

# HANBALI ACTS OF WORSHIP

From Ibn Balbān's  
*The Supreme Synopsis*

*Akḥṣar al-Mukhtaṣarāt*

MUSA FURBER

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ISBN 978-1-944904-03-6 (paper)

*Published by:*

Islamosaic

islamosaic.com

publications@islamosaic.com

Cover image © topor

## CONTENTS

### المُحتَوَيَاتُ

TRANSLITERATION KEY	VI
CONVENTIONS	VIII
PREFACE	IX
INTRODUCTION	I
1 Purification	3
2 Prayer	23
3 Funerals	62
4 Zakat	72
5 Fasting	81
6 Pilgrimage	88
7 Jihad	109
BIBLIOGRAPHY	115
DETAILED TABLE OF CONTENTS	116

## CONVENTIONS

### المُصْطَلَحَاتُ

Readers should be familiar with the following terms:

- *Wājib* – something one is censured for omitting, categorically. Throughout this translation, it is usually rendered as “obligatory.”
- *Fard* – something established via incontrovertible evidence. It has been rendered as “prescribed.”
- *Harām* – something one is legally censured for, including utterances and acts of the heart. It has been rendered as “unlawful.”
- *Mandūb, mustahabb, sunnah* – something one is rewarded for performing, yet one is not punished for neglecting it, categorically. It includes utterances and actions of the heart, and has been rendered as “recommended.”
- *Makrūh* – is that which someone is praised for avoiding yet is not censured for performing. It has been rendered as “disliked.”
- *Mubāh, ḥalāl* – something that in and of itself is free of praise and censure. It has been rendered as “permissible.”

## PREFACE

### المقدمة

While studying in Damascus, I was blessed with the opportunity to study Hanbali fiqh for three years with Abū Ibrāhīm ibn Badrān, one of the school's authorized muftis. Towards the end of my reading, he recommended I teach and transmit what I had studied. Following his recommendation, I began presenting Hanbali fiqh online and translating *Zād al-Mustaqni'*. I completed the translation of *Zād*, and then added annotations up through the chapter on trade. But my work was never mature enough to publish.

A decade has passed and I feel it is time to carry out my sheikh's recommendation. Instead of reviving a project dormant for a decade, I thought it better to translate a smaller text. So, at the end of December 2015, I started on *Akhṣar al-Mukhtaṣarāt*, one of the more popular later introductions to the school.

The author of the text is Muḥammad bin Badr al-Dīn bin 'Abd al-Ḥaqq bin Balbān al-Ḥanbalī, born in 1006 AH/1597 CE in the Ṣālihiyyah region of Damascus. He was known for his knowledge of hadith and fiqh, including mastery of the four schools, his acts of worship, and his abstinence. His books include *Kāfi al-Mubtadī* which he abridged as *Akhṣar al-Mukhtaṣarāt*, *Mukhtaṣar al-Ifādāt fi Rub' al-'Ibādāt ma' al-Ādāb wa Ziyādāt*, and a short book on the creed of the Salaf abridged from Ibn Ḥamdān al-Ḥanbalī's *Nihāyat al-Mubtadī'in*. He was reported to frequently repeat 'Alī bin Aḥmed al-Zaydī's statement: "Treat voluntary acts as obligations, sins as disbelief, lusts as poison, mixing with people as fire, and food as medicine." He passed away in 1083 AH/1672 CE.

## THE SUPREME SYNOPSIS

Not wanting to risk another decade passing without publication, I decided to publish the first quarter covering the major acts of worship: purification, prayer, alms, fasting, pilgrimage, and jihad. While reviewing these chapters I added explanatory notes from al-Ba‘li’s commentary *Kashf al-Mukhaddarāt* to clarify the basic text, provide examples, and clarify categorical rulings.

I relied on Dār al-Bashā’ir al-Islāmiyyah’s editions of these two books, both edited by Muḥammad Nāsir al-‘Ajmiy. Material from *Kashf* is placed between <...>. I kept my own additions to a minimum, placing them between [...].

It is my hope that this translation – along with its future installments – serves English-speaking audiences as an introduction to the basic topics within the Ḥanbali school. Students will benefit most if they read it with a qualified instructor, perhaps after reading Joe Bradford’s *Al-Qaddumi’s Elementary Primer in Hanbali Fiqh*.

Those who helped with this project are too numerous to mention. I am ever in debt to Sheikh Abū Ibrāhīm and it has been a great honor to study and sit with him. Many thanks are owed to the Abdul Wahhab and Abdel-Jellal for convincing me to translate a Hanbali text, and to the individuals who reviewed drafts of the translation and offered corrections, encouragement, and advice – especially Anaz Zubair, Annisa Rochadiat and Dropkick Copy’s Nabeel Azeez. Last but not least, I owe much to my wife and children for their constant support and sacrifice over the years.

