





## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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## INTRODUCTION

Once again Muslims are misguided and faltering from the straight path. Islam is being defined by the hostile outsider and by the internal Muslims attempting to assimilate into the western world. Qur'anic Ayats are being questioned by these forces to distort the true message. Some Muslims are choosing Ayats which closely match their secular countries, even in so called Muslims states ( at the cost of the Ayats which contradict that system).

With the advocacy of the Rand Corporation, the doctrine of nationalist Islam was established in the Rand Report's Civil Democratic Islam. We now see the materialization of Turkish Islam, American Islam, European Islam and many others fermenting in their respective regions dividing Muslims from their global community.

During the lifetime of Bediuzzaman, Nationalism was a dominant ideology among the peoples of the world, and it ran contradictory to Islam. In the name of Nationalism the Khilafah of the Ottoman state was abolished in 1924. Those who now call themselves Turks attempted to distance themselves from their Muslim brothers by adopting secularism and instituting laws that separated the people from Islam. Arabs who thought themselves free of "Ottoman Colonialism" were unaware of the impending disaster as the Zionist forces, with British support, had planted the seed of destruction from which Israel would spring at the cost of the Palestinians.

Amidst this turmoil and upheaval, Bediuzzaman promoted Islamic Unity and tried to reestablish the concept of Islamic Ummah (community) among Muslims. When you read this compilation, you are going to witness how Muslims were lost in the past. You can then use this information to apply the lessons learned to the present and see how the same problems befall Muslims today.

That is why I believe this work will be beneficial to the Muslims of today. I hope the struggle of Bediuzzaman will be a positive example on which we can use in our struggle.

Imran Kurter

## ISLAMIC UNITY

Islamic Unity is the most important issue which concerns all Muslims, and it is not only a political issue. This Unity starts from the bonds and solidarity between two Muslims due to their brotherhood-in-faith and reaches mutual cooperation and assistance among all Muslims throughout the entire Islamic World.

Our religion, our nation, our lands can only be protected from all kinds of dangers and enemies through the enormous power which will be generated by the religious brotherhood and Muslim solidarity which will further serve toward general global peace.

That is the reason why the enemies who cannot tolerate this material and spiritual power, try to destroy the unity and solidarity of the Islamic World by breaking it into parts, using all types of trickery and stratagems.

Therefore, we must remain vigilant against the corruptive incitements of such adversaries and understand the meaning and the importance of the Islamic brotherhood, which was very seriously commanded by our Religion and we must zealously act in accordance with this brotherhood.

The following verse of the Qur'an reminds us of the fact that great mischief and disasters will happen if mutual assistance and solidarity amongst Muslims are not achieved:

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ إِلَّا تَفْعَلُوهُ تَكُن فِتْنَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ  
وَفَسَادٌ كَبِيرٌ ﴿٧٣﴾

*"And the unbelievers are allies (protectors) of each other. Unless you do this (protect each other), there would be Tumult and Oppression on Earth, and great Mischief." (Qur'an, 8:73)*

The religion of Islam has brought important duties and rules which leads to mutual support and assistance. For example, **Pilgrimage (Hajj)** is of utmost importance for fostering Unity amongst Muslims and establishing solidarity and mutual assistance.

### **THE WISDOM OF THE PILGRIMAGE**

**The First requirement for the realization of Islamic Unity is to understand the wisdom of Hajj.**

Ustaz Bediuzzaman describes a truthful dream (ru'ya as-saadiqah) he saw during the 1st World War. In his dream he was given good-news about the consequences of the war, regretfully there was silence instead of good-news about the Pilgrimage (Hajj). Ustaz Bediuzzaman mentions this as follows:

"The dream came to a silence concerning Pilgrimage (Hajj), because, neglecting the Pilgrimage and its wisdom has brought, not calamity, but the Divine Wrath and Power (Qahr) over them. And its penalty did not expiate sins, but rather made our sins excessive. It is neglecting the sublime politics of Islam and the extensive social benefits of the Pilgrimage, which includes and assures especially the unity of opinions, the consensus, through knowing each other as brethren, and cooperation through mutual assistance, ignoring all of this-paved the way for enemies to employ millions of Muslims against fellow Muslims and Islam.

Look there! The Indian killed his father, supposing him to be an enemy, and is now sitting next to him and wailing.

Look here! The Tatar and the Caucasian realizing, when it was too late, that the person they helped others to kill was their helpless mother. They are crying now at her feet.

Look! The Arab killed his heroic brother by mistake, and he is even so stunned that he cannot cry.

Look! The African killed his brother unknowingly, and now he is lamenting.

Here! The World of Islam! They unintentionally and heedlessly helped others to kill their Flag-bearer son, and now they are tearing out their hair with sighs and wailings.

Millions of Muslims have been forced to travel long distances around the world under the flag of the enemy, which is entirely evil, since they did not rush for the journey of Pilgrimage which is full of benefits." **Occurances- Improvisations-Indications**, pp 52-54.

Hence there is a great wisdom in the Pilgrimage (Hajj); it is a kind of Supreme Consultative Assembly to be held once a year, in order to protect and perpetuate the independence and security of the World of Islam.

#### **THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF TURKS AND ARABS**

Ustaz Bediuzzaman tells us that the utmost responsibility of this great duty is upon the shoulders of the Ottomans and Arabs. Ustaz Bediuzzaman was explaining the vital importance of Islamic unity in his sermon that he delivered in 1911 in the Mosque of Umayyad in Damascus. This sermon was later published as a book titled, **The Sermon of Damascus**.

"Islamically lawful freedom (Hurriyet -ul Shar'iyah) and lawful consultation (Mashwarat- ul Mashruah) have demonstrated the real sovereignty of our true Nation. The foundation and the essence of our true nationhood is Islam. In so far as the Ottoman caliphate and the Turkish army were the standard-bearers in the name of that nationhood, the two true brothers - Arab and Turk, who are like the shell and citadel of the nationhood of Islam. In fact, they are the sentries of that sacred citadel.

