

Introductory sentence

*I cared for you in the desert,
in the land of burning heat.*

Hosea chapter 13 v 5.

Prayer

Dear Father God, You have cared for us in all our past wonderings, please will You continue to guide and care for us in all our desert places. Amen.

Bible Reading

A voice of one calling: "In the desert prepare the way for the Lord," make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God.

Isaiah chapter 40 v 3.

Hymn

Lead us, heavenly Father,
lead us o'er the world's tempestuous sea;
guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us,
for we have no help but Thee;
yet possessing every blessing,
if our God our Father be.

Saviour, breathe forgiveness o'er us:
all our weakness Thou dost know;
Thou didst tread this earth before us,
Thou didst feel it's keenest woe;
lone and dreary, faint and weary,
through the desert Thou didst go.

Spirit of our God descending,
fill our hearts with heavenly joy,
love with every passion blending,
pleasure that can ever cloy:
thus provided, pardoned, guided,
nothing can our peace destroy.

Reflections

I know this hymn is sung a lot at weddings but it's about our relationship with God and His love and care for us.

I wonder how you feel about desert and wilderness places. At first they can feel like bleak places where nothing much happens. It's a bit like when the seasons turn, we plant bulbs and seeds in the autumn, the earth lies still during the winter and we have no idea what is happening below the earth until we see green shoots appear in the spring. Sometimes it feels like we go through desert and wilderness places in our own lives, but these are places we learn and grow most in our faith journey. Things are going on in our own hearts and minds, which others cannot see, but God is always with us and He knows. He also gives us the gift of His Holy Spirit to guide and lead us.

There are times when we pray for family members or friends to know the Lord, maybe for years, but we cannot see what work God is doing in their lives, so don't give up, one day the green shoots may appear. God led His chosen people through the desert and wilderness for forty years, this was their learning curve. God took care of them and fed them all the way through, He did not leave them, nor will He leave us.

Prayer

Help us to remember Lord that when we go through difficult times you are always with us, and that You were led into the desert Jesus, but You came out victorious, lead us also into victory.

Bible Reading

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans chapter 15 v 13.

Hymn

O love that will not let me go,
revive Your loveliness in me:
I give You back the life I owe
that in Your ocean depths its flow
may richer, fuller be.

O joy that seeks for me through pain,
restore Your hopefulness to me;
I trace the rainbow through the rain
and trust Your promise once again:
that dawn shall tearless be.

Blessing

Christ be with me,
Christ within me,
Christ behind me,
Christ before me,
Christ to seek me,
Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me;
Christ beneath me,
Christ above me,
Christ in quiet,
Christ in danger,
Christ sustaining all who love me,
Christ uniting friend and stranger.
May God bless us and
be with us all in every situation. Amen.



Deserts and Wilderness Places

www.caraway.uk.com
caraway@caraway.uk.com