

"HE IS MINE, AND I AM HIS"

"My beloved is mine, and I am his" (Song of Solomon 2:16).

Perhaps the Song of Solomon is the most misunderstood and the least appreciated of all the books of the Bible. To understand the book, one must understand the place it occupies in the life of its writer. Solomon was the writer of three books of the Bible -- Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song. The key to Proverbs is the word "wisdom," or "common sense." It is a treatise on common sense in religion, a valuable thing to have, and something that is not too plentiful. The key to Ecclesiastes is the phrase "under the sun." It deals with that which we know without any revelation from above the sun. "The life of the worldling is his only good." "All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full." "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh." "The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down." We do not need a revelation from above the sun to teach us these things.

Solomon got into the marrying business. He took unto himself wives of all the surrounding heathen tribes and nations, till he had multiplied them by hundreds, wives and concubines, and each one wanted hubby to go with her into her religion. In this mix-up Solomon lost all the common sense he ever had, and built altars to heathen gods. Then he lost his vision from above the sun, and wrote the book which is an inspired revelation of what one can know without a revelation from God. Then he got back to common sense religion and wrote the Song, the key of which is love, and in which he sings of how his beloved is his, and he is his beloved's.

This is the song of the bride as she awaits the coming of the bridegroom, when the nuptials shall be said, and he shall be hers, and she shall be his forever. This book is a protest against polygamy. It is also a voice pleading for social purity. It is the song of the bride as she awaits the coming of the bridegroom. As such it sets forth the attitude of the church towards Christ Who has gone away, while she awaits and looks for His return. In the Scriptures the marriage relation is used as a type of that affectionate, confidential, and exclusive union that exists between Christ and believers. The Song of the waiting bride unfolds the sacred relationship of the children of God to their Shepherd Lord in His absence, and for Whose coming again He has bidden them watch and be ready.

What then is the climax of joy in this ideal espousal? It is the joy of mutual possession expressed in the words: "My beloved is mine, and I am his." This is the quintessence of that holy joy which the believer finds in his wonderful union with the adorable Son of God, the assurance of possessing and being possessed. Let us, therefore, unhesitatingly take these words upon our lips as applying to our Lord and ourselves. "My beloved is mine, and I am his."

I. The Cords Which Bind Him To Me.

1. The unbreakable cord of His promise.

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24). Of His believing people our Lord said: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my

hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" (John 10:27-29). Ah, my soul, here is security indeed. Scattered through the sacred book are scores of assurances given through prophets and apostles, but these which are now before you are promises which fell from the lips of the incarnate Lord Himself. He here gives Himself to us as our Shepherd, our Saviour, our Host, our Friend, and our Life. His word is a cord which nothing can break. "Firm as His throne His promise stands." His very character is bound up with His good word. Here is the assurance of faith. He is mine by His own promise which can never fail.

2. The unseverable cord of an eternal covenant.

"Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it." This statement wings the mind back across nineteen centuries to the green mound outside the city gate where the crucified Lord bowed His head in death, yea much farther than that. The cross was not merely a happening in time. It has an eternal significance. What happened on Calvary expressed that which had been in the infinite mind eternally. Before the mountains were brought forth, or God had made the earth, the cross was in the counsels of omniscience. That is why our blessed Lord is called "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

"Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it." We finite creatures have difficulty in grappling with the profundities of eternity. Yet we can adore when and where we can but dimly understand. From eternity Christ has loved the church, and, by extension, every member of it. From eternity He has given Himself for us and to us, as our Saviour and divine Bridegroom. From eternity He has covenanted Himself to us, that we should be able to say for evermore "My beloved is mine, and I am his." How then can we but be lost in wonder, love, and praise? How then can we but love Him with all our hearts, minds, souls, and strength? How can we allow anything to come into our lives which would grieve or dishonor our glorious divine Lover Who has loved us eternally and sealed His love in the blood of Calvary?

3. The golden cord of divine love.

O the love of Christ for us! How amazing it is! In the presence of Calvary, thought reels back overwhelmed. "The Son of God loved me, and gave himself for me." O mystery of mysteries, wonder of wonders, that He should thus love me! He "gave himself" for me. Who shall tell the immensity and intensity in that word? He bore the scourge, the nails, the thorns, the spear-gash, the shame, the agony, for me. O the love of my dear Lord! Who shall gauge the depth of anguish through which He plunged to win the love of my poor soul, and to make me His own? Who shall sound His praise? In the consummate miracle of that uttermost sacrifice on Calvary He has once for all give Himself for me and to me. O how then shall I dare to keep back anything from Him! How shall I dare to say, "My beloved is mine" without adoringly adding, "and I am his"?

4. The proven cord of experience.

Do I know that He is mine from the way in which He has revealed Himself to me? The eyes of millions are closed to His loveliness; yet in the mystery

of His love He has touched these inward heart-eyes of mine, by His quickening Spirit, that I might behold His beauty, and see Him as "the chiefest among ten thousand," yea the "altogether lovely." How real He has made Himself to me in the place of prayer! My soul can never forget the manifestations of my Lord. Do I not know that He is mine by the way He has made Himself real and satisfying to me through all the changeful experiences of my life? He has given the Holy Spirit to indwell my heart, constantly witnessing to the fact that He is mine and that I am His.

