

Supervision – the Most Important Factor for Self-restraint

One of the most important factors for self building and self-refinement is guarding, supervising, and paying attention towards the self. A wise person who is concerned about his well-being and prosperity would not remain ignorant about his own moral abjectness and psychological disease rather he would be continuously guarding and supervising his self and would be strictly controlling his habits, etiquettes, actions, deeds, and even thoughts. We would discuss this matter in details as follows:

1. Recordings of Deeds

The Qur’anic verses and traditions from the Holy Prophet (S) and his Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) indicate that all actions, deeds, sayings, even breathings, intentions, and thoughts of human beings are recorded in his letter of deeds, will remain filed for the Day of Resurrection, and each person will be judged on that Day strictly in accordance to his performance. For example: God–Almighty said in Holy Qur’an:

يَوْمَئِذٍ يَصُدُّرُ النَّاسُ أَشْتَاتًا لِّيُرَوْا أَعْمَالُهُمْ فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ

“That day mankind will issue forth in scattered groups to be shown their deeds. And whoso doth good an atom’s weight will see it then. And whoso doth ill on atoms weight will see it then. (99: 6–8)

And said:

وَوُضِعَ الْكِتَابُ فَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا فِيهِ وَيَقُولُونَ يَا وَيْلَتَنَا مَا لِهَذَا الْكِتَابِ لَا يُغَادِرُ صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً إِلَّا أَحْصَاهَا ۚ وَوَجَدُوا مَا عَمِلُوا حَاضِرًا ۚ وَلَا يَظْلِمُ رَبُّكَ أَحَدًا

“And the book is placed, and thou seest the guilty fearful of that which is therein and they say:

**What kind of a book is this that leaveth not a small thing nor a great thing but hath counted it!
And they find all that they did confronting them, and Lord wrongeth no one. (18: 49)**

And said:

يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُّحْضَرًا وَمَا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ سُوءٍ تَوَدُّ لَوْ أَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَهُ أَمَدًا بَعِيدًا

“On the Day when every soul will find itself confronted with all that hath done of good and all that it hath done of evil (every soul) will long that there might be a mighty space of distance between it and that evil. (3:30)

And said:

مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ

“He uttereth no word but there is with him an observer ready. (50: 18)

Therefore, if we believe that all our movements, actions, deeds, sayings, and even thoughts are being registered, recorded, and saved then how could we remain naive about the consequences arising therein?

2. Accounting on the Judgment Day

A lot of Qur’anic verses and traditions confirm that human beings will be accounted for their deeds accurately on the Day of Resurrection. All their deeds whether small a big shall be checked and even the most insignificant action shall not be neglected. e.g. God–Almighty said in the Holy Qur’an:

وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا ۖ وَإِنْ كَانَ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ خَرْدَلٍ أَتَيْنَا بِهَا ۖ وَكَفَى بِنَا حَاسِبِينَ

“And we set a just balance for the Day of Resurrection so that no soul is wronged in aught. Though it be of the weight of a grain of mustard seed, We will bring it. And We suffice for reckoners. (21: 47)

And said:

أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخَفُّوهُ يَحَاسِبُكُمْ بِهِ اللَّهُ ۖ وَإِنْ تُبْذَرُوا مَا فِي

“And whether ye make known what is in your minds or hide it, God will bring you to account for it. (2:284)

And said:

وَالْوَزْنُ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْحَقُّ ۚ فَمَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَظْلِمُونَ

“The weighing on that day is the true (weighing). As for as those whose scale is heavy, they are the successful. And as for as those whose scale is light: Those are they who lose their souls because they disbelieved Our revelations. (7: 8–9)

The Holy Qur’an describes the Day of Resurrection as the Day of Auditing and God–Almighty as the one who audits promptly. According to lots of Qur’anic verses and traditions one of the most difficult stage, through which we all have to pass over on the Day of Resurrection –is the stage of auditing of deeds.

During our entire span of life we perform various deeds which are forgotten by us after a while, but they are registered and recorded in our letter of deeds by God–Almighty, in a manner that not even the smallest or insignificant action is removed from the letter of deeds.

All of them are registered and recorded right here in this world and will remain with the human being forever, although he might be ignorant of them completely in this world, but after death when his esoteric eyes will be opened, he will see them all intact written in a single file. Then he will realize that all the actions, deeds, beliefs, and thoughts written over there are indeed belong to him and henceforth shall never be separated from him. God–Almighty said in Holy Qur’an:

وَجَاءَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّعَهَا سَائِقٌ وَشَهِيدٌ لَّقَدْ كُنْتَ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ هَذَا فَكَشَفْنَا عَنْكَ غِطَاءَكَ فَبَصَرُكَ الْيَوْمَ حَدِيدٌ

“And every soul cometh, along with it a driver and a witness, (and unto the evil-doer it is said): Thou wast in heedlessness of this. Now We have removed from thee thy covering, and piercing is thy sight this day. (50: 21:22)

The Holy Prophet (S) had said:

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله: لا تزول قدما عبد يوم القيامة حتى يسأل عن أربع: عن عمره فيما أفناه، وشبابه فيما أبلاه، وعن ماله من أين اكتسبه وفيما أنفقه، وعن حبنا أهل البيت.

