

Luke 3:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

Analysis

At Jesus' baptism, 'the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.' This Trinitarian manifestation—Father speaking, Spirit descending, Son being baptized—reveals the Trinity at the inauguration of Jesus' ministry. The dove symbolizes purity, peace, and the Spirit's gentle power. The Father's declaration combines Psalm 2:7 (messianic enthronement: 'Thou art my Son') and Isaiah 42:1 (suffering servant: 'in whom my soul delighteth'), defining Jesus' mission as both royal Messiah and suffering servant.

Historical Context

The Father's voice from heaven (bat qol in Jewish tradition, 'daughter of voice') was rare in the intertestamental period when prophetic revelation had largely ceased. Its occurrence marked special divine communication. The Spirit's visible descent as a dove confirmed Jesus as Spirit-anointed Messiah (Isaiah 11:2, 61:1). The declaration 'my beloved Son' publicly identified Jesus' unique relationship with the Father—not adopted sonship but eternal divine Sonship. This baptism anointed Jesus for His messianic mission, fulfilling the anointing of prophets, priests, and kings in Israel's history.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does the Trinity's manifestation at Jesus' baptism reveal the cooperative work of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in redemption?
2. What does the combination of Psalm 2:7 (royal Messiah) and Isaiah 42:1 (suffering servant) in the Father's declaration teach about Jesus' mission?

Interlinear Text

καὶ καταβῆναι τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἄγιον σωματικῷ εἴδει
And descended G3588 Ghost G3588 the Holy in a bodily shape
G2532 G2597 G4151 G40 G4984 G1491

ώσει περιστερὰν ἐπ' αὐτόν καὶ φωνὴν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ
like a dove upon him And a voice from heaven
G5616 G4058 G1909 G846 G2532 G5456 G1537 G3772

γενέσθαι λέγουσαν, Σὺ εἰ ὁ νιός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός
came which said Thou art G3588 Son G3588 my G3450 beloved
G1096 G3004 G4771 G1488 G5207 G3588 G27

ἐν σοὶ ἦσδόκησα
in thee I am well pleased
G1722 G4671 G2106

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 2:7 (Parallel theme): I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

Matthew 17:5 (Love): While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

John 1:32 (Spirit): And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

Isaiah 42:1 (Spirit): Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

Acts 10:38 (Holy): How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

Matthew 3:17 (Love): And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Matthew 12:18 (Love): Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.

1 Peter 2:4 (Parallel theme): To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,

Colossians 1:13 (Parallel theme): Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

Luke 4:21 (Parallel theme): And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.