

REVERSING HERMON

9: The Watchers' Sin & Christian Baptism

Learning objectives

By the end of this session, we shall be able to explain:

- Early Christian baptismal pledges.
- Who were the “spirits in prison”.
- How baptism saves.

Hippolytus , early 3rd century

“When the person being baptized goes down into the water, the one baptizing shall put his hands on him, saying: Do you renounce Satan, and all his works? And the person being baptized shall say: I do renounce them.”

Tertullian, late 2nd century

“When we are going to enter the water, ... in the presence of the congregation and under the hand of the president, we solemnly profess that we disown the devil, and his pomp, and his angels. Hereupon we are thrice immersed.” in *De Corona*

1 Peter 3:14-22, mid-1st century

¹⁴ If you ever have to suffer because you are righteous, then God will reward you. So, ‘Do not be frightened or distressed by their threats. ¹⁵ Instead, honor’ Christ ‘as Lord’ in your heart... [Isa. 8:12-13]

- If: With optative verb = unlikely future.
- Reward: Traditionally, ‘are blessed’.
- Lord: in Isa. 8:12-13 Lord = Yahweh.

by always being ready to give a reason to anyone asking for your testimony about your hope.

Reasons:

- Christ died to forgive me everything.
- Christ rose to give me his new life.
- His Holy Spirit gives me joy and hope.
- Others:

¹⁶ And do so calmly and respectfully, because you have a good conscience. As a result, those who abuse you will be ashamed of having slandered your good Christian behavior.

- Calmly: Only God can convince.
- Conscience: Confident assurance.
- Abuse: Insults, beatings, fines...

¹⁷ Remember, it is better to suffer for doing good — if God ever allows it — than for doing bad.

- Suffer: Always seems meaningless.
- Better: There is a divine purpose.
- Good: By biblical standards.
- Bad: By biblical and social standards.

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¹⁸ Christ once suffered because of our sins, the Righteous One on behalf of us non-righteous ones, in order to bring us to God. Although his body died, his spirit remained alive.

- Suffer: With divine purpose.
- Died: Gk. 'was put to death in flesh'.
- Alive: Gk. 'was made alive in spirit'.

¹⁹ Thus, he went and made an announcement to the *Watcher* spirits who are in prison. ²⁰ The *spirits* who disobeyed ...

- Thus: Gk. = 'in which'. Either 'in which spirit' or 'at which time'.
- Spirits: *pneuma*. Usually non-human.
- Prison: Never for departed believers.
- Disobeyed: Intermixed with humans.

²¹ By analogy, baptism in water now saves you, not by washing away fleshly uncleanness, but by your conscientious pledge of loyalty to God.

- Analogy: *antitypos*.
- Pledge: (a) promise, or (b) by your request to God (for a good/clear conscience).

Baptism saves you through Messiah Jesus' resurrection from death. ²² After he subjected to himself *Watcher* angels, authorities and powers, he went into heaven where he sits at God's right side.

- Resurrection: from physical death.
- Subject: victory over enemy spirits.
- Right side: authority over everything.

Spirits in prison

1. Watchers? Nephilim? Satan? Humans? All the above?
2. Spirit (*pneuma*) can be any of these.
3. Person (*psyché* 3:20) always human.
4. Prison (*phylaké*) never used of departed humans in NT or in 1 Enoch.
5. Satan in prison 1000 years. Rev 20:7
6. Watchers in prison forever. 1 En 14:5
7. Jewish readers understood this in reference to Genesis 6:2.

"You will not obtain your petition for all the days of eternity; but judgment has been consummated in the decree against you, that from now on you will not ascend into heaven for all the ages; and it has been decreed to bind you in bonds in the earth for all the days of eternity." 1 Enoch 14.4-5

Type (event) & antitype (analogy) in 1 Peter 3

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|------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. God was patient | Messiah suffered |
| 2. Eight souls | You (many) |
| 3. Ark prepared | Proclaimed a message |
| 4. Disobedient spirits | Jesus subjected angels |
| 5. In prison | Jesus went there is spirit |
| 6. Boat in water | Baptism |
| 7. Lifted by water | Jesus' resurrection |
| 8. Were saved | Saves you |

Watcher spirit terminology

- Sons of God, of heaven. Gen 6:2; Job 1:6; Dt 32:8; Ps 82:1, 6; 1 En 14:3
- Angels. 1 En 6:2; Jud 6; 1 Pt 3:22; 2 Pt 2:4; Mt 25:41; Rev 12:9
- Watchers. 1 En 12:2, 4; 14:3; Dan 4:17
- Spirits. 1 En 15:4, 6, 8; 1 Pet 3:19
- Rulers, authorities, powers, forces. Rom 8:36; Ep 3:10, 6:12; Pt 3:22

14 Biblical 'types' (analogies)

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|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 Adam: | Christ the '2nd Adam'. |
| 2 God: | Sabbath rest. |
| 3 Ark: | Water baptism. |
| 4 Hagar & Ishmael: | Legal bondage. |
| 5 Sara & Isaac: | Promise and freedom |
| 6 Exodus: | Jesus' return from Egypt. |
| 7 Serpent on a pole: | Son lifted up |
| 8 Passover: | The Lamb of God. |
| 9 Sacrifices: | Crucifixion. |
| 10 Immanuel: | Jesus' virgin conception. |
| 11 Wilderness rebels: | Warning to Christians. |
| 12 Church elders: | The Chief Shepherd. |
| 13 Law: | Heavenly realities. |
| 14 Yahweh victorious: | Christus victor. |

Model baptismal pledge

Do you believe that:

- Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God?
- Jesus died to forgive you your sins?
- Jesus rose back to life the third day?
- God gives to you everlasting life?

Do you:

- Pledge your loyalty to Jesus Christ?
- Renounce the devil and his angels?