“On the Day of Judgment, each servant of God will not be able to move forward even a single step without being questioned about the following :

How he spent his life ? How he spent his youth ? Through what means he earned the money and how was it spent ? And about the friendship of us (Ahlul Bayt). ”¹

In another narration the Prophet (S) said:

في الخبر النبوي: أنه يفتح للعبد يوم القيامة على كل يوم من أيام عمره أربعة وعشرون خزانة عدد ساعات الليل والنهار – فخزانة يجدها مملوءة نورا وسرورا فينالها عند مشاهدتها من الفرح والسرور ما لو وزع على أهل النار لادهشهم عن الاحساس بألم النار وهي الساعة التي أطاع فيها ربه.

ثم يفتح له خزانة أخرى فيراها مظلمة منتنة مفزعة فينالها عند مشاهدتها من الفزع والجزع ما لو قسم على أهل الجنة لنغص عليهم نعيمها ، وهي الساعة التي عصى فيها ربه. ثم يفتح له خزانة أخرى فيراها فارغة ليس فيها ما يسره ولا ما يسوؤه وهي الساعة التي نام فيها أو اشتغل فيها بشئ من مباحات الدنيا فينالها من الغبن والاسف على فواتها .حيث كان متمكنا من أن يملأها حسنات ما لا يوصف ومن هذا قوله تعالى, ذلك يوم التغابن

“One of the Day of Judgment when a servant of God is being readied for accounting, for each day of his living in the world, twenty four treasure boxes (each one representing an hour) are brought in front of him. Then they open a treasure box which is full of light and joy, whereby seeing it the servant of God becomes so happy that if his happiness is distributed among all the dwellers of Hell, they will forget the pain and torture of Hell's fire –this treasure box represent the hour when he was busy in God's Worship.”

“After that another treasure box is opened which is frightening, dark and full of odor, whereby upon seeing it he becomes so frightened and sad that if his grief is distributed among the dwellers of Paradise, all of the blessings of Paradise will become unpleasant for them –this treasure box represents the hour when he was busy in sinning.”

“Then another treasure box is opened before him which is completely empty and neither contains deeds producing joy nor deeds producing sadness –this treasure box represents the period when he was either sleeping or was busy performing allowable religious acts (Mubah) (which may or may not have been performed).

But having seen this empty treasurer a servant of God feels sorry because he could have utilized this hour for doing righteous and good deeds. It is because of this reason that the Day of Judgment has been named by God–Almighty as the Day of Regret.”²

On the Day of Judgment the accounts of our deeds will be audited swiftly and most accurately determining the final destinies accordingly; all the past deeds shall be scrutinized; human limbs and bodily members, prophets, angels, and even earth will offer their testimonies; it will be real tough scrutiny indeed, and will determine one's eternal destination.

Because, of the anxiety of result the hearts palpitate and bodies tremble in fear –a fear so horrible and

frightening that mothers will ignore the breast feeding of their babies and pregnant women will loose their conception by miscarriages.

All are anxious and worried to learn about their ultimate consequences. Is the result of their scrutiny would be God's pleasure, securing a draft for freedom, being honorable among God's prophets and saints, eternal living in Paradise in the company of God's most favorite and descent servants? Or, would it be wrath of God, humiliation and disgrace before other creatures and eternal living in the Hell?

Therefore, from the above narrations it could be concluded that scrutiny of people's deed is not same and differs; for some of them it would be extremely complicated and lengthy while for others it would be swift and easy. It would be done at various stops several times and at each station some of the questions would be asked. The most horrible and difficult station is the stop for oppressors, where the question are asked regarding trampling of human rights, oppressions and tyrannies.

Here the accounts must be settled completely and everybody should pay his debt to the creditors. Unfortunately, over there, no one possesses ready cash to pay for his debt and therefore, he has no choice except to pay from the account of his righteous deeds. If, he had some in his account, he may exchange them for clearing his debt. If, he does not possess righteous deeds in his account then in that case, the creditor's sins are transferred into the balance sheet of his deeds.

Any way, it is a horrible and tough day indeed, and may God helps all of us. Of course, the length and toughness of scrutiny is not same for all and differ in accordance to the magnitude of good and evil deeds, but for the pious and God's descent servants it would be extremely swift and easier. In replying to a question regarding the length of Day of Judgment the Holy Prophet (S) said:

قال رسول الله صلى عليه وآله: لما سئل عن طول ذلك اليوم فقال: والذي نفسى بيده انه ليخفف على المؤمن حتى يكون اهون عليه من الصلوة المكتوبة يصلحها في الدنيا.

“By God! For believers it would be so swift and easy –even easier than recital of an obligatory prayer.”³

3. Self-scrutiny Before the Judgment Day

Someone who believes in Day of Judgment, scrutiny of deeds, rewards and punishment, knows that all the deeds are registered and recorded, and verdict would be issued either good and bad; than how could such a person would remain naive about his deeds, actions, moral etiquettes, and thoughts? Wouldn't he really care about what has been done by him during the days, months, years, and entire span of his life? And what provisions have been forwarded by him for the Hereafter?

