

نزك الينفس

SPIRITUAL PURIFICATION RETREAT

SECRET DEEDS WITH ALLAH

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Secret Deeds with Allāh

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



A way to prepare for the Ākhirah is by having secret deeds with Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. Secret deeds with Allāh سبحانه وتعالى elevate one's status in the Ākhirah, they wipe away the sins, and they help one overcome hardships in this Dunyā. The Messenger ﷺ said,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْعَبْدَ التَّقِيَّ الْغَنِيَّ الْخَفِيَّ

Allāh loves the servant who is God-conscious, free from want, and is hidden (from the view of people).

Allāh سبحانه وتعالى loves those who are Al-Khafīyy. Among those that he loves is Al-Khafīyy. Allāh سبحانه وتعالى loves those who don't seek attention for their 'Ibādāt. He loves people who prefer their good deeds to go unnoticed in this Dunyā. Having some 'Ibādāt that you do in secrecy is a sign of sincerity and it's a reflection of deep Īmān. The hypocrites, liars, and pretenders can't have secret 'Ibādāt, because it's something they can't do since their 'Ibādāt are an act for show off. A true believer cherishes his private moments with Allāh سبحانه وتعالى by engaging in secret acts of 'Ibādah that please Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, just like wrong doers enjoy their time alone to indulge in sinful behavior, والعياذ بالله.

Secret acts of 'Ibādah could be charities, it could be Salāh during the day in your house, or Qiyām at night while everyone's sleeping. Some of the Salaf didn't even let their spouses know about their portion in Qiyām Al-Layl. It could be a Harām glance that you turned away from. No one knows about you lowering your gaze except Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. If you're walking with a group, they might not even notice you're lowering your gaze. Or if you look at Harām, the only one who will know if you looked at the Harām or looked away from it is Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, so that's a hidden, secret deed. You have a phone and you have social media, no one

knows if you turned away from a Harām glance while you’re browsing social media in the darkness of your room except Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. No one knows if you made an effort to steer clear of Harām content on social media except Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. Secret ‘Ibādāt could be fasting, could be Dhikr, could be Du‘ā, could be helping brothers or sisters, or defending them. It could be helping orphans, or prisoners, or paying off debts. One of the most honorable acts of ‘Ibādah that can be kept discreet, especially in today’s world, is virtual Da’wah to Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. Sharing pure Tawhīd, standing up for the righteous who passed away or those who are in prison. No one but Allāh سبحانه وتعالى knows if you used your username or your screen name — that screen name and username that no one knows about but Allāh سبحانه وتعالى — no one knows if you used it to spread Tawhīd and defend the Muwahhidīn except Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. Giving Da’wah quietly and unknown, away from the distractions of fame and attention, is among the best forms of secret ‘Ibādah. We encountered numerous brothers who dedicated significant efforts to Da’wah, spreading knowledge about Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, and sisters often surpassed the brothers in this regard. Rarely anyone knows who they are, but Allāh سبحانه وتعالى definitely knows them. Be one of the unsung heroes who are recognized in the heavens with their deeds, but their deeds remain unknown to people on this vanishing earth. In Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr, under the verse,

ج
أَدْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ

Invoke your Lord with humility and in secret. He likes not the aggressors.

Ibn Kathīr mentioned a quote by Al-Hasan Al-Basri. Al-Hasan Al-Basri was of course from the Tābi‘īn. He’s talking about the Sahābah. He mentioned that he met people, meaning the Sahābah, who never performed any act of ‘Ibādah in public that they were able to do in private. Now, people blast their ‘Ibādāt on social media and brag and bolster about them in gatherings. Hidden ‘Ibādāt are a sign of true Īmān.

