

Marāqī 'l-Sa'ādāt

ASCENT TO FELICITY

A Manual on Islamic Creed and Ḥanafī Jurisprudence

ABŪ 'L-IKHLĀṢ AL-SHURUNBULĀLĪ

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Translation, Notes and Appendices

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Translator's Foreword

IN THE NAME OF ALLĀH, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate. All praise is for Allāh, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe, the Bestower of sincerity. May His peace, blessings, and mercy be upon the best of creation, His final Messenger, our beloved Master and Liegelord, Muḥammad ﷺ, the Imām of the people of *ikhlās*; and upon his beloved family, venerable Companions, and all those who follow him ﷺ in excellence until the Day of Arising. *Āmīn*. The eminent 7th-century Levantine scholar Imām Nawawī relates the following ḥadīth in his famous collection of Forty Ḥadīths (*Arbaʿīn*):

Islam is built upon five: testifying that there is no deity except Allāh and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh, establishing the ritual prayer, almsgiving, making the pilgrimage to the House, and fasting in Ramaḍān (*Bukhārī, Muslim*).

These five components of the religion serve as its foundation and are hence known as its “pillars,” since the “edifice” of Islam—or one’s entire religious practice—is most centrally based on them. No matter how large a structure one constructs, or how elaborately one decorates that structure, the whole edifice is in peril if its foundation is not firmly established. This is spiritually no light matter. Therefore, an appropriate measure needs to be taken by the believer to ensure his foundation is established in the most perfect and firm fashion. He must learn how the five pillars are performed and diligently apply that knowledge in consistent practice. He then may turn to his Lord in hope of acceptance, in gratitude for the ability to perform them, and in repentance from his shortcomings therein. Aside from the very belief in one’s heart, no

other affair, whether worldly or religious, is of greater import. No tree stands tall or bears fruit unless its roots run deep, providing strength to withstand the forces of nature and ensuring it is adequately nourished; the foundation is of utmost concern.

The text before us, then, is an invaluable resource for this weighty agenda. It is entitled “Ascent to Felicity in the Sciences of Theology and Jurisprudence of Worship” (*Marāqī ’l-Sa’ādāt fi ’l-Mayi ’l-Tawhīd wa ’l-’Ibādāt*). It is a concise yet comprehensive manual on these two sciences, the latter based on the Ḥanafī school of law. Theology is an extension of the first pillar, since the testification of faith forms the basis of the entire corpus of Islamic beliefs, while jurisprudence of worship deals with the remaining four pillars. The text additionally covers the legal rulings pertaining to slaughtering, ritual sacrifice and hunting, and therefore as a primer, is quite broad in its range of subjects. At the same time, it does not delve into extraneous juridical and creedal minutiae that would otherwise overwhelm the reader, but is rather a clear presentation of the most salient issues pertaining to these two sciences.

“Ascent to Felicity” (*Marāqī ’l-Sa’ādāt*) is not only lucid in its presentation and relevant to this lofty aim, but also reliable in its content. Its author, Imām Ḥasan ibn ‘Ammār al-Shurunbulālī, is recognized as a leading jurist of the late Ḥanafī school. He is more well-known for his other text on worship, *Nūr al-’Iḍāḥ*—a work which gained unprecedented acceptance across Muslim lands wherever Ḥanafī law was taught, forming an integral part of the curricula of seminaries in modern-day Turkey, India, Pakistan, Egypt, the Levant, and the Caucasus. He also authored two excellent commentaries on *Nūr al-’Iḍāḥ*, the lengthier *Imdād al-Fattāḥ*, and its summarized version *Marāqī ’l-Falāḥ*, both of which also gained widespread approval. The *Imdād* specifically is referenced over seventy times, despite it covering only five chapters, in ‘Allāma Ibn ‘Ābidīn’s magnum opus *Radd al-Muḥtār*, the source of legal verdict for the late Ḥanafī school throughout the Muslim world.

Not only is Ibn ‘Ābidīn’s reliance on the *Imdād* a testament to its being a seminal legal work, of which this text is a summarized presentation, but also reflects Imām Shurunbulālī’s aptitude as a jurist. Indeed, Ibn ‘Ābidīn specifically refers to Imām Shurunbulālī as *dhī ’l-ta’ālīf al-shahīra*, or “one who authored the very well-known works [of jurisprudence]” as well as *faqīh al-nafs*, a title of utmost reverence and veneration from one jurist to another (*Radd al-Muḥtār* 1:3). Its meaning, as mentioned by Ibn ‘Ābidīn himself, is “one who is *innately*

