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# Love is Patient
# 13: 4a



**Love is patient.** This first stroke of the brush shows us that we are to be given a portrait of godly **love** as it finds **itself** amid the sins, evils, and trials of this fallen world. **Love** practices being **patient** (Greek: *makrothumeo,* meaning *longsuffering, refusing to retaliate in anger*). This word is common in the B'rit Chadashah and is used almost exclusively for being **patient** with people, rather than circumstances or events. **Love's patience** is the ability to be inconvenienced or taken advantage of by a person over and over again and yet not be upset or angry. Chrysostom, the early Church father, said, "It is a word which is used of the man who is wronged, and who has it easily in his power to avenge himself but will never do it." **Patience** never retaliates.

Like *agape* **love** itself, the patience spoken of in the B'rit Chadashah was a virtue only among believers. In the Greek world, self-sacrificing **love** and non-avenging **patience** were considered weaknesses. Aristotle, for example, taught that the great Greek virtue was refusal to tolerate insult or injury and to strike back in retaliation for the slightest offense. Vengeance was a virtue. The world has always tended to make heroes of those who fight back, who stand up for their welfare and rights above all else. But **love**, **God's love**, is the very opposite. Its primary concern is for the welfare of *others*, not itself, and it is more willing to be taken advantage of than to take advantage. **Love** does not retaliate. The believer who acts like **Messiah** never takes revenge for being hurt or injured or abused. **He** refuses to **pay back evil for evil (Romans 12:17)**, but if **slapped on the right**

**cheek**, will **let him hit the left cheek also (Matthew 5:39).**

The supreme example of **patience**, is, of course, **God Himself**. It is **ADONAI's patient love** that prevents the world from being destroyed. It is **His patience** and *longsuffering* that allows time for people to be saved: **The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some people think of slowness; on the contrary, He is patient with you; for it is not His purpose that anyone should be destroyed, but that everyone should turn from their sins (Second Peter 3:9).** As **He** was dying on the cross, rejected by those **He** had come to save, **Yeshua** prayed: **Father, forgive them; they don't understand what they are doing (Luke 23:34).**

Robert Ingersoll, the well-known atheist of the last century (1833-1899), often would stop in the middle of his lectures against **God** and say, "I'll give **God** five minuets to strike me dead for the things I've said." He then used the fact that he was not struck dead as proof that **God** did not exist. Theodore Parker, reformer and abolitionist (1810-1860), said of Ingersoll's claim, "And did the gentleman think he could exhaust the patience of the eternal **God** in five minuets?" I wonder how Ingersall is doing now?

Since Adam and Eve first disobeyed **Him** in the Garden, **ADONAI** has been continually wronged and rejected by those **He** made in **His** own image. **He** was rejected and scorned by **His chosen people**, through whom **He** gave the Torah and the revelation of **His** Word, **the very words of God (Romans 3:2).** Yet, through thousands and thousands of years, the eternal **God** has been eternally **patient**. If **the** holy **Creator** is so infinitely **patient** with **His** rebellious creatures, how much more should **His** unholy creatures be **patient** with each other?

One of Abraham Lincoln's earliest political enemies was Edwin M. Stanton. He called Lincoln a "low cunning clown," and "the original gorilla." "It was ridiculous for people to go to Africa to see a gorilla," he would say, "when they could see one easily in Springfield, Illinois (where Lincoln lived at that time)," Lincoln never responded to the slander, but when, as president, he needed a secretary of war, he chose Stanton. When his incredulous friends asked why, Lincoln replied, "Because he is the best man for the job." Years later, as the slain president's body lay in state, Stanton looked into the coffin and said through his tears, "There lies the greatest ruler of men the world has ever seen." His animosity was finally broken by Lincoln's *long-suffering*, non retaliatory spirit. **Patient love** had won.[400]

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, Praise **You** for how **patient You** are! Often when we are wronged, we call out for justice and justice right away. Yet in **Your patience** when **You** are wronged by sinners, **You** continue to **patiently** call them to repentance. **He is being patient toward you -not wanting anyone to perish, but for all to come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9c).** Rather than being hostile and quick to avenge, **You** wait till the right time to punish. **Your patience** of waiting 400 years till the Amorites sin was full is amazing. **Then in the fourth generation they [your seed] will return here – for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete." (Genesis 15:16).** May **You** help us, **Your** children, to follow **Your** example of **patience**. In **Yeshua's** holy name and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*