

Meditative Prayer Exercise

Bible Study at a Glance:

This study is an exercise in meditative prayer. There are two exercises to choose from. Depending on time, both can be done or just one. The aim is for participants to be exposed to meditative prayer so they can practice it in their own personal prayer life.

(Explain to the group) Tell the group we are going to enter into a prayerful mindset. You might want to start with the sign of the cross, and then sit in silence for 30 seconds, then start to read the scripture passage. Before you start reading, ask the group to pay attention to the words as you read them. Slowly read the passage from Micah.

Reflections:

- Reflect on any insight or thoughts you have reading or hearing these words
- Sense what God might be speaking to you through these words
- Consider the words as they relate to your life

Micah 6:8:

You have been told, O mortal, what is good,

and what the LORD requires of you:

Only to do justice and to love goodness,

and to walk humbly with your God

(Explain to the Group) = You don't have to read this word for word, but this is the general idea of what to explain before moving on.

- **Q: These are questions to ask the whole group**
 - *A: Hopefully the group arrives at most of the answers on their own, but if they don't, redirect the discussion towards these answers, and be sure to tell the group the answers if no one quite got it.*

CCC/Verses and quotes to read out loud are in boxes.

(Explain to the group) Tell the group you are going to read it again (slowly) but this time ask them to reflect on the words as they hear them. Read the passage again, slowly. Then pause for a minute or two to allow people to absorb and reflect. After the silence, ask if anyone would like to share how it went, or what stood out to them.

(Explain to the Group) Tell the group you will now repeat the exercise with a different passage with some additional reflection questions. Give the group these reflections ahead of time so they can be considered as you read.

Reflections:

- This passage is the Psalm Jesus started quoting while on the cross. He was not able to finish the entire psalm but he quoted enough of it for us to recognize it. The Psalm is prophetic, describing much of the circumstances of the crucifixion and the attitude of the crowds.
- Imagine Jesus saying all the words of this Psalm
- Imagine yourself saying these words to God, whichever parts of them you identify with

Psalm 22:

1 For the leader; according to "The deer of the dawn." [b] A psalm of David.

I

2 My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

*Why so far from my call for help,
from my cries of anguish?*

*3 My God, I call by day, but you do not answer;
by night, but I have no relief.*

*4 Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One;
you are the glory of Israel.*

*5 In you our fathers trusted;
they trusted and you rescued them.*

*6 To you they cried out and they escaped;
in you they trusted and were not disappointed.*

*7 But I am a worm, not a man,
scorned by men, despised by the people.*

8 All who see me mock me;
they curl their lips and jeer;
they shake their heads at me:
9 "He relied on the Lord—let him deliver him;
if he loves him, let him rescue him."
10 For you drew me forth from the womb,
made me safe at my mother's breasts.
11 Upon you I was thrust from the womb;
since my mother bore me you are my God.
12 Do not stay far from me,
for trouble is near,
and there is no one to help.

II

13 Many bulls surround me;
fierce bulls of Bashan encircle me.
14 They open their mouths against me,
lions that rend and roar.
15 Like water my life drains away;
all my bones are disjointed.
My heart has become like wax,
it melts away within me.
16 As dry as a potsherd is my throat;
my tongue cleaves to my palate;
you lay me in the dust of death.
17 Dogs surround me;
a pack of evildoers closes in on me.
They have pierced my hands and my feet
18 I can count all my bones.
They stare at me and gloat;
19 they divide my garments among them;
for my clothing they cast lots.
20 But you, Lord, do not stay far off;
my strength, come quickly to help me.
21 Deliver my soul from the sword,
my life from the grip of the dog.
22 Save me from the lion's mouth,

my poor life from the horns of wild bulls.

III

23 Then I will proclaim your name to my brethren;

in the assembly I will praise you:

24 "You who fear the Lord, give praise!

All descendants of Jacob, give honor;

show reverence, all descendants of Israel!

25 For he has not spurned or disdained

the misery of this poor wretch,

Did not turn away[g] from me,

but heard me when I cried out.

26 I will offer praise in the great assembly;

my vows I will fulfill before those who fear him.

27 The poor[h] will eat their fill;

those who seek the Lord will offer praise.

May your hearts enjoy life forever!"

IV

28 All the ends of the earth

will remember and turn to the Lord;

All the families of nations

will bow low before him.

29 For kingship belongs to the Lord,

the ruler over the nations.

30 [i]All who sleep in the earth

will bow low before God;

All who have gone down into the dust

will kneel in homage.

31 And I will live for the Lord;

my descendants will serve you.

32 The generation to come will be told of the Lord,

that they may proclaim to a people yet unborn

the deliverance you have brought.

(Explain to the Group) Give the group a few seconds to absorb this then let them know you'll read it a second time. After you complete reading it the second time, ask if anyone would like to share how it went, or what stood out to them.

(Explain to the Group) Conclude by letting the group know these were just examples. We can pray meditatively in a variety of ways. Examples of things we can meditate on to draw us closer to God are:

- *Any scripture passage*
- *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*
- *Spiritual books*
- *Nature*
- *Icons or crucifixes*
- *Meditative music (e.g., liturgical chants)*
- *Anything that facilitates communing with God!*