MANDATORY REQUISITES (*WĀJIBĀT*) OF THE PRAYER

Among them²²² are the following:²²³

1. To say the words *Allāhu akbar* specifically [as opposed to other phrases of remembrance] to begin every prayer [i.e., for the *tahrīma*];
2. To recite the Fātiḥa²²⁴ as well as a *sūra* or three verses²²⁵ after it, in any two *rakʿas* of the obligatory prayer and in all *rakʿas* of the voluntary prayer;
3. To do the above recitation specifically in the first two *rakʿas* of the obligatory prayer;
4. To perform prostration with [most of] the forehead and [the hard part of] the nose;
5. To perform the second prostration before moving on to other parts of the prayer;
6. To be still for at least a moment²²⁶ in every integral of the prayer;²²⁷
7. The first sitting;²²⁸

222 If a mandatory requisite is omitted, the prayer is still valid yet deficient. If it were omitted on purpose, it is sinful and hence mandatory (*wājib*) to repeat the prayer, just as it is if one does something prohibitively disliked (*makrūh tahrīman*) during the prayer. If omitted by accident, then one must perform the forgetfulness prostration at the end of the prayer (see related section, p. 106) (*Hadiyya* 65; *Durr* 1:306–7).

223 It is also mandatory (*wājib*) to rise from the first sitting as soon as one has recited the *tashahhud*. If one forgets and instead remains sitting until he recites *Allāhumma ṣalli ʿalā Muḥammad*, he has missed this requisite. If he recites less before recalling and standing, then it is excused (*Durr, Radd* 1:313; *Hadiyya* 66). Another mandatory requisite is to perform each obligatory (*farḍ*) and mandatory (*wājib*) element of the prayer in its proper place. If, for example, one finished the recitation and then accidentally remained standing while thinking—not engaged in any sort of remembrance, but rather silent for the length of time it takes to say *Subḥāna ʿLlāh* three times in a measured pace—then he missed this requisite by delaying bowing, and would therefore need to perform a forgetfulness prostration (*Durr* 1:315).

224 That is, the entire Fātiḥa, as each verse is mandatory. An exception is if one fears the time expiring for fajr, because sunrise actually nullifies the prayer. In that case, he simply recites one verse to fulfill the obligation and complete the prayer on time (*Hadiyya* 65; *Durr, Radd* 1:307).

225 That is, three short verses, the shortest being *Thumma naẓar, Thumma ʿabasa wa basar, Thumma adbara wa ʿstakbar* (Qurʾān 74:21–3), or one long verse of equivalent length or more, such as *Āyat al-Kursī* (2:255) or the like (*Durr, Radd* 1:308).

226 That is, for enough time to say *Subḥāna ʿLlāh* once (*Hadiyya* 66; *Durr* 1:312).

227 That is, in bowing (*rukūʿ*) and prostration (*sujūd*), as well as in the standing after bowing (*qawma*) and in the sitting between prostrations (*jalsa*) (*Hadiyya* 66; *Radd* 1:312).

228 That is, the sitting after the first two *rakʿas* in a three or four-*rakʿa* prayer, for the length

8. To recite the entire²²⁹ *tashahhud* in both sittings;
9. To say the word *as-salām*;²³⁰
10. To recite the *qunūt*²³¹ in the witr prayer [see p. 192];
11. To recite the [six] extra *takbīrs*²³² in the two ʿĪd prayers;
12. For the imām, to recite Qurʾān out loud in [the first two *rakʿas* of] the loud obligatory prayers;²³³
13. For both the imām and the one praying alone, to recite Qurʾān silently in the other *rakʿas* of the obligatory prayers.²³⁴

EMPHASIZED *SUNNAS* OF THE PRAYER

Among them²³⁵ are the following:

of time to recite the *tashahhud* therein. The sitting after the forgetfulness prostration is also a mandatory (*wājib*) requisite (*Hadiyya* 66).

229 Hence, omitting a part of it takes the same ruling as omitting all of it, namely, requiring a forgetfulness prostration if by accident, or being sinful if on purpose (*Durr, Radd* 1:313).

230 That is, twice when ending the prayer, each one being mandatory. Adding '*alaykum wa rahmatu 'LLāh* is a *sunna* (*Hadiyya* 67; *Durr, Radd* 1:314).

231 Any supplication (*duʿā*) fulfills this requisite (see related note, p. 97) (*Hadiyya* 67; *Durr* 1:315).

232 That is, three in the first *rakʿa* and three in the second, each one being mandatory (*Durr, Radd* 1:315). This is the optimal method according to the Ḥanafī school, yet to do seven in the first *rakʿa* and five in the second is also valid, for which one must follow the imām in prayer (*Marāqī 'l-Falāḥ* 2:155–6).

