
**The Intermediate State, and Christ Among the Dead, Tr.
by J.F. Schön**

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THE INTERMEDIATE STATE,

AND

CHRIST AMONG THE DEAD:

THE TWOFOLD RESURRECTION AND THE TWOFOLD
COMING OF CHRIST,

EXHIBITED ACCORDING TO THE WORD OF GOD.

BY

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Translated from the German,

BY THE

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LONDON:

SEELEY, JACKSON, AND HALLIDAY, FLEET STREET;

BENTON SEELEY, HANOVER STREET.

MDCCCLVI.

107. d. 387.

PREFACE.

By the lamentable progress which unbelief in God's word has made in the present generation, death is regarded not merely as a common process of nature, and inseparably connected with all mankind, but also as a sure passage to a better existence, in which every man—great criminals excepted—will, without any regard as to his relation to God, meet with a more comfortable and happier lot than here on earth.

In public notices of deaths and in funeral orations we are assured—often without any regard to the life and conduct of the individuals referred to—that they are henceforth delivered from all sorrows and miseries, taken up to heaven, and already in the enjoyment of endless felicity. Even the Hymns treating on death and immortality, and used in our public services, are teeming with this illusion.

The constant repetition of this error by the lips of the so-called educated classes, and the authoritative tone by which it is propounded as a settled article of our faith even by Evangelical Ministers, at the graves of the departed, has had this inevitable consequence, that by far the greatest number of Evangelical Christians have received this unscriptural dogma as a well-

established truth. And when, therefore, a person is dead, as regards his body, his surviving friends speak of him as being already in the presence of the Lord.

Well-informed widows speak often, and that after an *unhappy* matrimonial life, of their *blessed* husbands' *return to their home*; and modern phraseology has stamped it into a custom, generally admitted, that kings and princes—without any reference to their lives and conversation—are, after their departure from this world, to be called "*most-blessed*." Children listen not only from infancy to these erroneous expressions, but are likewise frequently told, and as something self-evident, that the spirit of man is, immediately after death, carried by Angels to heaven to be with the Lord; just so as the strange idea is also made very plain—more especially to the children of the higher classes—by means of pictures, and impressed on their memories and imagination in the most indelible manner.

Brought up in this error, it is therefore a natural consequence that young persons, otherwise so much inclined to levity of mind, believe themselves to be certain of a reception to heaven, and of everlasting salvation, even *without a divine Redeemer, without conversion, without repentance, without regeneration, and without reconciliation* with God: so that even in maturer years, and in old age, they remain entirely unconcerned for the salvation of their souls; and do often, not until in the condition in which they find themselves transferred by their departure from this world—but then too late—perceive, that their delusions during a long life on earth, have grievously deceived

them, and, perhaps, for many centuries, yea, perhaps, for ever, deprived them of salvation.

But forasmuch as the notion—which may appear very harmless to the natural mind—that disembodied souls be admitted to heaven, and to the enjoyment of everlasting felicity *instantly* after the decease of the body, disowns some of the most important doctrines of Christianity; suppresses that sense of the need of help and redemption so necessary to man; draws him away from the Redeemer, and from His plan of salvation, and consequently, exerts a most injurious influence on his life and conduct—and thereby, also, on the salvation of his soul: and, forasmuch as the mere delusion that death will deliver him from all distress, sorrow, and shame, and that his condition beyond the grave, be, at any rate, preferable to his condition on this side, induces, alas! but too often, the criminal, the disappointed lover, and, the life-weary pilgrim to commit suicide—it is the more necessary to oppose this wild spirit, and self-complacent delusion of our age, by the word of God: to view death, without any qualification or modification of our own, in the light of Scripture: to tell the erring brother plainly, but kindly, and without any palliation, what lot he has, (in conformity with his conduct towards God,) to expect after the decease of his body: and to convince him how important and absolutely necessary it is, for his own salvation, to *receive* the doctrines and hints, relative to the condition of the soul after death, which are revealed to us by the grace of God, in his word, *as alone and infallibly true*.

