

A lonely mind with a heavy burden: hope in the giver

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Hope; it holds the potential to drive a man insane, feeding on any optimism one possesses, building up and growing larger until reality tears it down. However, It can also be a marvelous state of mind, allowing one to do things they never thought possible. Without the hope that inspired a man to sail past the edge of the world, a vastly-uncharted land would not have been found, even if it was thought to be India at the time. Without the hope that pulled on the heartstrings of the settlers of this new land, the United States may not truly be the land of the free. Within a mass amount of calculations and scientific theory, it was hope that drove human beings to set foot on a celestial object that once could only be viewed from hundreds of thousands of miles away. This theme of hope flourishes through the pages of Lois Lowry's novel *The Giver*, illustrated through the tone and symbols that appear through the characters experiences.

Lois Lowry struck emotional tones and ideas, using descriptive situations to allow the reader to connect to the scenarios Jonas, the protagonist, found himself in. A bitter tone reveals itself as the story unfolds into a black-and-white world, quite literally. Jonas was the only one that was able to see color after becoming the Giver. " They were satisfied with their lives which had none of the vibrance his own was taking on. And he was angry at himself, that he could not change that for them." The author almost uses some sort of foreshadowing, saying that Jonas is not able to accomplish his wish of sharing his wonderful gift. This not only shows hope within Jonas himself, but also brings out hope in the reader. The tone forces the reader to place themselves where Jonas is; the only person that has the knowledge of the past, experiencing everything and carrying the memories on, from the

awesome to the awful. “ The worst part of holding the memories is not the pain. It’s the loneliness of it. Memories need to be shared” (Lowry 154). The tone represents the pain and anguish Jonas is experiencing, and the hope that one day the world might be as it was before. He had to carry the weight of all of mankind that came before him, he alone was burdened with the emotions and knowledge from the past. After being exposed to the real world, there was no way that he could go back, and he questioned how those around him could really live without the full experiences that come with being human.

The aspiration of sharing the memories with the world is not the only source of hope, but the small baby Gabriel. Being one of many symbols to appear throughout the work, Lowry signifies the theme of hope through baby Gabriel. As the world around Jonas becomes more and more complex and intricate, his hope for Gabe to experience the full wonder of the world expands and thrives. “ ‘ Gabe?’ The newchild stirred slightly in his sleep. Jonas looked over at him. ‘ There could be love’ ” (Lowry 128). Not even capable of expressing the emotion of love, the society around Jonas is blind to the feelings he is experiencing. Just as Jonas was reborn when the memories of the past were shown to him, Baby Gabriel is fresh to the earth, untouched. The main motivation quickly becomes Gabe, for he is a sign of new hope in the world and the potential of change. “ ‘ Things could change Gabe,’ Jonas went on, “ Things could be different. I don’t know how, but there must be some way for things to be different’ ” (Lowry 128). Gabe changed Jonas’s outlook on the whole entire situation. Before, there was no

hope in bringing all the wonder of the former world back to civilization, but Gabe brought a new ambition. The child was new to the world, he had not been exposed to the blandness of controlled life that everyone else in the community experienced. He was an opportunity to start anew.

As Lois Lowry illustrates through symbols and tone, the theme of hope appears countlessly throughout *The Giver*. Although hope has its ups and downs, it can bring about great things. It has the potential to motivate oneself while all odds look down upon them. It can reveal and enlarge any small opportunities of light in a world of darkness. It allows one to take the leap, ignoring the chance of failure or consequences that come with it. Without hope, one could not truly live.