

Resonate

BIBLE STUDY

**“GOD’S GREATEST HITS:
RIGHT HERE WAITING”**

Long-suffering is defined as *Patiently enduring wrongs or difficulties*. God is long-suffering toward us. This week I hope we will all come to praise the Lord for His long-suffering toward us, the ones who wronged Him.



Today's Scripture:
Nehemiah 9:5-31

The Word

Today is going to involve a lot of Scripture reading. The passage gives an overview of Israel's physical, emotional, and spiritual history. As you read, note all the marvelous things God did for His people. Also, let the people's reaction speak to you.

Nehemiah 9:5-31

⁵ *"Stand up and praise the LORD your God, who is from everlasting to everlasting. "*

"Blessed be your glorious name, and may it be exalted above all blessing and praise. ⁶ You alone are the LORD. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship you.

⁷ *"You are the LORD God, who chose Abram and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and named him Abraham. ⁸ You found his heart faithful to you, and you made a covenant with him to give to his descendants the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Jebusites and Girgashites. You have kept your promise because you are righteous.*

⁹ *"You saw the suffering of our forefathers in Egypt; you heard their cry at the Red Sea. ¹⁰ You sent miraculous signs and wonders against Pharaoh, against all his officials and all the people of his land, for you knew how arrogantly the Egyptians treated them. You made a name for yourself, which remains to this day. ¹¹ You divided the sea before them, so that they passed through it on dry ground, but you hurled their pursuers into the depths, like a stone into mighty waters. ¹² By day you led them with a pillar of cloud, and by night with a pillar of fire to give them light on the way they were to take.*

¹³ *"You came down on Mount Sinai; you spoke to them from heaven. You gave them regulations and laws that are just and right, and decrees and commands that are good. ¹⁴ You made known to them your holy Sabbath and gave them commands, decrees and laws through your servant Moses. ¹⁵ In their hunger you gave them bread from heaven and in their thirst you brought them water from the rock; you told them to go in and take possession of the land you had sworn with uplifted hand to give them.*

¹⁶ *"But they, our forefathers, became arrogant and stiff-necked, and did not obey your commands. ¹⁷ They refused to listen and failed to remember the miracles you performed among them. They became stiff-necked and in their rebellion appointed a leader in order to*

return to their slavery. But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love. Therefore you did not desert them,¹⁸ even when they cast for themselves an image of a calf and said, 'This is your god, who brought you up out of Egypt,' or when they committed awful blasphemies.

¹⁹ "Because of your great compassion you did not abandon them in the desert. By day the pillar of cloud did not cease to guide them on their path, nor the pillar of fire by night to shine on the way they were to take. ²⁰ You gave your good Spirit to instruct them. You did not withhold your manna from their mouths, and you gave them water for their thirst. ²¹ For forty years you sustained them in the desert; they lacked nothing, their clothes did not wear out nor did their feet become swollen.

²² "You gave them kingdoms and nations, allotting to them even the remotest frontiers. They took over the country of Sihon king of Heshbon and the country of Og king of Bashan. ²³ You made their sons as numerous as the stars in the sky, and you brought them into the land that you told their fathers to enter and possess. ²⁴ Their sons went in and took possession of the land. You subdued before them the Canaanites, who lived in the land; you handed the Canaanites over to them, along with their kings and the peoples of the land, to deal with them as they pleased. ²⁵ They captured fortified cities and fertile land; they took possession of houses filled with all kinds of good things, wells already dug, vineyards, olive groves and fruit trees in abundance. They ate to the full and were well-nourished; they reveled in your great goodness.

²⁶ "But they were disobedient and rebelled against you; they put your law behind their backs. They killed your prophets, who had admonished them in order to turn them back to you; they committed awful blasphemies. ²⁷ So you handed them over to their enemies, who oppressed them. But when they were oppressed they cried out to you. From heaven you heard them, and in your great compassion you gave them deliverers, who rescued them from the hand of their enemies.

