

Matthew 2:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

Analysis

God's warning to the magi in a dream demonstrates His sovereign protection of His Son and His ability to communicate directly with seeking hearts, even among Gentiles. The magi's obedience to God's revelation over Herod's command shows proper priorities: obeying God rather than men (Acts 5:29). Their silent departure thwarted Herod's scheme, showing how God uses ordinary human obedience to accomplish His purposes.

Historical Context

Dreams were a common means of divine revelation in the biblical period. God's warning protected both the magi (who might have faced Herod's wrath) and Jesus (by delaying Herod's awareness that his plot was foiled).

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does God's communication with pagan magi demonstrate His sovereign ability to reach seeking hearts everywhere?
2. When has God's guidance required you to disobey human authorities to obey His higher law?

Interlinear Text

καὶ χρηματισθέντες κατ' ὄναρ μὴ ἀνακάμψαι πρὸς
And **being warned of God** **in** **a dream** **not** **return** **to**
G2532 G5537 G2596 G3677 G3361 G344 G4314

Ἡρώδην δι' ἄλλης ὁδοῦ ἀνεχώρησαν εἰς τὴν χώραν
Herod **another** G243 **way** **they departed** **into** G3588 **country**
G2264 G1223 G3598 G402 G1519 G5561

αὐτῶν
G846

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 2:22 (References God): But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee:

Matthew 2:19 (Parallel theme): But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,

Matthew 2:13 (Parallel theme): And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

Matthew 27:19 (Parallel theme): When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

Exodus 1:17 (References God): But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive.

Matthew 1:20 (Parallel theme): But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

Genesis 31:24 (References God): And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said unto him, Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.

Hebrews 11:7 (References God): By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

Acts 5:29 (References God): Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

Acts 4:19 (References God): But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.