Thus, through the bond of this sacred nationhood, all the people of Islam are like a single tribe. Like the members of a tribe, the groups of Islam are bound and connected to one another through love of Islamic brotherhood. They assist one another morally and, if necessary, materially. It is as if all the people of

Islam are bound to each other with a luminous and strong chain. **The Sermon of Damascus**

For a glorious though unfortunate continent, a renown though hapless state, a noble though ownerless people, the prescription is Islamic Unity. **The Letters**

"The greatest obligatory duty in this time is to work for Islamic Unity. The aim and objective of this unity is to vibrate such a luminous and blessed chain that connects the centers of Islam and Mosques, places of worships and milieus, which are branched out in subdivisions and thereby to awaken those who are tied to that chain and to urge and lead them towards the path of advancement with a great will and command of conscience." **The Sermon of Damascus**

"Oh Brothers, who are listening to these words of mine here in the Umayyad Mosque! And, Oh, Muslim brothers in the mosque of the World of Islam forty to fifty years from now! Do not make apologies, saying, "We do not do any harm, but also we do not have the power to do anything beneficial; therefore we are excused." Such an apology is not acceptable. Your laziness, and saying, "What is it to me? " and your displaying no effort and not getting into the working spirit through Islamic unity and true Islamic nationhood have done much damage and injustice to yourselves. **The Sermon of Damascus**

Especially, Oh Arabs, who are great and important, and who are awakened, or to be awakened! First and foremost, I address you with these words. You were our teachers and leaders, and the teachers and leaders of all the people of Islam, and you were the fighters of Islam. It was later that the mighty Turkish nation fully assisted you in that sacred duty.

Therefore, due to laziness, your sin is great. But your good acts and your good deeds are also great and exalted. In particular, we await with great expectation Divine Mercy for the different Arab people and tribes to enter into a most exalted position in

forty to fifty years' time, like that of the United States of America, and we hope Divine Mercy for their being successful like in the past, in establishing Islamic rule in half the globe, or rather in most of it, which now remains in captivity. If some fearful calamity, or a doomsday does not soon erupt, the coming generations will see this, Insha-Allah. **The Sermon of Damascus**

### **HOW TO ACHIEVE PEACE AND SECURITY IN THE WORLD**

Ustaz Bediuzzaman stated that the sole means against anarchy was Islamic unity. In a letter of warning to government officials during the rule of the Democrat Party in Turkey (1950s) he wrote:

"Communism, Free-Masonry, atheism and Irreligion directly result in anarchism. Against these terrible forces of destruction, only and solely Islamic Unity, surrounding the truths of the Qur'an, can endure. And it is the only way to save this land from foreign occupation and this nation from falling into anarchy and it is the means to save mankind from this danger."  
**Emirdag Letters II**

Congratulating his students on the Day of Feast (Eid), Ustaz Bediuzzaman welcomed the positive developments towards Islamic cooperation and unity after the 1950s:

"My Dear Truthful Brothers! We congratulate your blessed Day of Feast with all our souls. Insha-Allah, may you live long enough to see the great celebration of the world of Islam, too. There are many signs and indications that the Qur'an Al Hakeem -which is the source of the Holy Constitution of the United Republics of Islam- will rule completely in the future and will bring a true celebration to mankind."  
**Emirdag Letters II**

"We congratulate ...the great Feast of Islam on account of that Islamic unity, which is starting to develop in Asia and Africa

for the moment and making 400 million (now 1.2 billion) Muslims brothers assist each other both materially and spiritually, which is in the process of being established within the newly-formed Muslim States, and that the Sacred Laws of the Qur'an Al-Hakeem are to be the Constitutions of those new Islamic States." **Emirdag Letters II**

"Yes, the ill-treatment and oppression by those foreigners who are like wild beasts, has accelerated the currents of freedom, the movements of independence and Islamic unity in the Muslim World. Consequently they have resulted in the formation of independent Muslim States. Insha-Allahu-Taala, the United Republics of Islam of all Muslims will also come into existence and Islam will rule in sovereignty all over the world. We strongly hope and ask this from the Divine Mercy." **Conference**

In a letter he wrote in 1945, Ustaz Bediuzzaman warned that if the Truths of the Qur'an are not advocated in Turkey instead of European ways, there will be great danger and harm to Islamic unity and brotherhood.

"O, Turkish Nation and the Brethren of those who are Turkified! You made the World of Islam rejoice with your heroism for a thousand years and protected the unity of Muslims and served as a great means to save the humanity of the world from corruption, deviation from the right path and absolute infidelity.

Should you not stand now as protector of the Qur'an and the truths of belief heroically as in the old times and advocate the truths of the Qur'an and belief directly, instead of propagating Western civilization at the harm and loss of the Religion? I am informing you and I can prove with definitive evidence that:

The Muslim World will show enmity and a dreadful dislike, instead of love and brotherhood, towards this Turkish Nation which is its heroic brother and commander, and then this Turkish Nation will be overcome by anarchy under the auspices of irreligion and atheism which is now trying to ruin the World

of Islam. What will follow is that this Nation, which is the citadel and the renown army of the Muslim World, will be divided into pieces and will be overcome by the dreadful dragon coming out of the North East.

Yes, indeed this heroic nation can only endure against these two external dreadful currents with the Strength of the Qur'an. This Nation -which has been blended and united with the truth of Islam and found all its honor in the past through Islam- can only stop the danger which is coming forcefully by their using the tools of the absolute irreligion and infidelity, despotism, dissoluteness and offering the wealth of the honest people to the vagabond. The steadfast and concerned citizens of this Nation can stop that current, Insha-Allah, by accepting as the foundational rule and the guiding principle the truths of the Qur'an which are like a great artery for that united nationhood.

...Besides, a Muslim cannot be compared to the people of the other nations (religions). If he gives up his religion, he would become an anarchist, and would not accept to live under any restriction or law. He could not be governed by any educational or supervisory methods but absolute despotism and total bribery." Emirdag Letters I

### **REFRAINING FROM INTERNAL HOSTILITIES**

It grieved Ustaz Bediuzzaman to see the disagreements and conflicts continuing, even if partly, in the Muslim World, despite the fact that there were many reasons that would lead to Islamic unity in the face of the on going global circumstances.

