

Luke 2:50

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

Analysis

The statement 'they understood not the saying which he spake unto them' reveals that even those closest to Jesus, including His mother who received angelic revelation, didn't fully comprehend His identity and mission. Their lack of understanding wasn't sinful but demonstrates the mystery of the incarnation—God's purposes aren't always immediately clear even to the faithful. Jesus's reference to 'my Father's business' used terminology they heard but didn't fully grasp. This teaches that progressive revelation and understanding characterize spiritual growth; initial confusion doesn't indicate lack of faith. Even Mary needed time to process and understand God's purposes, as shown by her pondering (v19, v51).

Historical Context

Despite Gabriel's announcement and supernatural surrounding Jesus's birth, Joseph and Mary didn't immediately understand all implications of His deity and mission. The mystery of God becoming man meant even those closest to Jesus grew gradually in understanding. This honest admission of their confusion demonstrates Scripture's historical reliability.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does acknowledging confusion about God's ways demonstrate humility rather than unbelief?
2. What does progressive understanding of God's purposes teach about spiritual growth?
3. Why didn't earlier supernatural revelations produce immediate comprehensive understanding?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	αὐτοῖς	οὐ	συνῆκαν	τὸ	ῥῆμα	ὃ	ἐλάλησεν
And	unto them	not	they understood	G3588	the saying	which	he spake
G2532	G846	G3756	G4920		G4487	G3739	G2980

αὐτοῖς
unto them
G846

Additional Cross-References

Luke 18:34 (Parallel theme): And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

Mark 9:32 (Parallel theme): But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him.

Luke 9:45 (Parallel theme): But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying.