

GOD IS LONG-SUFFERING

2 PETER 3:9

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

Additional Reading: Exodus 34:5–9; Psalm 86:15; Joel 2:12–13; Romans 5:8

When we think of the term “long-suffering,” we usually simplify it to the word “patient.” We think that God’s patience is much like our own and that He is simply waiting. But long-suffering means so much more than patience—it means that God is slow to anger. On the other side of His patience is wrath.

Throughout the Old Testament, the people of Israel recount time and time again that the Lord is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. They recognized just how deep sin is buried in the human heart yet how God perseveres in His goodness and love. The Israelites bounced back and forth between worshiping God and falling away from Him. They saw firsthand just how slow He was to anger. His long-suffering nature does not last forever, but He endures longer than we can imagine.

We learn in 2 Peter 3 that God’s promise of judgment and redemption will certainly come to pass. Even within that promise, He does not wish that anyone would suffer the fullness of His

anger. God is just and merciful at the same time. As believers, we have benefited from God's undeserved goodness that leads us to salvation and through life transformation. He gives us the promise of the new heavens and new earth.

We believers should not forget that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8). He has been long-suffering for our sake and continues to endure for nonbelievers. While others who don't know Christ are still in their sin, we are called to bring the gospel hope to them. Repentance and forgiveness are gifts for everyone all over the world, no matter their past or current situations. It's not our job to save others, but it is a privilege to share the truth of God's hope with them.

When we grasp what it means for God to be long-suffering, it changes how we approach non-Christians. We learn to persevere in those relationships as we generously share our faith and love.

**BECAUSE GOD IS LONG-SUFFERING,
WE CAN PERSEVERE IN SHARING THE
GOSPEL OF GOD'S MERCY AND GRACE.**

Notes

Reflect

What specific things in your life has God been long-suffering toward? How have you responded?

What would it look like for you to be long-suffering? How would that impact your relationships?



PRAY

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

2 PETER 3:9

Father, You've displayed Your patience in Your word and in my life. No one can show mercy and steadfast love like You do. Your example of patience is demonstrated on the cross where Your Son died for the sins of everyone, even those who would not accept Him. Even when I sin, You give me grace to repent because You are a good Father. I ask that Your Holy Spirit would fill me with the gift of long-suffering to show patience to others in the same way You have been patient with me. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.