"A regrettable, social condition and an awesome disease affecting the life of society, fit to be swept over by the heart of Islam:

To forget and abandon internal enmities, especially when foreign enemies appearing on the land and attacking, is a demand for the social well-being recognized and enacted even

by the most primitive peoples. What then ails those who claim to be serving the Islamic community, at a time when numberless enemies are taking up positions to attack, one after the other, they fail to forget their petty enmities, and instead prepare the ground for the enemies' attacks? It is disgraceful savagery, and treason committed against the social life of Islam." **The Letters**

### **EMPHASIZING COOPERATION WITH THE MUSLIM WORLD RATHER THAN EUROPE**

Ustaz Bediuzzaman recommended to the statesmen and the government that it was a necessity that they must seriously consider the establishment of the Islamic Union, rather than turning with preference towards Europe:

"Since, these strange moral bribes have been given in return for the policies of the foreigners and their insignificant temporary foreign aids, because of the weakness and lack of power due to lack of a Muslim alliance. This means that the brotherhood of the four hundred million (now 1.2 billion) brethren, and the path of the billions of our ancestors have not been seriously considered as important.... Without considering the poverty of the nation, they waste money and give bribes in the form of high salaries (to state officials) thinking that thereby they are obliged to obtain strength so that security and their policies would not be harmed.

The present politicians in this country must certainly and definitely give a very big gift and a harmless "bribe" to the four hundred million brethren who are equivalent to (are of importance for) the future United Republics of the Islamic World, for the benefits of the nation, the country and this Muslim State, a bribe in effect ten times as much as the political and moral bribe they gave to the West and the foreigners. And that "bribe" is acceptable, necessary, very beneficial, lawful and obligatory. It is to take as the guiding principle and the code of laws the following:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ  
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

*Indeed the believers are brothers. (Qur'an 49-10)*

وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ  
كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ فُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَى  
شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ  
تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

*And hold fast all together to the bond of Allah, and be not divided among  
yourselves... ( Our'an 3-103)*

قُلْ أَعْيَرَ اللَّهُ أَبْعَى رَبًّا وَهُوَ رَبُّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَلَا تَكْسِبُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ إِلَّا  
عَلَيْهَا وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَى ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُم مَّرْجِعُكُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ  
بِمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿١١٤﴾

*Every soul is accountable for itself, no bearer of a burden bears the burden  
of another..( Qur'an 6-164)*

وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَا تَنَازَعُوا فَتَفْشَلُوا وَتَذْهَبَ رِيحُكُمْ  
وَاصْبِرُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

*Do not engage in disputes with one another, lest you lose courage and  
become insignificant and your Power depart...( Qur'an 8-46)*

These are the foundations of Islamic solidarity and mutual-  
assistance and a Divine rule and the sacred Constitution of the  
gift of the Qur'an." **Emirdag Letters-II**

## **POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE NATIONALISM**

There are some prerequisites for the realization of Islamic unity.  
**The First** is based on the principle of Islamic Nationality  
(Ummah) and to refrain from racism, and tribalism which are  
the root-causes of disunion and disintegration.

Ustaz Bediuzzaman authored many articles regarding this matter as a warning and guidance, some of which are quoted here below:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ  
لِتَعَارَفُوا ۗ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

*"O mankind! We created you from a single pair of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other. (Qur'an, 49-13)*

That means, "I created you as people, nations, and tribes, so that you should know one another and maintain good relations between you in social life, and assist one another; not so that you should regard each other as strangers, refusing to acknowledge one another, and nurturing hostility and enmity".

In order to explain the principle of "knowing and assisting each other" which the verse indicates, we say this:

An army is divided into divisions, the divisions into regiments, the regiments into battalions, companies, and then into squads, so that every soldier may know his many different connections and their related duties; then the members of the army may truly perform a general duty governed by the principle of mutual assistance, and their social life may be guarded against the attacks of the enemy. This arrangement is not to be divided and split up, so that one company should compete with another, one battalion be hostile to another, and one division act in opposition to another.

In just the same way, the Islamic Society as a whole is a huge army which has been divided into tribes and groups. But it has a thousand and one aspects of unity. This groups' Creator is one and the same, their Provider is one and the same, their Prophet is one and the same, their Qiblah is one and the same, their Book is one and the same, their country is one and the same; all are the same; a thousand things are one and the same.

Thus, these many things being one and the same requires brotherhood, love, and unity. That is to say, being divided into groups and tribes is for mutual acquaintance and for mutual assistance and support, not for antipathy and mutual hostility. The idea of nationalism has greatly taken hold in this century. The cunning European tyrants in particular awaken this idea among Muslims in an adverse fashion, so that they may divide them and devour them.

Furthermore, nationalism is a thrill of the soul, a heedless pleasure, and an inauspicious power. For this reason those occupied with social life at this time cannot be told to give up the idea of nationalism. However, nationalism is of two kinds. One is negative, inauspicious, and harmful; it is nourished by devouring others, persists through hostility to others, and is aware of what it is doing. It is the cause of enmity and disturbance.

It is because of this that the Hadith states:

*Islam has abrogated what preceded it, and put an end to the tribalism in the State of the Ignorance. (Bukhari-Ahkam, Imara; Abu Dawood, Sunna; Tirmidhi-Jihad, Ibn- Majah-Jihad)*

And the Qur'an decrees:

إِذْ جَعَلَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْحَمِيَّةَ حَمِيَّةَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ وَعَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَأَلْزَمَهُمْ كَلِمَةَ التَّقْوَىٰ وَكَانُوا أَحَقَّ بِهَا وَأَهْلَهَا ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا

*While the unbelievers had set up in their hearts, arrogance and zealotry - the arrogance and zealotry of Ignorance - Allah sent down His peace and assurance to His Prophet and to the believers, and made them stick close to the command of self- restraint; and were they well entitled to it and worthy of it . And Allah has full knowledge of all things.(Qur'an 48-26)*

Thus, the above Hadith and Verse of the Qur'an reject in definite terms any negative nationalism and racialism. For the positive, sacred Islamic nationhood (ummah) leave no need for them.