²⁸ "But as soon as they were at rest, they again did what was evil in your sight. Then you abandoned them to the hand of their enemies so that they ruled over them. And when they cried out to you again, you heard from heaven, and in your compassion you delivered them time after time.

²⁹ "You warned them to return to your law, but they became arrogant and disobeyed your commands. They sinned against your ordinances, by which a man will live if he obeys them. Stubbornly they turned their backs on you, became stiff-necked and refused to listen. ³⁰ For many years you were patient with them. By your Spirit you admonished them through your prophets. Yet they paid no attention, so you handed them over to the neighboring peoples. ³¹ But in your great mercy you did not put an end to them or abandon them, for you are a gracious and merciful God.

Verse 5-31: Let's review all that God had done for His people: created them, chose Abraham to be the father of their nation, released them from slavery, parted the Red Sea, led them in the desert with a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire, spoke to them from heaven, gave them just laws, created the Sabbath, fed them, gave them water from the rock, allowed them military victory, sustained them, kept their clothes from wearing out

and their feet from swelling in the desert, gave them a country of their own, made them as numerous as the stars.

Imagine all of these gifts! How did the people respond? They were arrogant and stiff-necked, and disobedient. Besides that, they also ignored God, forgot His blessings, were rebellious, and committed idolatry. They even killed the very prophets that God had sent to warn them. They were blasphemous and evil.

So, what would you do with these people? Forget them? Abandon them? Let them suffer as you laugh? Thankfully, God is in charge while we are not. This was the response of God:

Nehemiah 9:17

But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love. Therefore you did not desert them...

To sum it up, God is a God of long suffering. He is patient with us even when we do wrong to Him. Did that mean that the people were walking all over God? By all means, no. God did punish them by allowing other nations to have military victories against them. But this only happened after warning upon warning. Then, when the people learned their lesson, they cried out to Him and God helped them out of their distress. By the way, He helped them knowing they would be rebellious against Him again. God is long-suffering.

Application

The long-suffering of God has been shown to you as well. Thank Him for that.
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How are you like the Israelites?

How does your sin look when you view it through the lens of the long-suffering of God?

How have you received the benefits of God's attribute of long-suffering?



The Word

Today's Scripture:
1 Timothy 1:13-17

We do not deserve the long-suffering, or the patience, of God. Yet, He gives it anyway. The long-suffering attribute of God benefits us yet that is not its ultimate purpose. The main reason for the patience shown by God to us is for the God to be glorified in us.

1 Timothy 1:15-17

¹⁵Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. ¹⁶But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life. ¹⁷Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Verse 15: The Apostle Paul wrote these words. He knew why Christ came to earth. His main objective was to save us. The cross was the goal of His life. He knew we needed intervention and we could not help ourselves. Paul profoundly realized the truth of this statement. He knew what he was. He knew what he had done. He knew what he deserved. In fact, earlier in the letter he described his life before Christ:

1 Timothy 1:13-14

¹³Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. ¹⁴The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

Paul blasphemed the Name of Christ. Paul persecuted Christians, to the point of death. Paul was violent in nature. Despite his actions toward Jesus and His followers, God did not strike Paul down. Instead, the long-suffering of God came into play until a moment in time when the grace of God would be poured out onto Paul.

Verse 16: The display of God's patience in Paul's life was an encouragement to new believers. They felt that if Paul who had been so opposed to Christ could receive eternal mercy, then they could be confident that their salvation was secure. In other words, "If God could have long-suffering towards someone like Paul, then I believe He can show that patience to me if He is willing."

Not only was it an example to new believers about the patience of God leading to salvation but also the patience of God in sanctification. The word "sanctification" is defined as *the process of God's grace by which the believer is separated from sin and becomes dedicated to God's righteousness. Accomplished by the Word of God (John*

17:7) and the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:3-4), sanctification results in holiness, or purification from the guilt and power of sin. In other words, living more and more in God's ways and less and less like the world's ways. Paul wrote in verse 15 "I am the worst", referring to sinners. The word "am" is present tense. He is not saying that before conversion he was terrible but now he is perfect. Paul still recognized that he sinned and that he still was in need of God's patience. He wanted this, also, to be an example to new believers. God's long-suffering is evident before, during, and after our belief of Christ as our Savior. His patience continues in our lives.

