

Song of Solomon 2:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies.

Analysis

The bride declares with confidence: 'My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies.' This verse expresses mutual belonging and covenant security. The reciprocal possessive—'mine... his'—reflects the covenant formula used in marriage and God's relationship with Israel: 'I will be their God, and they shall be my people' (Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 37:27). Neither partner dominates; both mutually belong to each other. The phrase 'he feedeth among the lilies' uses pastoral imagery—the shepherd grazing his flock among beautiful flowers, or the beloved feeding on lilies representing the bride's beauty and purity (lily imagery appears in 2:1-2). This suggests the beloved finds delight, nourishment, and contentment in the bride's presence. The verse celebrates covenant love's security: 'I am his' (belonging, commitment) and joy: 'he feedeth among the lilies' (delight, satisfaction). This mutual possession doesn't diminish personhood but establishes security, identity, and purpose through covenant union. Theologically, it prefigures the believer's union with Christ: 'I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine' (6:3).

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern marriage involved covenant vows establishing mutual obligation and exclusive commitment. The language of belonging ('mine... his') appears in marriage contracts and covenant formulae throughout Scripture. Israel's relationship with YHWH employed marital imagery—'your Maker is your husband' (Isaiah 54:5); God's people are His 'treasured possession' (Exodus 19:5; Deuteronomy 7:6). The Song's reciprocal language democratizes marriage—both parties equally belong to each other, countering ancient Near Eastern patriarchy

that often viewed wives as property. The lily imagery connects to 2:1-2, where the bride identifies herself as a lily. The beloved delighting in her beauty suggests covenantal love values and cherishes the other. Early church tradition saw this as the mutual indwelling of Christ and the believer: 'Abide in me, and I in you' (John 15:4). The Reformers emphasized covenant theology—God's people belong to Him through Christ's redemptive work, and He delights in His Church. Modern application celebrates both marital mutuality and the believer's secure identity in Christ.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does the reciprocal formula—'my beloved is mine, and I am his'—shape your understanding of secure, mutual covenant commitment in marriage or in relationship with Christ?
2. What does it mean that Christ 'feeds among the lilies'—delighting in His Church, finding satisfaction in His people, despite our imperfections?

Interlinear Text

יְדוּדִי	לִי	וְאֲנִי	לִי	הַרְעָה	בְּשׁוֹשַׁנִּים:
My beloved	H0	H589	H0	is mine and I am his he feedeth	among the lilies
H1730				H7462	H7799

Additional Cross-References

Song of Solomon 6:3: I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies.

Song of Solomon 7:10: I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me.

Psalms 48:14: For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.

Psalms 63:1: O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;

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