

GOD is in the Storm

INTRODUCTION:

The instructions I received from Pastor Sackey was that I should bring a ten-minute word of exhortation

In [John 10:10 \(NIV\)](#), Jesus said that, *"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it abundantly."*

In [Matthew 13:39](#) (NIV), Jesus also said that *"...the enemy who sows them (that is, the weed) is the devil."*

The QUESTION, therefore, is, what are we doing or going to do about it? More importantly, what does the Bible say we should do about it?

The TITLE of my message of exhortation today is, [GOD is in the Storm](#).

Today, I will be talking about the **Storms** of life. Therefore, I will swap the words challenges, temptation, adversities, struggles for the word **Storms**.

The Bible says in [1 Corinthians 10:13 \(ESV\)](#), *"No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it."*

THREE OBJECTIVES:

1. **To remind us that storms are part of life**
2. **To Highlight different kinds of storms which are "common to man"**
3. **To point out few things about storms which help us to prepare well to withstand them**

My First OBJECTIVE: is to remind us that storms are part of life

The first thing we must remember is that in our lifetime there will be storms; the second thing to remember is that these storms also happen to other people; the third and the most important is, that in whatever storm we are, God will make a way. In [John 10:9](#), Jesus said, *"I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved"*, He promised that He will always bring a solution to our storms. He is the Way Maker & the Miracle Worker.

My second OBJECTIVE is to highlight different kinds of storms which are "common to man"

1. THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE – THE PAIN AND SORROW OF DEATH OF A FAMILY MEMBER OR FRIEND

The death of a very close friend, an uncle, aunty, church brother/sister, parent, sibling, a spouse, or a child are all severe storms of life common to man.

In [John 11: 21](#), Martha said to Jesus, *"Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."*

2. SICKNESS IN THE FAMILY

The news of a terminal illness; or dealing with a disabled child who requires support around the clock, every day of their life; or perhaps a long-term illness, which has devastated the family are also severe storms of life common to man.

In [Mark 5:25](#), - about the Woman with the issue of blood, the Bible says that *".. a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years".*

3. LOSS OF JOB/ OR BUSINESS AND LIVELIHOOD

Dealing with redundancies from work, sacked from a company you have worked and devoted most of your life, facing a situation where people whom you have trained in your job are promoted above you, or perhaps, your business has to fold and as a result you have got nothing from your years of dedication, devotion and investment in the business. This is a storm of life common to man, we face these at different times of our lives.

- In [Luke 5:5](#), the Bible records about how a man had toiled all night and got nothing. *"But Simon answered and said to Him (that is to Jesus), "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing. 26 She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse."*

4. LOSS OF ONE'S HOME/HOMELESSNESS, DEBT & DISTITUTION

A person's house being repossessed by either their landlord or mortgage lender is certainly one of the greatest storms of life.

- In [2 Kings 4:1](#), - in the story of the wife of a Prophet who was in serious debt - the Bible records that she said to Prophet Elisha, *"Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that he revered the LORD. But now his creditor is coming to take my two boys as his slaves."*

5. HANDLING A REBELLIOUS OR PRODIGAL CHILD

Dealing with a rebellious teenage, perhaps the child has brought embarrassment to the family and has completely refused to follow a model life you have set for them is also a storm of life common to man. Yes, common to man.

- The story of David and Absalom in [2 Samuel 15 7-12](#), comes to mind. When Absalom rebels against his own father and takes the throne, forcing his father, the king, to flee to the wilderness for his life.

- The case of Eli and his rebellious two sons, **Hophni and Phinehas** in [1 Samuel 2:30-34](#) also comes to mind. The Bible records that the great man of God was warned concerning the rebellion of his sons saying: "... *this shall be a sign to you, that shall come on your two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them*".

