

Guided Meditation

*Drawn from Carolyn Stahl Bohler 'Opening to God'. Upper Room Books, 1996.
Currently out of print, but hunt around online and you'll find it.*

Introduction: Preparing for meditation

Get yourself into a comfortable posture. Being upright, and symmetrical, can help keep you alert and minimize distractions from the body.

This meditation is a type of 'guided imagery'. When some people 'see' during meditation, it can be more a 'sense' of the scene than a clear picture that they perceive. You may find that, as well as any visual impressions or images, you are attentive to sounds, fragrances, and even tactile sensations.

There are no rights and wrongs. Don't feel you have to 'obey' the guiding words. If the image that appears for you suggest something else, feel free to choose to follow that direction instead.

You are in control, so if you need help during the scene, ask God for what you need. It may be something specific, like a torch if the scene is dark; or you might invite someone to be there with you to help.

If 'nothing is happening', try and notice what that nothing is. Is it a colour, thought or sound? Might it relate, and be worth following? Or you could try taking a couple of deep breaths, or focusing on a visual image, then continuing with the meditation.

Blooming: A guided meditation

Reading (Isaiah 35: 1-2)

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
The desert shall rejoice and blossom;
Like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,
And rejoice with joy and singing.

Biblical Note

Isaiah 34 speaks of the nations' destruction, their culture turned to wasteland because of God's judgment. The people had placed their hope only in human power. Now in Isaiah 35, we see another appearance of God, this time to make a fertile oasis out of the desert wasteland and to refashion the salvation road that humans can learn to walk. Salvation and re-creation are possible! Radical reversals for humanity and for creation itself can occur.

For your Meditation

This passage conveys a profound theological belief that God offers individuals and societies opportunities for new life again and again. We cannot eliminate the past (individual mistakes, societal wars, or planetary waste and pollution), but we can make a radical reversal.

Meditation over the page ...

Meditation

Become quiet, close your eyes, and take a few, slow, deep breaths.... Feel your breath in.... and slowly out.... Imagine yourself in a meadow. Feel how tall the grass is; feel it against your legs.... Run your hands through it....

Experience yourself walking through this meadow.... Take your time.... Look around you to see what else is there.... Notice the fragrance of the grass, trees, and flowers, or whatever is there.... Observe whether the meadow is sloping or flat.... Notice the colours.... Feel the warmth of the sun radiating down upon you and warming up the whole meadow....

Now you walk to the edge of the meadow and discover a desert. Stand there for a while and become aware of what you experience, observing that apparently barren area....

Enter into the desert. Experience being in the desert.... Take time to explore it, to wander in it. Feel yourself being there.

[long pause]

Now, before your eyes, the desert blooms.... See it bloom.... Become aware of your feelings as you see the desert bloom around you.... Notice the colours, the fragrances, the sounds.... Allow yourself to feel a part of this blooming.... Reach out to pick up some symbol that represents this blooming desert.

Make your way back to the meadow at your own pace, in your own way.... When you get back to the meadow, look around and observe the meadow again... Remember the symbol that you brought back from the desert.

Become aware of your breathing again.... and when you feel ready, open your eyes.