

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

וְיָבֹא אֵלֶיךָ מִצְבֵּחַ יְהוָה בְּיַד־אַנְשֵׁים וְיִמְצְּבָא בְּמִצְבֵּחַ	H996	מִצְבֵּחַ יְהוָה בְּיַד־אַנְשֵׁים	H996	מִצְבֵּחַ הַיְהוָה וְיִמְצְּבָא בְּמִצְבֵּחַ	H4264
And it came	H935	and the camp	H4264	of the Egyptians	H4714
of Israel	H3478	and it was a cloud	H6051	and darkness	H2822
				to them but it gave light	H853
all the night	H3915	to these so that the one came not near	H7126	the other	H2088
				the other	H2088
all the night	H3605	כֹּל־לְילָה:	כֹּל־	אֶל־	אֶל־
				בְּ	בְּ
				וְ	וְ
				וְ	וְ

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.