

October 20, 2019

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Testimony: "Be Patient"

—Until the Lord's Coming—

Text: James 5:7,8

5:7 Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains.

5:8 You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near.

Introduction

Japan has one of its most peaceful eras right now. A war has not occurred for over 74 years and Japan is ranked as the third-largest economy country in the world. Compared with disorderly countries under the war, Japan seems to be peaceful. Of course, people have personal problems and are in the middle of struggles. However, from the worldly point of view, I think that Japan has an extraordinarily peaceful era today.

By the way, human beings are lukewarm and easily **forget the value of peace** when they live in peace. They are tempted by worldly things (pleasure, worldly enjoyment, etc.). They don't consider God and are selfish and think first about themselves rather than God.

Furthermore, they hardly think about the second coming of Jesus Christ.

In fact, Christians who lived 2000 years ago were the same as today.

We studied last time that James said in his epistle, Chapter 5 as below—

5:1 Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming on you.

5:5 You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter.

There were many Jewish merchants who thrived in those days. They turned away from the Gospel of Christ that Paul preached. James gave a warning to people like this, that they should not make light of the second coming of Christ and wait it with patience, that was one of the

most important teachings of Christ.

James teaches that nothing is more important than perseverance. However, perseverance has two meanings: to become patient by controlling by one's own power or becoming patient by God and His encouragement. He is not able to become truly patient for the first time until his heart is broken and becomes humble before God. These two kinds of perseverance are quite different. James' teaching here, "**Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming**" is patience by God's help.

Let's study patience until the Lord's coming (Jesus' second coming).

Main Points

1 . The Reasons that the Second Coming Is Emphasized

1) Jesus' Second Coming

Why was Jesus' second coming emphasized?

① Jesus promised it.

The Bible records that Jesus promised His second coming many times.

John 14:18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

Jesus said many times that He would be crucified, resurrected and returned to God the Father and come to this world again. Christians in early days who saw Jesus with their own eyes firmly believed in His word.

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Why was Jesus' second coming emphasized?

② His second coming should be handed down to posterity.

Jesus was taken up into heaven from Mt. Olive before the crowd. However, it is natural that those who did not directly meet Jesus increased as time went by and some of them did not recognize Jesus straight away.

Forty-six years have passed since I was married, and my sons are now in their forties. Even if I tell a story of 40 years ago, they don't really understand it. Times have completely changed.

Like the days of the Bible, those who hardly believe seemed to appear even though some people

clearly said, "I have met Jesus. He crucified but resurrected and he was taken into heaven before us. Jesus said that He will come again."

As memories of the war are gradually fading, some people attempt to hand down those memories from generation to generation. When those who didn't believe Jesus' second coming increased the disciples seemed to want to emphasize Jesus' second coming and write down the story.

Why was Jesus' second coming emphasized?

③ Jesus' second coming gave comfort and encouragement to those were under persecution.

The days of James, Christians were harshly persecuted. A topic of today's text is **to be patient**. The text deals with suffering from persecution.

In those days, Christianity was persecuted by the Roman Empire. We realize how severely Christians were persecuted by reading the history books.

Christians today are also persecuted. Approximately 50 countries over the world are under persecution and North Korea ranks first among them. (Reported by Open Doors, a mission organization). I became to feel sympathy for the saints who were under persecution and I have published *the Voice of Mission*, a monthly newsletter, since 1970. (Please read the newsletter for the further information.)

For the saints being under persecution, they must have emphasized Jesus' second coming and talked about meeting Him. They must have been given comfort and encouragement through the conversation.

Like this, there are at least three reasons for Jesus' second coming.

Then, how should we live in these days for the second coming?

2) The Reason to Accept the Second Coming

① God's promise never changes.

The things that God wrote in the Bible are established facts, so they never change even a little point. God's promises haven't changed since the olden days. We also believe they will not change at all in future.

The second coming is one of God's great plans and promises. It is included in God's master plan, so it never changes.

② **God is waiting the time to fulfill the plan.**

The Bible records as below—

2 Peter 3:8 But 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.

3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

3:10 But 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 done in it will be laid bare.

3:11 Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives

3:12 as 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.

3:13 But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

3:14 So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.

3:15 Bear 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.

3:16 He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

3:17 Therefore, dear friends, since you have been forewarned, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of the lawless and fall from your secure position.

3:18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

The Bible records **a thousand years are like a day** that is a well-known saying.

Some say it means that already 2000 years passed, and the promise is not true. However, it is a

kind of expression, so, it doesn't mean that a thousand years is exactly one day. If it is, two thousand years are like two days.

It means that we should not lead life as if God's promise is void. We live in the days of science and AI, however, the promise of Jesus' second coming is an unchangeable one. On the contrary, we should believe that as Scripture records, God is slow in keeping His promise so that as many as possible will come to repentance.

Let's study another important point.

③ **The reality of the world exactly follows the Bible.**

2 Peter 3:10 But 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 done in it will be laid bare.

Has Scripture above already been fulfilled? Science has made progress, however, humans has put too much confidence in science and made a bad choice, as a result, as you know, bombs were made and pollution problems have occurred. We should keep in mind that what Scripture records becomes reality.

The most significant sign was that the State of Israel was founded in Palestine in 1948. Jewish people were scattered over the world in A.D. 70. They thought that they would never have their own country anymore. Nevertheless, Israel was really founded. We should not overlook that fact. We should remember that God is alive and holds the key of history and steps into it.

Like this, the Bible promises that God's great plan that Jesus will come again to this world and gives the reasons why they should accept the second coming.

Then what should we do? The important thing is to trust in the word of the Bible.

The Bible encourages as below—

2. Be Patient.

James 5:7 Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains.

Until the Lord's coming refers to the Lord's second coming. Paul often records about **the time of the Lord's second coming** in his epistles.

1Thessalonians 2:19 For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in

the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you?

1Thessalonians 3:13 May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

However, as I mentioned that there was no sign of Jesus' second coming even more than 30 years after death of Jesus. The important thing is to be patient.

5:7 Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains.

The verse above records **the autumn and spring rains**. It is **the early and the latter rains** in Greek. The weather of the Mediterranean littoral is called the Mediterranean climate. The annual precipitation in this area is about 600mm. The first rain refers to the rainfall in autumn (October or November) and the latter rains refers to the rainfall in spring (March or April).

In Palestine, they could not irrigate from the river like Egypt and Mesopotamia, therefore, the crops depended on the amount of the first and the last rains.

The Old Testament records as below—

Deuteronomy 11:10 The land you are entering to take over is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you planted your seed and irrigated it by foot as in a vegetable garden.

11:11 But the land you are crossing the Jordan to take possession of is a land of mountains and valleys that drinks rain from heaven.

11:12 It is a land the LORD your God cares for; the eyes of the LORD your God are continually on it from the beginning of the year to its end.

11:13 So if you faithfully obey the commands, I am giving you today—to love the LORD your God and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul •

11:14 then I will send rain on your land in its season, both autumn and spring rains, so that you may gather in your grain, new wine and olive oil.

11:15 I will provide grass in the fields for your cattle, and you will eat and be satisfied.

The Jewish farmers patiently waited the rains from heaven.

James 5:8 You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near.

James encourages us that as the farmer patiently waited for the rains from heaven, we should be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming was near.

Conclusion

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—Until the Lord's Coming—

We studied the important point to be patient. It is very painful for us to be patient. What should we do under hardship and a painful trial? We need to trust in God's word.

Let's conclude today's message with Scripture below.

5:8 You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near.

* God bless you