

fer to it as briefly expressed in the third and fourth chapters of the first Epistle of Peter. There you will see that Jesus himself preached the Gospel to the spirits in prison, “which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.” This may seem strange to some, that Jesus should go to preach the Gospel unto the wicked, rebellious antediluvians; whose bodies had been destroyed in the flood because they rejected the testimony of Noah, who had been sent to rebuke their iniquities and warn them of destruction decreed against them if they did not repent, nevertheless it is true. From this Scripture we not only learn the condition of those who are cut off in their sins because of their wickedness in rebelling against the laws of God and rejecting his servants, but such of them as have not sinned against the Holy Ghost, however wicked they may have been in this world—save committing that unpardonable sin—will have the privilege of hearing the Gospel in the spirit world; “For,” as the Apostle says, “for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead.” “Yes,” says one, “dead in sin, but not dead as to the flesh.” But the Apostle does not say so, but to the contrary, for the dead here referred to had perished in the flesh and the Apostle continues—“That they might be judged according to *men in the flesh*, but live according to God in the spirit;” that is, out of the body until the resurrection from the dead. But first they must remain in hell—the “prison house,” until they have paid the penalty of their sins in the flesh, even to the “uttermost farthing.” “But,” says one, “is this possible?” The people

in Europe, where we have been preaching, were struck with wonder and astonishment when we mentioned this doctrine, and say they, “We had supposed that, ‘as the tree fell so it should lie,’ and that ‘there was no salvation in the grave.’” Neither is there any salvation *in* the grave, and “as the tree falls, so it lies,” but this is pertaining to the flesh. Does the spirit lie with the body? Is the spirit confined in the grave? No. As the body falls, so it will lie until the resurrection; there is no salvation in the grave, but in Christ, who is the “light of life,” and the spirit soars beyond the grave; it does not slumber in the dust, but is wafted to the place prepared for it in the spirit world, to receive its reward or punishment, having passed the first judgment of God, there to await his mercy, and the resurrection from the dead and the final judgment of the great last day.

Thus we see those wicked, unrepentant antediluvians who even had the privilege of hearing the Gospel in the flesh, as preached by Noah, and who rejected the message of that servant of God, were actually visited in the “prison house” by the Savior himself, and heard the Gospel from his own mouth after he was “put to death in the flesh.” Their prison was opened, and liberty was proclaimed unto them in their captivity, in fulfillment of the prediction of the Prophet Isaiah, as you might read in his 61st chapter, that they may come forth, when they shall have fulfilled the decree of judgment upon them in the prison, or hell, to do the first works necessary unto salvation, which they refused to do in the beginning.

Here will come in the principles of baptism for the dead, and of proxy and heirship, as revealed