I would, therefore, earnestly entreat (even on account of this important and good intencion on my part)

all those who are not in the habit of admitting the existence of an Intermediate State, between the departure from this life and the entrance upon heavenly bliss, not to lay aside this little book without reading it, because even the Preface states plainly, that it is the aim of the subsequent pages to deprive them of their favourite delusion of being received, at the very moment of their departure, to heaven, and to the enjoyment of everlasting felicity.

Learned divines I would more especially entreat to read this little book *without prejudice*, and not to reject, without previous examination the exposition, attempted by me of several passages of Sacred Scripture, because a person, who may be unknown to them, ventures to ask for a recognition of a deeper and richer exposition of those passages, than that which has heretofore been given of them.

That the sensualist and the man of this world, in whose presence the word "death," with all those that refer to it, must never be mentioned, will shrink from the very title of the book, is perfectly intelligible; because the mere thought of that intrusive disturber of their joys, proves a sting to their slumbering consciences, interrupting them most disagreeably in the midst of their gaieties and sweetest enjoyments; because this short monosyllable, but unavoidable word "death," destroys their earthly plans, deprives them of the goods in which they trusted, and to which their souls are clinging, presents all things, by which their minds are chiefly occupied, as useless, and puts an unwelcome stop to their merriments.

Since even the title of this little book indicates the

discussion of a subject which is entirely beyond the region of earthly science and human learning, and since it is also attempted here to exhibit it in conformity with God's word, there is no necessity that I should assure my readers that in composing these pages—originally designed merely for my own information—it has ever been my wish, not to express my own views and suppositions, relative to the condition of disembodied spirits. But for the sake of truth I would entreat all my readers not to undervalue the contents of this little work, nor to condemn it altogether, though they may meet here and there with a few passages with which they are familiar from the writings of other persons. For it gives us pleasure to refresh our memories with some interesting thoughts which we have read before; and I may, therefore, entertain the confident hope, that in a matter so important, and interesting to all mankind, as the *Intermediate State of our souls after this life*, the repetition of a few thoughts will be so much the less unacceptable to the reader, when he finds them embodied in another connexion, and faithfully represented in conformity with the word of God. But to him, to whom the word of God's revelation is of no value, the serious subject here discussed will not prove interesting in *this* life. He belongs then to the number of those, who, though unconscious of it themselves, are notwithstanding in a very unhappy and pitiable condition, and for whose illumination every good Christian will daily offer up his prayers to God.

THE TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE Translator does not consider it necessary to write a long preface before a small book;* he would rather that it should tell its own tale, and fight its own battles. He is conscious of many imperfections in his labours for which he must ask the forbearance of the indulgent reader. Still he flatters himself to have succeeded in exhibiting the author's meaning in the translation now presented to the public. He must also be allowed the privilege, generally claimed by Translators: "not to be held responsible for the opinions of another;" and this seems the more reasonable, as the subjects discussed probably are new to many readers, and in themselves of such a nature, as to forbid all hasty denunciation, and to demand the patient and prayerful investigation of the student of Christian Eshatology.

Chatham, February, 1856.

* Oer Tod, das Todtenreich and der Zustand der von hier abgeschiedenen Seelen. Dargestelt aus dem Wort Gottes, von Val Ulrich Maywahlen, Berlin. Verlag von Wiegandt und Grieben. 1854.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
§ 1. The prevalent notions of the present age, relative to the original condition and destination of man, as well as to death, and the condition of the soul after the decease of the body, are in direct contradiction with the Word of God	1
§ 2. The first man was created in the image of God, with body, soul, and spirit, immortal and without sin....	2
§ 3. Man's original destination	3
§ 4. The fall of man caused his separation from God, and together with it also his death, as an unavoidable consequence	5
§ 5. The inclination to sin is derived from the first man by all subsequent generations	6
§ 6. Death is, consequently, neither an evil originally innate to man, nor a common process of nature; but a <i>punitive</i> judgment of God, of which we must all confess ourselves to be deserving, as the propagators and multipliers of Adam's single sin	8