

A Tribute to Sheikh Al-Tusi

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A Tribute to Sheikh Al-Tusi الطوسي الحسن بن محمد شيخ

Yasin T. Al-Jibouri

The present text is a succinct and compact attempt to present in short the life and achievements of the great Sheikh al-Tusi. It also contains a list of his most important works.

The reader will come across the name of Sheikh (or Shaikh) al-Tusi in the three volumes of this translation/research; therefore, we have decided to acquaint him with this great personality:

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Shaikh al-Tusi, “Abu Ja’far” Muhammed ibn al-Hassan (385 –460 A.H./995 –1068 A.D.), is one of the greatest literary figures in Islamic history, a scholar the scope of whose knowledge encompassed Islamic history, fiqh and hadith. He is called “Tusi” after his birthplace, the city of Tus, Khurasan, Iran. After Tusi’s demise, Tus expanded in area, gradually becoming a center of knowledge and culture especially after Imam Ali ibn Musa al-Ridha’ [1](#) had resided in it. The Imam’s presence attracted scholars and seekers of knowledge from all the corner of the then Islamic world.

Sheikh al-Tusi was taught by the greatest scholars of his time who included Sheikh al-Mufid, Sayyid al-Sahreef al-Murtadha, brother of al-Shareef al-Radi, compiler of Nahjul-Balagha, who kept company with Sheikh al-Tusi for twenty-eight years, directing and helping the growth of his academic talents, so much so that Sheikh al-Tusi became a candidate for leading the nation after the demise of his mentor, and this is exactly what took place.

Students and seekers of knowledge went in hordes to the residence of Sheikh al-Tusi in order to learn from him, so his house in Baghdad embraced seekers of knowledge whose number was estimated to be no less than three hundred renown mujtahids from among the Shi’a faith in addition to countless Sunnis who attracted them with his own method and convincing style, presenting his evidence and treating everyone with the most lofty of Islamic ethical standards.

The former rector of al-Azhar, the revered Shaikh Abdul-Majeed Saleem, has been quoted as saying that he very much admired Shi’ite fiqh after someone had given him a copy of the book titled Al-Mabsoot by Sheikh al-Tusi as a gift. He liked the book so much that he made statements saying that he reviewed this book prior to issuing any fatwa, binding religious edict; so, whenever he found in this book what convinced him that it was the best viewpoint, he adopted it without any hesitation, an open-mindedness

which has now become so rare...

Al-Qa'im bi Amrillah was the ruler of his time. Recognizing the distinction of Sheikh al-Tusi, he ordered a special chair to be designed and made for the scholar, a chair which came to be known as that of scholarship and tutorship, one of its kind at the time. Sheikh al-Tusi, therefore, used to sit on that chair and deliver his sermons and speeches. This went on till the year 447 A.H./1055 A.D. when the flames of sectarianism swept Baghdad brought by Turkish Saljuks who burnt the Sheikh's house, library and chair. The Sheikh's library was known as the Shah-pur Library which is described by the great historian Yaqut al-Hamawi as the greatest in the entire Islamic world.

The Turks schemed to get the two main branches of Islam, the Shi'i and the Sunni, to be at each other's throats. This forced Sheikh al-Tusi to migrate to the city that houses the Shrine of the Commander of the Faithful Ali , namely al-Najaf al-Ashraf, Iraq, where he established a great university, turning this city into a capital for knowledge and a center for scholars, one which has ever since been attracting men of virtue and seekers of knowledge. Thousands of senior faqihs, jurists, speakers, virtuous exegetes and historians have graduated from it and will always continue to do so, Insha-Allah.

After his death, the grave of Sheikh al-Tusi turned into a lofty school for disseminating Islamic knowledge and a center for the scholarly hawza, theological seminary, and for its most prominent religious authorities.

The sectarian fire sparked by the Turks in Iraq in 447 A.H./1055 A.D. consumed most, if not all, the treasure of knowledge which Sheikh al-Tusi had spent years researching and compiling. Despite that, the following list has been compiled from various sources, and it introduces us to a drop in the bucket of what Sheikh al-Tusi had written:

1) **Al-Abwab**: a book about narrators of hadith.

. (١) - رجال الطوسي ، ويسمى هذا الكتاب (أبواب

2) **Ikhtiyar Ma'rifat al-Rijal**, a critique of the famous work Rijal al-Kashi.

. (٢) - اختيار معرفة الرجال - هذب من خاله كتاب (رجال الكشي

3) **Al-Istibsar**: Two Volumes about rituals and a third in the rest of aspects of fiqh .

. ٣ - الاستبصار - جزآن في العبادات، والثالث في بقية أبواب الفقه

4) **Al-Al-Amali fil Hadith** (also called Majalis): one of his most famous works.

٤) - أَلْمَالِي - في الحديث، ويسمى أيضاً (المجالس

5) **Al-Tibyan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an:** a book of exegesis.

٥ - القرآن تفسير في التبيان

6) **Talkhis Al-Shafi:** a summary of the book titled Al-Shafi by al-Shareef al-Murtadha, and it deals with the subject of imamate.

٦) - تلخيص الشافعي - في الإمامة، وأصله للشريف المرتضى (الشافعي

7) **Tamhid al-Usul:** an explanation of the book titled Jumal al-'Ilm wal 'Amal by al-Murtadha.

٧) - تمهيد الأصول - شرح لكتاب المرتضى (جمل العلم والعمل

8) **Tahthib al-Ahkam:** Ten Volumes and one of four books used as references for deriving rulings relevant to the Shari'a, the Islamic legislative system.

