

***JAMES HUDSON  
TAYLOR***

***UNION AND  
COMMUNION;  
OR, THOUGHTS  
ON THE SONG  
OF SOLOMON***

**James Hudson Taylor**

# **Union and Communion; or, Thoughts on the Song of Solomon**

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# FOREWORD

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THIS little book, whose design is to lead the devout Bible-student into the Green Pastures of the Good Shepherd, thence to the Banqueting House of the King, and thence to the service of the Vineyard, is one of the abiding legacies of Mr. Hudson Taylor to the Church. In the power of an evident unction from the Holy One, he has been enabled herein to unfold in simplest language the deep truth of the believer's personal union with The Lord, which under symbol and imagery is the subject of The Song of Songs. And in so doing he has ministered an unfailing guidance to one of the most commonly neglected and misunderstood of the Sacred Scriptures. For how many have said in bewilderment at the richness of language and profusion of figure which both conceal and reveal its meaning, "How can I understand except some man should guide me?" It is safe to say that these pages cannot fail to help and bless all such.

To those who knew him, Mr. Hudson Taylor's life was in the nature of emphasis upon the value of this small volume. For what he here expounds he also exemplified. If his words indicate the possibility and blessedness of union with Christ, his whole life declared it in actual experience. He lived as one who was "married to Another, even to Him Who is raised from the dead"; and as the outcome of that union he brought forth "fruit unto God." What he was has given a meaning and confirmation to what he has here said, which cannot be exaggerated. It is inevitable that there are those who will read and reject as mystical and unpractical, that which is so directly concerned with the intimacies of fellowship with the unseen Lord. I would, however, venture

to remind such that the writer of these pages founded the China Inland Mission! He translated his vision of the Beloved into life-long strenuous service, and so kept it undimmed through all the years of a life which has had hardly a parallel in these our days.

This is really the commendation of the following short chapters. They proclaim an Evangel which has been distilled from experience, and form at least a track through this fenced portion of God's Word, which will lead many an one who treads it into the joys of Emmanuel's land.

J. STUART HOLDEN.

ST. PAUL'S,  
PORTMAN SQUARE, LONDON, W.  
June 1, 1914.

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## **THE SONG OF SOLOMON**

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## **INTRODUCTORY**

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THE great purpose towards which all the dispensational dealings of GOD are tending, is revealed to us in the fifteenth chapter of the First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians: "That GOD may be all in all." With this agrees the teaching of our LORD in John xvii. 3: "And this is (the object of) life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true GOD, and JESUS CHRIST, whom Thou hast sent." This being so, shall we not act wisely by keeping this object ever in view in our daily life and study of GOD's holy Word?

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable, and hence no part is, or can be, neglected

without loss. Few portions of the Word will help the devout student more in the pursuit of this all-important "knowledge of God" than the too-much neglected "Song of Solomon." Like other portions of the Word of God, this book has its difficulties. But so have all the works of God. Is not the fact that they surpass our unaided powers of comprehension and research a "sign-manual" of divinity? Can feeble man expect to grasp divine power, or to understand and interpret the works or the providences of the All-wise? And if not, is it surprising that His Word also needs superhuman wisdom for its interpretation? Thanks be to God, the illumination of the HOLY GHOST is promised to all who seek for it: what more can we desire?

Read without the key, this book is specially unintelligible, but that key is easily found in the express teachings of the New Testament. The Incarnate Word is the true key to the written Word; but even before the incarnation, the devout student of the Old Testament would find much help to the understanding of the sacred mysteries of this book in the prophetic writings; for there Israel was taught that her MAKER was her HUSBAND. John the Baptist, the last of the prophets, recognized the Bridegroom in the person of CHRIST, and said, "He that hath the bride is the Bridegroom: but the friend of the Bridegroom, which standeth and heareth Him, rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled." Paul, in the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, goes still further, and teaches that the union of CHRIST with His Church, and her subjection to Him, underlies the very relationship of marriage, and affords the pattern for every godly union.

In Solomon, the bridegroom king, as well as author of this poem, we have a type of our LORD, the true Prince of peace, in His coming reign. Then will be found not merely His bride, the Church, but also a willing people, His subjects, over whom He shall reign gloriously. Then distant potentates will bring their wealth, and will behold the glory of the enthroned KING, proving Him with hard questions, as once came the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon; and blessed will they be to whom this privilege is accorded. A brief glance will suffice them for a lifetime; but what shall be the royal dignity and blessedness of the risen and exalted bride! For ever with her LORD, for ever like her LORD, for ever conscious that His desire is toward her, she will share alike His heart and His throne. Can a study of the book which helps us to understand these mysteries of grace and love be other than most profitable?

It is interesting to notice the contrast between this book and that preceding it. The Book of Ecclesiastes teaches emphatically that "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity": and is thus the necessary introduction to the Song of Solomon, which shows how true blessing and satisfaction are to be possessed. In like manner our SAVIOUR's teaching in the fourth of John points out in a word the powerlessness of earthly things to give lasting satisfaction, in striking contrast with the flow of blessing that results from the presence of the HOLY GHOST (whose work it is, not to reveal Himself but CHRIST as the Bridegroom of the soul); "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst: but the water that I