

Scrolls of Deeds (Name A'amal)

Allah says in the Qur'an:

“And when the books (of deeds) are spread.” (Surah at-Takweer, 81: 10).

It is one of the important stages of the hereafter and belief in it is incumbent. It is stated in the Qur'an:

“And most surely there are keepers over you, Kiraman katebeen, they know what you do.” (Surah al-Infitar, 82: 10-12).

In another place the two Angels are also referred to as 'Raqeeb' and 'Ateed'. Whatever a man does, or sees, or even intends doing, is noticed and written down by these two Angels. Someone asked Imam (a.s.) as to how could 'Kiraman-Katebeen' know of the intentions (*niyyah*) of people (to perform good or bad deeds), so as to record them.

The Imam (a.s.) replied that, “When a person intends doing a good deed, sweet fragrance emits from his mouth. The Angels smell this fragrance and come to know. Whereas when a person intends doing an evil deed, a foul odor emits from his mouth, and the Angels become aware.” If a person intends doing a good deed, one good deed is written down in his scrolls, and if he performs that intended deed, ten good deeds are written down. Whereas if a person intends doing an evil deed, the same is not written down in his scrolls till he actually performs it. As written in the Qur'an:

“Whoever brings a good deed, he shall have ten like it, and whoever brings an evil deed, he shall be recompensed only with the like of it, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.” (Surah al-An'am, 6: 161).

It is one of the countless mercies of Allah that when a person commits a sin, 'Ateed' tries to enter it in his scrolls, but 'Raqeeb' tells him to wait lest the person may feel ashamed and apologize for his act.

He does not record the deed for five or seven hours. And if within that period the person does not repent, *Ateed* says: “Verily he is shameless,” and then records one evil deed in his scrolls.

It is stated in traditions (*Ahadees*) that every man has two scrolls of deeds, first in which are recorded all good and virtuous deeds, and second in which are recorded all bad and evil ones. All the acts of men are written in it, even to the extent that the air, which he blows out of his mouth to light a fire, is also recorded.

“And everything they have done is in the writings, And everything small and big is written down.” (Surah al-Qamar, 54:52-53)

Shaikh Sadooq relates in “*E’eteqadatul Imamiyah*,” that once the commander of the faithful – Ali (a.s.) passed by some youths who were busy in vain and useless gossip, and were laughing. He (a.s.) said, “Why do you blacken your scrolls (of deeds) with such vain talks”?

They said, “O Master, are these also recorded”? Imam Ali (a.s.) replied, “Yes, and even the breath that you exhale. The reward of removing a thorn or a stone or a skin from the path of other people is also recorded. These small deeds too do not go waste.”

“Come and read my Scrolls”

“Then as for him who is given his book in his right hand, he will say: Lo! read my book, Surely I knew that I shall meet my account. So he shall be in a life of pleasure, in a lofty position.” (Surah al-Haqqah, 69: 19-22).

A child who secures first rank in his school is so excited and happy, that he calls out to his friends “Come and see my result, that I have passed in the first rank.” In the same manner, on the day of Qayamat, a believer (Mo’min) will be given his scrolls in his right hand, and he will call out in excitement: “Lo! Come and read my book. Allah has accepted my prayers (*namaz*), fasts (*siyam*), and other deeds. Come and have a look at them. Surely I knew that I shall meet my account. In the world I was always worried about what would be the outcome of my deeds on the day of Qayamat. Today my accounting is over’.

So he shall be in a life of pleasure. Verily the person will be fortunate, and will remain in eternal bliss in paradise. While the unfortunate child who has failed in his exams, passes through the narrow lanes, hiding from people’s sight with his head bowed down in shame. Sometimes he wishes that he had died, and sometimes he pacifies himself. This will be the state of the evildoers on that day.

“And as for him who is given his book in his left hand he shall say: O would that my book had never been given to me, And I had not known what my account was, O would that it had made an end (of me), My wealth has a wailed me nothing.” (Surah al-Haqqah, 69:25-28)

“And as for him who is given his book behind his back, he shall call for perdition, and enter into burning fire.” (Surah al-Inshiqaq, 84:10-12)

The sinner will be given his scrolls from behind, in a manner that his right hand will be tied with his neck, and his left hand will be stretched behind. The scrolls will then be given in his left hand and it will be said unto him "Read your scrolls." He will say, "How can I see what's behind so as to read." Then his neck will be twisted around. In some narratives it is stated that his neck will be turned around pulling him by the beard. And it will be said unto him, "

Read your book, your own self is sufficient as a reckoner against you this day. (Surah al-Bani Israeel, 17: 14)

He will read his scrolls of deeds and cry out "Sabbora" (perdition)

"Woe to us! What a book is this! It does not omit a small one nor a great one, but numbers them (all), and what they had done they shall find present (there), and your Lord does not deal unjustly with anyone." (Surah al-Kahf, 18:49).