One of the precondition of belief is that it demands from believers to scrutinize their accounts of deeds in this same world, must ponder profoundly about what they have done in the past, and what is being done

right now? Acting in a manner like a wise businessman, who checks his accounts each day and each month, in order to determine his profits and losses. The Commander of the Faithful Imam ‘Ali (a.s.) had said:

قال على عليه السلام: حاسبوا انفسكم قبل ان تحاسبوا ووازنها قبل ان توازنوا

“Before being audited on the Judgment Day better self-scrutinize your deeds in this same world.”⁴

Also said:

قال على عليه السلام: من حاسب نفسه ربح

“Whoever scrutinizes the account of his self in this world would earn profit.”⁵

Imam al-Naqi (a.s.) ⁶said:

عن ابي الحسن الماضى عليه السلام قال: ليس منا من لم يحاسب نفسه فى كل يوم فان عمل حسنا استزاد الله وان عمل سيئا استغفر الله منه وتاب اليه

“Whoever does not scrutinize his actions daily does not belong to us; then if, he found that he has performed some righteous deeds, he should request God–Almighty to increase His Grace, and in case if he has done an evil act, he should seek pardon from God–Almighty by offering repentance.”⁷

The Commander of the Faithful Imam ‘Ali (a.s.) has said:

قال امير المؤمنين عليه السلام: من حاسب نفسه ربح ومن غفل عنه خسر ومن خاف امن ومن اعتبر ابصر ومن ابصر فهم ومن فهم علم

“Whoever scrutinize the account of his self will earn a profit and whoever will be negligent will suffer a loss, whoever is fearful in this world will be safe in the Hereafter, whoever will pay heed to counseling will see the realities; whoever is able to see the realities would understand; and whoever understands would become wise and intelligent.”⁸

The Holy Prophet (S) said to Abu Dharr:

فى وصية النبى انه قال: يا ابا ذر! حاسب نفسك قبل ان تحاسب, فانه اهو لحسابك غذا وزن نفسك قبل ان توزن وتجهز للعرض الاكبر يوم لا تخفى على الله خافية (الى ان قال: يا ابا ذر! لا يكون الرجل من المتقين حتى يحاسب نفسه اشد من محاسبة الشريك شريكه فيعلم من اين مطعمه ومن اين مشربه ومن اين ملبسه؟ امن حلال او حرام؟

يا ابا ذر! من لم يبال من اين اكتسب المال لم يبال الله من اين ادخله النار

“Oh Abu Dharr! Before they scrutinize your account of deeds on the Judgment Day, do your own self-auditing in this world because today's review would be lot more easier than tomorrow's auditing on the Judgment Day, try to attain self-purification in this world instead of his being cleaned on Judgment Day –The Day when the deeds will be presented to God–Almighty and even the smallest deeds will not be hidden from him. Then the Holy Prophet (S) continued:

“O Abu Dharr! One never acquires piety unless until he self-scrutinize his own deeds –a scrutiny much more severe than the auditing of accounts between two business associates. A man must ponder seriously as through what means has he acquired his means of living ? Were it earned through lawful means or through forbidden means ?

“O Abu Dharr! Whoever does not respect the Divine limitations for earning a living, God–Almighty too would not have slight hesitation in dispatching him inside the Hell's fire through either passage.”⁹

Imam al-Sajjad (a.s.) said:

كان على بن الحسين عليه السلام يقول: ابن آدم! إنك لا تزال بخير ما كان لك واعظ من نفسك وما كانت المحاسبة من همك وما كان الخوف لك شعاعاً والحزن لك دنائراً ابن آدم إنك ميت ومبعوث وموقوف بين يدي الله عزوجل فأعد جواباً.

“O son of Adam! You will be continuously accompanied by goodness and blessing so for as you possess a preacher in your heart, practice self-scrutiny for your deeds and fear God–Almighty.”

“O son of Adam! verily you will die, will be raised on the Resurrection–Day, and your deeds will be judged in accordance with Divine–Justice. Therefore, get yourself readied for getting scrutinized for your deeds on the Judgment Day.”¹⁰

A man is like an investor in this world, his limited capital –life span –consists of these very hours, days, weeks, months, and years. This most precious capital i.e. one's life span, either willingly or unwillingly gets consumed and eventually one approaches death. The youth turns into old age, strength gives up to weakness and sound health changes into sick- ness.

If, against this spending of capital one has performed righteous deeds and forwarded some provisions for Hereafter, then in that case he has not suffered a loss, because he had secured for himself a happy and prosperous future.

