

DID CHRIST PREACH IN HADES?

Likely, everyone who has read 1 Peter 3:18-20 has had some difficulty understanding just who was preaching what, where and to whom. We can take comfort in all things hard to understand that the Bible is its own best commentary. So, with this subject as with any other, let us examine the whole picture.

Because Christ also suffered for sins once, 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; in which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, that aforetime were disobedient, when the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water" (1 Peter 3:18-20). This context is dealing with Christian suffering in this life. Why can we have confidence in this suffering? Because Christ suffered first. He paid the price in His flesh and by His resurrection we have the hope and promise of the same for us (see 3:21)! The real question seems to be three-fold: 1-Did Christ "go" somewhere when He died in the flesh? 2-Where did He go? 3-What did He do there? There are basically three answers put forth to verse 19: 1-Christ went to the Hadean (unseen) world and preached to all the spirits there. This is not likely as **not all** the spirits in Hades need this preaching. There are righteous souls there too. He "went" to those in prison. So, 2-Christ went to the unrighteous in Hades and preached only to them. But, there are several problems here also. 1-God is not a respecter of persons (Romans 2:11). 2-How would those in Hades obey the message of righteousness,

since we are to be judged by our deeds **in the flesh** (II Corinthians 5:10)? 3-The judgment for all men is sealed at death (Hebrews 9:27). Therefore, answer #3-Verse 19 does not chronologically follow verse 18. To be sure, Christ went to the Hadean world at His death (Acts 2:27,31). Did He preach there? We think not. Why? Because He was in Paradise (Luke 23:43), not in a prison or torment (see Luke 16:23; II Peter 2:4).

Let us ask five questions to understand verses 19 and 20. #1-Who was doing the preaching? Christ. #2-When? In the days of Noah, not right after His death. #3-How? In, through or by means of His Spirit. #4-Through whom? Noah (see II Peter 2:5). #5-To whom? The disobedient of Noah's day, not to the wicked dead who were in the Hadean prison of torment. The prison (see II Peter 2:4; Luke 16:23) is where the disobedient are **now**, not where they were at the time of the preaching of verse 19.

Peter is merely teaching us that the righteousness of God has been preached since the days of the flood, which is a picture of our escape from sin through our baptism. In Noah's day, only eight listened to the message. Those who did not are now in a prison of torment. Christ was preaching through Noah the same way Elijah was "preaching" through John the baptizer (Malachi 4:5,6; Matthew 11:13,14; Mark :11-14; Luke 1:17). Peter is **not** teaching, as the Mormons and so-called "Jehovah Witnesses" try to make us believe, that there is a "second chance" after death!

Sermon Notes:
“Instructions For and About Elders”

- It only took about _____ years for the newly rebaptized disciples to become elders!
- 20/20 preaching: declaring _____ that is profitable.
- Our most important priority in life: _____.
- God’s Gospel is _____; God’s grace is found in the _____.
- We must do our duty or share in the _____ of souls: including our own!
- To teach and preach, we must declare God’s will and _____ more, _____ less, and _____ else.
- It is the _____ that makes men elders then and today.
- Elders, bishops, and overseers are all the _____ man.
- Division can come from _____ the leadership.
- The _____ of God’s grace is what keeps us going.

Meeting Times:

Sunday:

Bible Study: 9:30 a.m.
Worship: 10:30 a.m.
Evening: 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday:

Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.

Preachers:

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Wednesday’s Wisdom:

“Job teaches us patience and trust. Don’t quit the Lord...go to Him when trouble comes! We shall be blessed for doing so.” Josh Haley

Continue to pray for Ray Sargent and his recovery.

Brother Hubert will be having some medical tests this week. Pray that the docs can help him out.

Fellowship meal/business meeting is next week. **HAPPY MOTHER’S DAY!**

Ladies night out...at Cheryl Haley’s home on Thursday, May 27 at 6:30pm. This will be a salad supper.

Question/Answer night is this month. Please get questions in the box or to Robin.

Sermon Preview:

- There are some vitally important instructions given to elders in Acts chapter 20.
- Many ignore these lessons.
- To be the Lord’s church, we must observe them and do all we can to develop, then appoint elders!