6. SPIRITUAL ATTACK & THE RISK OF LOSING ONE'S FAITH AND SALVATION/ CHALLENGE AGAINST OUR FAITH

This is the point in someone's spiritual life when they are severely tempted, and the storm appears to you so big, that the person asks the unaskable question, **"Is there God?"**

- *** In [MARK 4:38 \(NIV\)](#), the Bible records that when the Disciples faced a storm in the boat, they asked Jesus, *"Teacher, do you not care if we perish?"*

John the Baptist doubts:

- *** In [Matthew 11:2](#), the Bible also records that *"When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples³ to ask him, **"Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?"***

God, please lead us away from temptation.

My third OBJECTIVE is to point out a few things about storms which help us to prepare well to withstand them

A. STORMS GENERALLY ALWAYS APPEAR BIGGER THAN THEY REALLY ARE

Take for example, the Disciples with Jesus in the boat. They were mostly Fishermen according to the Bible, who had spent most of their lives at sea,

and most certainly had experienced much worse storms in their working lives in the past. But this time, they were so afraid, to the extent that they thought they were going to perish from the storm.

But remember, GOD is in the Storm:

Jesus cautions His Disciples for their lack of faith; and rebukes the storm.

Similarly, we should always remember that in every storm we should not let our faith fail us, and that God is always there with us waiting for us to ask Him to help us.

We should always declare His greatness over any storm, declare that He is the God of all storms.

The Bible teaches us that even the following great men and woman of God asked God for help and declared His greatness over the storms they faced:

- ✓ Moses, when he was before Pharaoh and by the Red Sea, declared the mighty power of YAHWEH
- ✓ Joshua before he approached the Wall of Jericho was in the presence of THE COMMANDER OF THE LORD'S ARMY, and being obedient to the instructions from God, he commanded the children of Israel to **shout**. There is power in our praise
- ✓ David, when he faced Goliath, declared that God is the LORD OF HOSTS, the God of THE ARMIES OF ISRAEL. So, let's declare Him as such.

SONG: There is a song that says:

We lift Your name higher x4

We shout Hale, Hallelujah

Shout Hale

Hallelujah

Shout Hale

Hallelujah

Shout Hale

Hallelujah

Yes, You are the Lord, Most High x4.

[Psalms 22:3](#) say, "God, You are the Holy One. You sit/dwell as King upon the praises of your people Israel.

May our God be glorified!

B. GOD WARNS US ABOUT ON-COMING STORM

If we really listen and discern, we will hear God's voice over an issue, either in a dream, prophecy, or a message, or perhaps from the counsel of a spouse, parent, a teacher, or lawyer.

Remember, GOD is in the Storm:

David in his situation with Bathsheba, Uriah's wife –

- ✓ In **[2 Samuel 12:1](#)**, the Bible records that, "*the LORD sent Nathan to David.*"
- ✓ God was very merciful to King David by sending the Prophet to confront him; and King David acknowledged and confessed his sins straightaway. We find in **[Psalms 51](#)** how King David lamented, pouring out his heart God in repentance:

In **[Psalm 51](#)** "*1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. 2 Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. 3 For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. 4 Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge. 5 Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. 6 Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb; you taught me wisdom in that secret place. 7 Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. 8 Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice. 9 Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity. 10 Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. 11 Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. 13 Then*

I will teach transgressors your ways, so that sinners will turn back to you. 14 Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, you who are God my Saviour, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness. 15 Open my lips, Lord, and my mouth will declare your praise. 16 You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. 17 My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise. 18 May it please you to prosper Zion, to build up the walls of Jerusalem. 19 Then you will delight in the sacrifices of the righteous, in burnt offerings offered whole; then bulls will be offered on your altar.

- ✓ Also, God warned Noah and the people who lived at the time of Noah and gave them enough time to repent. God also gave Noah enough time to build the arch before the storm started.

See [Genesis Chapter 6 and 7](#)

- ✓ God also forewarned King Hezekiah through Nathan the Prophet, that he would die from his illness, and that he should put his house in order. This act of kindness of forewarning afforded the King an opportunity to lament to the Lord in prayer for mercy.

