

connected with Colossians 2:15 -- "And, having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." The second clause, "he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth," is linked to Isaiah 61:1 -- "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me ... he hath sent me ... to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound." This is quoted by Christ in Luke 4:18. Both of these clauses, and the related Scriptures, are quoted in favor of the descent into Hades view.

However, the first clause may be understood as teaching that Christ broke the slave-hold of sin over all His people and bound them as captives to Himself, or that Christ broke the bondage of death and made death His own captive. And the second clause really turns on the word "lower." ("he descended first into the *lower* parts of the earth"). However, if the contrast is not between His descending to hades and then ascending to heaven, but between His descending to earth (which is certainly "lower" relative to His pre-incarnate state!) And His subsequent ascending to heaven, then the whole theory collapses. And once again, if the proponents of this view want to press the "lower parts of the earth" idea, then do they want to locate the "Paradise Section" of hades in the interior of the earth?! Once again, this proves too much.

The proclamation of "liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who were bound" could certainly apply to the marvelous deliverance from the guilt, penalty, and bondage of sin which every child of God experiences.

Finally we come to the *locus classicus* of the descent into Hades view, 1 Peter 3:18-20:

For Christ also hath once suffered 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 unto the spirits in prison, who at one time were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, in which few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water.

This passage is usually coupled with I Peter 4:6 -- "For, for this cause