

Song of Solomon 5:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.

Analysis

I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone (patachti ani ledodi vedodi chamaq avar, פָּתַחְתִּי אֲנִי לְדוֹדִי וְדוֹדִי חָמַק עָבַר)—this devastating moment teaches the cost of delayed response. The verb chamaq (חָמַק) means "turned away" or "slipped away." When the bride finally opened, the beloved had departed. Her hesitation cost her his immediate presence.

My soul failed when he spake (napshi yats'ah vedabro, נַפְשִׁי יָצְאָה בְּדַבְרֹו) suggests overwhelming grief—her soul "went out" in fainting despair. **I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer** describes frantic searching that yields nothing. This teaches sobering reality: delayed obedience sometimes means missed opportunities. While God's love remains constant, specific moments of invitation may pass. The bride learns painfully that the Beloved's timing matters.

Historical Context

Ancient courtship involved appointed times and places for meeting. Missing the beloved's visit meant missing precious fellowship. The bride's delay cost her immediate communion, though not ultimate relationship—he returns later. Early church fathers saw this as believers experiencing spiritual dryness after resisting

divine invitations—God sometimes withdraws felt presence to teach the cost of complacency. Medieval mysticism called this "the dark night of the soul"—periods when God seems absent, teaching dependence and urgency. The Reformers distinguished between God's unchanging love and our variable experience of His presence. The Puritans taught that Christians sometimes experience divine withdrawal as discipline for lukewarmness—not abandonment but fatherly correction teaching vigilance. Modern readers recognize that spiritual seasons of seeking without finding often follow periods of taking God's presence for granted.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. Have you experienced the cost of delayed obedience—times when hesitation meant missed opportunity for fuller fellowship with Christ?
2. How does this verse warn against presuming on God's grace, assuming His invitations will always remain available regardless of your response timing?
3. What does the bride's desperate seeking (verses 6-8) teach about the proper response when you've missed Christ's immediate presence through your own delay?

Interlinear Text

פָּתַח חֲתָי	אֲנִי	יְדוּדִי י	יְדוּדִי י	חָמַק	
I opened	H589	but my beloved	but my beloved	had withdrawn	
H6605		H1730	H1730	H2559	
עָבָר	נַפְשִׁי	יָצָא ה	בִּדְבָר ו	בִּקְשָׁתִי יְהו	וְלֹא א
himself and was gone	my soul	failed	when he spake	I sought	H3808
H5674	H5315	H3318	H1696	H1245	
מָצָאתִי יְהו	קָרָאתִי יו	וְלֹא א	עָנֵנִי:		
him but I could not find	him I called	H3808	him but he gave me no answer		
H4672	H7121		H6030		

Additional Cross-References

Song of Solomon 5:2: I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.

Revelation 3:19: As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.