

Exodus 14:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night.

Analysis

The pillar's dual function—'it gave light to them' (Israel) while 'it was a cloud and darkness to them' (Egypt)—demonstrates one divine presence producing opposite effects based on relationship. Light to believers, darkness to unbelievers. The result: 'the one came not near the other all the night' means God prevented Egyptian advance overnight. The same gospel is life to believers, death to unbelievers (2 Corinthians 2:16).

Historical Context

This supernatural darkness/light barrier prevented Egyptian attack during the night while Israel prepared to cross. The pillar that guided now protected, showing God's presence meeting every need.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does the same divine presence bringing light to some and darkness to others picture the gospel's dividing effect?
2. What does God preventing enemy approach teach about His timing in deliverance—protection while preparing salvation?

Interlinear Text

וַיָּבֹא א	בֵּין יוֹן	מַחֲנֵה ה	מִצְרַיִם	וּבֵין	מַחֲנֵה ה
And it came	H996	and the camp	of the Egyptians	H996	and the camp
H935		H4264	H4714		H4264
לְיִשְׂרָאֵל	וַיְהִי י	הָעֶנָּן	וְהָיָה שָׁחַר	וַיִּאָּר	אֶת
of Israel	H1961	and it was a cloud	and darkness	to them but it gave light	H853
H3478		H6051	H2822	H215	
הַלַּיְלָה:	וְלֹא	קָרַב ב	וְהַ	אֲל	וְהַ
all the night	H3808	to these so that the one came not near	the other	H413	the other
H3915		H7126	H2088		H2088
כָּל	הַלַּיְלָה:				
H3605	all the night				
	H3915				

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 8:14 (References Israel): And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.