May Allah grant all who have been mentioned in this preface – and us – His mercy, and may He make us among those who benefit from this text. Where I have succeeded, it is only through the grace of Allah; where I have faltered it is from my own shortcomings.

MUSA FURBER  
ABU DHABI  
APRIL 20, 2016

## FASTING

## كِتَابُ الصِّيَامِ

يَلْزَمُ كُلَّ مُسْلِمٍ مُكَلَّفٍ قَادِرٍ بَرُؤِيَّةِ الْهَلَالِ وَلَوْ مِنْ عَدَلٍ، أَوْ بِإِكْمَالِ شَعْبَانَ، أَوْ  
وُجُودِ مَانِعٍ مِنْ رُؤْيِيهِ لَيْلَةَ الثَّلَاثِينَ مِنْهُ كَغَيْمٍ وَجَبَلٍ وَغَيْرِهِمَا، وَإِنْ رُئِيَ نَهَارًا فَهُوَ  
لِلْمُقْبِلَةِ.

وَإِنْ صَارَ أَهْلًا لَوُجُوبِهِ فِي أَثْنَائِهِ أَوْ قَدِمَ مُسَافِرٌ مُفْطِرًا، أَوْ طَهَّرَتْ حَائِضٌ أَمْسَكُوا  
وَقَضَوْا. وَمَنْ أَفْطَرَ لِكَبَرٍ أَوْ مَرَضٍ لَا يُرْجَى بُرُؤُهُ أَطْعَمَ لِكُلِّ يَوْمٍ مِسْكِينًا.

Fasting Ramadan is required of every Muslim who is responsible and able upon sighting the crescent moon [of Ramadan] (even if sighted by a single upright male), completing thirty days of Sha‘bān, or the existence of something preventing its sighting on the night of the thirtieth of Sha‘bān (like clouds, mountains, or the like «e.g., smoke»). If seen during the day, it belongs to the next night.

If one becomes eligible [*ahlan*] for its obligation during it «i.e., during the day, such as a minor reaches maturity while not fasting, someone sick recovers from an illness, someone insane recovers their sanity,» a traveler arrives while not fasting, or a woman’s menstruation ends: one restrains [from food] and makes it up.

Whoever breaks a fast due to old age or a chronic illness feeds one poor person each day.

## THE SUPREME SYNOPSIS

وَسَنَّ الْفِطْرَ لِمَرِيضٍ يَشُقُّ عَلَيْهِ وَمَسَافِرٍ يَقْصُرُ وَإِنْ أَفْطَرْتَ حَامِلٌ أَوْ مُرْضِعٌ خَوْفًا  
عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمَا فَصَتًا فَقَطْ، أَوْ عَلَى وَلَدَيْهِمَا مَعَ الْإِطْعَامِ مِمَّنْ يَمُونُ الْوَلَدَ وَمَنْ أُغْمِيَ  
عَلَيْهِ، أَوْ جُنَّ جَمِيعَ النَّهَارِ لَمْ يَصِحَّ صَوْمُهُ، وَيَقْضِي الْمَغْمَى عَلَيْهِ.

Breaking the fast is recommended for someone who is sick and for whom fasting is difficult, and for a traveler shortening «prayers».

If a woman who is pregnant breaks her fast, or a woman who is nursing «breaks her fast» out of fearing for herself, she makes up «whatever fasts she broke». Or if either one «broke her fast out of fear for her child, «she must make it up» and whoever provides for the child must give food «which is one *mudd* [0.5 l liters] of wheat or half a *sā'* [2.04 liters] of something else, for each day. He can give all of the food to a single poor person, all at once».

Whoever loses consciousness or is insane the entirety of the day: his fast is not valid, and the one who lost consciousness makes it up.

### *The Intention to Fast*

وَلَا يَصِحُّ صَوْمٌ فَرَضٌ إِلَّا بِنِيَّةٍ مُعَيَّنَةٍ بِجُزْءٍ مِنَ اللَّيْلِ، وَيَصِحُّ نَفْلٌ مِمَّنْ لَمْ يَفْعَلْ  
مُفْسِدًا بِنِيَّةٍ نَهَارًا مُطْلَقًا.

An obligatory [*fard*] fast is not valid except with a specific intention during some part of the night «by believing himself to be fasting for Ramadan, making it up, performing a vowed fast, or a fast that is a communal obligation». Voluntary fasts are valid from someone who has not done something to invalidate it with an intention made during the day, categorically [*mutlaqan*] «whether the intention is before noon or after it».

