

Civil peace

[Experience](#), [Peace](#)



Civil Peace Chinua Achebe The short story “ Civil Peace” by Chinua Achebe is about a man named Jonathan Iwegbu, his wife Maria and his three surviving children. Chinua Achebe’s emphasis in his short story is how Jonathan and his family are trying to get on with their lives after the Civil War in Nigeria. Moreover, there is a phrase that Jonathan says several times through his story, “ nothing puzzles God”. What does Jonathan mean when he says this? The story starts off with Jonathan realizing how lucky he is to have survived the war along with his wife and three of his four children, one of his sons did not survive. He also mentions that his old bicycle which he had buried in the ground a year earlier just needed a little greasing and was able to be used again. This is also where Jonathan first uses the phrase “ Nothing puzzles God”, (page 29).

I think that in this part of the story Jonathan means that although his bicycle had been buried in the ground for a year all that it needed to work again was a little oil. Most people may have thought that the bicycle would have been no good or puzzled by the fact that it worked, but God knew that it would be okay, so Jonathan places his faith in God, “ Nothing puzzles God”. Jonathan immediately put his bicycle to use as a taxi to earn money. He then mentions that he makes the journey to Enugu and when he arrives he finds another miracle. His little house is still standing, “ he discovers that miraculously his own modest home is intact”, Dameron Charles, “ Chinua Achebe”, A Reader's Companion to the Short Story in English, paragraph 15. He again uses the phrase “ nothing puzzles God”. Jonathan talks about the fact that just two houses away a huge concrete structure is no longer there, but his tiny little house has survived.

As this point, I think Jonathan means that despite the war and hardship a small house withstood the effects of the war and Jonathan and his family had a place to return to. Jonathan after fixing his home opens a palm-wine bar for soldiers and people who had a lot of money. He opens this bar rather than going back to work as a miner. Jonathan talks of receiving twenty pounds from the treasury which he received for turning in rebel money and how he felt like it was Christmas because he had so much money. He attracts the attention of thieves who show up at his home that night to steal the money. Jonathan explains how he is usually a heavy sleeper but on this night he hears every noise. He finally falls asleep and is awakened by knocking at the door.

Jonathan and his wife scream for the police and for their neighbors but no one comes to help them. The thieves want one hundred pounds, but Jonathan tells them that he only has the twenty pounds that he had received from the treasury. Jonathan agrees to hand over the twenty pounds and the thieves leave. When Jonathan tells people of the robbery the next morning, he again uses the phrase “ Nothing puzzles God”, (page 34). I believe that Jonathan means that with everything that has happened, the war, his son's death, his bicycle being recovered, his house still standing, and finally the robbery that God has a plan for everything and although we may not understand what that plan is God does and therefore nothing puzzles God. He is a humble man, “ He is a modern, and modest, hero, a rural counterpoint to the doomed Gladys”. Dameron Charles, “ Chinua Achebe”, A Reader's Companion to the Short Story in English, paragraph 15.

Chinua Achebe is aware of Jonathan's feelings and he knows about his suffering and of his family members. However, the writer mentioned that Jonathan has a strong faith of God. Moreover, Jonathan always keeps his optimistic view of life and that is very important for all readers.