

## The Comings and Goings of God

Written by Lynne Hammond

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I learned a lot about the importance of answering the call to get alone with God from Sister Jeanne Wilkerson. A great prophetess and mighty praying woman, she used to teach about the spiritual order of the godly life. She said if we want to get God's direction and stay where we're supposed to be in our divine destiny, we must understand the "comings and goings of God" revealed in the Word.

One passage she used as an example was 1 Kings chapter 17 where God told Elijah to get away from the activity of ministry and "hide by the Brook Cherith" (v. 3). She pointed out that Elijah had to come to God at Cherith and spend time alone with Him before he was ready to go on to his next assignment.

Comings and goings are clearly a part of God's scriptural pattern. Think of John the Baptist on the backside of the desert waiting on God until he was sent out to proclaim, "The Messiah is coming!" Think of Moses waiting 40 years in the land of Midian until he saw the burning bush. Even Jesus—in His years as a carpenter and His 40 days in the wilderness—was hidden away in seasons of waiting and preparation.

It's a divine blueprint that applies to us all. We come to God. Then we go and do what He has prepared us to do. We come—and go.

Personally, I became familiar with coming to God, or waiting on Him in prayer, very early in my spiritual life. I discovered it when I went with friends to stay overnight at a Catholic retreat center and seek the Lord.

Since I'm an early riser, I'd often go to the chapel to pray in the morning before my friends were awake. After going there a few times, I noticed a nun who would always sit in the corner of the candle-lit building with her face toward the wall. She told me later, when I got to know her, that she got the idea from the story about Hezekiah who turned his face toward the wall and prayed in 2 Kings chapter 20. The Lord told her it was a good way of detaching herself from the distractions around her so that she could focus completely on Him.

What a fire that nun had in her spirit! She had such a divine respect for the things of God and such a strong presence of Jesus on her. Having worked with Mother Teresa, she shared the famous nun's conviction that there is far too much noise pollution in the souls of most Christians.

"Jesus comes in secret to those who have entered the secret chamber of the heart and closed out everything else," Mother Theresa had told her. "Within every Christian is a spring house that contains a well of limitless living water. God Himself is the source of it. When you draw from that well in the depths of you, you fill yourself up with God Himself. You stay revived, refreshed, and filled."

Psalm chapter 16 says it this way: "In Your presence is fullness of joy, at Your right hand there are pleasures forevermore" (v. 11).

Although fellowship with other believers has its vital place; although preaching and teaching,

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and ministry activity are helpful and important; times of waiting when we hear directly from God can change us in ways nothing else will.

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