## **HARMS OF NATIONALISM AND RACISM**

This negative adverse nationalism has caused untold harm in history.

**I n S h o r t:** Due to their combining some ideas of nationalism with their politics, the Umayyads vexed the World of Islam, and drew many calamities upon themselves. Also, European nations have advanced the idea of racialism much this century; the ghastly events of the Great War showed how harmful for mankind was this adverse negative nationalism, as well as the perpetual and ill-omened enmity of the French and Germans.

And with us (Ottomans), in the Second Constitutional Period (1908-1909), - like the "many tongues" at the destruction of the Tower of Babel, known as the "ramification of people," which resulted in their being divided and scattered - various refugee societies known as "Clubs" were formed, chiefly by the Armenians and Greeks, due to the idea of adverse nationalism, which were the cause of division. And from that time to now, the state of those who have been devoured and made wretched by the Europeans due to those groups has demonstrated the detriments of such harmful nationalism.

As for the present, when the people and nations of Islam are most in need of one another, and each is more oppressed and more poverty-stricken than the others, and they are crushed beneath European domination, to regard one another as strangers due to the idea of nationalism, and to consider one another to be enemies, is such a calamity that it cannot be described.

It is quite simply a lunacy, like turning one's back on dreadful serpents so as not to be bitten by a mosquito, and struggling with the mosquito - due to the idea of nationalism, to attach no importance to European nations, which are like huge dragons. At a time when with their insatiable greed, and with their grasping hands are open, indeed, to in effect help them, and to nurture enmity against fellow-citizens in the Eastern Provinces,

or brother Muslims to the South, and to take up positions opposed to them is extremely detrimental and dangerous.

In any event, there are no enemies among those to the South so that they should be confronted. What comes from the South is the Light of the Qur'an; the Light of Islam came from there; it is present among us and is found everywhere.

Thus, to be hostile towards those fellow Muslims is indirectly harmful to Islam and the Qur'an. And hostility towards Islam and the Qur'an is hostility of a sort towards the lives in this world and in the Hereafter of all those fellow-citizens.

I shall describe as examples, only two of the hundreds of advantages the sacred Nationhood of Islam has gained for the social life of the sons of this land:

**F i r s t :** What enabled this Islamic state, while only numbering twenty or thirty million, to preserve its life and existence in the face of all the large states of Europe was the following idea, which arose from the light of the Qur'an, in this state's army: *"If I die, I shall be a martyr; and if I kill, I shall be a ghazi (war hero)."*

They met death with complete eagerness and longing, laughing in its face. They always made Europe tremble. What in the world can be shown that will give rise to such elevated self-sacrifice in the spirit of a simple-hearted soldier? What patriotism can be instilled in its' place? What can make him willingly sacrifice his life and all his world ?

**S e c o n d :** Whenever the dragons (large states) of Europe have dealt a blow to this Islamic state, they have made three hundred and fifty million Muslims moan and cry out. So in order not to make them weep and complain, those Colonialists have drawn back their hands; they have lowered them, even while raising them ready to strike.

What power can be established in place of this constant moral support (of the Muslim World) which in no way may be belittled? Let them show it! Yes, that huge moral and spiritual strength must not be offended by harmful nationalism, zealotry and disdain.

Hope in Divine Mercy must not be lost. For Almighty Allah will not cause to perish through temporary set-backs, the magnificent soldiers and great community of the people of this land, whom He has employed for a thousand years in the service of the Qur'an, appointing them as its standard-bearer. He will once again kindle that Light and cause them to continue their duty.

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF SHURA (COLLECTIVE CONSULTATION)**

**The second requirement for the realization of Islamic unity is a genuine and virtuous Collective Consultation within the framework of Sharia.**

The Consultation, which will be carried out by the gathering of genuine scholars and spiritual guides in the Islamic world, and which will be based on the methods of Sharia, can become a legitimate and competent authority, as in the meaning of the consensus of the nation's scholars for all Muslims. This Council determines the rules of activity and organization of the Consultation and Islamic Union.

The Islamic States, which unite around the Holy Constitution of the Qur'an, as explained above, are to form the "United Republics of Islam" by Ustaz Bediuzzaman. Bediuzzaman put forward the following proposal in the year of 1919:

*"We are not living in the old times. In old times, the ruler was a single person. There was the Shaikh-ul-Islam, the Mufti (the official expounder of the Sacred Law) of that ruler. He was like the ruler, but also an individual person. He was able to correct and modify the ruler's (Sultan) opinions.*

Now, the present, is the time of community. The ruler should be a collective personality which arises from the spirit and essence of the community, somewhat a specialist, not influenced or shaken easily, strong and resistant, and the consultative councils should represent that spirit... The individual, even if he is a genius, can be regarded as a mosquito as compared to the collective personality of the community....

Every competent person, though, can interpret the law, (especially in detail matters). However, his jurisprudential opinion, in order to be a guiding principle, must be met with approval by a kind of consensus of the scholars or the confirmation of the public.... In Islamic Law, the consensus (ijma) and public opinion/ referendum (ray ul-jumhur) are always the sources of the fatawa (the opinions and decisions).

The natural members of the Consultative Council will be the religious leaders and directors of the departments in the office of the Sheikh-ul-Islam and select scholars of the Islamic world - fifteen or twenty of them for now - who have earned the trust and confidence of the Muslims due to their piousness and good moral qualities... **Sunihat.**

*The establishment of the Supreme Council of Islam will be based upon the Islamic Caliphate (Khilafah), which will be supported by Islamic unity.*

*When Bediuzzaman put forth the proposal of the Consultative Council mentioned above, the Caliphate and the office of the Sheikh-ul-Islam existed in Istanbul; that is, the foundation was ready for a Supreme Council of Islam. Only the expansion and the reinforcement over the Islamic world were needed then, whereas now such a Council can be formed within the framework of the Islamic Union which should be realized by the United Republics of Islam.*

Ustaz Bediuzzaman stated the necessity of the consultation in one of his works, as follows:

The key to Muslims' happiness in Islamic social life is the collective consultation enjoined by the Shari'a

## وَأْمُرُهُمْ شُورَىٰ بَيْنَهُمْ

"...Whose rule is consultation among themselves..." [Qur'an 42:38]

This Qur'anic verse orders consultation as a fundamental principle. For centuries consultation has been practiced by mankind. Throughout history the conjunction of ideas is formed on the basis of progress and scientific disciplines of all mankind. One reason for lagging behind of Asia, the largest continent, was the failure to practice that true consultation.