What does this truth mean to us? For one, we can stop living in fear. I have a friend who whenever she does something that she thinks is really bad says, "I'm going to burn". Also, whenever something bad happens to her she thinks it must be related to past sins committed years ago. She lives with a weight that keeps her from this truth: God is long-suffering. He is patient with us even when we do wrong. He knew we would sin against Him. That is why Christ came with the mission to save sinners. We did not surprise Him by failing. He knew we would. He loves us still. Second, we need to live to display the glory of God. Refer back to verse 17.

Verse 17: Christ came to save sinners. When the long-suffering of God is shown in our lives because we receive eternal life instead of eternal destruction, God receives the glory. When the long-suffering of God is shown in our lives, because we sin, but He still shows us mercy, God receives the glory. When the long-suffering of God is shown in our lives and others recognize it and also believe to receive eternal life, God receives the glory. We need to be aware of the work of God's long-suffering in our lives so that we may give Him the glory!

Application

God's long-suffering has been shown, is shown, and will be shown in your life. Thank God for this amazing truth.
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How is the long-suffering attribute of God related to salvation?

How is the patience of God demonstrated in your personal life?

How can you give God glory for the display of His long-suffering in your life?



Today's Scripture:

Jonah 1:1-3; 3:1-5, 10; 4:1-11

The Word

One day I was riding in a car with a friend. We passed by an adult book store. She said, "hold on" and then whispered a prayer. I asked her what she was doing. She told me that she was praying for that place to burn down. I remember thinking, "Why not prayer for the salvation of the people who own it. Then, they would close the business. For it to just burn, they would receive insurance and possibly build another one. No one's life would be eternally changed." Thankfully, I kept my thoughts to myself for I may have started out sarcastically by calling her, "Jonah". The prophet Jonah, also, did not have an understanding of the long-suffering attribute of God.

Jonah 1:1-3

¹ The word of the LORD came to Jonah son of Amittai: ² "Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me."

³ But Jonah ran away from the LORD and headed for Tarshish. He went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for that port. After paying the fare, he went aboard and sailed for Tarshish to flee from the LORD.

Verse 1-3: Jonah was a Hebrew prophet that had been asked by God to go to Nineveh. He was to confront their wicked ways. The city of Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrian Empire. They were cruel people, known for violence and torture. They were a threat to the nation of Israel. They were a pagan culture which reveled in their evil ways. Jonah did not want to go, he went in the opposite direction.

Through a series of events God brought Jonah back to Nineveh. Jonah began to preach the message of the Lord.

Jonah 3:1-5

¹ Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time: ² "Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you."

³ Jonah obeyed the word of the LORD and went to Nineveh. Now Nineveh was a very important city—a visit required three days. ⁴ On the first day, Jonah started into the city. He proclaimed: "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overturned." ⁵ The Ninevites believed God. They declared a fast, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth.

Verse 1-5: The truth of God was proclaimed and the people repented. They believed God and turned from their wicked ways. How did God respond?

Jonah 3:10

¹⁰ When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction he had threatened.

God gave them compassion. During their times of wickedness, He had shown His long-suffering by not destroying them. He had sent them warning about impending judgment and the people changed their ways. If that is how God responded, what did Jonah do?

Jonah 4:1

¹ But Jonah was greatly displeased and became angry.

Verse 1: Jonah did not celebrate this amazing spiritual victory. He did not rejoice that lives had been eternally changed. He was not excited that the “adult book store had not burned” but that instead they just closed shop. He was mad. Who was he mad at? He was angry with God.

Jonah 4:2-3

² He prayed to the LORD, "O LORD, is this not what I said when I was still at home? That is why I was so quick to flee to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity. ³ Now, O LORD, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live."