But if he wasted his precious capital consisting his life, youth, strength and physical fitness, and against all this spending no righteous deed was deposited for his Hereafter; instead, with moral abjectness, and indulgence into sins and transgressions, made his heart dark and contaminated, then he has inflicted

upon himself –the most severe damage and loss, which could never be compensated. God–Almighty said in the Holy Qur'an:

وَالْعَصْرُ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ

“By the declining day; lo! Man is a state of loss, save those who believe and do good works, and exhort one another to truth, exhort one another to endurance (103: 1-3)

The Commander of the Faithful Imam ‘Ali (a.s.) said:

قال على عليه السلام: ان العاقل من نظر في يومه لغده وسعى في فكاك نفسه وعمل لما لا بد له ولا محيص عنه

“A wise man is the one who is all anxious today about his tomorrow –the Resurrection Day, must strive for achieving freedom of self; Because, of the realities of death and Resurrection Day, he has no choice except to perform righteous deeds.”¹¹

Also said:

قال على عليه السلام: من حاسب نفسه وقف على عيوبه واحاط بذنوبه فاستقال الذنوب واصلح العيوب

“Whoever scrutinizes his deeds will discover his faults and sins. Then, he will offer repentance for his sins and will strive for correcting his faults “¹²

4. How to Scrutinize?

Supervision and management of self is not an easy task and requires determination, maturity, sincerity, efforts, endeavors, and specific program. Will the imperious–self offer surrender so easily? Will he present himself for cross–examination and verdict? Will he agree to pay his dues so easily? The Commander of the Faithful Imam ‘Ali (a.s.) said:

قال على عليه السلام: من لم يس نفسه اضاعها

“Whoever has not programmed his self for performance of righteous deeds has indeed wasted him.”¹³

And said:

قال على عليه السلام: من اغتر بنفسه سلمته إلى المعاطب

“Whoever is not careful of self’s frauds and cheating will be destroyed (by self)”¹⁴

And said:

قال على عليه السلام: من كان له من نفسه يقظة كان عليه من الله حافظة

“Whoever possesses self-awakening and self-enlightenment, God-Almighty will assign Divine angels for his guidance and protection.”¹⁵

And said:

قال على عليه السلام: املكوا انفسكم بدوام جهادها

“Subdue your self through continuous struggle and resistance, and firmly take over his control.”¹⁶

The self-accounting must be accomplished in three steps in order to acquire this habit gradually:

4.1. Making Commitments (Mosharateh)

The self-accounting should be started as follows:

As the early hour of the day before starting daily routine activities some time must be allocated for this purpose. For example, after offering morning prayer one may sit alone in an isolated place and should address to his self in the following manner:

Right now, I am alive but don't know how long it may last, may be for next one hour or may be little bit more. The time of life already spent has all been wasted, and the remaining time left might be counted as capital still at my disposal. For each hour spent out of this remaining life, I could arrange some provisions for the Hereafter. If right now the Israel –the angel of death would have arrived for receiving my soul I would have desired for living one more day or even one extra hour.

Oh helpless poor self! Just imagine that you are in such a condition and your desire for this living a little longer has been granted and you have been allowed to return to this world. Oh self! Be kind to me as well as to yourself and don't waste these precious hours for indulgence into nonsense amusements. Don't be negligent now, otherwise you will be ashamed tomorrow on the Judgment Day –the Day when being regretful will not be of any help.

Oh self! For each hour spent during this life God-Almighty has created a treasure box in which good and evil deeds will be deposited, to be opened on the Judgment Day. Oh self! Try to fill this treasure with righteous deeds. Be careful not to fill this treasure with sins and transgressions.

Likewise, all the parts of the body should be addressed individually to commit themselves not to commit sins. For example, the tongue should be asked that lying, backbiting, tell-bearing, fault finding, abusing, babbling, insulting, self-praising, disputing, and false testimony are moral abjectness and divinely forbidden, which destroy eternal life of human beings.

Therefore, I will not allow it to indulge in these acts. Oh tongue! Be kind to me and yourself and don't commit immoral acts because everything said will be taped and deposited into the treasure box containing the deeds and I will be accountable on the Day of Judgment.

In this manner the tongue should be required to commit itself not to indulge into sinning. After that the righteous deeds which could be performed by it should be reminded and their performance should be made obligatory during each day. For example, it could be said to the tongue: you may recite such and such invocation (*dhikr*), such and such supplication, may fill up the treasure box of deeds with joy and illumination and may receive a good result in the Hereafter.

Therefore, don't be negligent otherwise you will feel terribly sorry later on. Similarly, all other parts of the body should be required to commit themselves to perform only righteous deeds and to strictly guard them against sins and transgressions.

Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) narrated a tradition from his father as follows:

عن الصادق عليه السلام قال: الليل إذا أقبل نادى مناد بصوت يسمعه الخلائق إلا الثقلين يا ابن آدم اني خلق جديد ، إني على ما في شهيد فخذ مني فإنني لو طلعت الشمس لم أرجع إلى الدنيا ولم تزد في من حسنة ولم تستعذب في من سيئة وكذلك يقول النهار إذا أدير الليل .

