

August 15, 2026

HOPE Ministries, Inc.

NEWS



In the Belly of a Fish

By: Diane Houghtaling

While reading a Bible study about the book of Jonah, the author asked an interesting question. "What do you think it was like for Jonah to be in the belly of a fish for three days?" I'd never thought about that so gave it some consideration.

First the back story. God asked the prophet Jonah to go to the great city of Ninevah to announce judgement against the wicked people there. Instead, Jonah boarded a ship to run far away from his assignment.

God wasn't taking "no" for an answer. He sent a violent storm that threatened to destroy the ship. When the crew found out that Jonah was the cause, they reluctantly threw him overboard into a raging sea. The storm immediately stopped.

Now as Jonah sank into the ocean depths toward certain death, the mighty waters engulfed him and seaweed wrapped around his head. As the end was near, Jonah remembered the Lord and cried out for rescue. God answered.

Suddenly Jonah found himself in a place of total blackness, his nostrils filled with a putrid smell of rotten decay. He probably had no idea he'd been swallowed by a great fish. Maybe he feared that saying no to God's call had landed him in hell.

But Jonah decided to give it one more try, and cried out to the Lord. Maybe He would relent and have mercy on him. Maybe he could have one more chance. We don't know how long Jonah prayed and made vows to turn back to God, but we do know that he was inside the belly of the fish for three days and three nights.

But Jonah didn't know that he would be free in three days. He didn't know if God would answer his prayers for help, or if this deep blackness would be his eternal home. He'd probably lost all sense of time in this dark prison.

But we can be sure of the immense gratefulness that Jonah must have felt when he was suddenly vomited out of the belly of the fish and landed on a beach. I'm sure he must have rejoiced after removing the seaweed to see the light of day once again.

So how does this apply to our lives? Some may have turned from following the Lord, or are running from His call on your life. You find yourself in a deep dark place, with no hope of finding a way of escape.

Some may be experiencing this same deep darkness and hopelessness through no fault of your own. Fiery trials have come upon you one after another, and you're plunged into a depression like you've never known. The stormy waves have engulfed you and you are sinking further into the depths of despair.

Like Jonah, you have no way to know if you will ever be able to escape this black hole you find yourself in. You cry out day and night to God for help, but nothing ever seems to change. You feel forsaken and only hear the hollow echo of your voice in the darkness.

But I want to encourage you to take heart and continue to look to the Lord. For just as Jonah was suddenly delivered from his place of bondage, so, too, God is still in the miracle-working business. Who knows? Perhaps today could be the day you find yourself once again in the light of God's mercy and goodness. Keep praying and believing, for He is faithful.



HOPE HOUSE ORPHANAGE

Pastor Sam Sikapizye and I spoke this morning and there are two issues of concern that we need to keep in prayer.

Please keep Pastor Charles Mumba in prayer. He has been going through some serious health problems. He has diabetes and he has been having difficulty walking and experiencing weakness.

There is great unrest in the country of Zambia at this time. There is election today for the president and the government has been going through a period of violence. The violence has created financial upheaval and people are lacking adequate money to purchase food and needed necessary goods.

The shoes that we were planning to purchase for the young people at the orphanage have not been able to take place. Pastor Sam is leaving next week to return to Zambia and he is hoping that after the election things will begin to settle down and then the kids will be taken to the store to buy the new shoes and also a pizza party with the donations that have been set.

So, please keep these two crucial concerns in your prayers and our next newsletter on October 15th should give a good report.

This is a picture of Pastor Charles when he was feeling well:



BACK-TO-SCHOOL BLESSINGS



Remember to stick close to Jesus this year through prayer and reading your Bible.



Color your school year bright by letting the light of Jesus shine through you.



Write HIStory in your life this school year by doing what Jesus would do and making wise choices.



Use a notebook as a Gratitude Journal. For each day of school, write down things you are grateful for.



Use a bookmark to mark your favorite Bible story or favorite verse.



Use a Back—to—School Prayer Journal to write out your prayers to God.



Enjoy a sweet treat and remember that Jesus makes your life sweet!



www.familyfaithbuilders.org

WE need your continued prayer and financial support to accomplish the task the Lord has given us to reach out to those who are struggling and need a safe place to turn for help. Prayerfully consider becoming a **PARTNER OF HOPE** by making a one-time gift or monthly commitment.

GOD BLESS YOU AS YOU GIVE .

Remember — your gifts to HOPE Ministries are always tax deductible!

The God Of The Thunder By: Scott Pauley

You would have laughed at me. In fact, I laughed at myself. I was sitting on our front porch studying what the Bible has to say about thunder. Suddenly the largest crack of thunder I have ever heard in my life sounded right next to me! Before I was even conscious of what I was doing, I had dropped everything and was standing with both hands in the air looking around. It got my attention to say the least.

We have had an inordinate amount of strong thunderstorms this year. They can be frightening and impressive at the same time. But there is more...they make us think about God.

Scripture speaks frequently of thunder. There is a theology to thunder.

- Thunder is always connected to the throne. (Revelation 4:5, 6:1, 8:5, 11:19, 14:2, 19:6, etc.)
- Thunder is an illustration of the powerful voice of God. Psalm 29:3-5 says,
"The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the Lord is upon many waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty. The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars; yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon."
- Thunder is spoken of by the psalmist as the Lord's response to the prayer of the distressed (Psalm 18:6-15). We think our enemies are strong and God declares that He is stronger! Psalm 81:7 reinforces this truth, *"Thou calledst in trouble, and I delivered thee; I answered thee in the secret place of thunder."* (It is of note that Job spoke a great deal about thunder in the book that details the trials of his faith.)

Thunder is to be a reminder of the Creator, the One who is over all. Here are a few thoughts that I have had about thunder in the last few weeks, thoughts that have made me think more of God...

1. Thunder makes you look up. It is a sound *from above*. There is a God who sits on His throne above us. He sees us and holds the whole world in His mighty hand.

Lizzy Says:

We have chickens, a cockatiel, and now a new kitten!



2. Thunder says there is something behind the clouds. There is movement that you cannot see. Clouds are on the move and rain is coming! When God begins to speak in your life it is evidence that there is more to come. He is at work in ways you may not understand.
3. Thunder is evidence of power. Where there is thunder there is lightning. Our God is a God of all power.
4. Thunder is the sound of warning or blessing depending on your relationship to it. For the farmer who is praying for rain it is an answer. For the wicked man on the run from God it is a fearful thing. In the first mention of thunder in Exodus 9 it is a picture of judgment. You don't have to fear the thunder if you know the God of the thunder!

Thunder shakes everything. It causes normal life to pause even if just for a moment. The next time the thunder surprises you see it as God's voice, and a reminder of His power and presence in your life. Like the God of thunder, you cannot see it

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork" (Psalm 19:1).

Memorize Scripture

The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he that winneth souls is wise.
Proverbs 11:30

God grades on the cross, not the curve.

~Onlinefun.com



Those we choose as our associates will have an impact on
our values – for good or evil.

*

Do not be deceived: Evil company corrupts good habits.

1 Corinthians 15:33

~ From "God's Best For Your Success"

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We are here at **HOPE Ministries, Inc.** because we believe
there is always **HOPE** for every situation, no matter how grave.
If you have a need that you would like us to lift in prayer,
please call us anytime.



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