

# *Safe Passage Beyond the Shadow of Death*

1 Peter 3:18-20

PART ONE

## **Introduction**

***“that he might bring us to God”*** (v18c).

Ephesians 2:12-14; 16-18

***“being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit”*** (v18d).

*“put to death”* Gk *thanatotheis*, ‘become dead, kill, mortify.’

*“made alive in the spirit”*

## **Did He die spiritually?**

We know that sin causes separation from God (Isaiah 59:2). Was this true for Him? Yes:

*“My God, my God, You have forsaken Me! Why?”* (Matthew 27:46).

*“forsaken”* means ‘abandoned, deserted, left helpless, left destitute.’

**This is not a cessation from existence, but a spiritual *separation* from the Father and the Holy Spirit.**

## **Our Lord in His incarnation had ...**

† a human body (Matthew 26:26)

† a human soul (John 12:27)

† a human spirit (Luke 23:46)

He was *“made sin”* for us (2 Corinthians 5:21).

*“Father, into Your hands I commit my spirit!”* (Luke 23:46).

## **So, where did He go as a living spirit?**

*“in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison”* (v19).

***“he went”***

## **He went somewhere to preach!**

*“to the spirits in prison.”*

## **Who are these “spirits”?**

*“For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham”* (Hebrews 2:16).

“Just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment” (Hebrews 9:27).

**This is a triumphant proclamation of complete victory from our conquering King!**

**Jesus triumphed in the midst of unjust suffering.**

***Our victory in Christ is realized, it is made manifest, in our suffering.***

**Why was this trip necessary?**

***“in prison” so where is this place?***

**This is not a condition, it is an actual *location*.**

“And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss” (Luke 8:31).

“The prison of disobedient spirits” (Kittle).

**So, how and why did the incarcerated demons in the abyss become imprisoned?**

*“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” (v20).*

*“did not obey”*

*“when God's patience waited”*

*“in the days of Noah”*

“The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Genesis 6:5).

*“while the ark was being prepared”*

**No one repented.**

“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; 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 Peter 2:4-5).

“hell” is *Tartarus* in the original.

**So, which demons were cast into the abyss? What did they do that was so egregious?**

“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— just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire” (Jude 6-7).

*“their own position of authority”* Gk *arche*, which speaks of office, position, and dignity.

## So, what happened in Sodom and Gomorrah?

“sexual immorality” Gk *ekporneuo*; ‘given oneself over to fornication; lewdness.’

“*pursued unnatural desire*” Gk *heteros*; ‘of a different kind.’

“When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose... when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown” (Genesis 6:1-2, 4).

“**sons of God**” = demons. The term Hebrew *bane elohiym* (‘Creator’) always refers to angels.

“the sons of God” (Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7).

“by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him” (Colossians 2:14-15).

“*while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water*” (v20).

“‘When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men.’ (In saying, ‘He ascended,’ what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.)” (Ephesians 4:8-11).

“‘Death is swallowed up in victory.’ ‘O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?’ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:54-57).