271206 - Allah is Watching Over You

the question

What is Muraqabah (awareness that Allah is watching)? Are there any Hadiths or Quranic verses that speak of Muraqabah?

Summary of answer

Muraqabah (awareness that Allah is watching) means that the Muslim is bearing in mind in all circumstances and situations, and believing with certainty, that Allah sees him and knows his good and bad deeds, and that He knows what is hidden in his thoughts and heart.
Muraqabah is essential for every Muslim, because by means of it he will attain sincerity in his acts of worship, perform them properly, and avoid what is prohibited.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

What is Muraqabah and Its Importance in Islam?

Muraqabah (awareness that Allah is watching) means the Muslim's bearing in mind in all circumstances and situations, and believing with certainty, that Allah sees him and knows what he is earning of good or bad deeds with all his faculties, and that He knows what is hidden in his thoughts and in his heart.

Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Muraqabah means always being aware and being certain that Allah, may He be Glorified and Exalted, is constantly watching what is visible of his deeds and what is hidden.

Constantly knowing that and being certain of it is Muraqabah; it is the result of knowing that Allah,

may He be Glorified, is watching him, looking at him, listening to what he says, knowing all that he does at all times and all moments… (End quote from Madarij As-Salikin, 2/1489)

Evidence from the Quran for the Constant Watchfulness of Allah

This is one of the central tenets of faith. There are many religious texts that speak of this idea, such as the following verses:

{And know that Allah knows what is within yourselves, so beware of Him. And know that Allah is Forgiving and Forbearing.} [Al-Baqarah 2:235]

{O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women. And fear Allah , through whom you ask one another, and the wombs. Indeed Allah is ever, over you, an Observer.} [An-Nisa' 4:1]

Hadith on the Observation and Muraqabah of Allah

According to a Hadith narrated by Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him), Jibril (peace be upon him) asked the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) about Ihsan. He said: "It is to worship Allah as if you can see Him, for although you cannot see Him, He can see you." (Narrated by Al-Bukhari, 50 and Muslim, 9)

The Connection Between the Names of Allah and Muraqabah

Muraqabah is one of the outcomes of belief in the beautiful names of Allah, such as Al-`Alim (the All-Knowing), As-Sami` (the All-Hearing), Al-Basir (the All-Seeing).

Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Muraqabah means to worship Allah on the basis of the knowledge that He is Ar-Raqib (the Watchful), Al-Hafidh (the Preserver), Al-`Alim (the All-Knowing), As-Sami` (the All-Hearing), Al-Basir (the All-Seeing). Whoever understands these names and worships Allah on the basis thereof will attain this awareness that He is always watching (Muraqabah). And Allah knows best. (End quote

from Madarij As-Salikin, 2/1493)

Muraqabah Leads to Sincerity in Worship and Actions

This Muraqabah is essential for every Muslim, because by means of it he will attain sincerity in his acts of worship, will do them properly, and will avoid that which is haram.

An-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “It is to worship Allah as if you can see Him, for although you cannot see Him, He can see you…”

The purpose behind these words is to encourage the Muslim to be sincere in worship, and to remember that his Lord, may He be Blessed and Exalted, is always watching him, so that he might develop proper focus and humility, and so on.

People of knowledge and devotion recommend keeping company with righteous people, so that that might protect him from falling into some shortcomings, out of respect for them and feeling shy before them. So how should one behave who believes that Allah, may He be Exalted, is constantly watching him and sees what he does in secret and openly? (End quote from Sharh Sahih Muslim, 1/158)

Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Righteous people agreed that being aware that Allah, may He be Exalted, knows every thought that crosses a person’s mind is a means of protecting him from falling short in what he does. The one who bears in mind the fact that Allah is watching his thoughts and his heart, Allah will protect him from falling short in what he does both in secret and openly. (End quote from Madarij As-Salikin, 2/1492)

And Allah knows best.