Isaiah 38:1-5 *"1 In those days Hezekiah became ill and was at the point of death. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz went to him and said, "This is what the LORD says: Put your house in order, because you are going to die; you will not recover."*

2 Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD,

3 "Remember, LORD, how I have walked before you faithfully and with wholehearted devotion and have done what is good in your eyes." And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

4 Then the word of the LORD came to Isaiah:

5 "Go and tell Hezekiah, 'This is what the LORD, the God of your father David, says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will add fifteen years to your life.'"

- ✓ Also, we see in [1 Samuel 25](#) -in the story of David and Nabal, Abigail's husband - that Abigail had a **discerning spirit**.

The Bible says that:

¹⁸ Abigail acted quickly. She took two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five dressed sheep, five seahs^[b] of roasted grain, a hundred cakes of raisins and two hundred cakes of pressed figs, and loaded them on donkeys. ¹⁹ Then she told her servants, "Go on ahead; I'll follow you." But she did not tell her husband Nabal.

³² David said to Abigail, "Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, who has sent you today to meet me. ³³ May you be blessed for your good judgment and for keeping me from bloodshed this day and from avenging myself with my own hands. ³⁴ Otherwise, as surely as the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, who has kept me from harming you, if you had not come quickly to meet me, not one male belonging to Nabal would have been left alive by daybreak."

May the Lord who sent a Word of warning to King David, King Hezekiah and Noah continue to speak to us and forewarn us about the storms of life.

C. STORMS WILL SHAKE YOUR FAITH

A severe storm of life will cause you to ask whether God actually exists, even when you already know the answer.

The Disciples in the boat, asked Jesus, **"Teacher, do you not care if we perish?"**

- ❖ Think about this? These were the same Disciples whom Jesus had called His family.
- ❖ The same Jesus whom they had witnessed show great compassion to the oppressed and sick and had seen loose those who were bound.

In **Matthew 11:2**, we read about *"When John (The Baptist), who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples ³ to ask Him (that is, Jesus), **"Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?"***

- ❖ This is the same John the Baptist who was filled with the Holy Spirit in his mother's womb when his and Jesus' mother came together- [Matthew 3](#),
- ❖ The same John the Baptist whose entire ministry was about announcing the coming of Jesus Christ, who said that he was not worthy to carry His sandals - [Matthew 3](#).
- ❖ The same John the Baptist who pointed out Jesus in the crowd as the Messiah
- ❖ The same person who baptised Jesus Christ and saw the Heavens opened and the Spirit of God descending like a dove on His head; and who heard (first-hand) the voice of the Father (the Almighty God) announce, "*This is my son in Whom I am well pleased*" - [Matthew 3](#).

This is where the devil and storms of life would like to leave. But the Almighty God will not let our faith fail us.

But remember, GOD is in the Storm:

- ✓ In [Matthew 11:4](#) - concerning the strange question from John the Baptist – "*Jesus replied, Go back and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵ The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy^[b] are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. ⁶ Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.*

We should therefore remember what the Word says, so that we would not stumble in the storm of life, namely:

- ✓ "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of *them* whose heart is perfect toward him." [2-Chronicles 16:9](#).
- ✓ "*Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid...I will never leave you nor forsake you*" [Deuteronomy 31:6](#).

- ✓ *"This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved **him out of all his troubles** – [Psalm 34:6-8](#).*
- ✓ *In [Mark 4:39](#), "Then Jesus got up and rebuked the wind and the sea. "Silence!" He commanded. "Be still!" And the wind died down, and it was perfectly calm."*

May our hearts be fully committed to the Lord.

D. STORMS WILL SEEM TO LAST FAR MORE THAN THEY ACTUALLY DO

When you are going through a storm the duration will seem forever. Take for example, someone finds a lump on their body and takes a test in the hospital; the days or weeks they spend waiting for the test result will seem forever.

Take the story of Mary and Martha/Lazarus for example. In [John 11:18](#), the Bible says that "*Bethany was less than two miles^[b] from Jerusalem*", yet the journey took Jesus four days. Think about it? 2 mile in 4 days?

But remember, GOD is in the Storm:

God comes at the appointed time.

