



July 01, 2022

I Hear Thunder

Warm hellos friends, brethren, co-workers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God from here on the Gulf Coast. My wife and I pray and hope this finds you doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

We've had a very dry beginning of the summer here in the Eastern Shore area. It reminded me of being in Montería, Cúcuta, or Cartagena Colombia. The difference, is usually while I've been in these areas it rains a little.

Over the last few weeks, our ground became hard, the grass turned yellow to brown, and leaves began to prematurely fall to the ground. Even for those who irrigate lawns it was clear we needed moisture from above, and soon.

I awoke early morning at the beginning of the week, well before my normal time to rise, to an unfamiliar sound that I had not heard for a while this summer...thunder and then rain! It brought to mind something I'd like to share with you all this evening.

Society is learning that humans need and desire a great amount of compassion. The problem is, they often ignore such.

I remember in my post graduate studies having to carefully study and research the concept of compassion when it came to effective counseling. Over the decades I find that one of the greatest needs in serving others is "compassion" when counseling and encouraging. That need has not lessened as the years march on.

I am reminded of the occasion when Christ and His disciples journeyed to Jerusalem.

On the way, they planned to rest at a Samaritan village. The group sent

messengers ahead to arrange accommodations, but the village refused to be cooperative. Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem, but the Samaritans wanted nothing to do with the trip, because of *their hatred for the Jews*.

The disciples with Christ were very angry! These villagers refused Jesus! What? (Luke 9:54) *“Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven and destroy them?!”*

James and John, nicknamed “the sons of thunder” were enthusiastic for what they believed. No one doubted their enthusiasm, however, they lacked a very important ingredient: the compassion that comes from God’s Holy Spirit.

I’ve noticed an interesting phenomenon over the last few years. The more uncertain times become, stress, anxiety, and anger grow. Compassion and patience, not so much.

Sometimes it seems we all can be more inclined to be like the sons of thunder, than compassionate Christians.

Compassion in the world faces extinction. (Romans 1:29-31) We see a picture of the days we now live in. II Timothy 3:2-3 says in those last days people will refuse to love others or forgive them.

The clapping of the thunder, reminded me of the importance of having compassion for our fellow human beings around us...

Do we want God’s Kingdom so badly, that we forget to pray for mercy and compassion on those who refuse to obey Him?

Do we pray, “God if there by any other way, please help these folks who don’t know you to turn to you” or “May they not suffer as harshly as some are”.

The sound of thunder brought this need for compassion to the forefront of my mind.

As we enter this Sabbath...reflect on this with me, will you?

Arms up friends! Our prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Please do pray for us as well.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Hoefker', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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