Not only is it a sign of Īmān, not only does it increase Īmān, but from the greatest secrets of hidden acts of ‘Ibādah is that you will experience a profound sweetness in your Īmān and in your ‘Ibādah. If your ‘Ibādah and Īmān lack sweetness, flavor it by performing concealed ‘Ibādāt between you and Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. Secret ‘Ibādāt kill Riyā’ and show-off. Those who struggle with Riyā’ and show-off or the doubts of that — those who doubt any of that, they’ll find their cure in performing secret ‘Ibādāt. The more concealed ‘Ibādāt are, the more truthful they are. Hypocrites and people of Riyā’, people who like to show off, they do ‘Ibādāt to be seen by others. They seek praise and admiration while the faithful, sincere individuals perform their ‘Ibādāt for the sake of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى alone, concealing their ‘Ibādāt and their deeds from the eyes of creation as much as they can, because they want their reward from Allāh سبحانه وتعالى alone. Those who struggled with the thought of Riyā’, they often struggle with the thought of Riyā because their private acts of ‘Ibādah are minimal or nonexistent. If someone is spotted praying two Rak’āt in public and he starts to feel unsure about his intention as it pertains to Riyā’, but then he goes in his house and prays many more Nawāfil that no one knows about, or he spends hours in Qiyām at night without anyone noticing, those two Rak’āt that he did in public wouldn’t make him doubt their sincerity since what he’s done in private is far greater. If someone is seen giving two dollars in public in charity, but in secrecy he’s giving thousands more that no one knows about, he will not have Riyā’ or thoughts or whispers about it, because in secrecy, he’s giving much more than what he’s giving in public. Whatever ‘Ibādah you’re seen doing in public, purify that ‘Ibādah by doing that ‘Ibādah or other ‘Ibādāt in private many more times than you do openly in public. Remember that just like there can be show-off, which is Riyā’, in public ‘Ibādāt, one must be careful not to fall into ‘Ujb in private ‘Ibādāt, which is vanity or self-conceit or self-admiration — and that’s a long topic, it’s not our topic today, it’s a long other topic.

Another reason for secret ‘Ibādāt is that secret ‘Ibādāt are a foundation of steadfastness on the truth. Secret ‘Ibādāt act like a strong shield for the heart against the potential for a relapse in one’s faith. The more deeds that you have that are hidden, the stronger your Īmān becomes and the more Allāh سبحانه وتعالى

places light in your heart to see through the dark Fitan when they occur. Secret ‘Ibādāt will, by the will of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, protect you from inconsistencies and Dalāl that others experience during times of Fitan. Don’t expect Thabāt during times of Fitan without dedicating some private ‘Ibādah between yourself and Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. You’ll also see the effect of such private ‘Ibādāt during your personal trials as well. One will not have Sabr during periods of personal Ibtilā’āt, like losses of loved ones or losses of wealth or loss of freedom — you won’t have Sabr without a substantial record of private acts of ‘Ibādah between yourself and Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. Build the largest collection of secret ‘Ibādāt that you can, that only you and Allāh سبحانه وتعالى know about. You’ll be firm in times of Ibtilā’āt, whether it’s personal matters or matters pertaining to the Dīn. With secret ‘Ibādāt and Du’ā for guidance, you will perceive the virtuous Muwahhidīn Mujāhidīn as just, and you’ll recognize the truth during Fitan with the utmost clarity, while others with no private bond with Allāh سبحانه وتعالى will be struggling with confusion and they may oppose the most righteous people of their time. Take this as a rule: the more hidden your ‘Ibādāt are, the stronger your Īmān becomes, the more steadfastness and insight you will have during personal or Dīn related trials and Fitan. Concealed ‘Ibādāt resemble a stake that you hit into the ground, it’s like a stake that’s embedded into the ground. The further you drive the stake down, the more secure it remains above the surface. And likewise, the deeper your deeds are buried, the stronger your Īmān stands during trials. The strength of that stake comes in how much you conceal of it underground. The strength of your Īmān and Thabāt comes in how much you conceal of your sincere ‘Ibādāt. Many of those who strayed away from the right path, they didn’t actually change. They were always lost and misguided. It’s just that their true hidden nature came to light. *You* think they changed, but all that happened was that the hidden side of them that lacked true ‘Ibādah, *that* became visible. It overshadowed their fake, seemingly righteous front. That’s like one of these beautiful trees that you see, any one of these. It may appear lovely on the outside, but if you inspect it closely, you might find that it’s decayed within. A breeze could cause it to topple. An individual may seem outwardly virtuous, however, without sincere, private ‘Ibādāt, they’re likely to collapse like the decayed tree at their first trial or difficulty or their first challenge in life.

And there's also a significant amount of special Ajr for concealed 'Ibādāt. Allāh سبحانه وتعالى commanded the concealed 'Ibādāt.

إِنْ تَبَدُّوا الصَّدَقَاتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِيَ وَإِنْ تُخْفُوهَا وَتُؤْتُوهَا الْفُقَرَاءَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ

If you disclose your charitable expenditures, they are good; but if you conceal them and give them to the poor, it is better for you...