For its future the key and opening up of the continent of Asia must be collective consultation. That is to say, just as individuals should consult one another, so must nations, in fact, all continents should also practice consultation. For it is the freedom resulting from the Shari'a, the freedom that is born of the consultation enjoined by the Shari'a, and the compassion of belief and the boldness coupled with efficiency that will loosen and remove the fetters and chains of the various forms of tyranny fastened to the feet of hundreds of millions of Muslims. It is that lawful freedom which is adorned with the refinements and proprieties of the Shari'a that will cast out the evils of dissolute Western civilization. The freedom born of the Shari'a, which arises from belief, enjoins two principles:

أَنْ لَا يُدْأَلَّ وَلَا يُتَدَلَّلَ مَنْ كَانَ عَبْدًا لِلَّهِ لَا يَكُونُ عَبْدًا لِلْعِبَادِ  
نَعَمَ الْحُرِّيَّةَ ۖ وَلَا يَتَّخِذُ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ  
الشَّرْعِيَّةَ عَطِيَّةَ الرَّحْمَنِ

*Belief necessitates not humiliating others through oppression and despotism and not degrading them, and, secondly, not abasing oneself before tyrants. Someone who is a true slave of Allah cannot be a slave to others. "None of us should take anyone other than Allah for Lords." (Qur'an 3-64).*

That is to say, someone who does not recognize Allah ascribes relative degrees of lordship to everything and everyone, and piles worries and hardship on his own head. For sure, freedom

born of the Shari'a is a bounty of Almighty Allah through the manifestation of His Names, All-Merciful and All-Compassionate; it is indeed a characteristic of belief. **The Sermon of Damascus**

If it is asked: Why do you attach this much importance to Consultation (Shura)? And how can the life and progress of mankind, in particular in Asia, and particularly the Islamic world, come about through Consultation?

We would answer: As is explained in the "Twenty-First Ray" of the Risale-i Nur, "the Treatise on Sincerity," just as consultation results in sincerity and solidarity, three 'ones' become one hundred and eleven. Thus, three men between whom there is true solidarity may benefit the nation as much as say, a hundred men. Many historical events inform us that as a result of true sincerity, solidarity, and consultation, ten men may perform the work of a thousand men. Man's needs are endless, his enemies innumerable, and his strength and capital insignificant, and the number of destructive and harmful humans who have become like monsters through lack of religion are increasing. Just as, in the face of those endless enemies and innumerable needs, man's personal life can continue only through the point of support and point of assistance that proceed from belief. So, too, can his social life endure only through the collective consultation enjoined by the Shari'a that again proceeds from the truths of belief. Only thus can he halt those enemies and open up a way to secure those needs. **The Damascus Sermon**

### **REFRAINING FROM DISPUTES AMONG RELIGIOUS GROUPS**

**The third condition for the realization of Islamic unity is to cooperate with one another.**

Religious groups and communities, which are the point of support of Islamic unity, must take the principles and the essentials of the religion as the foundation of cooperation and

must not dispute over detail issues of the religion or differences in schools of thought and their interpretations. According to Bediuzzaman, it is essential to unite on the basic principles of the Sharia:

"Question: What is the solution that will correct disunity and disagreements in the Islamic world?

The Answer: First, look at the high purposes agreed unanimously, for our Allah is One and the same, our Prophet is the same, our Qur'an is one and the same, and we all are in unanimity.

The details outside of the essentials of the religion, or differences in modes of interpretation, or ways of perception cannot upset this unity and union, and they cannot be considered as preferable...If "Al Hubbu Fillah" (love in the way of Allah) is taken as a guiding principle and if the love of truth governs all our actions, then disagreements and disputes can be channeled towards a sound direction." **Sunuhat Tuluat Isharat**

If there is unanimity in what is good and right, and there is conflict concerning what is more right, then sometimes good and right is better than what is better or more right. Everyone could say about his own way, "It is right." He should not say, "It is the only right way." Or he could say, "It is good," but he should not say, "It is the only good way." **22nd Letter in the The Letters**

When you know your way and opinions to be true, you have the right to say, "My way is right and the better." But you do not have the right to say, "Only my way is right."

According to the sense of "The eye of contentment is too dim to perceive faults; it is the eye of anger that exhibits all vice", your unjust view and distorted opinion cannot be the all-decisive judge and cannot condemn the approach of another to belief as invalid. **22nd Letter in the The Letters**

"Question: What do you say about the dreadful disputes amongst the scholars of the Islamic world? What is your opinion?"

The Answer: I reflect upon the Islamic world and consider it as a disorderly or out-of-order assembly and consultative council. We hear and read in Islamic Law that the opinion of the learned is such and such and the fatwa (decision) is based on this and on that etc. Therefore, the opinion in this assembly is similar to the majority opinion... Assertions, other than public opinion, if they are not empty of truth and essence, should be left to the opinions of competent individuals... Every one of these individuals could choose whatever is appropriate in view of his proper education. **Sunuhat Tuluat Isharat**

Bediuzzaman is pointing out that even though the stand of such an individual is a minority opinion, the followers of individual opinions zealously took it upon themselves to impose them upon all. Fanaticism reached to the point of striving for the demolishing of opposition. The clouds did not bring the rain. They only hindered the light. If the minority opinion is tainted by personal desires and lust and overcome by mood and temperament, it becomes harmful. And, the individual, instead of being colored by the color of Allah, makes the opinion personalized and serviceable to himself. The bee acquires liquid, and it becomes honey; the snake acquires liquid, and it becomes poison.