### *Fast Invalidators*

(فَضْلٌ) وَمَنْ أَدْخَلَ إِلَى جَوْفِهِ، أَوْ مَجْرَفٍ فِي جَسَدِهِ كِدِمَاعٍ وَحَلَقٍ شَيْئًا مِنْ أَيِّ  
مَوْضِعٍ كَانَ غَيْرَ إِحْلِيلِهِ أَوْ ابْتَلَعَتْ نَحَامَةً بَعْدَ وُضُوئِهَا إِلَى فَمِّهِ أَوْ اسْتَقَاءَ فِقَاءً، أَوْ

## FASTING

اسْتَمْتَى، أَوْ بَاشَرَ دُونَ الْفَرْجِ فَأَمْتَى، أَوْ أَمَذَى أَوْ كَرَّرَ النَّظَرَ فَأَمْتَى، أَوْ نَوَى  
الْإِفْطَارَ، أَوْ حَجَمَ، أَوْ اخْتَجَمَ عَامِدًا مُخْتَارًا ذَاكِرًا لِصَوْمِهِ أَفْطَرَ، لَا إِنْ فَكَّرَ فَأَنْزَلَ،  
أَوْ دَخَلَ مَاءً مَضْمُضَةً أَوْ اسْتِنَشَاقٍ حَلَقَهُ، وَلَوْ بَالِغَ أَوْ زَادَ عَلَى ثَلَاثٍ.

Whoever inserts anything into his body or a body cavity (like the brain and throat <and the inside of the vagina or similar things that lead to the stomach>), from any location other than the urethra; swallows mucus after it reaches his mouth; induces vomit and vomits; ejaculates or releases pre-ejaculate [*madhi*] from masturbation or non-genital rubbing; looks repeatedly and ejaculates; intends to break their fast; is cupped or cups someone else – deliberately, voluntarily, and remembering the fast – has broken [the fast] <even if he is unaware that it is unlawful>. But <the fast is> not <broken> if thought leads to orgasm, or water from rinsing the mouth or nostrils enters his throat – even if he did so vigorously, or exceeded three <times, even if not done for purification>.

وَمَنْ جَامَعَ بِرَمَضَانَ نَهَارًا بِلا عُذْرٍ شَبَقَ وَنَحْوَهُ فَعَلَيْهِ الْقَضَاءُ وَالْكَفَّارَةُ مُطْلَقًا وَلَا  
كَفَّارَةَ عَلَيْهَا مَعَ الْعُذْرِ: كَنُومٍ، وَإِكْرَاهٍ، وَنَسْيَانٍ وَجَهْلٍ، وَعَلَيْهَا الْقَضَاءُ، وَهِيَ عِتْقُ  
رَقَبَةٍ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامَ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فِإِطْعَامُ سِتِّينَ مِسْكِينًا، فَإِنْ  
لَمْ يَجِدْ سَقَطَتْ.

Whoever has intercourse in the daytime of Ramadan without overwhelming need for sex and the like <e.g., a sickness that is improved through sex> must make it up and give an expiation, categorically [*mutlaqan*] <whether ignorant, forgetful, mistaken – such as someone who thought it was night and it turned out to be day, compelled or participated voluntarily>. No expiation is required <of the woman> when she has an excuse, such as sleeping, compulsion, forgetfulness, and ignorance. But she must make it up.

The expiation is freeing a slave or, in its absence, fasting consecutively for two months. Whoever is unable <to fast> can give food to sixty poor. In their absence, the obligation is dropped.

## THE SUPREME SYNOPSIS

وَكُرِهَ أَنْ يَجْمَعَ رَيْقَهُ فَيَبْتَلِعَهُ، وَذَوْقُ طَعَامٍ، وَمَضْغُ عِلْكِ لَا يَتَحَلَّلُ، وَإِنْ وَجَدَ طَعْمَهَا فِي حَلْقِهِ أَفْطَرَ، وَالْقَبْلَةَ وَنَحْوَهَا مِمَّنْ نُحِرَكَ شَهْوَتَهُ.  
وَيَحْرُمُ إِنْ ظَنَّ إِنْزَالًا، وَمَضْغُ عِلْكِ يَتَحَلَّلُ، [وَكَذِبٌ] وَعَيْبَةٌ، وَنَمِيمَةٌ وَشْتَمٌ وَنَحْوُهُ بِتَأَكُّدٍ.

It is offensive to gather one's spit and then swallow it; to taste food or suck on mastic that does not dissolve – and the fast is invalid if the taste reaches the throat.

