

**THE INTERMEDIATE  
STATE, II  
CORINTHIANS V**

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The intermediate state, II Corinthians v by George Montagu

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**GEORGE MONTAGU**

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INTERMEDIATE STATE.

II CORINTHIANS V.

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*101. d. 401.*

THE following Tract, which appeared originally in a Periodical, is reprinted in a separate form in compliance with the desire of friends, who have felt interested in it. It was corrected by the Author shortly before his death.



## THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.

2 CORINTHIANS V.

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NOR a few of the advocates for our Lord's personal reign upon earth have maintained views with regard to the intermediate state of the soul, which are adverse to the doctrine upon that subject most generally held amongst Protestant divines.

Is there any necessary connexion between the doctrine of our Lord's reign upon earth and the opinion that the separate spirit is more or less in a state of unconsciousness? Or, is the view of the future glory permitted to become so absorbing as to throw too much into the shade the intervening bliss of the separate spirit? Or, does the differ-



ence of opinion arise from the different modes of interpreting Scripture, which are severally adopted by the spiritualists and literalists?

There is no conceivable connexion between the doctrines above-mentioned; but it is possible that the mind, when in a state of transition from the belief of a spiritual to that of a literal reign, may be susceptible of impressions, which lead to erroneous views.

It is not long after the belief in our Lord's personal reign upon earth is received, that the student discovers passages which have been incautiously applied to the separate spirit in heaven, but which do in truth refer to the state of glory upon earth; and as these are one after another pressed upon his mind, he finds that the popular view, in many instances, is not soundly maintained; and he begins to suspect that the doctrine has not any scriptural support, and is nothing more than a corollary from the current belief of the day with regard to our Lord's kingdom.

*There is always danger, when giving up*

error, that some truth, which has been held together with the error, may be resigned with it also : faith, when it has been abused and overburdened, becomes suspicious, and the reaction of extreme credulity is not unfrequently infidelity, either secret or avowed. In the present case, though the error is uncomfortable rather than perilous, the danger of falling into it is great, in consequence of so many texts having been wrongly applied in support of the orthodox faith, and there really being but few in the New Testament which do properly relate to it. But it will be perceived that there is no necessity for holding the one doctrine because of a belief in the other. The error has in fact been occasioned by the erroneous manner in which the truth has been maintained.

Nevertheless, his suspicions being aroused, the enquirer sets himself diligently to examine the question, and he is next influenced by perceiving that, in passages where he would have expected mention of the intermediate state, he finds no notice of it whatever, but, on the contrary, the kingdom of

glory is prominently held forth, as the object of the believer's expectancy. The intermediate state being thus passed over in silence, he now more than suspects that it is a condition of apathy, rather than of active bliss.

But this argument is without force, if the different standing-points of believers now, and believers to whom the Apostles wrote, are borne in mind. We look back over the long period which has elapsed since our Lord's ascension, and unwarily suppose, that the fact, which in its retrospection influences us, must have been prospectively contemplated by them; and that, if so, an intermediate state of bliss would have been a subject of much too deep an interest to be passed over in silence. But we ought rather to place ourselves in their position, and then consider, whether a dilation upon the bliss of the intermediate state would indeed have proved a theme of consolation.

Our Lord's own followers were called *upon to be in constant watchfulness and*