

{ Day 98 }

I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had turned away and had gone! My heart went out to him as he spoke. I searched for him, but I did not find him; I called him, but he did not answer me. The watchmen who make the rounds in the city found me, they struck me and wounded me; the guardsmen of the walls took away my shawl from me. I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved, as to what you will tell him: for I am lovesick. —Song of Solomon 5:6-8, NAS

Now comes the maiden's ultimate twofold test: the Lord withholds His presence, and even His people reject her. The first test is the loss of the conscious presence of God that so satisfies her soul. This is a temporary test. This withdrawing of His presence is not due to disobedience but rather because of her obedience and desire for full maturity. It is as if the Lord is saying, "Let Me ask you, My bride: Am I only the source of your satisfaction, or am I the consuming reason for your very life? Am I a means to your end, or am I the very end goal of your life? Will you serve Me if there are no spiritual feelings? When My discernible presence is gone, will you still say, 'I am Your loving bondservant'?"

{ PRAYER STARTER }

Lord, in the seasons of my life when You seem far away, there have been times when I've also felt the rejection of people around me. Help me to remember in those times that I am Your inheritance and that You will keep me secure and safe in Your love.

**Sooner or later, you and I will also
confront this twofold test.**