

# Hope is the thing with feathers meaning

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" Hope" is the thing with feathers by Emily Dickinson " Hope" is the thing with feathers That perches in the soul..... And sings the tune without the words.....

And never stops.... at all.... And sweetest... in the Gale.... is heard... And sore must bethe stormThat could abash the little Bird That kept so many warm I've heard it in the chillest land... And on the strangest Sea Yet, never, in Extremity It asked a crumb .... of Me Dickinson defines hope by comparing it to a bird (a metaphor) . Stanza one Hope is a " thing" because it is a feeling; the thing/feeling is like a bird. Dickinson uses the standard dictionary format for a definition; first she places the word in a general category (" thing"), and then she differentiates it from everything else in that category.

For instance, the definition of a cat would run something like this: a cat is a mammal (the first part of the definition places it in a category); the rest of the definition would be " which is nocturnal, fur-bearing, hunts at night, has pointed ears, etc. (the second part of the definition differentiates the cat from other all mammals). How would hope " perch," and why does it perch in the soul? As you read this poem, keep in mind that the subject is hope and that the bird metaphor is only defining hope. Whatever is being said of the bird applies to hope, and the application to hope is Dickinson's point in this poem. The bird " sings. " Is this a good or a bad thing? The tune is " without words. " Is hope a matter of words, or is it a feeling about the future, a feeling which consists both of desire and expectation? Psychologically, is it true that hope never fails us, that hope is always possible? Stanza two Why is hope " sweetest" during a storm? When do we most need hope, when things are going well or when they are going badly? Sore is being used in the <https://assignbuster.com/hope-is-the-thing-with-feathers-meaning/>

sense of very great or severe; abash means to make ashamed, embarrassed, or self-conscious.

Essentially only the most extreme or impossible-to-escape storm would affect the bird/hope. If the bird is " abashed" what would happen to the individual's hope? In a storm, would being " kept warm" be a plus or a minus, an advantage or a disadvantage? Stanza three What kind of place would " chilliest" land be? Would you want to vacation there, for instance? Yet in this coldest land, hope kept the individual warm. Is keeping the speaker warm a desirable or an undesirable act in these circumstances? Is " the strangest sea" a desirable or undesirable place to be? Would you need hope there? The bird, faithful and unabashed, follows and sings to the speaker (" I've heard it") under the worst, the most threatening of circumstances. The last two lines are introduced by " Yet. " What kind of connection does " yet" establish with the preceding ideas/stanzas? Does it lead you to expect similarity, contrast, an example, an irrelevancy, a joke? Even in the most critical circumstances the bird never asked for even a " crumb" in return for its support. What are the associations with " crumb"? would you be satisfied if your employer offered you " a crumb" in payment for your work? Also, is " a crumb" appropriate for a bird? Emily Dickinson's " Hope is the Thing With Feathers," is the VI part of a much larger poem called " Life. " The poem examines the abstract idea of hope in the free spirit of a bird.

Dickinson uses imagery, metaphor, to help describe why " Hope is the Thing With Feathers. " In the first stanza, " Hope is the Thing With Feathers," Dickinson uses the metaphorical image of a bird to describe the abstract

idea of hope. Hope, of course, is not an animate thing, it is inanimate, but by giving hope feathers, she begins to create an image of hope in our minds. The imagery of feathers conjures up hope in itself. Feathers represent hope because feathers enable you to fly and offer the image of flying away to a new hope, a new beginning. In contrast, broken feathers or a broken wing grounds a person, and conjures up the image of a needy person who has been beaten down by life. Their wings have been broken and they no longer have the power to hope.

In the second stanza, “ That perches in the soul,” Dickinson continues to use the imagery of a bird to describe hope. Hope, she is implying, perches or roosts in our soul. The soul is the home for hope. It can also be seen as a metaphor. Hope rests in our soul the way a bird rests on its perch. In the third and fourth stanzas, Ads by Google | Famous Haiku

Poems Haiku Poetry Flying Birds Examples of Poems | | And sings the tune without the words And never stops at all. Dickinson uses the imagery of a bird’s continuous song to represent eternal hope.

Birds never stop singing their song of hope. The fifth stanza “ And sweetest in the gale is heard” describes the bird’s song of hope as sweetest in the wind. It conjures up images of a bird’s song of hope whistling above the sound of gale force winds and offering the promise that soon the storm will end. Dickinson uses the next three lines to metaphorically describe what a person who destroys hope feels like. And sore must be the storm That could abash the little bird That kept so many warm. A person who destroys hope with a storm of anger and negativity feels the pain they cause in others.

Dickinson uses a powerful image of a person abashing the bird of hope that gives comfort and warmth for so many.

The destroyer of hope causes pain and soreness that hurts them the most. In the first line of the last set of stanzas " I've heard it in the chilliest lands," Dickinson offers the reader another reason to have hope. It is heard even in the coldest, saddest lands. Hope is eternal and everywhere. The birds song of hope is even heard " And on the strangest sea. " Hope exists for everyone. In the last two lines, Dickinson informs us that the bird of hope asks for no favor or price in return for its sweet song.

Yet never in extremity, It asked a crumb of me. Hope is a free gift. It exists for all of us. All we must do is not clip the wings of hope and let it fly and sing freely. Its song can be heard over the strangest seas, coldest lands, and in the worst storms. It is a song that never ends as long as we do not let it. This is the only poem of hers that does not stress the mental anguish of the poet.

The only one. You can disagree. Great use of metaphors much like the feathers on a bird hope insulates us from some of the harsher realities of life! suggests hope is universal when talks about birds song without words hope is common to all people and all times... Louise Posted on 2009-09-28 | by a guest .: ah interesting .:

I interpreted the poem more as a reference. The hope can stand through much more hardship than the people themselves, but hope doesn't react as the way a bird would. A bird would sink into a slump, or fly from the complication, whereas hope would continue to be precious, reassuring the

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" In the soul where this bird has perched on, sings wordlessly and without pause. Like the bird, hope comes from one's soul, and " never stops at all," meaning that an individual does not stop hoping. Like the tune without words, hope also is not a matter of words. It is a feeling about the future both of desire and expectation. The development of this metaphor continues as Dickinson describes how the bird reacts to hardships. A storm must be impossibly brutal to " abash the little bird. The bird continues to survive as it can be found everywhere.

The “chillest land” to the “strangest sea,” symbolizes hope’s presence under the worst and most threatening circumstances. Hope reacts in the same way. For hope to be “abashed,” “sore must be the storm,” or fatal must be the hardship. “That kept so many warm” is an appropriate characteristic of hope and a bird. Similar to a bird’s constant and comforting melodies, hope’s constant reassurance “has kept so many warm” in times of hardships. | Posted on 2007-02-28 | by a guest .: .:

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