**5 Views of 1 Peter 3:19ff**

**View 1. Augustinian interpretation**

**Summary: "When Noah was building the ark, Christ 'in spirit' was in Noah preaching repentance and righteousness through him to unbelievers who were on the earth then but are now 'spirits in prison' (people in hell)."**

This is also found in [Thomas Aquinas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Aquinas); [*Summa Theologica*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Summa_Theologica) (3,52,2). A variant of this view is the view of the Rev. Archibald Currie (1871) that Christ through Noah preached to "the spirits in prison ;" meaning the eight persons interned in the Ark as in a place of protection.

**View 2. Harrowing of hell**

**Summary: "After Christ died, he went and preached to people in hell, offering them a second chance of salvation."**

The Anglican [Edward Hayes Plumptre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Hayes_Plumptre), Dean of Wells, in *The Spirits in Prison* starting from the verse in Peter argued for revival in the belief in the [harrowing of Hell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harrowing_of_Hell) and the spirit of Christ preaching to the souls of the dead in [Hades](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hades) while his body was in the grave.

**View 3. Proclaiming triumph**

**Summary: "After Christ died, he went and preached to people in hell, proclaiming to them that he had triumphed over them and their condemnation was final."**

This is a variant of the [harrowing of Hell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harrowing_of_Hell) idea, except that Christ only proclaims triumph.

**View 4. Release from purgatory**

**Summary: "After Christ died, he proclaimed release to people who had repented just before they died in the flood, and led them out of their imprisonment (in Purgatory) into heaven."**

This view originates with [Robert Bellarmine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Bellarmine) (1586) and has been followed by some [Catholic Church](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_Church) commentators in relation to a belief in Purgatory.

**View 5. The spirits in prison are angels**

* **Summary: "After Christ died (or: after he rose but before he ascended into heaven), he travelled to hell and proclaimed triumph over the fallen angels who had sinned by marrying human women before the flood."**

Support for the understanding that the spirits in prison are angelic beings and not people is thought to be confirmed by II Peter 2:4–5 and Jude 6, which refer to rebellious angels, punished by God with imprisonment. Just like I Pet. 3, II Pet. 2 also refers to the time of Noah's flood, including the number of people saved in the ark. However, the text in 2 Peter uses a different word for the location of the angels than I Peter does. in 2 Peter 2, the word used is [tartaroo](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/2pe/2/1/t_conc_1158004), otherwise known as [Tartarus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tartarus). In I Peter 3:19, the word is [phylake](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/1pe/3/1/t_conc_1154019) (can also be anglic. as **Phylace**), meaning prison.