

SERMONS AND LECTURES

JAMES HAMILTON

SERMONS AND LECTURES

SELECTED FROM THE MANUSCRIPTS

OF THE LATE

JAMES HAMILTON, D.D. F.L.S.

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Uniform Edition of the Works of the late Dr. Hamilton
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NOTE.

FROM a great number of Manuscripts the Sermons which constitute this volume have been selected with the view of presenting to the reader fair specimens of the Author's ministry, at once in the uniformity of its leading aim, and the characteristic variety and freedom of its means and methods.

This volume completes the *Uniform Edition of the Works of the late Dr. Hamilton*. The whole series is now presented to the Christian public as a memorial of one whom to know was to love and honour, with the earnest prayer that by the printed page the dead may yet not only speak anew with power to those who once enjoyed his ministry, but also convey comfort, instruction, and reproof to many whom his living voice never reached.

LONDON, *June* 1873.

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S E R M O N S.

SERMON I.

MERCIFULNESS.

“Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.”—MATT. v. 7.

BRETHREN,—“God is Love.” So the Bible tells us; but it needs a new heart to credit the announcement. It is hard for depravity to believe in rectitude; and vice can scarcely realize such a thing as stainless purity. And even so; sin has made us miserable, and misery makes us suspicious and sullen. It is not easy for our dreary and disordered spirits to realize that God is good; it is a contradiction of our morose and bitter natures to believe in the Divine benignity. And before we can rise up to all the blessedness of this discovery, our dark souls need to be brightened and our cold hearts warmed with a beam from His own countenance. It needs that God give us something of His own lovingness before we see and feel that “God is Love.”

Yet, God is Love. And just as he has told shortly if not fully regarding the orb of day, who tells us that the “Sun is Radiance”—as this, without detailing rays of light and heat and transformation, is the compendious statement of

what the sun is to us, so without entering into the detail of particular attributes, it is the brief epitome of the Divine perfections; "God is love." Many glories may mingle, but the predominant and eventual effect is one. There is a prevalency, a promise of love. And though no searching can find out the Almighty to perfection, he approaches nearest the Divine Essence, in whose idea of the great I AM the most of this attribute mingles. He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God.

So far as embodied matter goes, the universe once was void. On this planet no forest waved, no cataract roared, no volcano reared its fuming head, no ocean clapped its hands. Nay, there was a time when this planet did not exist; a time when our sun was not lighted, nor any world of our system launched. There was a time when no star twinkled in the abyss of space, and no seraph winged his flaming path through the vast empyrean. There was a time when sound was sleeping and light was still unborn. But even then this silent orbless immensity was full of a latent joy; for it was full of God. Shrouded in their own light inaccessible, filled with mutual delight and complacency, and exchanging communion high and sweet, the Father, Son, and Spirit rejoiced together, and the bosom of Godhead was an ocean of bright unfathomed blessedness. And so from eternity to eternity the Creator might have continued the silent hiding-place of His own power, the radiant retreat of His own sanctity, the glorious abyss of His own joyful all-sufficiency. Even then, God was love. And that love welled so deep and rose so high, that at last it overflowed. Creation is the brimming over of the Creator's