Verse 2-3: Sometimes, the compassion, grace, long-suffering, and love of the Lord toward others makes us angry. We want to see others punished for their wrong especially if they have victimized us. We want them to “burn” instead of being saved. We hope for the worst to happen to them. We rejoice over their misfortunes. It is not always the most terrible of things, but we relish when they are embarrassed, or they have financial troubles, or their children make poor choices. We smile when others talk bad about them and do not mind joining in the conversation. We are so much like Jonah. We get upset when things go right for our enemies. God asks us the same question, He asked the prophet.

Jonah 4:4

⁴ But the LORD replied, "Have you any right to be angry?"

Verse 4: We are also the beneficiaries of the long-suffering of God. How can we be angry when others receive His patience? We are called to present the truth of God to this world. Are we to be upset when they receive it? Are we that far removed from the heart of God? We see the evil in others. We look at them from a distance. My friend saw the wicked bookstore, but she did not know the name of the owner, when he was born, his heartaches, his failures, his secrets. She just saw his gross sin. Can you imagine if God only saw the sin hanging on us? What if He had not looked past our

gross sin? We would not have salvation. But God shows His long-suffering to us for He chooses to be acquainted with us.

Jonah 4:11

11 But Nineveh has more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left, and many cattle as well. Should I not be concerned about that great city?"

Verse 11: God knew the people. He was not far removed. He loved them for He knew them. Next time we want to see someone “burn”, pray to God that He will help us see that person through His eyes. Maybe then we can love them enough to reach out to them so that we can rejoice when they receive salvation.

Application

Confess any “Jonah” tendencies in your life. Ask God to give you His heart for people.

Why do we want others to be judged?

How do we “run away” from God in His request that we proclaim to others their need for repentance?

What causes us to question the Lord’s long-suffering with others?

What person or group of people do you desire to see punished instead of receiving mercy? This group may not be known to you personally. How will you begin to work on changing your attitude towards them? (Please remember, their sin is still wrong. But we do not have the right to question God’s long-suffering in their lives.)



The Word

Today's Scripture:

Segments from the book of Matthew

There are a group of men in the Bible who constantly amaze me. I like to refer to them as the "Dumb Disciples". I know that is not usually the title they receive. We often refer to them as saints and apostles, which they were. Yet, in so doing, we often forget that these were real men. We have put them on display as those who have done great things for God, which they did. But we need to zero in on their defeats as well. These guys did the dumbest things. Look at just a few examples:

Lack of faith

Matthew 8:23-27

²³Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him. ²⁴Without warning, a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping.

²⁵The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!"

²⁶He replied, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm.

²⁷The men were amazed and asked, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!"

Lack of understanding

Matthew 15: 15:15-16

¹⁵Peter said, "Explain the parable to us."

¹⁶"Are you still so dull?" Jesus asked them.

Lack of commitment

Matthew 19:10

¹⁰The disciples said to him, "If this is the situation between a husband and wife, it is better not to marry."

Lack of sensitivity

Matthew 19:13

¹³Then little children were brought to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked those who brought them.

Lack of compassion

Matthew 26:6-9

⁶While Jesus was in Bethany in the home of a man known as Simon the Leper, ⁷a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, which she poured on his head as he was reclining at the table.

⁸When the disciples saw this, they were indignant. "Why this waste?" they asked. ⁹"This perfume could have been sold at a high price and the money given to the poor."

Lack of discipline

Matthew 26:40-41

⁴⁰Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. ⁴¹"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."

Lack of loyalty

Matthew 26:50, 56

⁵⁰...Then the men stepped forward, seized Jesus and arrested him.

⁵⁶...Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

To sum it up, the disciples were lacking. These are just examples from one gospel, I didn't pull out accounts from Mark, Luke, and John! Over the three year period of the earthly ministry of Christ, these guys goofed up multiple times. Yet, at the end, eleven out of the twelve (Judas committed suicide) were commissioned by Christ to spread the gospel throughout the world.

