

From the Pulpit of the Japanese Baptist Church of North Texas  
November 25, 2018

God's Patience  
2 Peter 3:8-13

3:8 But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

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.

3:10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

3:11 Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness,

3:12 waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!

3:13 But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

### **1. Patience of Men**

For anything, we need patience for “waiting.” The Bible teaches us, “Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord.” (James 5:7) The examples of many success story prove this.

Woolworth had opened 4 stores; however, he had closed three of them. Later, he was very successful and had many franchise stores all over the states because he was patient. Admiral Perry was heading to

the North Pole 7 times but failed all. He finally reached it in the 8th time. Edison tried over 1600 materials in order to find the filament. Oscar Hammerstein is famous for “Oscar Award.” His musical “Oklahoma” premier was disaster and the show was closed after 6th performance; however, the show became one of the most popular, and it has been performed 2,248 times. Babe Ruth had hit a home run 714 times; however, he had swing and miss twice more than home runs. He kept his record until Hank Aaron beaten it.

Ulysses Grant was fired from the military because he was drunken during his duty. He started his business but failed. He started the agriculture but failed again. In his 40s, he experienced misery life because he collected and sold the firewood on the road. However, he had never gave up. But he was very patient and became 18th president of the United States.

Senator John McCain passed away on August 25th of this year. He became a war prisoner when his airplane was attached during the Vietnam war. His father was the admiral of the US Navy and the commander chief of the pacific army. Because of that, he was expected to be released early; however, he said, “people who were kept longer need to be released first” and rejected the special consideration. Mr. McCain had serious wound, which might affect on his life but he bore the tortures and threatens, and survived for 5 years and 6 months. Later, he was released and became a politician. Because of his patience, he became a candidate for the US president.

## **2. Patience of Faith**

If patience is necessary for the general community, even more it needs

for faith. In Hebrews 10:36 said, “For you need endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what is promised.” In the Bible, there are numerous numbers of believers who have received promises through patience.

Noah made the ark over the years, become a flood and to draw water, had been confined to be a year ark. It is said that Noah’s ark was about the size of a football coat. It seems quite wide, but there are various kinds of animals and their foods full and Noah's couple and the three sons and their wives lived there, so it must have been cramped life.

When the flood happened, the sky was covered with thick clouds, and the sun was not visible even in the daytime. Rain started from the dark sky like a waterfall, the ground ruptured, and the water overflowed. I think that the more the ark is about to sink, the more swayed it has shaken. Since such day lasted forty days, I think that the year of the ark was felt in 10 years and 20 years as well. Even if the rain stops, the outside is water and water. The ark lost the land to arrive. I wondered what the anxiety was like at that time.

But Noah waited. Wait for the water to draw slowly. Soon the bottom of the Ark arrived on the ground. Noah released the dove three times to make sure that the land was dry. However, Noah still waited a few months on the ark. Noah waited for God to say “get out of the ark.”

In our life, like Noah, there are many cases we can not do anything, and we just have to “wait.” In such a case, we will be testing patience. There is a word, “Do not stop believing five minutes before a miracle happens.” Only a few more when we were patience, the result would

be better, I think everyone would taste such a regret. Noah would have made such a mistake in his long life. But, as a lesson of failure, he waited patiently until God's words were there. And that patience was rewarded, and Noah opened up a new world after the flood.

Abraham took 25 years to obtain Isaac the promised child from receiving God's calling. Abraham failed to wait for God's promises, but he returned to the faith once more. And after patience, he saw the fulfillment of God's promise.

Joseph, sold to Egypt, forced him to be patient for 13 years during the time he was unfortunate. However, his "patience of faith" was rewarded, became the prime minister of Egypt, and Joseph became a savior to his family.

However, no matter how persevering you may not see the results. Everyone probably had such a time. I also had. The problem closed like a big rock in front of me. It seemed like a big rock. Because God said "Push it," I pushed it hard, but the rock did not move by any means. I complained, saying, "God, the rock did not move at all, nothing changed." Then God said, "No, I have changed, I have made your arms stronger by that." My arms of faith became stronger by pushing the rock though the rock stayed there. The problem was not resolved instantly, but God tried to make me a worthy person to tackle the problem.

Romans 4:5-6 said, "...and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, ...." Even with tribulation, if you are patient hope will be born. "Hope is not a disappointment." What a definite word. However, let's not forget that there is "character" between "patience" and "hope" rather than

“patience” to “hope” immediately. ‘Character’ is the qualification that is suitable for a believer. The New Japanese Bible translates it as “knitted character.” The original word’s meaning is “certificate of quality.” After the various products are made at the factory, it is sent to the inspection, and when passing the inspection, it is shipped after being marked as “Passed.” Through patience, God makes believers only in matters of mind and leads to certain hope. “Knitted character” is the irreplaceable fruit that the patience of faith gives.

### **3. God’s Patience**

In this way, God will ask for our patience, but actually God himself is very patient with us. Have you thought about it?

Today’s verses asks us to wait for the Second Coming of Christ patiently. When Peter wrote this letter, Christian was in the midst of persecution. Many Christians were robbed of their wealth, chased out of the town, and became refugees. More believers were imprisoned, tortured and martyred. The troubles came to those who had faith. But, the followers endured the tribulation, lived in faith and hope. The first Christians hoped that Christ will immediately return and they will be saved from the persecution. But the Lord did not return in the generation.

Because people knew that Christians were longing for the Second Coming of Christ, they said, “Where is the promise of his coming?” (2 Peter 3:4) They mocked Christians. Even Christian started asking, “Does the Lord really come again?” They started doubting about the Second Coming of Christ.

After two thousand years from the early church, there is no yet the

Second Coming of Christ. So people came to think that “Christ promised for His Second Coming two thousand years ago, but that promise has already been expired.” But is it really so? Does God’s promise change as time goes by after two thousand years? No, the Word of God never changes. “With the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day” (verse 8) teaches that God’s words remain unchanged. The verse 9 tells us that the Second Coming has not occurred because of God’s patience. “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.”

On the day of the Second Coming, it is the day of salvation for those who love Jesus Christ and have been waiting for Christ to come. But it is the day of judgment for those who are not believe in Him. That day is the day of the final judgment, where our eternity is finalized. A merciful God is waiting patiently and is extending the day of the judgment so that many people can repent and receive the salvation from Christ. Therefore, those who say, “There is no Second Coming after two thousand years now,” are the ones who tramples the love of God because God is waiting for people to be saved for two thousands years with the love which he gave his only Son. (John 3:16)

Jesus Christ willingly took the cross and endured the hardships. By doing so, Christ showed God’s patience with ourselves. We do not have the patience by ourselves. What we need is the love of this God who waits patiently for us. It is the patience that Christ endured for us on our behalf. Second Thessalonians 3: 5 says, “May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ.” Let

us pray this prayer. And let us cultivate our character by patience and be led to the sure hope by our character.

**(Prayer)**

God of patience and comfort, please continually teach us the patience of your love. Please help us to learn the patience of Christ and have it. Through the patience, make us those who have the character which pleases You, and see Your help and blessings in our life. In the name of the Lord Jesus, we pray, Amen.