

Luke 9:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.

Analysis

And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. Luke's phrase *egeneto de meta tous logous toutous* (ἐγένετο δὲ μετὰ τοὺς λόγους τούτους, "it came to pass after these sayings") connects the Transfiguration to Jesus' predictions about His death (v. 22) and the kingdom (v. 27). Luke says "about eight days" while Matthew and Mark say "six days"—likely inclusive vs. exclusive counting, a common variation in ancient reckoning.

Jesus selected the inner circle—**Peter and John and James** (Πέτρον καὶ Ἰωάννην καὶ Ἰάκωβον)—who also witnessed Jairus' daughter's resurrection (8:51) and the Gethsemane agony (Mark 14:33). The mountain (traditionally Mt. Tabor or Mt. Hermon) symbolizes divine encounter—Moses at Sinai, Elijah at Horeb. Critically, **he went up... to pray** (*anebē eis to oros proseuxasthai, ἀνέβη εἰς τὸ ὄρος προσεύξασθαι*). Luke uniquely emphasizes prayer—the Transfiguration occurred during prayer (v. 29), revealing that communion with the Father precipitated the glory manifestation.

Historical Context

Mountains held theological significance in Jewish thought—places of revelation where heaven and earth met. Sinai was where Moses received the Law, Horeb where Elijah encountered God, and Moriah where Abraham nearly sacrificed Isaac.

Jesus' mountain prayer establishes continuity with these pivotal redemptive moments. The Transfiguration functioned as divine confirmation of Jesus' true identity and mission immediately before the journey to Jerusalem and the cross. The inner three disciples were being prepared for leadership—Peter would preach at Pentecost, James would be the first apostolic martyr (Acts 12:2), and John would receive Revelation. This preview of glory sustained them through the crucifixion trauma.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. Why does Jesus consistently seek mountains and solitary places for prayer, and what does this teach about communion with God?
2. How does Luke's emphasis that the Transfiguration occurred during prayer highlight the connection between prayer and spiritual perception?
3. What prepared Peter, James, and John to witness this revelation when the other nine disciples were excluded?

Interlinear Text

Ἐγένετο	δὲ	μετὰ	τοὺς	λόγους	τούτους	ὥσεί	ἡμέραι
it came to pass	And	after	G3588	sayings	these	about	days
G1096	G1161	G3326		G3056	G5128	G5616	G2250
ὀκτὼ	καὶ	παραλαβὼν	τὸν	Πέτρον	καὶ	Ἰωάννην	καὶ
an eight	and	he took	G3588	Peter	and	John	and
G3638	G2532	G3880		G4074	G2532	G2491	G2532
Ἰάκωβον	ἀνέβη	εἰς	τὸ	ὄρος	προσεύξασθαι		
James	and went up	into	G3588	a mountain	to pray		
G2385	G305	G1519		G3735	G4336		

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 109:4 (Prayer): For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer.

Luke 6:12 (Prayer): And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.