233 Namely, both *rakʿas* of fajr, the first two *rakʿas* of maghrib and ʿishā, both *rakʿas* of the Friday prayer and two ʿĪd prayers, and the *tarāwīḥ* and congregational witr in Ramaḍān. For these *rakʿas*, a man praying alone has the choice of reciting aloud or silently, even if making up the prayer. Women do not recite aloud for any prayer (*Mukhtār* 1:76; *Hadiyya* 67; *Radd* 1:315).

234 Namely, all *rakʿas* of zuhr and ʿaṣr, the third *rakʿa* of maghrib, and the third and fourth *rakʿas* of ʿishā' (*Hadiyya* 67; *Radd* 1:315).

235 The following are also emphasized *sunnas* of the prayer: while standing, to keep the feet about four-fingers apart (*Imdād* 267); to lengthen the first *rakʿa* of only fajr, while for other prayers the first and second *rakʿas* should be approximately of similar length; to place one's hands on one's thighs when sitting, such that the fingertips are parallel to the knees, without grabbing the knees; to point with the right index finger when pronouncing the testification of faith in the *tashahhud*, raising it with *Lā ilāha* and lowering it back down with *illa 'LLāh*; for the imām when ending the prayer, to pronounce the second *salām* less audibly than the first one; for anyone, to begin with the right when turning the head with the closing *salāms*; and for the latecomer (*masbūq*), to wait until the imām says the second closing *salām* before rising to make up his missed *rakʿa*(s), to see if the imām needs to perform a forgetfulness prostration, since following the imām is mandatory (*wājib*). (*Hadiyya* 69–71; *Durr, Radd* 1:320–1, 332, 484; *Marāqī 'l-Falāḥ, Ṭaḥṭāwī* 1:375).

The following are emphasized *sunnas* that are specific to men, while women do the opposite. While bowing, men clutch the knees with the hands and spread the fingers wide, keep the legs straight without bending the knees, and bend over fully such that the head is even with the bot-

Almsgiving (Zakāt)

Zakāt is defined as the transfer of ownership (*tamlīk*) of a portion⁵²⁹ of wealth—specified by the Lawgiver—to a particular person,⁵³⁰ with its intention.⁵³¹

It is obligatory (*fard*) on every free Muslim who is legally responsible,⁵³² and who possesses the quantum (*zakāt*able amount) (*niṣāb*)⁵³³—whether in

529 Namely, 2.5% of one's wealth that is equal to or above the *zakāt*able amount (*niṣāb*) (see note below), upon which one lunar year has elapsed (*Hadiyya* 197; *Durr* 2:3).

530 That is, a Muslim of one of the categories of eligible recipients listed below.

531 Because it is an act of worship rather than a tax, *zakāt* is not valid without its intention, which must be present either (a) when one pays it to the recipient, (b) when one gives it to one's agent appointed to pay it on one's behalf, or (c) when one sets it aside to be paid as *zakāt* in the future. If one pays it without its intention, then it does not fulfill one's *zakāt* obligation, unless one later intends it as such while it is still intact, in the recipient's possession. Moreover, the recipient does not have to know that it is one's *zakāt* payment. One may, for example, call it a "gift" or "loan" while paying it to the recipient, all the while intending it to fulfill the *zakāt* obligation (and then later forgive the "loan") (*Imdād* 681; *Hadiyya* 202; *Durr, Radd* 2:11–12; *Kanz, Tabyīn* 1:257).

532 That is, adult and sane, as otherwise one is not legally responsible (*Hadiyya* 198; *Durr, Radd* 2:4; *Tabyīn* 1:252).

533 *Niṣāb* is of two types: *niṣāb wujūb al-zakāt* and *niṣāb ḥirmān al-zakāt*. The first type, mentioned above, refers to the minimum amount of wealth upon which *zakāt* is due, specifically from one's monetary wealth (i.e., gold, silver, cash, etc.), livestock, or trade goods, with the conditions mentioned above. The second type, *niṣāb ḥirmān al-zakāt*, is the minimum amount of wealth by which one would become ineligible to receive *zakāt*, though he may not have to pay it either. It is the same amount of wealth as the first type, yet is considered from any type of wealth other than one's basic personal needs (*Sharḥ al-Wiqāya* 1:230–231, *Lubāb* 168, *Durr* 2:73). For example, the combined value of a person's monetary wealth, livestock, and trade goods (i.e., categories of wealth for which *zakāt* is due) is below the quantum. Yet he owns an extra piece of land that was not purchased for resale (and hence not a trade good—see related note below, p. 140), and that land is of a value—when added to the previous amount (i.e., categories of wealth for which *zakāt* is due)—that causes his total wealth to be above the quantum. This person would have *niṣāb ḥirmān al-zakāt*, such that he would be ineligible to receive *zakāt*, yet would not have *niṣāb wujūb al-zakāt*, such that he would not be obligated to pay *zakāt*.