Refusal to accept the Scrolls

It is narrated that many people at that time will refuse to accept what is written in the scrolls, and will say, "O Allah! the deeds and actions written in these scrolls are surely not ours"

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.) says, that at that time Allah will bring forth the Angels (who wrote the scrolls) to testify. They will say, "O Allah! Verily these are Your own Angels and will testify in Your favor, while the reality is that we have not committed these acts," and they will swear upon it.

As said in the Qu'ran:

"On the day that Allah will raise them up all, then they will swear to Him as they swear to you." (Surah al-Mujadilah, 58: 18)

And when their shamelessness reaches this stage, Allah will set a seal on their tongues, and their bodily parts will scream and testify against them.

"On that day We will set a seal upon their mouths, and their hands shall speak to Us, and their feet shall bear witness of what they earned." (Surah al-Yaseen, 36:65).

In another place it is stated:

"And on the day that the enemies of Allah shall be brought together to the fire, then they shall be formed into groups. Until when they come to it, their ears and their eyes and their skins shall bear witness against them as to what they did." (Surah al-Ha Meem Sajda, 32: 19-20).

"And they shall say to their bodily components, 'Why have you borne witness against us?' They shall reply, 'Allah who makes everything speak has given us speech.'" (Surah al-Ha Meem Sajda,

32:21).

At that time they will be rendered speechless.

“Say, then Allah is the conclusive argument.” (Surah al-An’am, 6: 150)

Their refusal (to accept their faults) at that time will be the proof of their ignorance. For, if they accepted their faults, surely Allah would shower His mercy upon them and forgive.

It is narrated in *“Anware No’maniyah,”* that when a person’s deeds will be weighed, and his bad deeds will be more than his good ones, Allah will command His Angels to throw him into hell fire. When the Angels will be taking him, he will turn around and see. Allah will ask him, “Why do you look behind”? He will reply, “O my Lord! I had never expected that you would throw me to the flames.” Allah will say, “O my Angels! I swear by my Honor and Grandeur, verily he in his lifetime never ever thought of what he now says. But now when he claims to have thought so (of my mercy), I permit him to enter Paradise.”

Shaikh Ayyashi narrates from Imam Ja’far as-Sadiq (a.s.) that He said, that on the day of Qayamat every person will be given his scrolls (of deeds) and will be told to read it. At that time Allah will recollect the person’s strength of sight, speech and movement, and he will say, “O regrets! What has happened to my scrolls, for there is no big or small sin of mine which is not recorded in it.”

Shaikh Ibne Quwailah narrates from Imam Ja’far as-Sadiq (a.s.) that he said, that whoever goes for the pilgrimage (*Ziyarat*) to the Shrine of Imam Husain (a.s.) in the month of Ramazan or dies on the way while going there, then on the day of Qayamat there will be no accounting and reckoning for him, and he shall enter Paradise without fear or anxiety.

Allamah Majlisi narrates from Imam Ali ar-Ridha (a.s.) in *‘Tohfatus Saemeen’* that He said, “Whoever comes to visit my grave from far and near, We shall save him from three calamities on the day of Qayamat: (i) we shall give him refuge from the terrors of Qayamat, when the scrolls of good doers will be given in their right hands, and evil ones in their left hands, (ii) he will be safe from the punishment at the Bridge (*Pool*) of Serat, (3) we will help him during weighing of scales.”

It is written in *‘Haqqul Yaqaen’* that Husaini bin Sa’eed in *‘Kitabuz Zohd’* narrates from Imam Ja’far as-Sadiq (a.s.) that he said, that when Allah will wish to take account of a believer (*mo’min*), He will give his scrolls (of deeds) in his right hand. And Allah Himself will take his accounting so that no one else may come to know about his affairs. Allah will then ask him, “O My valuable slave! Have you committed such and such acts also”? The believer will answer (in repentance), “Yes my Lord, I have committed them.” Then Allah will say, “I have forgiven your sins and have replaced them with good deeds.” People will look at him with awe in paradise and exclaim: Glory be to Allah! Verily this person is free from all sins.

A narrator (*rawi*) asked Imam (a.s.) regarding Allah’s words:

“Then as to him who is given his book in his right hand, he shall be reckoned with by an easy

reckoning, and shall go back to his people joyfully” (Surah al-Inshiqaq, 84:7- 9)

– as to who are the relatives of the believer in paradise. Imam (a.s.) replied, “His relatives will be the same as in this world, provided they be believers.”

And when Allah will take account of the evildoers, He shall do it in the open and in front of all those present in Qayamat. And Allah will end all correspondence with him, and give his scrolls in his left hand from behind. The person will cry out: What a catastrophe! And he will fall headlong into hell. He will be the one who led a luxurious and careless life with his family in the world, and disbelieved in the hereafter. It is also a fact that in Qayamat Allah will tie the hands of the hypocrites (*munafeqeen*) and disbelievers behind their necks. And in the supplication (*du'a*) to be recited during Wuzu, these two punishments are described:

اللَّهُمَّ أَعْطِنِي كِتَابِي بِيَمِينِي

O Allah; (please) give me my Scroll in my right hand

وَالْخُلْدَ فِي الْجَنَانِ بِيَسَارِي

and eternity in the gardens of Paradise in my left hand

وَحَاسِبِي حِسَاباً يَسِيراً

and reckon with me by an easy reckoning.

