

Luke 9:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again.

Analysis

And of some, that Elias had appeared—The Greek *Ēlias* (Ἠλίας) is Elijah, whose return was prophesied in Malachi 4:5-6 to precede "the great and dreadful day of the LORD." Jewish expectation held that Elijah would reappear before the Messiah to restore all things. Some saw Jesus's miracles and authority as fulfilling this eschatological hope.

And of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again (ὅτι προφήτης τις τῶν ἀρχαίων ἀνέστη, *hoti prophētēs tis tōn archaiōn anestē*)—the verb *anestē* ("rose up, was resurrected") indicates literal resurrection, not metaphorical renewal. The people recognized that Jesus's ministry bore the marks of the great prophets—Moses, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah—but with unprecedented power. The speculation reveals partial truth: Jesus was indeed a prophet (Luke 7:16, 24:19), but infinitely more than a prophet—He is the Son of God, the Messiah. These inadequate categories show humanity's tendency to fit Jesus into familiar boxes rather than recognizing His unique identity.

Historical Context

Jewish messianic expectation in the first century was diverse and complex. Some anticipated Elijah's return based on Malachi; others expected the "prophet like Moses" (Deuteronomy 18:15-18). Intertestamental literature and the Dead Sea Scrolls reveal expectations of multiple eschatological figures—a prophet, a priestly Messiah, and a kingly Messiah. Jesus's miracles (healing, multiplication of food,

raising the dead) paralleled both Moses and Elijah-Elisha cycles, fueling these speculations.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. Why do people tend to fit Jesus into inadequate categories (great teacher, prophet, moral example) rather than accepting His claim to be God's unique Son?
2. How does the expectation of Elijah's return before the Messiah help explain John the Baptist's preparatory ministry?
3. What does the diversity of speculation about Jesus's identity reveal about human attempts to understand divine revelation?

Interlinear Text

ὑπό	τινων	δὲ	ὅτι	Ἑλίας	ἐφάνη	ἄλλων	δὲ	ὅτι
of	some	And	that	Elias	had appeared	of others	And	that
G5259	G5100	G1161	G3754	G2243	G5316	G243	G1161	G3754

προφήτης	εἷς	τῶν	ἀρχαίων	ἀνέστη
prophets	one	G3588	of the old	was risen again
G4396	G1520		G744	G450

Additional Cross-References

John 1:21 (Prophecy): And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No.

Luke 9:19 (Resurrection): They answering said, John the Baptist; but some say, Elias; and others say, that one of the old prophets is risen again.

