

Luke 1:80

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

Analysis

Luke summarizes John's preparation: 'And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit' (τὸ δὲ παιδίον ἡῤξανεν καὶ ἐκραταιοῦτο πνεύματι). The verb 'auxanō' (αὐξάνω) indicates natural physical growth, while 'krataioō' (κραταιόω) means to be strengthened or empowered, referring to spiritual development. The phrase 'was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel' (ἦν ἐν ταῖς ἐρήμοις ἕως ἡμέρας ἀναδείξεως αὐτοῦ πρὸς τὸν Ἰσραήλ) indicates John lived in wilderness areas, possibly connected to Essene communities, though Scripture does not confirm this. His 'showing' (ἀνάδειξις, public manifestation) came when God's word came to him (Luke 3:2), demonstrating that effective ministry requires both spiritual preparation and divine timing.

Historical Context

The Judean wilderness, likely near the Dead Sea, provided isolation for spiritual formation. Some scholars suggest John may have been associated with Qumran community (where Dead Sea Scrolls were found), given geographical proximity and shared emphasis on ritual purity, though significant theological differences exist. John's Nazirite lifestyle (avoiding wine, Luke 1:15) and prophetic calling required separation from normal society. His emergence at approximately age 30 (typical age for priestly service) in the 15th year of Tiberius (AD 29) was divinely orchestrated to coincide with Jesus' public ministry.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. What does John's long period of preparation teach about the importance of spiritual formation before public ministry?
2. How does the pattern of wilderness preparation (Moses, Elijah, John, Jesus) demonstrate God's method of shaping His servants?

Interlinear Text

Τὸ	δὲ	παιδίον	ἠΰξανεν	καὶ	ἐκραταιοῦτο	πνεύματι	καὶ
G3588	And	the child	grew	and	waxed strong	in spirit	and
	G1161	G3813	G837	G2532	G2901	G4151	G2532
ἦν	ἐν	ταῖς	ἐρήμοις	ἕως	ἡμέρας	ἀναδείξεως	αὐτοῦ
was	in	G3588	the deserts	till	the day	shewing	of his
G2258	G1722		G2048	G2193	G2250	G323	G846
πρὸς	τὸν	Ἰσραήλ					
unto	G3588	Israel					
G4314		G2474					

Additional Cross-References

Luke 2:40 (Spirit): And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

Luke 2:52 (Parallel theme): And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

Matthew 3:1 (Parallel theme): In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,

John 1:31 (References Israel): And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.

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