

Sabr — patience, and its three kinds

Not a mood you wait for, but a discipline: holding yourself to what is right, away from what is wrong, and steady under what you did not choose.



Three kinds

The scholars divide it in three: patience in obeying Allah, patience in keeping away from sin, and patience under what is decreed.

- The third is the one people mean; the first two are the daily work

the scholars' division · Ibn al-Qayyim, 'Uddat as-Sabirin

Ask for help with it

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اَسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ

"Seek help through patience and prayer. Indeed, Allah is with the patient."

Qur'an 2:153

The test is announced

"We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger, and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits — but give good tidings to the patient."

Qur'an 2:155

What they say

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

Those who, when disaster strikes, say: "Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return." Blessings and mercy are named for them.

Qur'an 2:156-157

At the first blow

الصَّبْرُ عِنْدَ الصَّدْمَةِ الْأُولَى

"Patience is at the first blow." Composure found a week later is easier; this praises the first hour.

Sahih al-Bukhari 1302

No wider gift

وَمَا أُعْطِيَ أَحَدٌ عَطَاءً خَيْرًا وَأَوْسَعَ مِنَ الصَّبْرِ

"No one has been given a gift better or wider than patience."

Sahih al-Bukhari 1469

Reward with no account

"Indeed, the patient will be given their reward without account." Every other deed is weighed; this one is not.

Qur'an 39:10

Either way he gains

"Strange are the ways of a believer: if ease comes he thanks Allah, and that is good for him; if hardship comes he is patient, and that is good for him."

Sahih Muslim, Kitab az-Zuhd wa'r-Raqa'iq

Counsel each other to it

وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ

"...and advised each other to truth and advised each other to patience." One of the four things that save a person from loss.

Qur'an 103:3