"Question: We wonder if this supreme Majlis (Assembly) of Islam will ever get into order in this bewildered global city of the world?"

The Answer: I have great faith and confidence in that the entire Islamic world will become like a sacred assembly within the nation of all human beings, descendents of Adam. Ancestors and descendants, witnessing each other over the centuries, will form a council of consultation amongst each other. However, the first group - the aging generation - will listen silently and praiseful..." **The Debates-Munazarat**

"Obstinacy and partisanship are extremely harmful in social life. If it is said: "There is a Hadith which says: 'Differences among my *Ummah* are an instance of Divine Mercy,' and yet difference requires partisanship. Partisanship also delivers the oppressed common people from the elite oppressor; for if the elite of a land or town join together, they will destroy the oppressed common people. If there is partisanship, the oppressed may seek refuge with one of the parties and thus save themselves. It is also from the confrontation of opinions and the contradiction of views that truth becomes apparent in its full measure."

The Answer: To the first part of the question, we say: The difference intended in the Hadith is a positive, constructive difference. That is, each party strives to promote and diffuse its own belief; it does not seek to tear down and destroy that of the other, but rather to improve and reform it. Negative difference is rejected by the Hadith, for it aims in partisan and hostile fashion at mutual destruction, and those who are at each others' throats cannot act positively.

To the second part of the question, we say: If partisanship is in the name of truth, it can become a refuge and support for those seeking their rights. But as we are witnessing now, partisanship is biased and self-centered, and it can only be a refuge for the unjust and a point of support for them.

To the third part of the question, we say: If confrontation of views takes place in the name of justice and for the sake of truth, then the difference concerns only means; there is unity with respect to aim and basic purpose. Such a difference makes manifest every aspect of the truth and serves justice and truth. But what emerges from a confrontation of views that is partisan and biased, and takes place for the sake of a tyrannical, evil-commanding soul, that is based on egotism and fame-seeking is not the "ray of truth" but the fire of dissension. Unity of aim is necessary, but opposing views of this kind can never find a

point of convergence anywhere on earth. Since they do not differ for the sake of the truth, they multiply ad infinitum, and give rise to divergences that can never be reconciled. The present status of the world is a witness (proof) of this...

In short: If one does not make of the exalted rules,

الْحُبُّ لِلَّهِ \* وَالْبُغْضُ فِي اللَّهِ \* وَالْحُكْمُ لِلَّهِ "Love for the sake of Allah, dislike for the sake of Allah, and the judgment for the sake of Allah" the guiding principles of one's conduct, dispute and discord will result.

If one does not say, الْبُغْضُ فِي اللَّهِ \* وَالْحُكْمُ لِلَّهِ "dislike for the sake of Allah, and the judgment for the sake of Allah" and takes due account of these principles, one's attempts to do justice will result in injustice. **22nd Letter in the The Letters**

According to a noble Hadith of the Prophet (PBUH), noxious and awesome persons like Sufyan (Anti-Islam) and the Dajjal (Anti-Christ) will come to lead the hypocrites and disbelievers at the end of time, and exploiting the greed, discord and hatred amongst the Muslims and mankind, they will need only a small force to reduce humanity to anarchy and the vast Islamic world to bondage and slavery...

O people of faith! If you do not wish to enter a humiliating condition of slavery, come to your senses and enter and take refuge in the citadel of:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ "Indeed the believers are brothers..." to defend yourselves against those oppressors who would exploit your differences!

*Otherwise you will neither be able to protect your lives nor to defend your rights. It is evident that if two champions are wrestling with each other, even a child can overcome them. If two mountains are balanced in the scales, even a small stone can disturb their equilibrium and cause one to rise and the other to fall.*

So, O people of belief! Your strength is reduced to nothing as a result of your greed, violent passions and biased partisanship, and you can be defeated by the slightest forces. If you have any interest in your social life and order, then make the following exalted principle your guiding principle in life!

المؤمن للمؤمن كالبنيان المرصوص يشد بعضه بعضاً

"The believers are together like a well-founded building, one part of which supports the other"

Then you will be delivered from humiliation in this world and wretchedness in the Hereafter. **22nd Letter in the The Letters**

#### **TO DISPEL ANY FEARS**

(From the newspaper, **Volkan**, Istanbul, No.90, March 31, 1909)

One by one I shall reply to five groundless fears voiced about the Ittihad-ul-Muhammadi (Muhammadi Union).

**First Groundless Fear:** "It is inappropriate to put forward the question of religion at a sensitive time such as the present. "

The Answer: We love religion, and we love this world for the sake of religion. "There is no good in this world without religion."

Secondly: Since in the (Republican) Constitution sovereignty belongs to the nation, the nation's existence has to be demonstrated, and our nation is only Islam, for the strongest bond between Arab, Turk, Kurd, Albanian, Circassian, and Laz, and their firmest nationhood is nothing other than Islam.

The foundations of an array of states are being laid, due to negligence and strife incited through the revival of the partisanship and tribalism of the Age of Ignorance, which died one thousand three hundred years ago. We have seen this.

**Second Groundless Fear:** "By using this name specifically you make non-members feel alarm and anxiety ".

The Answer: I have explained this before, but because it has not been read or has been misunderstood, I am obliged to repeat it. It is like this: What is meant when we say the Ittihad-ul Muhammadi (Muhammadi Union), which is Islamic unity, it is the unity between all believers, whether potential or actual. It does not refer to just a society in Istanbul or Anatolia.

A single drop of water is still water. The word here cannot be thought of as narrowly specific. Its true definition is as follows:

Its foundations stretch from East to West and from North to South, its center are the Holy places of Makkah and Madina; its point of unity is Divine unity; its oath and pledge are belief; its code of regulations are the practices and traditions of the Prophet (Pbuh); its code of laws are the commands and prohibitions of the Sharia; its associations and councils are all the religious schools, mosques, and spiritual meeting-houses. The society's eternal press organ is all Islamic literature, and the constant and foremost one is the Qur'an and all Qur'anic commentaries (the Risale-i Nur is a Qur'anic commentary), as well as all proper religious papers and journals whose aim is to uphold the Word of Allah. Its membership consists of all believers, and its Leader, Prophet Muhammed (Peace be upon Him) is the glory of the world.

