

Descent Proposal	Summary	Details	Weaknesses	The Genitive “Earth” τὰ κατώτερα μέρη τῆς γῆς
<p align="center">Descent into Hades</p>	<p><i>Eastern Orthodox:</i> Christ’s defeat of Hades and liberation of Adam from sin’s penalty, death.</p>	<p>Association of Eph 4:9 with 1 Peter 3:19 (he went and preached to the spirits in prison).</p>	<p>No reference to Hades in Peter or in Ephesians</p> <p>Some Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic views imply some sort of universalism.</p>	<p>Genitive of Comparison: parts lower than the earth or the lower parts of the earth = the abode of the dead.</p>
	<p><i>Roman Catholic:</i> Jesus descends to the first level of hell and preaches the Gospel to the inhabitants (virtuous Jews and pagans who lived and died before Christ) and takes out all who repent and believe.</p>			
	<p><i>Martin Luther:</i> Victory over death and Hades. Removed part about liberation.</p>			
	<p><i>Irenaeus:</i> Christ proclaims his triumphant victory and vindicates rather than revises God’s promises to the righteous dead.</p>			
<p align="center">Descent at Incarnation and/or Death, Burial</p>	<p>The descent is at the incarnation where he comes to earth.</p>	<p>Parallels the order of Psalm 68, where Yahweh first descended to deliver his people and triumph over his enemies before ascending to his dwelling place.</p>	<p>The extra description “lower parts” seems to imply that it is more than the incarnation. Compare this with 1 Peter and it seems that a humiliation view is not sufficient.</p>	<p>Epexegetical or appositional genitive: the lower parts, namely the earth = Christ’s incarnation</p>
	<p>The descent is Jesus’ death and burial. In his death and burial he “penetrated even to the dead.”</p>	<p>Passages in the New Testament like Acts 2:24; Eph. 4:8, and Rom. 10:7 seem to refer to Christ’s descent as a descent to the place of the dead. Jesus’ statement about the sign of Jonah (Matt. 12:40) is a clear reference to a descent to the place of the dead, and in Jonah 2 this place is called the abyss, or Sheol.</p>	<p>The reference to the place of the dead is not explicit in Ephesians.</p>	<p>Partitive Genitive or Possessive Genitive: the earth’s lower parts = the grave or his burial</p>
<p align="center">The Descent of the Exalted Christ in the Spirit</p>	<p>Descent was the Spirit at Pentecost. Thus the descent of Christ is subsequent to his ascent into heaven.</p>	<p>Paul in Ephesians has already spoken of the Spirit’s work in unifying the body thus it is natural to connect descent to Spirit. Additionally, there are views that tie Psalm 68 to Pentecost.</p>	<p>Ephesians pictures Christ as seated in the heavenly places. The reference and order in Ephesians makes implies it is about Jesus and the descent precedes the ascent.</p>	<p>Epexegetical or appositional genitive: the lower parts, namely the earth = Spirit’s descent</p>