

Song of Solomon 1:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest,
where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I
be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?

Analysis

The bride asks, 'Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?' The phrase 'thou whom my soul loveth' (she'ahavah naphshi, שְׂאָהָבָה נַפְשִׁי) expresses deep soul-love. The bride seeks the shepherd-beloved's location—'where thou feedest' (eyphoh tir'eh, אֵיפֹה תִרְעֶה) and 'where thou makest thy flock to rest.' The question 'why should I be as one that turneth aside' (otyah, עֹטְיָה) may mean 'veil myself' or 'wander.' The bride wants direct access to her beloved, not to search among others' flocks. This verse celebrates the soul's desire for intimate knowledge of and access to the beloved. Spiritually, it represents the believer seeking Christ's presence directly—not content with second-hand religion but pursuing personal communion.

Historical Context

Shepherds in ancient Palestine moved flocks to different pastures—morning, midday, evening. The noonday rest was crucial in hot climate. The bride's question reflects courtship customs: seeking the beloved's location for legitimate encounter. The phrase 'as one that turneth aside' might reference veiled women or wandering outsiders—the bride desires open, direct access, not furtive searching. Early church fathers saw this as the soul seeking Christ the Good Shepherd (John 10:11), asking, 'Where do you feed your flock?'—answered through Word, sacrament, and fellowship. Bernard of Clairvaux's sermons emphasized that the soul must seek

Christ Himself, not merely doctrinal knowledge about Him. The Puritans distinguished between head knowledge and heart knowledge—theological information versus experiential communion with God. Modern readers recognize the difference between religious activity and personal relationship with Christ.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. Are you seeking Christ Himself or merely religious information about Him?
2. Where do you find spiritual nourishment and rest—and are you pursuing direct communion with God or settling for second-hand religion?

Interlinear Text

תֵּלַּח הַגִּידָה לִּי Tell H5046	שֶׁ אֲהַבָּה loveth H157	נַפְשִׁי י me O thou whom my soul H5315	אֵיכָּה where H349	
תִּרְעָה where thou feedest H7462	אֵיכָּה where H349	תִּרְבֵּי יֵץ thou makest thy flock to rest H7257	בְּצֶהְרֵ יוֹם at noon H6672	שְׁלָמָה for H4100
אֲהִיָּה H1961	כֵּל טִי ה why should I be as one that turneth aside H5844	עַל H5921	עֲדֵרֵי י by the flocks H5739	
חֲבֵרָיָה: of thy companions H2270				

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 13:20: It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there.

Psalms 28:1: Unto thee will I cry, O LORD my rock; be not silent to me: lest, if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit.

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