“When night approaches it makes an announcement which is heard by all the creation except human being and jins as follows:

*Oh sons of Adams! I am a new creation and will testify about all the, deeds performed during my tenure. Utilize my existence to the best of your advantage, because, after the sun-rise you will never see me again. After that you would not be able to increase your righteous deeds and offer repentance for your sins and transgressions. After the night departs each coming day repeats the same announcement.”*¹⁷

It is quite possible that Satan and imperious-self may tell us: You cannot live a life with such program. Is it possible to live a life with such limitations and restrictions? How could you allocate a certain hour for auditing program every day? With these whispers the Satan and imperious-self want to deceive, thus, preventing us from taking the important decision. We must offer resistance against these Satanic plots and must neutralize them by telling them:

This program is absolutely feasible and does not have any contradiction with life's daily routine activities, and since it is necessary for attaining self-refinement and self-purification as well as for accomplishing

the eternal salvation, I must undertake this program. It is not so difficult either, and once you have decided firmly it would become easier. Even if it is a little bit difficult in the beginning, would become easier gradually.

4.2. Supervision and Control (Moragebat)

After passing through the stage of making commitments we enter into the stage of contact execution. At this stage all the self's actions should strictly be monitored all along the day to be sure that they are being performed in accordance to commitments made earlier. A human being should remain awake in all situations and should strictly guard his actions.

He should remind himself continuously: that God–Almighty watches all our actions, and must remember the commitments made earlier. Even, a slight negligence might provide opportunity for Satan and imperious–self to make their entry and, thus, disrupting the entire program.

The Commander of the Faithful Imam ‘Ali (a.s.) said:

قال علي عليه السلام: إن الحازم من شغل نفسه بجهد نفسه فأصلحها وحبسها عن أهويتها و لذاتها فملكها و إن للعاقل بنفسه عن الدنيا و ما فيها و أهلها شغلا.

“A wise man offers continuous resistance against the self, endeavors for self’s correction, preventing him following passions and in this manner makes him subdued. A wise man with absolute domination over the self will be dejected from the world and its allurements.”¹⁸

And said:

قال علي عليه السلام: من كان له من نفسه زاجر كان عليه من الله حافظ.

“Whoever possesses a guard to reprimand, with m his self; God–Almighty, will appoint for him Divine Protectors.”¹⁹

And said:

قال علي عليه السلام: الثقة بالنفس من اوثق فرص الشيطان.

“Being optimistic and confident about self provides the best opportunities for Satan to deceive us.”²⁰

A cautious and aware human being is continuously occupied in God is Remembrance and sees him in His presence. He does not perform any task hastily without profound thinking and appraising all the consequences. If he commits a sin or transgression, immediately reminds himself about God–Almighty

and Judgment Day and refrains from its continuation.

Does not forget his earlier commitments and in this manner keeps the self continuously subdued, preventing him from indulgence into evil and obscene deeds. This program is one of the best means for attaining self-refinement and purification.

In addition to that a cautious believer thinks continuously about obligatory and recommended deeds, fulfillment of duties, righteous deeds, and charity through out the day; try his best to offer daily prayer on preferred time with humility, devotion, and presence of mind, offering in a manner as though this would be the last prayer of his life; keeps himself occupied with remembrance of God–Almighty in all situations and involvement.

Does not spent his free time in nonsense amusements, instead utilize it to the maximum advantages of affairs related to Hereafter; knows the importance and preciousness of time and endeavors seriously for utilization of every available opportunity for achieving self-perfection; strives to perform recommended deeds (*Mustahabbat*) as much as his capacity permits.

How good it is that a believer should try to become habitual of performing at least some of the recommended deeds. Remembrance of God–Almighty and recital of invocation (*dhikr*) is one such recommended deed which could be done easily in all circumstances.

Also, it is important that a believer with sincerity and pure intention of God's Nearness (*Qurbat*), should direct all his daily activities for worship, spiritual migration and ascend towards God is Countenance. Even, working, eating, drinking, sleeping, marrying, and all other lawful desired acts through sincerity and pure intention could be made as part of worshipping.

Work and business if done with the intention of earning a lawful genuine living and serving the people would became an act of worship. Similarly, eating, drinking and resting if are preliminaries for living and being a devoted servant of God are considered as worship. That is the way God's pure servant used to live and they still live in this manner.

4.3. Accounting of Deeds

The third stage is the accounting of deeds performed every day. It is necessary that a person should fixed a certain hour to scrutinize his deeds and the most suitable time would be the hour when he has finished all his daily activities. At this time he should sit alone in a corner and should think what he has done during this stay. He should begin from the very first hour till the last hour of the day checking every minor activity accurately.

If he finds that he has performed a righteous deeds and worship at that time he should thank God–Almighty for bestowing his Divine grace and should decide for its continuation. But if finds that he has committed a sin or transgression he must show his wrath against the self addressing him:

Oh you wretched self! Look what have you done? You destroyed my letter of deed and made it totally dark. What will be your reply to God–Almighty on the Day of Judgment? What are you going to do with the painful punishment of Hell? God–Almighty bestowed upon you life, health, and resources in order to enable you to collect provisions for Hereafter, instead you blackened your letter of deeds with sins. Why don't you consider the probability of death approaching you at this very moment? In that case, what are you going to do? Oh shameless self!

