

# US DISASTER PROGRAM

## Hope Rooted in God



### Bible Study for times of disaster

## A SPARK OF HOPE

Through prayer, we open ourselves to God's power at work within us. Through prayer, God changes us and shapes us to be the people God wants us to be. Through prayer, we invite God's action in and around us for healing, renewal and hope. Through prayer, we grow in trust and confidence in God.

Read Isaiah 43: 1-7

This passage speaks to God's people held in exile in Babylon during their captivity. They are people to whom the worst has happened – their country has been defeated; their city, Jerusalem, has fallen; and they have been taken to work as forced labor in a distant nation. All their fears have come true. They would seem to have nothing to look forward to and no one to trust in. Yet, into their situation, God speaks a message of love and assurance and gives to the people a promise of redemption and return. God's message sets within them a spark of hope, a hope that is fulfilled as they return to Israel, enabled to live afresh as God's people in dignity, compassion and truth.

"But now, this is what the Lord says—he who created you, Jacob, he who formed you, Israel: "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze"(Isaiah 43:1-2).

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How have you known God's faithfulness during difficult times in your life?
2. How can we show people affected by an infectious disease that they are precious, honored and loved by God (v 4)?
3. What do you think redemption might mean during an epidemic?

Adapted from *La foi en temps d'Ebola* by Dr. Isaac Muyonga and Rt. Rev. Michael Beasley