

The Patience of God

2 Peter 3:8-9

2 Peter 3:8-9 (NASB)

⁸“But do not let this one *fact* escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day.

⁹The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.”

God’s seemingly slow reaction to sin is often puzzling to believers. Why doesn’t He immediately punish those who violate His principles? The answer is found in today’s passage—the Lord is patient so that all people have an opportunity to repent ([2 Peter 3:9](#)).

In our humanness, we at times want people to suffer for wrongdoing. Jonah ran away from his duty to preach in Nineveh, because he expected that if the inhabitants repented, his gracious, compassionate God would relent about destroying the city. And that is precisely what came to pass. Instead of rejoicing in the Lord’s success, the prophet complained about His treating the Ninevites with patience and mercy ([Jonah 4:2](#)).

Jonah 4:2 (NASB)

²“He prayed to the LORD and said, “Please LORD, was not this what I said while I was still in my *own* country? Therefore, in order to forestall this, I fled to Tarshish, for I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, and one who relents concerning calamity.”

Jonah was angry at God despite the fact that he himself had received divine mercy. (Unpleasant though it was, there are worse forms of discipline than being swallowed and regurgitated by a fish.)

More often than not, believers have ample reason to be thankful that the Lord, unlike human beings, is slow to anger. When we are stubborn and unrepentant, He waits patiently for us to respond to conviction. Discipline is painful to both the recipient and the one carrying it out. God prefers that we see the error of our choices, stop thinking that we’re getting away with sin, and turn back to His righteous path.

The Lord places a high value on repentance and maintaining fellowship. However, His justice demands a penalty. Do not wait for discipline. Instead, do what’s right, and turn your heart toward God.