We should be encouraged by the Word that says that there are times and seasons for everything:

- ✓ [Ecclesiastes 3:1-8](#) *¹There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: ²a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, ³a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, ⁴a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, ⁵a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing, ⁶a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, ⁷a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, ⁸a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.*

- ✓ Noah in the arch - 378 days & it rained for 40 days and 40 nights
- ✓ Jesus in the wilderness - 40 days and 40 nights
- ✓ Mary and Martha - 4 days
- ✓ Moses on the run in Midian - 40 years
- ✓ Children or Israel in the wilderness - 40 years; and
- ✓ The woman with the issue of blood - 12 year, etc

Let us pray that joy will come in the morning.

E. STORMS WILL TRY TO SEPARATE YOU FROM EVERY POSSIBLE HELP AND LEAVE YOU HELPLESS AND ISOLATED

One characteristic of storms is that it will take you to a point where you have tried everything you know, you have called in all the help you can, you have prayed and fasted, etc and you then find yourself standing alone in the battle. Just imagine the common image from the Animal Geographic documentary where one baby antelope is surrounded by a pack of lions. That is where the devil and storm of life would like to leave us. God have mercy on us.

At this point I would like us to specifically remember people who have lost loved ones during this COVID-19 lockdown, who were not allowed to see or be close to the bodies of their loved ones, properly, or at all, before their burial, and who have as such, had to suffer in isolation even without friends and the church family.

But remember, GOD is in the Storm:

May God help us to prevail over this storm of life. In Jesus name.

The Bible reminds us in [Psalm 139:7-12](#) of the question posed by the Psalmist: *"7 Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? 8 If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. 9 If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, 10 even there your*

hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. 11 If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me," 12 even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you."

That means that His presence is with us always.

- ✓ Joana in the belly of the whale found God's mercy
- ✓ Job – In his calamities found help from God
- ✓ David as he fled from Absalom – received great counsel; and
- ✓ God was with the children of Israel as a Pillar or Fir by Night and a Pillar and Cloud by day

F. SOMETIMES THE ANSWER FROM THE LORD WILL DEPEND ON HOW QUICKLY YOU CRY OUT TO HIM FOR HELP

If you wait to seek help elsewhere from every other source you know, or to do everything according to your human powers, or even to wait until a Prophet/Pastor prays for us, before coming to the Lord for help, your help might be delayed. This is not to say that there is not a time/place for seeking help from Pastors/Elders, or that it negates the advice in the Word of the Lord for *the laying hands by the elders*. It only encourages us to have a personal relationship with God.

See the story of Peter walking on water:

In [Matthew 14:29](#), the Bible records that when Peter *"...saw the strength of the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink, (immediately he became afraid) he cried out, "Lord, save me!"*

Peter's call for help was immediate and help came to him instantaneously from Jesus.

Also see the story of the Centurion, who told Jesus to say the Word from where he was and not wait until he comes to his home – his servant was healed immediately. In [Matthew 8:8](#) He said to Jesus, *"Lord, I am not worthy for You to come under my roof, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed."*

Compare that with the woman with the issue of blood, (although with great faith), waited for 12 years, going from one doctor to another before coming to the Lord – her help was delayed for 12 years. [Mark 5:25-26](#).

Mary and Martha's help was delayed for four 4 days, while they insisted on Jesus coming to their home to heal Lazarus.

G. THE OCCURRENCE OF A STORM IN YOUR LIFE IS AN INDICATION THAT GOD IS ABOUT TO DO SOMETHING GREAT IN YOUR LIFE

The enemy sends a storm to stop something great which God is about to do in your life. Sometimes, a challenging time at work is, for example, an opportunity for you to prove yourself and gain promotion. But if you do not see it as such, you will miss your opportunity and the promotion it presented. Most people can attest that after they were made redundant from their job, they went on to do bigger and better things in future.

But remember, GOD is in the Storm:

Please remember that the will of God must be done and at His appointed time.