What we want now is the awakening and attention of believers, for the effect of public attention is undeniable.

The aim of this union and its purpose is to uphold the Word of Allah, and its way is to wage the "greater Jihad" with one's own soul, and to guide others.

Ninety-nine percent of the endeavors of this blessed Society are not political. They are rather turned towards good morals and moderation, which are the opposite of today's politics, and

other lawful aims; for very few societies have adopted this as their function, although its value and importance is immense.

Only one out of a hundred of its members will be connected with politics by way of offering guidance to politicians. The decisive proofs are their swords. And just as their way is love, so will they encourage the love included in the seed of the brotherhood between believers to grow, like a tree of Tuba in Heaven...

**Third Groundless Fear:** "Is there not the possibility that the Europeans will be perturbed by this union?"

The Answer: Those who consider this to be a possibility are themselves perturbed. For it is refuted by the Europeans praising Islam in lectures (by Bismarck, Carlyle and others) and describing its elevatedness, in the very centers of their bigotry.

Also it is not they who are our enemies...What has in reality brought us this low is our opposition to the Sharia, as a result of ignorance, thus preventing us from upholding the Word of Allah...and poverty and its fruits of immorality and bad conduct...and conflict and its products of strife and hatred...the attacks of our Union are directed at these three enemies.

In the middle Ages, Islam was compelled to be biased and hostile in the face of the Europeans' savagery, but it nevertheless maintained its justice and moderation. It never instituted Inquisitions and such like. In this time of modernity, the Europeans are modernized and powerful...and harmful hostility and bigotry should therefore disappear.

For in respect of religion, the civilized are to be conquered through persuasion, not through force, and through showing by conforming to its commands in actions and conduct that Islam is elevated and worthy of love. Force and enmity are only to combat the barbarity of savages.

**Fourth Groundless Fear:** "Some people say that Islamic unity, which aims to implement the practices and traditions of the Prophet (S.A.W.), limits freedom and is opposed to the requirements of civilization."

The Answer: The true believer is truly free. One who is the slave and servant of the Maker of the World will not condescend to lower himself before His creatures. That is to say, freedom is increased to the degree belief is strengthened. However, absolute freedom is absolute savagery, indeed it is animality. From the point of view of humanity, too, freedom has to be restricted.

Secondly, Some lax and dissolute individuals want not to be free, but to be the vile slaves of their evil-commanding souls.

In short: Freedom outside the bounds of the Sharia is either despotism, slavery to the soul, animality, or savagery. The heedless and disbelievers who want such freedom should know that they will never make any European with a conscience love them through vice and irreligion, nor will they resemble them. For no one loves the dissolute and the unprincipled. And if a man wears a woman's dress, he merely becomes ridiculous.

**Fifth Groundless Fear:** "The Muhammadi Union has split away from the other religious groups, and this leads to rivalry and mutual aversion".

The Answer: Firstly, there can be no jealousy, contention, and conflict in the matters of the Hereafter. So if any of those societies attempts to compete or strive against another it will be as though it is hypocritical and dissembling in worship.

Secondly, we congratulate all societies founded out of love of religion and we unite with them, on two conditions:

**First Condition:** That they preserve the freedom which is in accordance with the Sharia and public order.

**Second Condition:** That they act out of love, and do not smear other groups for self-advantage. If any are in error, they should refer it to those who are authorities in religion, who collectively constitute the Mufti (scholarship) of the Ummah.

Thirdly, any society whose aim is upholding the Word of Allah cannot in any way be the means of animosity and serving its own ends. Even if it wants to, it will not be successful, because to do so is duplicity. The truth is exalted, and may not be sacrificed for anything. Can the Pleiades be swept with a brush or eaten away like a bunch of grapes?

*Anyone who puffs at the Sun of Truth to extinguish it merely advertises his lunacy. (An old Proverb)*

We say to the newspapers and periodicals which support religion that religious groups and societies should have a common goal. But it is neither possible nor is it permissible for them to unite because of their ways and methods. (For it opens up the way to blind imitation and causes people to say: "What is it to me? Let others do the thinking.) this part is not clear". **The Damascus Sermon,**

\* The prescription for a sick age, an ailing nation, an ill member, is to follow the Qur'an.

\* The prescription for a glorious though unfortunate continent, an illustrious though hapless State, a noble though ownerless people, is Islamic unity.

\* The revival of religion is the revival of the nation. The life of religion is the light of life.

\* As time grows older, the Qur'an grows younger...Its signs become more apparent.

\* Anyone who is capable may make interpretations of the law for his own self; but he cannot make the law.

\* Calling others to accept an idea is dependent on acceptance by the ulama (scholars); otherwise it is innovation, and should be rejected.

\* Since the early days, this Islamic (Ottoman) State took on itself upholding of the Word of Allah, the maintenance of independence, and jihad for Islam - an obligation that if undertaken by part of the community, releases the rest. It considered itself to be charged with sacrificing itself for Islam. It was united, carrying the banner of the Caliphate.

So its disaster now will be made up for by the future prosperity and freedom of the Islamic world. For this calamity has speeded up in wondrous fashion the growth of Islamic Brotherhood, the leaven of our lives. **The Seeds of Reality, The Letters**

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## **Who was Bediuzzaman Said Nursi and what is the Risale-i Nur?**

Bediuzzaman Said Nursi was born in eastern Turkey in 1873 and died in 1960 at the age of 87 after a life of exemplary struggle and self-sacrifice in the cause of Islam. He was a scholar of the highest standing having studied not only all the traditional religious sciences but also modern science and earned the name Bediuzzaman, Wonder of the Age, in his youth as a result of his outstanding ability and learning.

