

John 1:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

Analysis

The present tense 'shineth' indicates Christ's ongoing illumination despite humanity's darkness. The darkness 'comprehended it not' uses Greek 'katelaben', meaning both 'understood' and 'overcame', showing darkness's double failure. This anticipates the Gospel's conflict between belief and unbelief, light and darkness—themes fulfilled at the cross where darkness literally covered the earth yet could not extinguish the Light.

Historical Context

Written during persecution under Domitian, this verse encouraged believers that Christ's light continues despite Rome's opposition. The dualism of light/darkness was familiar in both Jewish apocalyptic literature and pagan mystery religions.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. Where do you see spiritual darkness attempting but failing to overcome Christ's light today?

2. How can you be a reflector of Christ's light in dark places?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	τὸ	φῶς	ἐν	τῇ	σκοτία	φαίνει	καὶ	ἡ	σκοτία
And	G3588	the light	in	G3588	darkness	shineth	And	G3588	darkness
G2532		G5457	G1722		G4653	G5316	G2532		G4653
αὐτὸ	οὐ	κατέλαβεν							
it	not	comprehended							
G846	G3756	G2638							

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 2:14 (Parallel theme): But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Romans 1:28 (Parallel theme): And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

John 1:10 (Parallel theme): He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

Proverbs 1:22 (Light): How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?