

A WAY OF ESCAPE

In the second Christmas story of Matthew, there were two miraculous escapes from the fatal danger of King Herod.

- First miraculous escape was the Magi from Herod (Matt.2:9-12).
- Second miraculous escape was Joseph, Mary, and Jesus from Herod (Matt.2:13-18).

One reason that they were miraculous escapes is because of Herod's homeland security system. He had ten fort outposts throughout his territory. They were designed as check points that made it nearly impossible to leave his territory undetected. Plus Herod was severely paranoid about threats and securities to his throne – "And when Herod the king heard it, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." (Matt.2:3)

Here is the point of this Christmas lesson – "No (ouk) **temptation (peirasmos)** has overtaken (lambano / **perf. a. ind**) you but such as (ei an / elliptical) [except] is common to man; and God is faithful, Who will not let you **be tempted** (peirazo / a.p.ind) beyond (huper+acc of extent) what you are able (dunamai / p.m.ind), but (alla / contrast) with **the temptation** (to peirasmos) will provide (poieo / f.a.ind) the way of escape (ten ekbasis) also, that you may be able (dunamai / p.m.infin) to endure (hupophero / a.a.ind) it." (1 Cor.10:13) (NAS)

Let's examine 1 Cor.10:13 by the following three homiletical points.

- Problem temptation (ouk) – overtaken you – common to man (except/ anthropinos)
- Promise tempted – God is faithful – not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able
- Provision temptation – it will provide a way of escape – that you may be able to endure it (through it not from it).

This final Christmas lesson will study five aspects of A Way of Escape.
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1. Let me begin by saying that your way of escape from testing will not be apart from the will of God.

The way of escape will be according to and compatible with the will of God – "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance, and let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing." (James 1:2-4)

- Magi were warned in a spiritual dream about it (Matt.2:12).
- Joseph was warned also in a spiritual dream about it (Matt.2:13).

Why? Because God is faithful and will not let the spiritual advancing believer be tempted beyond what is common to man. God is faithful and will provide a way of escape by the testing. God is faithful and will provide you with the ability to endure it.

2. Notice that in both cases God provided words of encouragement about ways of escape by means of spiritual dreams. Why spiritual dreams?

There are some decisions that must be made in the CWL that do not have a direct Scripture to help us in making them. Acts 16:31 and 1 John 1:9 are direct Scriptures that help us make correct decisions.

But what about those decisions that do not have direct Scripture and that require applying several Scriptures or doctrinal principles? Like in this second Christmas story with the Magi and Joseph.

Sometimes decisions are hindered by subjective thinking that makes it difficult to make the correct decision. Like when Joseph initially found out about Mary's pregnancy (Matt.1:18-25).

3. Some decisions require divine intervention in order to apply the proper doctrine by the faith cycle to the human experience.

Spiritual dreams and teaching angels were used in the Christmas story of Jesus Christ because of the Jewish Age.

How would it work for the Church Age? Let me suggest four ways it might work in the Church Age apart from spiritual dreams and teaching angels.

- Indwelling teaching ministry of Holy Spirit (John 14:25-27; Acts 5:3; 6:10).
- Spiritual gift of exhortation (1 Cor.12:8)
- Spiritual mature believer offering counseling (Acts 21:4-6).
- CBD residing and functioning in the conscience of spiritual advancing believer (Heb.4:12; Col.3:16; Ps.119:11)

4. We learn this important doctrinal principle from this Christmas lesson:

God has obligated Himself to give the spiritual advancing believer divine truth as a way of escape (Rom.4:21; Heb.11:17-19).

The spiritual advancing believer is required to have positive volition towards this truth and act upon it with obedience. Did the Magi? Did Joseph and Mary? (Eph.5:17)

- What way of escape did the spiritual dream offer the Magi? (Matt.2:12-13)
- What way of escape did the spiritual dream offer Joseph and Mary? (Matt.2:13-15)

Did their way of escape require obedience to the revealed truth?

5. What common device did the Devil use in attempting to abort the will of God in the redemptive plan?

(Matt.2:12-13 _____) Why didn't it work this time? (Matt.4:4)

King Herod was a reversionistic unbeliever who had the position of divine delegated authority in DI#4 (nation).

Did either the Magi or Joseph and Mary attack the position or the institution? What did they do?

They obeyed the revealed word of God that applied to their present circumstances (Acts 4:17-21; 5:28-32).