Matthew 28:18-20

¹⁸Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Look at the men that Jesus is sending out. They had sinned against Jesus. They had wronged one another. Yet, Jesus showed them long-suffering. He never said, "That's it. I can't take you guys anymore. You drive me crazy. Peter, keep your mouth shut for once. Thomas, quit doubting. John, stop being so moody. I've had it!" Instead, Jesus continued in love towards them. He forgave their sins. He helped them to be better people than they ever thought possible. He taught them, encouraged them, rebuked them, lived with them. He did not abandon them, give up, or walk away. They were lacking everything that Jesus had and He was willing to give them everything they needed.

Do you look at your life and realize that you have done dumb things? You are in good company. We are all dumb disciples. But God shows us His patience. He not only extends this gift to us but He asks us to extend it to others. The dumb disciples were now asked to disciple others! The same is true for us. Maybe we can write a book "Long suffering for Dummies!"

Application

Rejoice in our Savior, Jesus Christ, who is eternally patient with us!
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In what other ways do you think the long-suffering attribute of Christ was shown to the disciples during His time on earth?

How can you relate to the "dumb disciples"?

Jesus did not have perfect disciples. Yet, they still did amazing things by the power of God. How could understanding the patience of God enable us to be sent forth into this world?

How can we extend long-suffering to other “dumb disciples”?



Today's Scripture:
2 Peter 3:3-15

The Word

2 Peter 3:3-15

³First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. ⁴They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation." ⁵But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. ⁶By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. ⁷By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

⁸But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. ⁹The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

¹¹Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives ¹²as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. ¹³But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

¹⁴So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. ¹⁵Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him.

Verse 3-4: Christ promised to return. Yet, He left earth 2,000 years ago. People will begin, and have already begun, to question this truth. They will say that there is no change in life. The cycle of life continues: babies are born, they live, they die. Nothing else occurs. There is nothing more beyond the grave. They say this due to their own evil desires of wanting to live for themselves. So, they laugh at anyone who holds onto the hope of eternity.

Verse 5-7: The evidence of creation is overwhelming yet it is suppressed. Why? Because to acknowledge a Creator would be to acknowledge His ways. That is why past judgments, like the flood, are ignored. This leads to refusal to accept the truth that a future judgment is coming. For if people would admit to judgment, then they would become aware of the need to confess sin, this would lead to a need for a Savior. They are refusing to go down the path of eternal life, which leads them onto the path of destruction.

Verse 8-10: The scoffers do not realize that the delay of Christ's coming is for their good. What they mock is really the only possibility for their salvation. On God's calendar, it has only been about two days since He left the earth. He is not being slow by His schedule. He has the perfect time set aside for His return. But His plan displays His patience. His act of long-suffering, even to those who mock Him and His children, is because He desires them to come to repentance. But there will be a specific moment of time for the day of the Lord. Sadly, then it will be too late for people to accept Him as Savior.

Verse 11-13: Since we know about the Day of the Lord, we need to live a life that reflects the truth of His return. We are to look forward to the eternal life that has been granted to us by God. Our actions should be holy and our lives should be godly. Despite the ways other treat us, we are to stand firmly in the truth that Christ will return. Our lives will prove the truth to those who mock us. Hopefully, it will cause others to recognize the long-suffering of the Lord and turn from their wicked ways.

Verse 14-15: We are to be living in a way that looks forward to Christ's return. We do not want to be ashamed of our foolish actions but instead we want to be "caught" living boldly for Him. Each day that the Lord tarries, we can remind ourselves that His patience brought more to salvation. The long-suffering of God = salvation for people. The patience of God is eternally linked to the salvation of God in our lives and in other's as well.

Application

Spend time thanking God for His long-suffering towards you which led to your salvation. Each morning realize that Christ could return at any moment so live like you believe this truth. If the Lord tarries, thank Him each night for the new people added to His eternal kingdom.

How are we already seeing the evidences of scoffers in our day who disbelieve the return of Christ, God's creation of the world, and also His judgments?

How does looking forward to the day of God help us to live holy and godly lives?
How does understanding the long-suffering of God enable you to live for Him?

What have you learned about the patience of God?

How will you apply yourself to receive knowledge?

Who can you pray for to receive more of the knowledge of God?