The storm which came to the Disciple on the boat happened after Jesus told them (in [Mark 4:35](#)) *"Let us cross over to the other side"*, meaning to the Gadarenes, the country where the demon-possessed man was living in the grave yard ([Mark 5](#)). Satan's plan was to stop Jesus from coming to restore the demon-possessed man.

But God's help come at His appointed time.

✓ [Mark 5:8 & 13](#) *"For Jesus had already declared, "Come out of this man, you unclean spirit!"*

- ✓ ¹³ *So Jesus gave them permission. The evil spirits came out of the man and entered the pigs, and the entire herd of about 2,000 pigs plunged down the steep hillside into the lake and drowned in the water."*

The devil will not stop us fulfilling our God-ordained purpose in life. In Jesus name.

H. MOST OF THE TIME IT WILL BE HARD TO HEAR GOD IN THE STORM

Sometime, amid our storm, we become deaf to what God is saying, especially in a prolonged storm. This may be because we expect God to display His wonders in the exact way in which we had experienced Him in the past.

Concerning Prophet Elijah, in [1 Kings 19:11-13](#) the Bible records, *"¹¹The LORD said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by." Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not **in** the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not **in** the earthquake. ¹²After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not **in** the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. ¹³When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. Then a voice said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"*

It may seem a contradiction to have heard me say repeatedly today that God is in the Storm and yet read from that portion of the Bible. I believe that the Bible did not mean that God was not present with Elijah; it cannot be the case because we know that God is Omnipresent.

To understand this point, see another version of the Bible which says,

[1 Kings 19:11-13 \(ERV\)](#) *"... The wind caused the mountains to break apart. It broke large rocks in front of the LORD. But that wind was not the LORD. After that wind, there was an earthquake. But that earthquake was not the LORD. ¹² After the earthquake, there was a fire. But that fire was not the LORD. After the fire, there was a quiet, gentle voice.^[b]"*

This is simply saying that sometimes we are so busy doing elaborate things, yet the Spirit of God is not in what we are doing. The best way for me to explain this, is to take for example, a charismatic preacher who is very animated and tries too hard to mesmerise his congregation into giving a lot of offering and fails to teach the congregation what the Word of God really says. Such a Preacher may preach from the Pulpit, but as the preaching did not conform to the Word of God, God will not be in the preaching.

Elijah who had called down fire and went on to kill all 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of Ashtoreth, could not see or recognise God when he faced his own personal battle in his own isolation.

That brings me to my last point.

I. IT IS MUCH MORE DIFFICULT TO PREACH/MINISTER TO YOURSELF IN YOUR OWN PERSONAL STORM

It may sound strange, but it happened that at times people find it extremely difficult to perform to their optimum in their area of spiritual calling when faced by, or are dealing with, their own personal storm; they may find it easier dealing with similar storm in the lives of other people than for themselves or their family members.

Take for example, King David, who is undoubtedly the greatest battle warrior in the Bible, having to run from his son, Absalom, (mere Absalom) to the wilderness. It does not make any sense. But that is the danger of the storm of life – it hits us at our weakest hour, when we have exhausted much of our strength fighting different battles.

May God Almighty renew our strength that we may stand and fight our own battles, in Jesus name. May God renew our leader's strength bad the fight other's battles. In Jesus name.

But remember, GOD is in the Storm:

IN CONCLUSION, REMEMBER THAT GOD IS ALWAYS IN YOUR STORM

In [2 Samuel 15:31](#), the Bible says that when *"... David had been told, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." So David prayed, "LORD, turn Ahithophel's counsel into foolishness."*

As we have been reminded earlier, in [1 Corinthians 10:13 \(ESV\)](#), the Bible says that *"...with the temptation He will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it."*

Therefore, my prayer for us today is that the Faithful God we serve will fulfil His Word, that with every storm we face He will also provide us with a solution so that we may be able to endure the storm. In Jesus name.

Finally, I pray according to [Isaiah 40:31](#) which says ³¹*"...they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.*

May they Lord renew your strength that you may not be weary or faint. In Jesus name.

AMEN.

Brother Theo