

## ABU ISA AT-TERMIDHI IS A GREAT HADITH SCHOLAR

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### ABSTRACT

This article gives some information about the life and scientific activity of the famous hadith scholar Abu Isa at-Termidhi. In addition, there is a brief discussion about his writings, his unique methods of compiling hadith, and the importance of his work nowadays.

**Keywords:** Movarounnahr, Abu Isa Muhammad at-Termidhi, Termez, Samarkand, Marv, hadith, sahih, hasan, Al-Jame' as-Sahih (Reliable Collection), Al-Jame' al-Kabiyir (The Great Collection), Sahih at-Termidhi, Sunan at-Termidhi.

### INTRODUCTION

Many scholars living in Movarounnahr paid great attention to the development of religious studies as well as life science and physical science. Religious studies have always played an important role in the progress of society, the development of humanity and the formation of their outlook.

Abu Isa Muhammad at-Termidhi was one of the most influential scholars in the development of Islamic studies. His full name was "Muhammad ibn Isa ibn Savra ibn Musa ibn az-Zahhaq Abu Isa as-Sullamiaz-Zarir al-Bughi at-Termidhi". He was born in 209AH (824CE) in the village of Bugh near Termez. The reason why he is popularly known as at-Termidhi is that his whole life and scientific activity (from his youth) was closely connected with the city of Termez, and the village of Bugh, where the scientist was born, was close to the city of Termez (village located approx. 8 miles away from Termez).

There are several considerations why scholar's name includes many titles. One source says the reason behind the title "sullami" is that one of his ancestors was a close friend of an Arab tribe called "Sullam". The famous Central Asian historian Abu Sa'd Abdul Karim al-Sam'ani (1113-1167) explains the pseudonym al-Bughi by the fact of scholar's death in the village of Bugh. He also mentions that he took the nickname az-Zariyr (blind) because it was believed that Termidhi became blind at the end of his life for too much crying.

There is little information in the sources about At-Termidhi's family and parents. Mulla Ali Qari narrated from at-Termidhi that he said: "My grandfather lived in Marv during the time of Lays ibn Sayyar. Then they moved to Termez". (Sharh-ush-shamail: p. 136). Other historians limit themselves with quoting him. There are also a number of written sources about at-Termidhi's blindness. While some authors say he was born blind, most historians write that the scientist became blind later at the end of his life.

Al-Hakim Abu Ahmad narrates from one of his teachers saying: "I was in Khurasan when Muhammad ibn Ismail died. He was followed by no one like Abu Isa al-Termidhi followed him in knowledge, taqwa and zuhd. Termidhi became blind by crying so much".

At-Termidhi stood out from his peers because of his diligence and intelligence from a young age. Due to his great interest in science, he mastered many of the sciences of that time, especially

the science of hadith. He is one of the scholars who diligently studied the works of famous scholars and hadith scholars living in Termez, Samarkand, Marv and other major cities of Central Asia, and made a worthy contribution to the establishment of scientific contacts with scientists in the neighboring cities of Balkh and Hayraton.

In his early twenty's Imam at-Termidhi learned from Ishaq ibn Rahawayh al-Marwazi, one of the sheikhs of Khorasan, and others. On the age 25-26 he met many Islamic scholars in Hejaz, Mekka, Medina, Iraq and number of cities in Khorasan, he learned from them, participated in live scientific discussions and debates. Although, Ahmad Muhammad Zakir, a former Sharia judge in Egypt says: "I don't think Termidhi went to Bagdad. If he had entered Bagdad, he would have heard a hadith from one of the greatest hadith scholars Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Hanbal (164-241), and also Hafiz Abu Bakr Al-Khatib would have written about him in his book *Tarikh-ul-Baghdad*". During his many years of travelling, Termidhi learned not only the science of hadith, but also other fields of science as well, such as recitation, al-bayan, fiqh, history from many teachers.

At the same time, at-Termidhi paid special attention to the collection of the hadiths of Muhammad (s.a.w.). In this matter he endured all kinds of hardships. He would record the hadiths he read or heard from a narrator on separate pieces of paper, and if only he was convinced that they were accurate and consistent, then he would copy them into special pieces of paper. If there was any doubt about the authenticity of the hadiths, he wrote them separately. Thus, the hadiths are divided into 4 types: sahih (true, reliable), hasan (good), weak (empty, unreliable), and strange (strange).

In acquiring and perfecting the science of hadith, al-Termidhi studied with famous hadith scholars of his time. In the list of his teachers there were Imam al-Bukhari, Imam Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, Abu Dawud, Qutayba ibn Said, Ishaq ibn Musa, Mahmud ibn Ghilan, Said ibn Abdurrahman, Muhammad ibn Bashar, Ali ibn Hajar al-Marwazi, Ahmad ibn Munih, Muhammad ibn al-Musanna, Sufyan ibn Waqi' and a number of other well-known hadith scholars also can be mentioned.

