

THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.



"For this cause was the Gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit."—I Peter iv., 6.

The subject to which I wish to invite your most thoughtful attention this morning is this :—

THE EDUCATIONAL, AND THEREFORE PROGRESSIVE CHARACTER OF THE INTERMEDIATE LIFE ; that is, the Life in Hades, the unseen world.

Let me preface all I have to say on this subject by the remark that our light on the Intermediate Life is to be gathered, *not* from the very imperfect glimmerings of the O. T. Scriptures, but from the clearer teaching, and the fuller revelation of the N. T. Scriptures.

It is the risen Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who hath "The keys of Hades and of death." He, and He alone, "hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel."

To Jesus Christ, therefore, and to His Holy Apostles, whom He guided by His Holy Spirit into all truth, are we indebted for our knowledge of the Intermediate Life, that is, Life in the vast and varied realms of Hades, the world unseen.

One further prefatory remark I must make. Numerous side-issues, which this subject suggests to thoughtful minds, I must leave undiscussed. The short space of time allowed in these days to a sermon compels me to do this.

I.

My first statement is this :—

PREACHING IS A MEANS OF EDUCATION.

It is not necessary for me to prove this. However some persons to-day may be disposed to undervalue preaching, most people would admit