If you conceal your Sadaqah, its better for you. That's similar to the meaning in the Hadīth about the Seven that Allāh سبحانه وتعالى will shade them Yawm Al Qiyāmah,

وَرَجُلٌ تَصَدَّقَ بِصَدَقَةٍ فَأَخْفَاهَا حَتَّى لَا تَعْلَمَ شِمَالُهُ مَا تُنْفِقُ يَمِينُهُ

A man who gives in charity in secrecy. In so much secrecy, that his left hand doesn't know what his right hand has given.

In the same Hadīth,

وَرَجُلٌ ذَكَرَ اللَّهَ خَالِيًا فَفَاضَتْ عَيْنَاهُ

A person who remembers Allāh in seclusion and his eyes get flooded with tears.

Allāh سبحانه وتعالى commended a person who remembers Allāh سبحانه وتعالى in solitude and then his eyes tear up. How does he remember Allāh سبحانه وتعالى?

Khāliyan — alone — our topic today. Shedding a simple tear or having a watery eye when remembering Allāh سبحانه وتعالى alone is better than weeping profuseously in public. Qiyām Al-Layl was praised for being late at night when no one knows about it.

إِنَّ نَاشِئَةَ اللَّيْلِ هِيَ أَشَدُّ وَطْأً وَأَقْوَمُ قِيلاً

Verily, the rising by night (for Tahajjud prayer) is very hard and most potent and good for governing oneself, and most suitable for (understanding) the Word (of Allāh).

And Allāh سبحانه وتعالى said,

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِ نَافِلَةً لَّكَ

And from [part of] the night, pray with it [i.e., recitation of the Qur'ān] as additional [worship] for you...

Fasting is among the best deeds because it's a deed only Allāh سبحانه وتعالى knows about. Hidden deeds also refine and purify the heart from impurities and darkness. When matters get tough, you use those deeds in Wasīlah, like the story of the three men in the famous Hadīth who were blocked by a rock and they sought a pure deed that will help them escape from the cave, and I mentioned it and talked about it in detail last Ramadān.

Ibn Al-Qayyim also mentioned that concealed deeds, the hidden deeds, grant one acceptance and a positive praise in this Dunyā. Even though that should not be intended, one of the effects of hidden deeds is that Allāh سبحانه وتعالى blesses that person with acceptance and positive praise in this Dunyā.

Muhammad Ibn Wāsi' said, *"Whoever rectifies his inner-self,"* like in private 'Ibādāt, *"Allāh سبّحانه وتعالى will rectify his outward appearance."* Ibn Al-Qayyim said, in meaning and in summary, that a person who hides a deed between himself and Allāh سبّحانه وتعالى, Allāh سبّحانه وتعالى will make that deed appear on him to others. He said those with a strong bond with Allāh سبّحانه وتعالى, who concealed their 'Ibādāt, are people who are spoken about positively to the point that their sins and faults are forgotten and people will only mention good things about them. Why? Because he said Allāh سبّحانه وتعالى does not overlook the efforts of his servants. The hearts of the pure, righteous people — the hearts of the *pure, righteous*, not everyone — can sense the true state of an individual based on the person's secret relationship with Allāh سبّحانه وتعالى. Allāh will put it in their heart that this is a righteous person. Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله تعالى used to go to abandoned Masājid and bury his face in the dirt and make Du'ā to Allāh سبّحانه وتعالى,

اللهم يا معلم إبراهيم فهمني

O Teacher of Ibrāhīm! Grant me understanding!

He made Du'ā to gain knowledge, and he would make Du'ā to understand a single verse of the Qur'ān after reading over a hundred Tafsīrs on that verse. He would make Du'ā for Allāh سبّحانه وتعالى to guide him to the understanding of that verse. Where would he do that? In an abandoned Masjid. Why? Because they're honorable Houses of Allāh, and no one is there, they're abandoned. That's how you attain sweetness in 'Ibādah. It could have been one of those times that he spent in solitude making Du'ā in a deserted Masjid — it could have been one of those times that Allāh سبّحانه وتعالى granted him the incredible knowledge and high status that he's been recognized for over the centuries. If you don't have a record of hidden good deeds, you're missing out on sweetness in 'Ibādah, and you're far away from the most important matters that help you stay strong for your Dunyā

and Ākhirah. If you need help performing secret 'Ibādāt, seek Allāh سبحانه وتعالى's Aid for it, because He said,

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

You alone we worship and You alone we seek Your Aid.

Seek His Aid to worship Him.

وصلی اللہ علی سیدنا محمد وعلی آلہ وصحبہ وسلم