

Daily Devotional, April 11, 2020

“He Went and Preached” (1 Peter 3:19, NKJV)

“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison.” (1 Peter 3:18-19).

Many people have wondered exactly what Jesus was doing on the Saturday, if anything, when His body was in the tomb. Our text gives us the answer. Jesus made an official royal proclamation that God’s plan had been accomplished in time by Him, and that its completion was at hand. The following day, the Lord would arise bodily from the dead (Cf. John 2:19,21). Though His body was in the tomb, His omnipresent divine spirit was very much alive! These specific angels that were preached to were those who cohabited with women back in Noah’s day (1 Peter 3:20; Genesis 6:1-4). There was no provision for the salvation of angels, but only for men. The penitent criminal on the cross was one beneficiary of the blood of Christ which brings salvation. Just before Jesus gave up the ghost, he turned to the man and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise” (Luke 23:43). That sinful man experienced the Bible truth with teaches that for all believers, “to be absent from the body” is “to be present with the Lord” (2 Corinthians 5:8).

The first application is that the things of God can be easily understood by a careful reading of the Scripture in its context and within the context of all the rest of the Bible. Be careful also who your teachers are, for many “twist the Scriptures” (1 Peter 3:16). There are people who teach that certain categories of people can never enter heaven because they have committed a particular sin, even though it has been truly repented of. Others teach an intermediate state, such as Purgatory, where one pays for their own sins in addition to Jesus’ payment, as if the Lord’s payment was not enough. Be wise and discerning, and let the Scriptures override every human authority and tradition.

The second application is that the victory of God and His Christ over sin and death was always in the divine plan. Nothing catches Him by surprise or thwarts His plan. God is, always has been, and ever shall be, in control. Those who accept Him, repenting and believing in faith, have assurance of eternal life with God on the basis of His sacrificial death and resurrection. For the rest, there remains only the fearful proclamation of judgment.