How come you are not ashamed from God–Almighty? Oh you liar and wretched hypocrite! You claim to be a believer in the existence of God–Almighty and Hereafter then how come your actions reflect contradictions with your belief?

Then, he should repent sincerely and should decide firmly never to indulge into sins and transgressions as well as to compensate for his past omissions. The Commander of the Faithful Imam 'Ali (a.s.) said:

قال علي (ع): من وبخ نفسه على العيوب ارتدعت من كثرة الذنوب.

“Whoever would reprimand self for his faults and sins– would be able to restrain himself from indulgence into sins.”[21](#)

If he realizes that the self is showing rebellious tendencies and is not ready for repentance and abstinence from sinning, then he must take a firm stand against the imperious–self through offering resistance. He may threaten the self that serious consequences will arise in case he continued to show disobedience.

For example, if the self has consumed the forbidden (*haram*) an unlawful food, or has committed other sins then to punish him will donate some money for charity for God's pleasure, will do fasting few days, temporarily will refrain himself from eating delicious foods or cold water, or other food which is self's favorite, or will stay out side under the burning sun for a certain period.

Any way, one should not show weakness and negligence against the self or otherwise he will take the upper hand eventually throwing a human being into the darkest and deepest valleys of deviations and misfortune. But if you acted strongly offering stiff resistance against him, he will become subdued.

If he finds that at a particular hour he has neither performed any righteous deed nor has committed any sin even in that case he should show his anger and reprimand the self that how come this particular hour which was the precious capital of the life has been wasted for nothing? You could have performed righteous deeds in this period and could have deposited it in the accounts of your deeds for the Hereafter. Oh you wretched looser!

Why have you wasted this valuable precious opportunity? You will certainly feel sorry for your this negligence on the Day of Judgment –a Day when regret will not be of any use. In this manner, acting like

a strict business associate all the daily transactions of the self should be scrutinized strictly. Of course, it would be better if the result of this scrutiny could be recorded in a notebook.

Anyway, the matter of supervision and scrutiny for attaining self-purification and refinement is an important, useful thing that is absolutely necessary; whoever is serious, and who is serious and aspires for his salvation and prosperity, should pay special attention to it.

Although, in the beginning it might appear as a difficult task but with firm determination and perseverance it would become easy and imperious-self would become subdued surrendering completely to your supervision and domination. The Holy Prophet (S) once asked his companions:

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله: الا انبئكم باكيس الكيسين واحمق الحمقا؟ قالوا: بلى يا رسول الله! قال: اكيس الكيسين من حاسب نفسه ، و عمل لما بعد الموت . و احمق الحمقاء من اتبع نفسه هواه ، و تمنى على الله الامانى. فقال رجل: يا رسول الله وكيف يحاسب الرجل نفسه؟ قال: إذا أصبح ثم أمسى رجع إلى نفسه فقال: يا نفس! إن هذا يوم مضى عليك لا يعود إليك أبدا والله يسألك عنه فيما أفنيت، فما الذي عملت فيه؟ أذكرت الله أم حمدته؟ أقضيت حق اخ مؤمن؟ أنفست عنه كربة؟

أحفظت به بظهر الغيب في أهله وولده؟ أحفظت به بعد الموت في مخلفيه؟ أكففت عن غيبة أخ مؤمن بفضل جاهك؟ أأعنت مسلما؟ ما الذي صنعت فيهما ذكر أنه جرى منه خير، حمد الله عز وجل وكبره على توفيقه. وإن ذكر معصية أو تقصيرا إستغفر الله وعزم على ترك معاودته، ومحا ذلك عن نفسه بتجديد الصلاة على محمد وآله الطيبين وعرض بيعة أمير المؤمنين على نفسه وقبولها وإعاد الله لعن شائئه وأعدائه ودافعيه عن حقوقه. فاذا فعل ذلك قال الله: لست أناقشك في شئ من الذنوب مع مواليتك أوليائي، ومعاداتك أعدائي

"Shouldn't I inform you about the most intelligent person among the intelligent and the most stupid one among the stupid?"

"They replied: 'Oh Prophet of God please tell us.'

'The most intelligent person is the one who audits his self's account and performs righteous deeds for his life after death, and the most stupid person is the one who is a prisoner of self's whims and passions and keeps himself amused with long term desires! Replied the Holy Prophet (S).

"He was asked: 'Oh Prophet of God! How the account of self should be audited ? ' The Prophet (S) replied:

'When the day has finished entering into night the!' communicate with your self as follows:

"Oh self! This day too is passed and will never return, God-Almighty is going to ask you about it as how did you spend it and what deeds were performed? Did you remember and praise him? Did you discharge your due obligations as regards to the rights of a brother believer?"

Did you remove the sorrow from his heart ? Did you take care about his children and family in his absence ? Did you pay his due share to his offspring after his death ? Did you help a fellow Muslim ? What have you done during this day ?

