

# Visitation Time

By Steve Pruitt

*I opened for my beloved, But my beloved had turned away and was gone. My heart leaped up when he spoke. I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.*

Song of Solomon 5:6

In the fifth chapter of the Song of Solomon is a story about a Shulamite woman who missed a special opportunity to be with the one she loved. Beginning in verse two the Shulamite is in bed when she hears the voice of her Beloved calling for her to unlock the door and let him come inside. She makes excuses for why she cannot come to the door; *I have taken off my robe; How can I put it on again? I have washed my feet; How can I defile them?* (verse 3) By the time the Shulamite decides to open the door for her Beloved, he is gone. *I opened for my beloved, But my beloved had turned away and was gone. My heart leaped up when he spoke. I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.* (verse 6) She diligently searched for him but he was no where to be found.

One Sunday morning our worship team arrived before Sunday school to take a view minutes to practice our set. We were not far into the set when a remarkable sense of God's presence came over us. As people began entering the building for Sunday school they too had a strong sense of God's presence. Many of them came into the sanctuary and found their way to the altar. Knowing it was time for Sunday school to begin, I ended the practice in deference to the teachers who had prepared their lessons.

When the worship service began we anticipated that the move of God's Spirit would pick up where we left it before Sunday school. We were sadly mistaken. We sang the same songs as we did before Sunday school but there just wasn't the same movement of the Spirit. We had made excuses for not opening the door when our Beloved called. We missed our time of visitation.

The religious leaders of Jesus day made a similar mistake. As Jesus descended from the Mount of Olives on a colt into the city of Jerusalem, a multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God for the mighty works they had seen. Some of the Pharisees in the crowd urged Jesus to rebuke his disciples. Jesus responded by saying that if his disciples were silent the stones would immediately cry out. Jesus then prophesied that the destruction of Jerusalem would come because they missed their time of visitation (Luke 19:37-44). The religious leaders and many others in Jerusalem missed their time of visitation because the Messiah didn't look like what they thought he should look like.

God is omnipresent; everywhere, all the time. But, there are times when his presence is concentrated in a certain place either with an individual or in a corporate gathering. When he desires to be in our presence we should be quick to open the door for our Beloved. It shouldn't matter if it doesn't look like what we think it should nor should we be concerned about what others may think. We can't afford to miss the time of our visitation.

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## **Scriptures for meditation:**

Psalm 27:8

Psalm 63:1

Isaiah 55:6