

158. His Descent into Hell.

Christ was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit; by which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison. / Pet. 3,18.19.

When, on the third day after His death, Christ was quickened in the grave, He first descended into hell. Scripture says Christ was put to death in the *flesh*, that is, in the humiliation of His human nature, but quickened by the *Spirit*, that is, by the divine glory of His human nature, "by which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison." The prison into which He went is the place of torment, reserved for the wicked angels and unbelieving men.

For what purpose did Christ go into this prison? Assuredly not to suffer; for He suffered all that was necessary for our complete redemption on the cross. And when with His death on the cross the redemption of mankind was perfected, He said, "It is finished." His sufferings for us were ended. And as soon as He was quickened in the grave, He exhibited Himself to hell as its Conqueror; He manifested His glory; He triumphed over all His infernal enemies. "Having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it," as we read Col. 2, 15. The enemy was in full flight and the Victor in hot pursuit. The vanquished sought refuge in his hellish fortress, but to no purpose, he was pursued into the very gates of hell. And there the principalities and powers of hell were "spoiled." What does this mean? That means, first of all, their weapons were taken from them; and there stood the Prince of Darkness with his legions, unarmed. Satan has nothing left him now wherewith he may overpower us Christians. He may attempt to injure us, but wound us unto death he never can; for he can no longer wield the sharp sword of the Law against us; also death has been taken away. By His descent into hell Christ showed that He is the Victor over death and the devil and that we who believe in this Victor are no longer in the power of Satan.

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus Christ, we thank Thee for Thy victorious descent into hell. Thou hast spoiled our enemies of all their weapons; Thou hast taken all their armor. And now Thou sittest in majesty at the right hand of the Father. Grant us grace to realize that Thou art still mindful of us, that Thou art our Advocate with the Father, that Thou dost preserve and govern Thy kingdom with power, and that Thou art pleased to receive us into Thy glory. We beseech Thee, destroy in our hearts the power of Satan and raise us up out of the death of sin into the heavenly life. Draw us to Thee that, where our treasure is, there our hearts may be also. Amen.

Hallelujah! Lo, He wakes,
Lives o'er death and hell victorious;
Earth in awe with trembling quakes.
As the Hero rises glorious,
He who died on Golgotha.
Jesus lives! Hallelujah!

This devotion is one of 318 taken from *Daily Bread* by F. E. Pasche, published by CPH in 1926, but now in the public domain. They have been copied and reformatted by Rev. Bruce G. Ley and made available for distribution by pastors and missionaries.

You may contact Rev. Ley at: pastorley@leychalet.com.

You are invited to go to www.scholia.net for the other devotions from *Daily Bread*.