Kissing and its like «e.g., hugging, touching, and repeatedly looking; are offensive» for someone who will be aroused. They are unlawful if he thinks he will orgasm.

«It is unlawful» to suck mastic that dissolves «even if one does not swallow one's saliva».

Lying, gossiping, tale-bearing, abusing, and the like «e.g., extremely ugly sin and disobedience» are emphatically «unlawful».

وَسُنَّ تَعْجِيلُ فِطْرِ، وَتَأْخِيرُ سُحُورٍ وَقَوْلُ مَا وَرَدَ عِنْدَ فِطْرِ وَتَتَابِعُ الْقَضَاءِ فَوْرًا وَحَرْمُ تَأْخِيرِهِ إِلَى آخِرِ بَلَاءِ عُدْرٍ، فَإِنْ فَعَلَ وَجَبَ مَعَ الْقَضَاءِ إِطْعَامُ مَسْكِينٍ عَنْ كُلِّ يَوْمٍ، وَإِنْ مَاتَ الْمَفْرُطُ وَلَوْ قَبْلَ آخِرِ أَطْعَمَ عَنْهُ كَذَلِكَ مِنْ رَأْسِ مَالِهِ، وَلَا يُصَامُ، وَإِنْ كَانَ عَلَى الْمَيِّتِ نَذْرٌ مِنْ حَجٍّ، أَوْ صَوْمٍ، أَوْ صَلَاةٍ، أَوْ نَحْوِهَا سُنَّ لِوَلِيِّهِ قَضَاؤُهُ وَمَعَ تَرْكَةِ يَجِبُ، لَا مُبَاشَرَةً وَلِيٍّ.

It is recommended to hasten breaking one's fast and to delay one's pre-fast meal; to say what has been narrated when breaking fast:

«*Allāhuma laka shumtu, wa 'alā rizqika aftarṭu, subḥānaka Llāhumma wa bi-ḥamdika, Allāhumma taqabbal minnī, innaka anta s-samī'u l-alīm*»

(“O Allah, for your sake I fasted, and upon your sustenance I break it. O Allah, accept it from me. Indeed, you are the All-Hearing, All-Knowing”);

## FASTING

to make up fasts consecutively and immediately.

It is unlawful to delay making up fasts without excuse. If one delays excessively, then – along with the make up – one must feed one poor person for each day. If someone breaking his fast dies – even if before another ‘Ramadan’ – food is also given on his behalf from the top of his estate [i.e. before the estate is distribute to inheritors] and fasting is not performed on his behalf.

If someone dies having vowed to perform Hajj, a fast, a prayer, or the like <e.g., circumambulation or a vowed spiritual retreat [i‘tikāf]’, it is recommended for his guardian to make it up. When there is an estate, it must be done, though the guardian does not have to perform it himself.

### *Recommended Fasts*

(فَضْلٌ) يُسَنُّ صَوْمُ أَيَّامِ الْبَيْضِ وَالْحَمِيسِ وَالْإِثْنَيْنِ، وَسِتٌّ مِنْ شَوَّالٍ، وَشَهْرِ اللَّهِ الْمُحَرَّمِ، وَآكِدُهُ الْعَاشِرُ ثُمَّ التَّاسِعُ، وَتِسْعَ ذِي الْحِجَّةِ، وَآكِدُهُ يَوْمَ عَرَفَةَ لِغَيْرِ حَاجِّ بِهَا.

It is recommended to fast the White Days <the 13–15th of every lunar month>; Thursdays; Mondays; six days from Shawwāl; Allah’s month Muḥarram (with the tenth and then the ninth being more emphatic); the nine days from the start of Dhi l-Ḥijjah (with the Day of ‘Arafah being most emphatic) for individuals not performing Hajj.

وَأَفْضَلُ الصَّيَامِ صَوْمُ يَوْمٍ وَفِطْرُ يَوْمٍ، وَكُرِّهَ إِفْرَادُ رَجَبٍ وَالْجُمُعَةِ وَالسَّبْتِ وَالشَّكِّ، وَكُلِّ عِيدٍ لِلْكَفَّارِ، وَتَقَدَّمَ رَمَضَانَ بَيَوْمٍ أَوْ بِيَوْمَيْنِ مَا لَمْ يُوَافِقْ عَادَةً فِي الْكُلِّ.

The best fast is <the fast of Dāwūd (‘alayhi s-salām)>: fasting one day and breaking fast the next. It is offensive to single out <the entire month of> Rajab, Friday, Saturday, the Day of Doubt <the 30th day of Sha‘ban when there is something affecting visibility,

## THE SUPREME SYNOPSIS

such as clouds», every celebration of disbelievers; and fasting one or two days before Ramadan. All [are offensive] so long as the fast does not match one's habit.