II. The Cords Which Bind Me To Him.

1. The original cord of creation.

I belong to Him by His right of ownership as my Creator, and because of my creaturely dependence upon Him. I am not in any sense the independent proprietor of my own being. I am His property. All that I have He gave me. All that I am He made me -- all except any disfigurement due to sin, whether hereditary or self-committed. In Him "I live and move and have my being." This primary Creator-creature cord which binds me to "my beloved" has become unspeakably precious. Unless this cord had first been wound around me, none of the other bands which make me His would have encircled me. It is our very Creator Who has become united to us in spiritual wedlock. Even as He said through His prophet, "Thy maker is thine husband."

2. The red cord of redemption.

O prodigy of grace, that He Who made me by His power should redeem me by His blood! "Ye are bought with a price," He says to His people. Yea, what a price! Angels looked on in amazement as the ransom price was paid in the drops of blood and terrible agony. O the love that sought me! O the blood that bought me! O the grace and glory of this redemption! In Christ God suffered to redeem me.

3. The strong cord of election.

My salvation was not the chance product of fortuitous circumstances. My regeneration by the Spirit of God was itself the evidence of a predetermining divine purpose. The fact that the subject of divine election is enshrouded in mystery in no measure detracts from its reality. Election in Christ is one of the most glorious verities unveiled to us in the Scripture revelation; and it is one of the believer's most comforting securities. Who shall gainsay such words as the following:

"He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will" (Ephesians 1:4-5). O the mystery, the majesty, and the mercy of it! The divine sovereignty and the divine love together bind us forever to the heart of the Lord Jesus. Ah, this is a strong cord indeed. Those whom God has chosen He will never give up or let go.

These are the cords which bind my Lord to me, so that I can now say, "My beloved

is mine, and I am his." What cords! They can never decay with age; and none can never cut them asunder.

"I've found a Friend, O such a Friend,
He loved me ere I knew Him;
He drew me with the cords of love,
And thus He bound me to Him.
And round my heart still closely twine
Those cords which naught can sever;
For I am His, and He is mine,
For ever and for ever."

III. The Characteristics Of This Union.

1. It is a present union.

"My beloved is mine, and I am his." Christ is mine as a present possession.

2. It is a certain union.

The mutual possession is affirmed with the unfaltering voice of perfect assurance. He "is" mine. I "am" His. It is even so with the believer and His Lord. We are not left to the mercy of "peradventures" and "perhapses." Each of the Spirit-born can say, "I know whom I have believed." Thank God, we know that He abideth in us.

3. It is a joyous union.

What exhilaration breathes through the glad cry "My beloved is mine, and I am his"! O the joy where true love sets two hearts beating as one! It is thus with the believer and his Lord. Joy of all joys it is to know that "my beloved is mine, and I am his." What are the worldling's fancied pleasures but bursting bubbles and deceits of the imagination when compared with this spiritual bliss?

4. It is a loving union.

Who can find words to describe the love-bond between the Redeemer and the redeemed? Language breaks down here. As to His love for us, we know not which is the greater, the mystery or the reality of it. As to our love for Him, while in the first place we love Him gratefully, for what He has done for us, we have learned how to love Him adoringly, for what He is in Himself; yea, we have come to love Him in a way which we can only struggle to describe as absorbingly. We feel that our very life goes out to Him with our love, while His own love brings His very life into our hearts.

5. It is a complete union.

The bridegroom and the bride have given themselves fully to each other. Christ is mine in all His offices and capacities -- in His incarnation, in His teaching, in His redeeming, in His resurrection life, in His exaltation, in His second advent, and in the glory of His coming reign, yea, and in all the blessedness of His eternal glory. He is mine. O the wonder of it!

6. It is a complex union.

It takes a complexity of metaphors to express such a unique union. Christ is the head and we are the body -- for it is a living union. Christ is the bridegroom and we are the bride -- for it is a loving union. Christ is the foundation and we are the building -- for it is a lasting union. Christ is the vine and we are the branches -- for it is a fruitful union. Christ is the Firstborn and we are His brethren -- for it is a union of joint-heirship. There is no more wonderful study in the Bible than that of our complex union with the Son of God. Christ is mine by conscious, personal experience, by the indwelling of His Spirit within my heart. "My beloved is mine" -- what a world in a word!

"I know He's mine, that Friend so dear;
He lives with me; He's ever near.
Ten thousand charms around Him shine;
But best of all, I know He's mine!"

7. It is an indissoluble union.

Hear again the Word of God: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Nothing shall ever separate us from the love of God which is in Christ.

"From Him Who loves me now so well
What power my soul shall sever?
Shall life or death or hell?
No, I am His for ever!"

IV. The Consequences Of This Union.

Our consciousness of this wondrous relationship of oneness with Christ fills us with:

1. Serene tranquillity.

Though poverty should beset me, since "my beloved is mine and I am his" I am boundlessly rich. Though adversity reduce me, and troubles assail me, I can say, "My beloved is mine, and I am his."

2. Eager anticipation.

One who truly loves the Lord Jesus can say, "My beloved is mine, and I am his," is eager to add, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." There is no doctrine in all the Scriptures more precious than that of the Lord's return. O for that daybreak, when the shadows flee away for ever, and we shall "see him as he is" and be "like him"!