Hence, the central condition shared by all eligible recipients is possessing less than *niṣāb ḥirmān al-zakāt*, while the condition by which one is obligated to pay *zakāt* is possessing more than *niṣāb*

monetary wealth or in trade goods whose value is equivalent to the *niṣāb* of wealth⁵³⁴—over which a full lunar year (*ḥawl*) has passed, in excess of any debts⁵³⁵ and of basic personal needs.⁵³⁶

The *niṣāb* of gold⁵³⁷ is 20 *mithqāls*,⁵³⁸ for which one pays half a *mithqāl*. The *niṣāb* of silver is 200 *dirhams*, for which one pays 5 *dirhams*. For any amount above the *niṣāb*, if it increases to a fifth of the *niṣāb*, one pays its proportionate amount due, yet pays nothing if less than a fifth.⁵³⁹

The value of trade goods⁵⁴⁰ is combined with one's gold and silver, both of which are also added together by value.

wujūb al-zakāt. Finally, one who possessed *niṣāb ḥirmān al-zakāt* would still have to pay *ṣadaqat al-ḥīr* (see related section, p. 143) and perform the *uḍḥiyya* (see related chapter, p. 169).

534 This sentence comes later in the Arabic published edition and in the manuscript, yet is as above in the author's larger works *Imdād* (681) and *Marāqī 'l-Falāḥ* (2:391).

535 That is, debts that would reduce his wealth below the *niṣāb*. Otherwise, if one still possesses *niṣāb* despite one's debts, *zakāt* remains obligatory (on the wealth that exceeds the debts). Moreover, what is meant above is debts owed to humans, not those owed for religious obligations such as expiation (*kaffārā*), vows (*nudhūr*), the obligation of *ḥajj* and the like; such debts are not deducted when calculating one's zakāt-able wealth (*Ikhtiyār* 1:150; *Hadiyya* 198; *Tabyīn* 1:254–5). Finally, money set aside for general expenses, such as food, rent, education, or family provisions (*nafaqāt*), is likewise not deducted (*Badā'ī* 2:1101).

536 Basic personal needs (*ḥawā'ij aṣliyya*) refer to personal items that are not zakāt-able, such as one's house(s); furniture; clothing; vehicle(s); equipment used for one's profession; or any other personal belongings, like books or even property, not purchased with the intention of resale. If something is purchased with the intention of resale, it is deemed a trade good and is hence zakāt-able (*Ikhtiyār* 1:151; *Ṭaḥṭāwī* 2:392; *Durr, Radd* 2:8–9; *Tabyīn* 1:253).

537 *Zakāt* is due on gold and silver in any form, whether minted coins, raw nuggets, jewelry (whether worn or not worn, contrary to other schools), or household decorative pieces (*Imdād* 681; *Kanz* 1:277). There is no *zakāt* due, however, on precious stones such as rubies, diamonds or emeralds, regardless of their value, unless they are one's trade goods (see note below) (*Durr, Radd* 2:114; *Tabyīn* 1:277).

538 A *mithqāl* is roughly equivalent to 4.374 g; therefore, the *niṣāb* (minimum zakāt-able amount) is approximately 87.48 g of gold, or its equivalent monetary value (*Imdād al-Awzān* 17, 31). This value is the quantum used to determine whether or not one is obligated to pay *zakāt*, or eligible to receive it (see discussion at beginning of chapter and related note on two types of *niṣāb*).

539 For example, if someone owned 450 *dirhams* of silver, then he would pay 11 *dirhams* of *zakāt*—10 on the 400 and 1 on the extra 50—since the extra 50 *dirhams* is more than 1/5 of the *niṣāb* (i.e., 40). The proportionate amount of *zakāt* on the 50 *dirhams* is 1 *dirham*, since 1 *dirham* is owed for 40, and the extra 10 does not amount to another 1/5. If, however, he had 430 *dirhams*, he would pay 10 *dirhams*, as the extra 30 does not amount to 1/5 of the *niṣāb*. If he had 480 *dirhams*, he would pay 12 *dirhams*; and so on.

540 A trade good refers to any non-monetary item purchased with the intention, at the time of purchase, of resale. If one does not intend resale at the time of purchase, then the item is not deemed a trade good with regard to *zakāt*, and is hence not zakāt-able. That is, even if later after the purchase he intends resale, or even if it was purchased for personal use yet with the intention that if he later found a good deal, he would sell it, *zakāt* is not due on the item. Rather, once he actually