٨ - تهذيب الأحكام - عشرة مجلدات، من الكتب الأربع التي عليها مدار التنباط الأحكام الشرعية.

9) **Al-Jumal wal 'Uqud:** a book in rituals which he wrote after being requested by the judge of Tripoli of the time to do so.

٩ - الجمل والعقود - في العبادات، ألفه بطلب من قاضي طرابلس

10) **Al-Khilaf:** a book in two volumes that deals with the ahkam, religious rulings, in which he debates those who dispute with his School of Thought.

١٠ - الخالف - في الأحكام، ناظر فيه المخالفين. في مجلدين

11) **Riyadat al-'Uqul:** an explanation of his own book titled Muqaddima fi 'Ilm al-Usul (Introduction in the Science of Principles)

١١ - رياضة العقول - شرح لكتابه (مقدمة في علم الأصول

12) **Al-'Udda:** deals with the principles of the creed and of those of fiqh.

٢١. - العدة - في أصول الدين وأصول الفقه

13) **Al-Ghaiba:** deals with the occultation of Imam al-Mahdi (may Allah Almighty hasten his ease).

. (٣١ - الغيبة - في غيبة الإمام المهدي) عجل ٥ تعالى فرجه

14) **Al-Fihrist:** a bibliography of major books and authors who wrote in the science of usul, principles of the Islamic faith.

٤١. - الفهرست - في ذكر أصحاب الكتب وأصول

15) **Ma Yu'allal wama la Yu'allal** (what can be explained and what cannot): a book in the science of logic.

٥١. - ما يعلل وما ال يعلل - في علم الكالم

16) **Al-Mabsoot** (refer to the text above): one of the most prestigious books of fiqh; it contains seventy chapters.

٦١. - المبسوط - من أجل كتب الفقه. يشتمل على سبعين فصلاً

17) **Misbah al-Mutahajjid:** a book of recommended acts of the Sunnah, one of the greatest books of supplications and acts of worship

٧١ - وأعمال الأدعية كتب أجل من وهو السنة، أعمال في - المتهجد مصباح

18) **Al-Mufsih:** deals with the subject of Imamate, and it is one of the important sources in this topic.

٨١. - المفصح - في الإمامة، وهو من الآثار المهمة

19) **Maqatal al-Imam al-Hussain Alaihis-Salam:** a narrative of the epic of heroism of Imam al-Hussain's martyrdom.

٩١. - مقتل الإمام الحسين عليه السلام

20) **Al-Mustajad minal Irshad**: deals with the five principles of the creed.

٢٠. - المستجاد من الإرشاد - في أصول الدين الخمسة

21) **Manasik al-Hajj**: deals with pilgrimage-related rituals.

١٢. - مناسك الحج - في مجرد العمل

22) **Al-Nihaya**: a book about fiqh and issuing fatwas, edicts and contains 22 parts and 214 chapters

٢٢. - النهاية - في الفقه والفتوى.. يحتوي على ٢٢ فصلاً و ٤١٢ باباً

23) **Hidayat al-Mustarshid wa Basirat al-Muta'abbid**: a book of supplications and acts of adoration

٣٢. - هداية المسترشد وبصيرة المتعبّد - في الأدعية والعبادات

From this list of precious books, we have selected these few works for the reader only because they are available at libraries, providing you with their place of publication; unfortunately, the name of publisher or press house is omitted from existing editions:

- **Kitab al-Ghaiba**, Al-Najaf al-Ashraf, Iraq.
- **Misbah al-Mutahajjid**, Qum, Iran.
- **Al-Tibyan**, Al-Najaf al-Ashraf, Iraq.
- **Al-Amali**, Al-Najaf al-Ashraf, Iraq, 1384 A.H./1964 A.D. (Iran, 1313 A.H./1895 A.D.).
- **Al-Fihrist**, Al-Najaf al-Ashraf, Iraq.

¹. Imam Ali ibn Musa al-Al-Ridha' is the eighth in the series of Infallible Imams. He was born in the holy city of Medina on the eleventh of Thul-Qa'da, 148 A.H./765 A.D. and was given the titled "Al-Ridha" which means that Allah Almighty and His Holy Messenger are pleased with him. The Imam is also considered as the Greatest Learned and Erudite) of the Holy Ahlul Bayt. Al-Ma'mun (ruled from 198 – 218 A.H./813 – 833 A.D.) (younger son of caliph Harun "al-Rashid" who ruled from 170 – 193 A.H./786 – 809 A.D.), the then Abbasid caliph, appointed him as his crown prince but later poisoned him in Sanabad, Tus, in the Iranian region of Khurasan on the last day of the month of Safar 203 A.H./August 818 A.D. where he was buried. After the burial of Imam al-Ridha' a in this place, Sanabad was soon transformed into a metropolis. The holy shrine of Imam al-Ridha' in the holy city of Mashhad is also one of the most extensively visited pilgrimage centers in the

world: Annually, more than 25 million pilgrims and lovers of Holy Ahl al-Bayt from all parts of the world visit it.

Alhamdu-Lillah, I translated a book about this great Imam which the late Sheikh Muhammed-Jawad Fadlallah, the famous Lebanese scholar, had written, and you can review my translation Online by clicking on this Link:

<https://www.al-islam.org/imam-ar-ridha-a-historical-and-biographical-res...> [3]

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