

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 ηὔξανεν καὶ ἐκραταιοῦτο πνεύματι). The verb 'auxanō' (αὔξανω) 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 ἔως ἡμέρας ἀναδείξεως αὐτοῦ πρὸς τὸν Ἰσραὴλ) 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 ηὔξανεν καὶ ἐκραταιοῦτο πνεύματι καὶ
G3588 **And** **the child** **grew** **and** **waxed strong** **in spirit** **and**
G1161 G3813 G837 G2532 G2901 G4151 G2532

ἡν̄ ἐν ταῖς ἐρήμοις ἔως ἡμέρας ἀναδείξεως αὐτοῦ
was in G3588 the deserts till the day shewing of his
G2258 G1722 G2048 G2193 G2250 G323 G846

πρὸς τὸν Ἰσραὴλ
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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