Imam at-Termidhi, as a great muhaddith of his time, also taught many students. Great scientists can be seen among his students, such as Maqul ibn al-Fazl, Muhammad ibn Mahmud Anbar, Abu ibn Muhammad an-Nasafi, Hammad ibn Shakir, Haysam ibn Kulayb ash-Shoshi, Ahmad ibn Yusuf an-Nasafi, Abul-Abbas Muhammad ibn Mahbub al-Mahbubi. As we have seen, there were representatives of different countries and ethnic groups among at-Termidhi's teachers and students. From this point of view, the fact that in the distant past the representatives of different countries worked together in the development of science and the spread of the seeds of enlightenment and there was a real international spirit in the development of global moral values can be good example and lesson for modern world.

There are many narrations in historical sources about the sharpness of at-Termidhi's mind and the strength of his memory. For example, the Arab historian Shamsuddin al-Dhahabi (1274-1347) wrote in his *Tazkiratul-Huffaz* (Tazkira about the Hafiz) the following story: When he went for hajj to Mekka, he met famous hadith scholars and asked one of them to teach the hadiths. The scholar said: then, get a pen and paper. On the response at that time Termidhi could not find a pen and started to move his bare hand on a piece of paper as if he were writing

down the hadiths he heard sitting in front of a scholar. The scholar narrated about seventy of the various hadiths. The scholar, mean while, looked at the paper and saw that it had no writing on it, and was outraged by at-Termidhi's work. At-Termidhi calmly said: "Shall I recite from you the hadiths you have narrated?" and recited all hadiths he heard from the scholar one by one. The scholar said he was impressed by At-Termidhi's strong memory.

At-Termidhi collected hadiths and also compiled books during his travels to many foreign countries. After returning from the trip, he participated in scientific discussions with scientists, and mentored many students. In particular, he was in many such debates with the famous muhaddith scholar al-Bukhari, about which at-Termidhi mentioned in his book "Al-Ilal". Many of at-Termidhi's works, including his famous book "Al-Jame'", were created after his return to his homeland. Imam al-Termidhi died in 892 in the village of Bugh near Termez and was buried there.

During his career, at-Termidhi created more than a dozen works. Without a doubt, "Al-Jome'" has great importance in his cultural heritage. This book is also known with different names as Al-Jame' as-Sahih (Reliable Collection), Al-Jame' al-Kabiyr (The Great Collection), Sahih at-Termidhi, Sunan at-Termidhi (The Sunnah of Tirmidhi).

Another major work of the scholar is "Ash-Shamail an-Nabawiyya"(The Special Qualities of the Prophet). This work is also known as "Ash-shamail Muhammadiyya" or "Ash-shamail fi shamail an-nabi sallallahu alayhi wasallam". Some of the works including above mentioned one was translated into uzbek language by Said Mahmoud Tarozi (died in 1992 in Saudi Arabia)and were published several times in Tashkent in the Arabic and Cyrillicscript. Most famous translations are "Kitab at-Tahrikh", "Kitab al-ilal as-saghiyr wa al-ilal al-kabiyr", "Kitabuz-zuhd" ("The book about piety"), "Kitab al-asma val-kunya" ( "A Book on the Names and Nicknames of the Narrators", "Al-ilal fil-hadith" ("On the Defects or Deviations in the Hadiths"), Asma us-sahaba ("Names of the Companions of the Prophet").

"Al-Jame'al-Sahih" (The Trustworthy Collection) is one of the most important works of at-Tirmidhi. According to the historian Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, at-Tirmidhi completed this work in 270 AH (884 AD), around his sixty's, after gaining great experience in science and attaining the rank of imam.

Tirmidhi's "Al-Jame' as-Sahih" is one of the most important books of hadith science. This book has its own peculiarities that set it apart from other books of hadith. It is also one of the 6 most well-known books of hadith in the Islamic world, or as Muslim world calls the "Sihohi Sitta".

Manuscripts of this work are kept in several cities around the world, as well as in Tashkent, at the Institute of Oriental Studies named after Abu Rayhon Beruni. "Al-Jame' as-Sahih" has been published several times as an important source. Coming into details, it was published in Mitoh in 1283 (1866), in Cairo in 1292 (1875), and in Beirut in 19805.

By studying the life and creative work of the great hadith scholar Abu Isa at-Tirmidhi, we will continue to enjoy the unique qualities of our great ancestors that will serve as an example for us. There is no doubt that the works written by him will be a program to solve the socio-economic and psychological issues that arise in modern society.

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