“Therefore, remind it to your self one by one whatever you have done, and if you find that you have done some righteous deed then thanks God–Almighty for bestowing His grace, but if you find that you have committed a sin then immediately offer repentance and decide firmly never to commit any sin again. Through recital of salutation. (Salawat) upon the Holy Prophet (S) and his Holy Progeny (a.s.) purify your self from impurities and contamination.

“Take the oath of allegiance for the friendship of the Commander of the Faithful Imam ‘Ali (a.s.) and should imprecate his enemies: If one acted in this manner God–Almighty would tell him: ‘ I am not going to have any controversy with you at the time of auditing your account of your deeds on the Day of Judgment, because, you were friend with my favorite saints and showed enmity towards their enemies.”[22](#)

Imam al– Kadhimi (a.s.) said:

عن الكاظم عليه السلام قال: ليس منا من لم يحاسب نفسه في كل يوم فان عمل حسنا استزاد الله وان عمل سيئاً استغفر الله وتاب اليه.

“Whosoever does not scrutinize the account of the self does not belong to us; thus, if he has done some good deeds should request God–Almighty for increasing His Favor and if he has sinned should offer repentance.”[23](#)

The Holy Prophet (S) said to Abu Dharr:

في وصية ابي ذر قال النبي صلى الله عليه وآله: على العاقل ان يكون له ساعات: ساعة يناجي فيها ربه وساعة يحاسب فيها نفسه وساعة يتفكر فيما صنع الله عز وجل اليه.

“A wise person should distribute his hours as follows: One hour should be assigned for being occupied in Prayers, supplications, and hymns with God–Almighty. One hour should be allocated for auditing the account of self s deeds. And one hour should be reserved for pondering the Divine Blessings bestowed upon him.”[24](#)

The Commander of the Faithful Imam ‘Ali (a.s.) said:

قال علي عليه السلام: جاسبوا انفسكم باعلمها وطالبوها باذا المفروض عليها والاخذ من فوائدها لبقائها وتزودوا وتاهبوا قبل ان تبعثوا.

“Let the self be accountable for his deeds, should be demanded to discharge his due obligations by utilizing this transient world properly. You should collect provisions for the Hereafter and make yourself readied for that journey before being forced to be transferred.”²⁵

Also, said:

قال على عليه السلام: ما احق الانسان ان يكون له ساعة لا يشغله عنها شاغل يحاسب فيها نفسه فينظر فيما اكتسب بها وعليها في ليلها ونهارها.

“How much is it necessary for a person to allocate a free time for himself to scrutinize the account of his deeds, and see what kind of good and useful, or bad and harmful deeds, have been performed by him during the past twenty four hours.”²⁶

Also said:

قال على عليه السلام: جاهد نفسك وحاسبها محاسبة الشريك شريكه وطالبها بحقوق الله مطالبة الخصم خصم. فان اسعد الناس من انتدب خامسة نفسه.

عن ابي عبدالله (ص) قال: فحاسبوا انفسكم قبل ان تحاسبوا فان في القيامة خمسين موقفا كل موقف مائة ألف سنة. ثم تلا هذه الآية في يوم كان مقداره خمسين الف سنة.

“Wage a continuous struggle against the self; like a strict business associate check precisely the account of his deeds, and like a creditor force him for payment of God's dues, because, the most prosperous person is the one who does his own self-scrutiny.”²⁷

“Do your own self-auditing for the account of deeds in this world before being forced to be audited on the Judgment Day, because over there, this would be done over fifty stops –each stops being one thousand years long.” Then he recited the following verse:

“The day whose length is equivalent to fifty thousands years. (70: 4) ²⁸

In the end this point should be emphasized that at the time of self-scrutiny a person should not be optimistic and trust his self because the deceitful imperious-self with hundreds of deceits and tricks manifests evils as good and visa versa; does not allow a person to identify his duties and their fulfillments; justifies refrainment from worshipping and encourages indulgence into sins and transgressions. He makes you forget your sins or regard them as minor omissions and presenting minor acts of worships as great, thus, making you proud about it.

He cleans the thoughts of death and Resurrection Day from the memory of your mind, encourages the

hopes and long-term desires; and presents self-scrutiny something as difficult, impracticable, and even unnecessary. Therefore, because of these considerations a person should be pessimistic while auditing the account of his deeds, and should scrutinize strictly with precision without paying least attention to Satanic justifications and interpretations.

The Commander of the Faithful Imam 'Ali (a.s.) has said:

قال على عليه السلام: وإن للذكر لاهلا اخذوه من الدنيا بدلا فلم تشغلهم تجارة ولا بيع عنه يقطعون به أيام الحياة ويهتفون بالزواج عن محارم الله في اسماع الغافلين، ويأمرون به، وينهون عن المنكر ويتناهون عنه. فكانما قطعوا الدنيا إلى الآخرة وهم فيها، فشاهدوا ما وراء ذلك فكانما اطلعوا عيوب أهل البرزخ في طول الإقامة فيه وحققت القيامة عليهم عداتها فكشفوا غطاء ذلك لأهل الدنيا حتى كأنهم يرون ما لا يرى الناس ويسمعون فلو مثاتهم لعقلك في مقاومتهم المحمودة ومجالسهم المشهودة وقد نشروا دواوين أعمالهم وفرغوا لمحاسبة أنفسهم على كل صغيرة وكبيرة أمروا بها فقصروا عنها ففرطوا فيها وحملوا ثقل أوزارهم ظهورهم فضعفوا عن الاستقلال بها فنشجوا نشيجا ونحبوا نحيبا يعجون إلى ربهم من مقام ندم واعتراف، لرايت اعلام هدى ومصابيح دجى، قد حفت بهم الملائكة وتنزلت عليهم السكينة وفتحت لهم ابواب السماء وأعدت لهم مقاعد الكرامات.

