

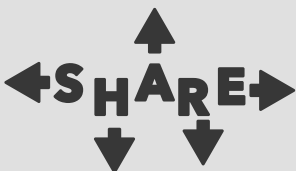
Hope refreshed

Isaiah 42:1-9

Isaiah prophesies to those in exile about God's chosen servant, who will bring justice, light and freedom from captivity to the nations.

We explore the hope that God gave to all people in his Son, Jesus, whose baptism we mark today, and how we might share God's hope with those who are in desperate need of it.

Read this week's passage:



Do you as a family share your worries? Consider setting aside a regular time to share, with adults sharing appropriate worries, to talk and then to pray together.



Some people like to make vision boards – a collection of images, words and drawings to help inspire them to reach their goals or aspirations. Why not make one all about 'hope refreshed'?

Write 'hope refreshed' on a piece of paper, then write or draw on three different coloured sticky notes and stick them around the 'hope refreshed' words. Colour 1: What hope is found in the reading? Colour 2: When have we experienced 'hope refreshed' from God? Colour 3: Who in our communities and world are in desperate need of 'hope refreshed'?

DRAW

God provided hope to the Israelites who were in desperate need of 'hope refreshed' and Isaiah conveys this hope in powerful images. What images would you use to represent hope? Design a logo or a collage to express 'hope refreshed' that you could give to people in need of hope today.

Find more free Roots resources to reflect on this week's theme:



Living Scripture

'I have given you as... a light to the nations.' Isaiah 42:6

Christianity is more widespread than any other faith or religion. There are Christians on every continent, Jesus-followers from thousands of languages and cultures. Jesus truly is a light to the nations. His life, death, and resurrection provide a path to relationship with God for all peoples.

In this reading from Isaiah, God explains that his chosen servant (Jesus) is our hope, bringing justice, caring for the bruised and crushed, offering freedom and healing. Consider how Jesus brings hope to you today, in the place where you live, your culture, your country, our world. Does that hope feel a long way off in the future, or something you could step into and experience today? When we've waited a long time or suffered injustice, we may need our hope refreshed. It can help to think of taking our hope off a particular outcome, and putting our hope in God.

Hold On, Pray Expectantly.

When we feel crushed or weary, hope is holding on, trusting that God is still working, and praying expectantly, not just asking again and again like God didn't hear, but remembering the goodness, faithfulness and power of God. Our hope is in God.

First impressions

- What are you hoping for?
- How might this everyday image convey the idea of Jesus bringing light and fresh hope?
- What spiritual refreshment can we offer people this week?



Pray

God, you bring hope today, as well as to so many through the ages. May we be open to the hope that you bring: refreshing, restoring, renewing, and be ready to share that hope with others. Amen.



ACT

New Year's resolutions are often self-focused. What would happen if we shifted our resolutions to focus on others? How could we bring 'hope refreshed' to people lacking hope?

In the Isaiah reading, we hear God instructing the Israelites to be a light to the nations, to open the eyes of those who are 'blind' and to free the prisoners who sit in darkness.

How might you bring or share hope to people who need God's hope, light, and freedom?