اللَّهُمَّ لَا تُعْطِنِي كِتَابِي بِشِمَالِي

O Allah; (please) do not give me my Scroll in my left hand

وَلَا مِنْ وَرَاءِ ظَهْرِي

or from the side of my back,

وَلَا تَجْعَلْهَا مَعْلُوقَةً إِلَيَّ عُنُقِي

and do not make my hand be tied to my neck

وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ مَقَطَّعَاتِ النَّيِّرَانِ

and I seek Your protection against the severing flames of Hellfire.

Here I quote the narration of Sayyed Ibne Tawoos: When the month of Ramazan would commence, Imam Ali Zainul Abedeen (a.s.) would stop punishing his male and female servants for their faults. Instead he would note down their names and their faults (which they committed) in a book, instead of punishing them at that very moment.

On the last night of the month of Ramazan, he (a.s.) would gather all of them. He would then bring the book and tell each of them, “Do you remember that on such and such day you committed such and such crime, and I had not punished you for it”? They would accept their mistakes and say, “O son of the Prophet! Verily we have committed these crimes.” Thereby he would make everyone accept their faults. Then he (a.s.) would stand in their midst and tell them all to call out in a loud voice: “O Ali bin Husain! Your Lord has also noted down your deeds as you have noted down ours. Surely Allah has with Him a book that speaks and in which are recorded all deeds whether big or small. And just as you desire that Allah may forgive your sins, in the same manner you too forgive and overlook ours. O Ali bin Husain! Ponder upon your state in Qayamat when you will be standing in front of the Almighty, for Allah is just and will not do injustice nor oppress anyone even equal to the size of a mustard seed. Then you too overlook our faults and forgive us so that Allah may forgive you on the day of Qayamat. For verily Allah says in the Qur’an:

“And they should pardon and turn away. Do you not love that Allah should forgive you.” (Surah an-Noor, 24:22).

Thus Imam Zainul Abidin (a.s.) requested his male and female servants to repeat these words again and again, and they did so. He stood in their midst and wept and asked for Allah’s forgiveness, and said, “O Allah! You have ordered us to forgive. O Allah we have forgiven all their faults and mistakes, so You too forgive our sins, for You are the Best Forgiver. O Allah You have commanded us not to let go any beggar empty-handed from our doors, so You too do not turn us empty-handed from Your door. O Allah You have commanded us not to let to any beggar empty-handed from Your doors. O Allah! We have also come to Your door like beggars, and crave for Your mercy and blessings. O Allah! do not disappoint us.”

Imam Zainul Aabedeem (a.s.), after uttering these words and would turn towards His servants say, “I have forgiven you all. Have you also forgiven my faults, which I have committed? For I am an oppressive ruler and am a subject of a Just King.” Then the servants would reply, “O our Master, we have forgiven you, but you have never ever wronged against us nor oppressed us.” But he (a.s.) would tell them to say, “O Allah! You forgive Ali bin Husain as he has forgiven us. O Allah, save him from the fire as he has freed us from bondage (slavery).” His servants would say this, and then Imam (a.s.) would say: O Allah; please respond! O Lord of the worlds. Go you all; I have forgiven you and freed you hoping for

pardon and freedom from punishment.

Then when the day of Eidul Fitr would pass away, Imam (a.s.) would forgive all the things, which his servants owed him, and would make them independent of others. And every year on the last night of the month of Ramazan, He (a.s.) would free around twenty slaves in the way of Allah and say, “Verily on each night of the month of Ramazan during the time of the breaking of fast (*Iftaar*), Allah grants amnesty to seven people from hell-fire, each one of whom is worthy of punishment. And on the last night of the month of Ramazan, He grants liberty to the amount of people He freed in the whole month. And I like this that Allah may witness that I have freed the slaves in this world with the hope that He too delivers me from the fire of hell.”

Angels take the Scrolls to the Holy Prophet (s) and the Holy Aimmah (a.s.)

The Angels first take the scrolls to the Holy Prophet (s), and then to the Holy Imams (a.s.). Lastly the scrolls are handed over to Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) for scrutiny. Imam (a.s.) looks at both (good as well as bad) scrolls, and asks for forgiveness from Allah for the sins of his Shi’ahs that are recorded in them. And those sins, which can be written off are done so. Hence Imam (a.s.) tells his Shi’ahs, “Beware! When your scrolls come to me, your sins should be such that can be written off, and should not be such that cannot be corrected or forgiven.” Then the scrolls are taken to the heavens.

As said in the Qur’an:

“And say: Work, so Allah will see your work and (So will) His Apostle and the Believers (Holy Aimmah)” (Surah al -Bara’at, 9: 105)

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