

Luke 1:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

Analysis

Zacharias's muteness serves as both judgment for unbelief and a sign confirming the angel's words. The Greek 'siopa' (silent) indicates complete inability to speak—a physical manifestation of spiritual doubt. Yet even this discipline is gracious, giving Zacharias nine months to reflect on God's power and faithfulness. The prophecy would be fulfilled 'in their season,' emphasizing God's sovereign timing. Zacharias's sign differs from his request—instead of evidence to produce belief, he receives discipline to strengthen it. This teaches that God's word always accomplishes its purpose, even when we doubt.

Historical Context

The nine-month silence prevented Zacharias from publicly doubting God's promise while giving visible evidence to the community that something supernatural had occurred. His inability to speak forced reliance on God's word alone rather than human explanation.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does God use discipline to strengthen rather than destroy faith?
2. What is the relationship between doubt and spiritual discipline in the Christian life?
3. How does God's word accomplish its purposes despite human unbelief?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἰδού, ἔσῃ σιωπῶν καὶ μὴ δυνάμενος λαλῆσαι
And behold thou shalt be dumb And not able to speak
G2532 G2400 G2071 G4623 G2532 G3361 G1410 G2980

ἄχρι ὅν ἡμέρας γένηται ταῦτα ἀνθρώποις
until that the day shall be performed these things because that not
G891 G3739 G2250 G1096 G5023 G473 G3739 G3756

ἐπίστευσας τοῖς λόγοις μου οἵτινες πληρωθήσονται εἰς
thou believest words my which shall be fulfilled in
G4100 G3588 G3056 G3450 G3748 G4137 G1519

τὸν καιρὸν αὐτῶν
G3588 season their
G2540 G846

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 3:26 (Parallel theme): And I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, that thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be to them a reproof: for they are a rebellious house.

Ezekiel 24:27 (Parallel theme): In that day shall thy mouth be opened to him which is escaped, and thou shalt speak, and be no more dumb: and thou shalt be a sign unto them; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

Revelation 3:19 (Parallel theme): As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

Hebrews 6:18 (Parallel theme): That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

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