

Leaving the Desert *and* Caring for the Garden

A **desert** is a **desert** is a **desert**. You can do anything you want in it, but you CANNOT change it from what it IS. It still lacks water, which is why it IS a **desert** ... The thing to do with a **desert** is to LEAVE.



The miracle prayer IS: "If you will tell me what to do, I will to do it." This prayer is the door that leads out of the **desert** forever.

Withdrawal is properly employed in the service of withdrawing from the **desert**. It is NOT a device for escape, but for consolidation...

Any attempt to endow the ego with the attributes of the Soul, is merely confused thinking. Freud was more clear-sighted about this, because he knew a BAD thing when he perceived it, but he failed to realize recognize that a bad thing cannot exist. It is therefore wholly unnecessary to try to get out of it. As you very rightly observed yourself, the thing to do with a **desert** is to LEAVE.

The role of a teacher, properly conceived, is one of leading himself and others out of the **desert**. The value of this role can hardly be underestimated, if only because it was one to which I very gladly dedicated my own life. I have repeatedly asked MY pupils to follow me. This means that, to be effective teachers, they MUST interpret teaching as I do. I have made EVERY effort to teach you ENTIRELY without fear.

In your tiny kingdom you have so little! Should it not, then, be there that you would call on love to enter? Look at the **desert**, dry and unproductive, scorched and joyless, that makes up your little kingdom. And realize the life and joy that love would bring to it, from where IT comes, and where it would return WITH you.

As you come closer to a brother, you DO approach me, and as you withdraw from him I become distant to you... **Your giant step forward was to INSIST on a collaborative venture.** This does NOT go against the true spirit of meditation at all. It is inherent IN it. Meditation is a collaborative venture with GOD. It CANNOT be undertaken successfully by those who disengage themselves from the Sonship, because they are disengaging themselves from me. God will come to you only as you will give Him to your brothers.

The Thought of God surrounds your little kingdom, waiting at the barrier you built, to come in and shine upon the barren ground. See how life springs up everywhere! The **desert becomes a garden**, green and deep and quiet, offering rest to those who lost their way, and wander in the dust. Give them a place of refuge, prepared by love from them, where once a **desert** was. And every one you welcome will bring love with him, from Heaven for you. They enter one by one into this holy place, but they will not depart as they had come, alone.

The love they BROUGHT with them will STAY with them, as it will stay with YOU. And, under its beneficence, your little **garden** will expand, and reach out to everyone who thirsts for living water, but has grown too weary to go on alone. Go out and FIND them, for they bring your Self with them. And lead them gently to your quiet **garden**, and receive their blessing there. So will it grow, and stretch across the **desert**, leaving no lonely little kingdoms locked away from love, and leaving YOU outside. And you will RECOGNIZE yourself, and see your little **garden** gently transformed into the Kingdom of Heaven, with all the love of its Creator shining upon it.

You have reached the end of an ancient journey not realizing yet that it is over. You are still worn and tired, and the **desert's** dust still seems to cloud your eyes, and keep you sightless. Yet He Whom you welcomed has come to you, and would welcome YOU. He has waited long to give you this. Receive it now of Him, for He would have you KNOW Him. Only a little wall of dust still stands between you. Blow on it lightly and with happy laughter, and it will fall away. **And walk into the garden love has prepared for BOTH of you.**

(all the above quotes are from the Urtext version and all non-capitalization emphasis is mine)

ONE OF HELEN'S VISIONS: Helen remembered asking for an experience to cheer her up when she was feeling a bit low: The answer came in the form of a picture of a plant nursery with very young plants in neat rows, carefully labelled and apparently tended with great care... "The picture meant nothing to me and I found it mildly irritating. 'What's so helpful about that?' 'Look where it's growing,' said the Voice, patiently and gently... 'Oh, all right,' I said, somewhat sulkily. Then I looked at the picture more carefully. The plant nursery was completely surrounded by a bleak and lifeless **desert**. Only the little area in which the plants were growing was moist and green. 'And now that it's finally started,' said the Voice, 'you will go on watering it, won't you?'"

(Absence from Felicity, pp 128-9)