

**THE MOUNT OF  
OLIVES: AND OTHER  
LECTURES ON PRAYER**

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The Mount of Olives: And Other Lectures on Prayer by James Hamilton

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**JAMES HAMILTON**

**THE MOUNT OF  
OLIVES: AND OTHER  
LECTURES ON PRAYER**



*Edward B. Hallam*

THE

MOUNT OF OLIVES,

AND OTHER

LECTURES ON PRAYER.

BY THE

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1847.

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TO THE  
KIRK SESSION AND CONGREGATION  
OF THE  
NATIONAL SCOTCH CHURCH,  
REGENT SQUARE.

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MY DEAR FRIENDS.—Of all ministerial employments—and some of them are exceedingly delightful—there is none in which I am so happy, nor so sure that I am profitably engaged, as when meditating over, and writing down, the truths of the Bible for your benefit. These sometimes come out to view with a vividness and beauty which words cannot perpetuate, but still with a radiance which, to my own memory, lingers on many texts, and has left an entrancement round days and places devoted to their study. And just as I rejoice when a day of uninvaded leisure secures some fresh materials for the edification and comfort of that beloved people whose welfare lies nearest my heart; so I have sometimes had to mourn when personal exhaustion, or stormy weather, or some adverse incident on Sabbath, frustrated the meditation of the week. There is the two-fold sadness, that

one's thoughts have perished, and that another opportunity of doing good is gone for ever.

And yet the mere wish to preserve a fragment of these Saturday musings would not be a sufficient reason for printing them. I feel that something like the following pages is a needful supplement to a tract with which you are already acquainted.\* Besetting as the sin of indolence is, we shall find many persons diligent who are not devout. Perhaps some of these may read this little book, and, by the blessing of God, may see prayer in a new light, and be led themselves to practise it.

Except that in the third and seventh Lectures three discourses have been condensed into one, and several have been omitted altogether, I have not made many alterations. I thought it best to retain the sermonic style, as well as the homely illustrations so hazardous in print.

This is not a treatise on prayer. Those who desire something fuller and more systematic will find a variety of excellent works already provided. None is more comprehensive, or more enriched by Scriptural truth, and extensive acquaintance with Christian literature, or by its tone more calculated to awaken devotional feeling, than the well-known treatise of my revered and beloved friend Mr. Bickersteth. I lately read with much pleasure a small volume by Mr M'Gill, of Hightae, "Enter into thy closet." It is judicious, systematic, and practical. For original and elevated sentiment, delicate observation, and experimental wisdom, conveyed in the happiest style, we have few books comparable to Mr Sheppard's "Thoughts on Private Devotion."

I have a friend,—many will know him when I say that his large accomplishments and lofty mind intended

\* *Life in Earnest.*

him for authorship,—but his unweariable benevolence and consummate taste have hitherto kept him busy as the referee and coadjutor of all his book-making acquaintance. When he discovered what I was about, he lent me a manuscript volume of notes of the late Mr. Foster's Lectures,—several of them on the subject of prayer. Had there been room I should have quoted more freely from them, in the hope that their gnarled vigour would lend a strength and solidity to the text; but this book is already too long, and the notes are worthy of being printed separately. And now that I am acknowledging obligations, I cannot refuse to my grateful feelings the satisfaction,—and I hope he will not be angry at it,—of mentioning how much I owe, in the way of suggesting subjects and trains of thought to the conversations of another friend,—one to whose eminent professional talents and personal kindness I owe numberless obligations, and to whom I am indebted for my first acquaintance with more than one field of theological authorship. Amongst others, he induced me to read the writings of Alexander Knox,—an author from whom I have, perhaps, learned the more, all the rather that, in many things, I am constrained to differ from him.

It would have made the course,—such as it is,—more complete, had the Lecture on “Social and United Prayer” been added. The especial blessing attached to consentaneous prayer is one peculiarity of the New Testament dispensation, and its abundant exercise is a delightful token of Christian vitality. This year is likely to be ushered in with a larger amount of united supplications than opened any year since the commencement of the Christian era; and I doubt not this agreement in prayer is the harbinger of better days in the Church's history.



Our own prayer-meeting on Monday evening has often been a season of refreshing. When conducted by our brethren, the elders and deacons, it is the minister's Sabbath, and, like yourselves, I have nothing to do but to worship. And whenever I see a goodly attendance, I am led to hope that the previous day has been a day of profit, and that the remainder of the week will reap the blessing of that prayerful hour.

My beloved hearers, amidst many misgivings occasioned by want of time for revising it, I send this little book to you. I know that you will receive it kindly for the truth's sake and for the author's sake; and, as it is, I am glad to think that you have in this more permanent form, and with all your friendly prepossessions, words which were some of them spoken in weakness, but which, even when dead, I should still desire to speak. Should you derive any profit from perusing them,—  
 “Brethren, pray for us.”

Ever most affectionately yours,

JAMES HAMILTON.

January 1, 1848.

## CONTENTS.

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### LECTURE I.

#### THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

Mountains of Scripture. Olivet. The Saviour's Compassion. The Agony in Gethsemane. The Saviour's Example in Prayer. Submission. Perseverance. Preparation for suffering. The Saviour's Love to his Own . . . . .	Page 11
--	---------

### LECTURE II.

#### THE PARTING PROMISE AND THE PRESENT SAVIOUR

Climbing Plants. The Tree of Life. Reasons why Men do not love the Lord Jesus. The Saviour neither dead, nor distant, nor different from what he was. Christ ever present with his people. His presence sanctifying and sustaining. Paul and Nero. Christ's presence comforting. The Short Journey. Bunyan in Prison, and Rutherford in banishment. The Infant Dreamer. "For ever with the Lord." . . . . .	Page 25
---	---------

## LECTURE III.

THE HEARER OF PRAYER. THE INTERCESSOR ABOVE  
THE PROMPTER WITHIN.

Prayer has actual Power. The Petitionless Prayer. The Efficacy of Prayer revealed. It is Matter of Fact. *A priori* Objections irrelevant. The Declarations of God himself. The Saviour's Testimony. Instances of answered Prayer. Newton's Experience. The Inhabitant of Jupiter, and the Husbandman. God is the Hearer of Prayer, for he is the Living God, the Almighty, and the God of Love. The Mediation of Christ. The Work of the Spirit. Guilt on the Conscience. Dull Perception. The Dog and the Naturalist. Cold Affections. The Intermittent Fountain. The Disposition to ask Wrong Things, and to ask Right Things in a Wrong Way. . . . Page 44

## LECTURE IV.

## THE PRIVILEGE OF PRAYER.

Athenian Curiosity. A Supposition. Another. Affliction. The Shipwrecked Mariner. Perplexity. Mentor. Solomon's request. The Important undertaking. The Warrior and the broken Buckle. Henry IV. Michael Angelo. The Spiritual Inquirer. The Blind Man of Bethsaida . . . . Page 70