وَحَرْمَ صَوْمِ الْعِيدَيْنِ مُطْلَقًا، وَأَيَّامِ التَّشْرِيقِ إِلَّا عَنْ دَمٍ مُتَعَةٍ وَقِرَانٍ.

It is unlawful to fast the two days of Eid, categorically [*mutlaqan*] «whether the fast is obligatory or voluntary – and it is invalid», and the Days of Tashriq [11–13 Dhi l-Hijjah] (unless making a blood sacrifice for performing Umrah and then Hajj or performing them both together).

وَمَنْ دَخَلَ فِي فَرَضٍ مُوسِعٍ حَرَّمَ قَطْعُهُ بِلَا عُدْرٍ أَوْ نَفْلٍ غَيْرِ حَجٍّ وَعُمْرَةٍ كَرِهَ بِلَا عُدْرٍ.

It is unlawful to interrupt an obligatory [*fard*] act which allows for multiple performances within its valid time [*fard muwassa'*] «e.g., making up Ramadan before the next one, performing a prayer at the beginning of its time» without an excuse once one begins it. It is offensive to interrupt voluntary act other than Hajj or Umrah without an excuse.

### **Spiritual Retreat**

(فَضْلٌ) وَالْأَعْتِكَافُ سُنَّةٌ، وَلَا يَصِحُّ مِمَّنْ تَلَزَمَهُ الْجَمَاعَةُ إِلَّا فِي مَسْجِدٍ تُقَامُ فِيهِ إِنْ أَتَى عَلَيْهِ صَلَاةٌ، وَشُرْطُ لَهُ طَهَارَةٌ مِمَّا يُوجِبُ غُسْلًا.

Spiritual Retreat [*i'tikāf*] is recommended. It is not valid from someone who is required to attend congregational prayers except in a mosque where a congregation is held if a prayer will occur [during the time of his retreat].

A condition for it[s performance] is that one is free of anything requiring performing the purificatory bath «e.g., menstruation or lochia».

## FASTING

وَأِنْ نَذَرَهُ أَوْ الصَّلَاةَ فِي مَسْجِدٍ غَيْرِ الثَّلَاثَةِ - فَلَهُ فِعْلُهُ فِي غَيْرِهِ، وَفِي أَحَدِهَا فَلَهُ فِعْلُهُ فِيهِ، وَفِي الْأَفْضَلِ، وَأَفْضَلُهَا الْمَسْجِدُ الْحَرَامُ، ثُمَّ مَسْجِدُ النَّبِيِّ - عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ - [فَالْأَفْصَى].

If one vows to perform spiritual retreat or prayer in a mosque other than the three [al-Masjid al-Harām in Mecca, the Mosque of the Prophet ﷺ in Medina, and al-Aqṣā in Jerusalem], one can perform it in another mosque. But if one vows it in one of those three, one must perform it there or in a superior mosque. The most superior is al-Masjid al-Harām, then the Mosque of the Prophet ﷺ, and then al-Aqṣā.

وَلَا يَخْرُجُ مَنْ اعْتَكَفَ مَنْدُورًا مُتَّابِعًا إِلَّا لِمَا لَا بُدَّ مِنْهُ وَلَا يَعُودُ مَرِيضًا، وَلَا يَشْهَدُ جِنَازَةً إِلَّا بِشَرْطٍ.

One does not exit from a spiritual retreat that one has vowed to perform consecutively except for something unavoidable (e.g., fetching his own food and drink when no one will bring it for him, vomiting, washing away filth, relieving oneself, performing an obligatory ablution (even if for a prayer before its time has entered)). He does not visit someone who is sick nor attend a funeral unless it was stipulated (though it is not valid to stipulate exiting for trade or whenever one wants).

وَوَطْءُ الْفَرْجِ يُفْسِدُهُ، وَكَذَا أَنْزَالُ بُمْبَاشِرَةٍ، وَيَلْزَمُ لِإِفْسَادِهِ كَفَّارَةٌ يَمِينٍ.

Intercourse spoils it. So does orgasm from foreplay.

An expiation for oath breaking is required for spoiling (a spiritual retreat one had vowed to perform).

وَسُنَّ إِشْتِعَالُهُ بِالْقُرْبِ، وَاجْتِنَابُ مَا لَا يَغْنِيهِ.

It is recommended to busy oneself with acts of worship and to avoid whatever does not concern one (e.g., debating, arguing, and frequent speech).