

The Attributes of God God is Patient...God is Gracious

A clear display of God's patience is His patience with the world and its rebellion against Him. This patience is described in the book of Romans: "*Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance? But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.*" (Rom. 2:4-5).

Bible words and phrases used to describe the patience of God:

"Slow to anger." This is in the Old Testament.

Long-suffering. New Testament, literal. You can find this in the King James translation.

Patience – newer translations such as ESV, NIV, Holman. These translations bring the word across as patience because that's how we talk. No one describes a patient person as a long-sufferer.

For example, in 1 Corinthians 13:4 – Love is *patient*. The literal rendering is: love is *longsuffering*.

The word patient means to endure or to suffer.

To be patient, Biblically, is the ability to endure and exercise restraint when you are provoked.

Patience flows from God's character and is most clearly seen in situations where we would not have the ability to be patient. So, we say this is an attribute of God. God doesn't have to learn patience.

God simply IS patient.

The clearest way to see God's patience is to look at the examples of God demonstrating His patience. Numbers 14:1-19, is a good example of God's patience and it uses the phrase, "slow to anger."

Two things are extremely fascinating with this passage:

1) Moses persuades God by appealing to His patience.

2) Moses is godly in his patience.

God's patience allows time for God's grace to be worked out. Regarding the return of Jesus Christ... *The 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.* 2 Peter 3:9

Recommended Reading on the attributes of God:

A Knowledge of the Holy, A. W. Tozer

The Nature of God, Arthur W. Pink

God, As He Longs For You To See Him, Chip Ingram

None Like Him, Jen Wilkin

Knowing God, J.I. Packer

Home Group Discussion Questions:

- 1) Are you a patient person?
- 2) Are you patient in the way that God is patient?
- 3) Read Numbers 14:1-24 and discuss what you see in this passage.
What does this passage say about God? about people?
What do you make of this story in Numbers 14?
- 4) How is God patient with people? How has God been patient with you?
- 5) What are some things you can do to develop patience?