“There are some people devoted to the remembrance (of God), who have adopted it, in place of worldly matters so that commerce or trade does not turn them away from it. They pass their life in it. They speak into the ears of neglectful persons warning against matters held unlawful by God, they order them to practice justice and themselves keep practicing it, and they refrain them from the unlawful and themselves refrain from it.”

“It is as though they have finished the journey of this world towards the Next World and have beheld what lies beyond it. Consequently, they have become acquainted with all that befell them in the interstice during their long stay therein, and the Day of Judgment fulfills its promises for them. Therefore, they removed the curtain from these things for the people of the world, till it was as though they were seeing what people did not see and were hearing what people did not hear.”

“If you picture them in your mind in their admirable positions and well-known sittings, when they have opened the records of their actions and are prepared to render an account of themselves in respect of the small as well as the big things they were ordered to do but they failed to do, or were ordered to refrain from but they indulged therein.”

“They realized the weight of their burden (of bad acts) on their backs, and they felt too weak to bear them, then they wept bitterly and spoke to each other while still crying and bewailing to God in repentance and acknowledgment (of their shortcomings).

You would find them to be emblems of guidance and lamps in darkness, angels would be surrounding them, peace would be descending upon them, the doors of the sky would be opened for them and positions of honor would be assigned to them in the place of which God had informed them. Therefore,

He has appreciated their actions and praised their position. [29](#)

- [1.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 7, p-258.
- [2.](#) Bihar al-Anwar vol. 7 p-262.
- [3.](#) Majma al-Dawaid, vol. 1, p-337.
- [4.](#) Ghirar al-Hukm, p-385.
- [5.](#) Ghirar al-Hukm, p-618.
- [6.](#) Imam al-Naqi (a.s.): The Tenth Imam 'Ali ibn Muhammad al-Naqi (a.s.) son of Imam Muhammad al-Taqi was born on Friday 2nd Rajab 212 A.H. in Suryah in the vicinity of Medina. He was only six years old when his father Imam al- Taqi was poisoned by Abbasid Caliph al-Mu'tasim.

The Holy Imam devoted himself to the sacred mission of preaching in Medina and did, thus, earn the faith of people as well as their allegiance and recognition of his great knowledge and attributes. This reputation of the Imam evoked the jealousy and malice of Abbasid Caliph al-Mutawakkil against him.

Al-Mutawakkil imprisoned Imam under his strict vigilance for a number of years during which he was subjected to severe tortures. But even in this miserable imprisonment, the Imam kept devoting himself at all times to worship God-Almighty. The watchman of the prison used to comment that Imam al-Naqi seemed to be an angel in human grab.

He was poisoned by Abbasid Caliph al-Mut'azz billah on 26 Jumada'th-thaniyah 254 AH. The Imam was only forty two years old at the time of his martyrdom. The period of his Imamate was thirty five years. He was buried in Samarra in Iraq.

- [7.](#) Wasail al-Shi'a, vol. 11, p-377.
- [8.](#) Wasail al-Shi'a, vol. 11 p-379.
- [9.](#) Wasail al-Shi'a, vol. 11, p-379.
- [10.](#) Wasail al-Shi'a, vol. 1, p-378.
- [11.](#) Ghirar al-Hukm, p-238.
- [12.](#) Ghirar al-Hukm, p-696.
- [13.](#) Ghirar al-Hukm, p-640.
- [14.](#) Ghirar al-Hukm, p-685.
- [15.](#) Ghirar al-Hukm, p-679.
- [16.](#) Ghirar al-Hukm, p-131.
- [17.](#) Wasail al-Shi'a, vol. 11, p-380.
- [18.](#) Ghirar al- Hukm, p-237
- [19.](#) Ghirar al-Hukm, p-698.
- [20.](#) Ghirar al-Hukm, p-54
- [21.](#) Ghirar al Hukm, p-696.
- [22.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 70, p-69.
- [23.](#) al Kafi, vol. 1, p-453.
- [24.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 70, p-64.
- [25.](#) Ghirar al- Hukm, p-385.
- [26.](#) Ghirar al-Hukm, p-753.
- [27.](#) Ghirar al-Hukm, p-371.
- [28.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 70, p-64.
- [29.](#) Nahjul Balagha, sermon 222.

<https://www.al-islam.org/self-building-ibrahim-amini/supervision-most-important-factor-self-restraint#comment-0>