Bediuzzaman's life-time spanned the final decades of the Caliphate and Ottoman Empire, its collapse and dismemberment after the First World War. The first thirty-seven years of the Republic after its formation in 1923 of which the years up to 1950 are famous for the Government's repressive anti-Islamic and anti-religious policies.

Until the years following the First World War, Bediuzzaman's struggles in the cause of Islam had been active and in the public domain. He not only taught many students and engaged in debate and discussion with

leading scholars from all over the Islamic world, but he personally commanded and led a volunteer regiment against the invading Russians in eastern Turkey in 1914 for nearly two years until taken prisoner. Furthermore, up to that time he sought to further the interests of Islam by actively engaging in public life.

However, the years that saw the transition from empire to republic also saw a transition in Bediuzzaman himself. This transition was characterized by his withdrawal from public life to concentration on study, prayer and thought for what was required now was a struggle of a different sort. After a period of some two years, in 1925, Bediuzzaman was sent into exile for the next twenty-five years in western Anatolia and to a lesser extent for the last ten years of his life, he suffered nothing but exile, imprisonment, harassment and persecution by the authorities. But these years of exile and isolation saw the writing of the *Risale-i Nur*, the Treatise of Light, and its dissemination throughout Turkey. To quote Bediuzzaman himself, "Now I see clearly that most of my life has been directed in such a way, outside my own free-will, ability, comprehension and foresight that it might produce these treatises to serve the cause of the Holy Qur'an. It is as if all my life as a scholar had been spent in preliminaries to these writings, which demonstrate the miraculousness of the Holy Qur'an."

Bediuzzaman understood an essential cause of the decline of the Islamic world to be the weakening of iman (belief). This weakening, together with the unprecedented attacks on those foundations in the 19th and 20th centuries that were carried out by materialists, atheists and others in the name of science and progress, led him to realize that the urgent and over-riding need was to strengthen, and even to save, *Iman*. Thus, in his exile, Bediuzzaman wrote a body of work, the *Risale-i Nur* that would explain and expound the basic tenets of belief, the truths of the Holy Qur'an to mankind. His method was to analyze both belief and unbelief and to demonstrate through clearly reasoned arguments that not only is it possible, by following the method of the Holy Qur'an, to prove rationally all the truths of belief, such as Allah's existence and unity, prophethood and bodily resurrection, but also that these truths are the only rational explanation of existence, man and the universe.

Thus, Bediuzzaman set out in the form of easily understood stories, comparisons and explanations, a series of categorical proofs demonstrating that, rather than the truths of religion being incompatible with the findings of modern science, the materialist interpretation of those findings is irrational and absurd. Indeed, Bediuzzaman proved in the *Risale-i Nur* that science's breathtaking discoveries of the universe's functioning corroborate and reinforce the truths of the Holy Qur'an.

The importance of the *Risale-i Nur* cannot be overestimated, for through it Bediuzzaman Said Nursi played a major role in preserving and revitalizing the Islamic faith in Turkey in the very darkest days of her history. But further to this, the *Risale-i Nur* is uniquely fitted to address not only all Muslims but indeed all mankind for several reasons. Firstly, it is written in accordance with present man's mentality, a mentality that, whether Muslim or not, has been deeply imbued by materialist philosophy: it specifically answers all the questions, doubts and confusions that this causes.

Also, the *Risale-i Nur* explains the most profound matters of belief, which formerly only advanced scholars studied in detail, in such a way that everyone, even those to whom the subject is new, may understand and gain something without it causing any difficulties or harm.

A further reason is that in explaining the true nature and purpose of man and the universe, the *Risale-i Nur* shows that true happiness is only to be found in belief and knowledge of Allah, both in this world and the hereafter. It also points out the grievous pain and unhappiness that unbelief causes in man's spirit and conscience, which generally the misguided attempt to block out through heedlessness and escapism, so that anyone with any sense may take refuge in *Iman*.

TO CONCLUDE: The Holy Qur'an addresses the intellect, as well as man's other inner faculties. It directs man to consider the universe and its functioning in order to learn its true nature and purpose as the creation, and thus to learn the attributes of its Single Creator, and his own duties as a creature. This, then, is the method that Bediuzzaman employed in the *Risale-i Nur*. He explained the true nature of the universe

as signs of its Creator and demonstrated through clear arguments that when it is read as such all the fundamentals of belief may be proved rationally.

When this method is followed, a person attains a true *Iman* that will be sound and firm enough to withstand any doubts that may arise in the face of the subtle attacks of materialism, naturalism and atheism, or of the materialistic approach to scientific advances. For all scientific and technological advances are merely the uncovering of the workings of the cosmos. When the cosmos is seen to be a vast and infinitely complex and meaningful unified book describing its Single Author, rather than causing doubt and bewilderment, all these discoveries and advances reinforce belief, they even deepen and expand it.

Man's most fundamental need is the need for religion, the need to recognize and worship Almighty Allah with all His Most Beautiful Names and Attributes and to obey His laws; those manifested in the universe and those revealed through His prophets. In explaining the message of the Holy Qur'an, Almighty Allah's final Revealed Book, which was perfectly expounded by His final Prophet, Muhammad, (Peace and blessings be upon him), and in teaching the religion of Islam, the complete and perfected religion for mankind.

Bediuzzaman Said Nursi demonstrated in the *Risale-i Nur* that there is no contradiction or dichotomy between science and religion; rather, true progress and happiness for mankind can and will only be achieved in this way, the way of the Holy Qur'an.



*The foundation and the essence of our true nationhood is Islam. In so far as the Ottoman caliphate and Turkish army were the standard-bearers in the name of that nationhood, the two true brothers - Arab and Turk, who are like the shell and citadel of the nationhood of Islam. In fact, they are the sentries of that sacred citadel.*

*Thus, through the bond of this sacred nationhood, all the people of Islam are like a single tribe. Like the members of a tribe, the groups of Islam are bound and connected to one another through love of Islamic brotherhood. They assist one another morally and, if necessary, materially. It is as if all the peoples of Islam are bound to each other with a luminous and strong chain. **The Sermon of Damascus (1911).***

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