

Preached to Spirits in Prison

1 Peter 3:18-20

¹⁸ For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive **in the spirit**, ¹⁹ **in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison**, ²⁰ **because they formerly did not obey**, when God's patience waited **in the days of Noah**, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water.

Option 1

Option 2

Fallen angels	To whom did Christ preach?	Disobedient humans
The “sons of God” who had children with human women in Genesis 6 ² the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose ... ⁴ The Nephilim were on the earth in those days ... when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. (Gen. 6:2, 4)		“Spirit” separated from the flesh at death And as her soul was departing (for she was dying), she called his name Ben-oni (Gen. 35:18) the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it. (Eccl. 12:7)
In hell between Jesus’ death and resurrection	When / Where did Christ preach?	Through Noah in the Spirit
Same interpretation as Apostles’ Creed: I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to hell. The third day he rose again from the dead.		Noah is called a preacher despite not preaching in Gen. 6—7 if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly (2 Pet. 2:5)
The same angels imprisoned in 2 Pet. 2:4, Jude 6, and 1 Enoch 21		“Spirit of Christ” spoke through prophets ¹⁰ Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, ¹¹ inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. (1 Pet. 1:10-11)

⁶ And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day— ⁷ just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire (Jude 6-7) ⁴ For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment; ⁵ if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah ... ⁹ then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, ¹⁰ and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. (2 Pet. 2:4)		Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. (2 Cor. 5:20) <i>Gospel preached to “the dead” back when they were alive</i> For this is why the gospel was preached even to those who are dead, that though judged in the flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does. (1 Pet. 4:6)
Condemnation / Victory over them		Message of repentance
<i>Jesus’ exaltation over spirit beings at death / resurrection / ascension</i> he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion ... ²² And he put all things under his feet (Eph. 1:20-22)	What was the content of Christ’s preaching?	<i>“Repentance” is a more standard meaning of verb κηρύσσω</i> From that time Jesus began to preach [κηρύσσω], saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matt. 4:17) repentance for the forgiveness ... should be proclaimed [κηρύσσω] in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem (Luke 24:47)
Conquered evil spirits		Make defense
<i>“Have no fear” (3:14) of persecutors because Jesus has already conquered evil spirit beings, the “powers having been subjected to him” (3:22)</i> ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer ... Have no fear of them ... ¹⁸ For Christ also suffered ... being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit ... through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him. (1 Pet. 3:14, 18, 21-22)	How does this make sense in the context of 1 Peter?	<i>Peter urges readers to be “ready to make a defense” (3:15) as persecuted minority in hostile world as Noah preached / defended construction of ark to ungodly world</i> ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake ... always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you ... ¹⁸ For Christ also suffered ... being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, ¹⁹ in which he went and proclaimed ... in the days of Noah (1 Pet. 3:14-15, 18-20)