

**SCENES IN BETHANY, A COURSE  
OF LECTURES, ON THE ELEVENTH  
CHAPTER OF THE GOSPEL  
ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN**

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Scenes in Bethany, a Course of Lectures, on the Eleventh Chapter of the Gospel According to St. John by L. Bonnet

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**L. BONNET**

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SCENES  
IN  
**BETHANY,**  
A COURSE OF LECTURES,  
ON THE  
**ELEVENTH CHAPTER**  
OF THE  
GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN,

**By E. Bonnet,**

TRANSLATED BY A LADY.

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“He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love.”—1 John iv. 5.

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1837

## DEDICATION.

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TO THE INHABITANTS OF THE VILLAGE AND NEIGHBOURHOOD OF ADARE.

MY DEAR FRIENDS—When absent from you in the winter of 1836, I passed some weeks at Frankfort on the Maine; I there constantly attended the Lectures of a Clergyman whose preaching appeared to me particularly calculated to impress upon his hearers the abundant love of Christ to Man. My spirits were much depressed at the time by the alarming illness of a very dear child, for whose recovery I since have had much cause to be thankful, but still preserving a grateful sense of the comfort derived from M. BONNET'S doctrines, I have endeavoured to translate a short course of his lectures, in the hope that their influence might be extended among my own neighbours. To you then do I offer them with sincere wishes for your spiritual and temporal welfare.

For the instruction of my young readers, who are accustomed to seek for texts from the Bible, I have by notes directed them to the passages from whence the Scriptural quotations are taken. Humble as my abilities may be, I should indeed esteem it a blessed privilege were I permitted to employ them in the service of a tender Master, who has promised that a

cup of cold water offered in the name of a disciple will not be rejected—we have passed many years of our earthly pilgrimage in the same parish—we have often met together in prayer, and knelt around the same altar, and that the blessings of Divine Grace may be abundantly poured down upon us all, is the sincere desire of

Your affectionate friend,

C\_\_\_\_\_ D\_\_\_\_\_.

*Adare, July, 1837.*

## LECTURE I.

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### LAZARUS, MARTHA, AND MARY.

*Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.—St. John ii. 1.*

“ The Christian religion, though appearing to have for its sole object our happiness in a life to come, constitutes our only true happiness in this.” This admirable truth, thus expressed by a celebrated French author,\* is neither understood by worldly-minded people nor duly appreciated by those who have had the benefit of its experience. No doubt that we, creatures of a day, strangers and pilgrims, do well not to expect happiness in a world polluted by sin. This is not a place of rest, we should indeed deceive ourselves if we sought it here. We who are the ministers of him who had not on this earth where to lay his head, are not to encourage in those to whom we speak in his name the anxiety we all have to possess before our appointed time, to rest before we have finished our course, and to reap before we have sown; many who know the Gospel only by name have fallen into a great error by imagining that in order to bring their hearts into due subjection to it, they have only to impose on themselves painful sacrifices, and unfruitful self-denials, but far from seeking to stifle our best feelings, or to paralyse our noblest faculties, the Gospel of Christ exalts and sanctifies them, by restoring them to the original destination from which they had been led away by sin.

\* Montesquieu.



The Gospel properly understood sanctions the natural feelings of the heart proving the truth of these inspired words. “ \*Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.” Our Redeemer’s whole life was an evidence of this fact. Though the principal object of his mission was to seek and save that which was lost, yet the sight of our temporal sorrows moved him to much compassion—there were no troubles he did not hasten to relieve, no sufferings for which his tender pity did not find some alleviation.

Now as ministers of his word, and wishing “ \*to declare unto you all the counsel of God,” we ought not, either in public or private, to neglect this very interesting part of our Lord’s Divine Mission. We ought, my dear brethren, to lay before you unreservedly his whole work; his whole life. When speaking to you of Jesus Christ, (and he should be the constant theme of our instructions,) though we usually must represent him to you, as descending from Heaven, to deliver us from the guilt which is consuming us, as expiating our sins upon the cross, as dying for our offences and rising again for our justification, yet we must not pass over in silence those affecting passages in his terrestrial life which he passed in assuaging the sorrow and healing the diseases of those who were brought unto him. Besides, dear friends, in shewing you Jesus Christ as your comforter, we shew him

\* 1 Tim. iv. 8.

† Acts xx. 27.

to you as your Saviour, he comforts by saving you, and by destroying the cause delivers you from the bitter consequences of sin.

We think in the whole of the Gospel history there is not a more affecting incident, or one more calculated to instruct us and shew us the love of Jesus, than the illness, death, and resurrection of one of his Disciples—it is recorded in the Chapter from whence we have taken our text.

If your mind be capable of appreciating all that is great, noble, and divine, in that love which the Lord felt for us—if you have ever known affliction, or are now suffering under severe trial, you will delight in coming with me to the grave of Lazarus, the friend of Jesus. You will love the sad abode of death when Jesus is present to brighten it with light and life; you will love the sorrows of the family of Bethany when Jesus draws near and brings them comfort—you will even love the sufferings of this mortal life, when Jesus pours a healing balm into your wounds. After weeping with Martha and Mary over the tomb of their lamented brother, perhaps your tears, like their's, may be changed into songs of praise—O! death where is thy sting, O! grave where is thy victory.—In the course of your life you may possibly find but too many opportunities of applying to yourselves the lessons taught to these afflicted sisters. Who among you hath been spared the trials

attending our pilgrimage in the world? or who can hope to escape them in future? Alas! in addressing the afflicted, do we not address all created beings? it is then for your own sakes we would make known to you the only true Comforter, the Lord Jesus Christ.

My beloved brethren, in the first place, let me beseech you to join us in imploring the blessings of God on the course of lectures we are beginning this day, that our words may not be the mere feeble sayings of a weak sinner, but may prove to be words of Eternal life, and, Oh! may they be accompanied by an assurance of spirituality and power.

The narrative on which we propose to discourse is related to us by St. John—St. John the Disciple whom Jesus loved; he who at the last supper leaned on the bosom of his Master, or rather of his friend, and who appears there to have drunk deeply of his Redeemer's love—St. John, who at the foot of the cross, received that most precious bequest, the Mother of the dying Jesus. To St. John the whole Gospel seems comprised in one word, Love: He derives all things from love, he refers all things to love. “\* He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love.” “† God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.” “‡ Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” “§ God so loved the

\* 1 John iv. 8. † 1 John iv. 16. ‡ 1 John III. 1. § John III. 16.