

**SUNNIS
AND
SHIAS
ARE BROTHERS**

by

Bediuzzaman Said Nursi

A Nur Institute of America Publication

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We extend our appreciation to the original translator, Sukran Vahide. We also thank Erdogan Gurmen for his proofreading and suggestions for this publication.

The Nursi Foundation of America has assembled a group of Muslims, from diverse fields, most of whom have doctorate degrees in various disciplines, for the publication of the Risale-i Nur Collection in English and Spanish.

This booklet is distributed free of charge by
NUR INSTITUTE OF AMERICA

Editor: Havva Kurter

Publication Committee:

Suleyman Kurter
Fethullah Canpolat

Technical support: Imran Kurter

June, 2007

Editor's Note:

This booklet is dedicated to the true mission of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi. His mission in life was to preserve Islam as ordered in the Holy Qur'an by Allah (SWT) and as described by Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be Upon Him).

During his 87 years of life, Bediuzzaman tried to strengthen the *Iman* (belief) of Muslims and to establish *Ittihad* (unity) among the Muslim *Ummah* (Community). This booklet is an example of that.

The Fourth Radiance was written in 1932 mainly to advise Sunnis to develop better relations and brotherhood between Sunnis and Shias. In those days, maybe even today, many alims would not dare to take this type of stand. Thus, this pamphlet should be read with that in mind.

As the Nur Institute of America, we wish to present to you the correct understanding of Bediuzzaman's writings and above all to preserve his mission as he intended.

The Fourth Radiance

The title: The prescribed practices, the Sunnah¹, of the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) were considered appropriate for this treatise.

{Although the 'Imamate Question' is not an essential issue, since it has been given excessive importance, and since it has been a subject considered in the sciences of theology and the principles of religion, therefore it has relevance to our basic duties towards the Qur'an and the faith, and this issue is discussed here briefly).

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ
عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ * فَاِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُلْ حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ
إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَهُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ * قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ
عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمُوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَى

"Now has come a prophet from among yourselves; it heavily weighs upon him that you might suffer; full of concern is he for you, and full of compassion and mercy towards the believers. But if they turn away, say: Allah is enough for me, there is no god but He. In Him have I placed my trust, for He is the Sustainer of the Mighty Throne.(Qur'an:9:128-129)

"... Say: I ask no recompense of you except loving kindness among kinsfolk..." (Qur'an: 42-23)

1.Sunnah: The way Prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessing be upon him) lived his life, with all his deeds, sayings, and tacit approvals. It is the second source of Islamic jurisprudence.

We shall point out in this level a very few of the many vast truths contained in these glorious verses.

FIRST LEVEL

The first level consists of four points.

FIRST POINT

This describes the Most Noble Prophet's (Peace and blessings be upon him) perfect compassion and mercy towards his Community. According to sound narrations, when at the terror of the Resurrection, everyone and even the prophets will cry out for themselves. The Most Noble Prophet will demonstrate his pity and compassion by calling out: "My Community! My Community!" As affirmed by those who uncover the mysteries of creation, when he was born, his mother heard among his supplications the words: "My Community! My Community!". Also, the whole history of his life, as well as the kind and compassionate conduct which he extended, demonstrate the perfection of his compassion and clemency.

So, through displaying an unending need for the innumerable prayers for Allah's blessings upon his community, he showed a boundless mercy and compassion. Out of his total compassion, he was concerned with the happiness of all. One can understand how lacking in gratitude and conscience it is not to observe the practices, the Sunnah, of so kind and compassionate a leader.

SECOND POINT

Among the universal and general duties of his prophethood, the Most Noble Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) displayed great compassion in

certain particular, minor matters. Externally, his expending great compassion on such matters seems inappropriate to the supreme importance of the function of prophethood. But in reality, minor matters were the tips or samples of a sequence which were the means to fulfill a universal and general function of prophethood. Therefore, great importance was given to minor matters for the sake of a mighty sequence.

For example, the extraordinary compassion the Most Noble Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) showed towards Hasan and Husain (his grandchildren) in their childhood, and the great importance he gave them, was not only due to love arising from natural kindness and family feeling. Rather, they were each the tip of a shining bond of the prophethood. They were the source and representation of a community of great importance which would inherit the legacy of prophethood.

Indeed, the Most Noble Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) used to take Hasan (May Allah be pleased with him) tenderly into his arms and kiss his head for the sake of the luminous and blessed Mahdi-like descendents who would spring from him. Offspring such as Shah Geylani, Ghawth al-A'zam would be the inheritors of prophethood and would bear the sacred Shari'a of Muhammed (Peace and blessings be upon him). He saw, with the eye of prophethood, the sacred service and duty they would perform in the future and valued and commended them. He kissed Hasan's head as a sign of approval and encouragement.

Also, he embraced Husain and showed him great importance and tenderness on account of the illustrious *Imams* like Zayn-ul-Abidin and Ja'far al-Sadiq,

and the numerous *Mahdi-like* luminous persons, true inheritors of prophethood, who would spring from his shining lineage, and for the sake of the religion of Islam and of the prophethood.

With his heart, which had knowledge of the unseen, and with his luminous vision and prescient eye, Prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings be upon him) observed during his era, the era of Bliss, the events of the Assembly of the Resurrection toward the eternity, and from the earth saw Paradise, and observed events which had occurred since the time of Adam and which were concealed in the dark veils of the past, and even received the vision of the All-Glorious One.

He surely saw the spiritual poles and the *Imams*, who were the inheritors of prophethood, and the Mahdi's, who would follow on in the lines of Hasan and Husain. And for sure he would kiss their heads in the name of all of them. Yes, Shah Geylani too has a large part in his kissing Hasan's head.

THIRD POINT

According to one interpretation, the meaning of the verse:

إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَىٰ

'Say: I ask of you no recompense except loving kindness among kinsfolk,' is that "the Most Noble Prophet (Peace be upon him) wants no reward for carrying out the duty of prophethood. He wants only love for his family."

According to this meaning, it seems there is an advantage to be gained from a family relationship. Whereas, according to the meaning of the verse,

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَىكُمْ

"...The most honored of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you..." (Qur'an 49:13), therefore it is not in regard to family relationships that the Prophet's mission takes place, but it is in regard to closeness to Allah."

The Answer: With his vision, which perceived the unseen, the Most Noble Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) saw that his family would become like an illuminating tree for the world of Islam. The overwhelming majority of those who would perform the duty of guides, instructing every level of the Islamic World in human attainment and perfection, would emerge from his family. He prophesied that his community's prayer for his family in the final section of the prescribed prayers:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا
صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ

"O Allah, grant blessings to our master Muhammed and to the Family of our master Muhammed, as You granted blessings to Abraham and to the Family of Abraham; indeed, you are worthy of praise, most exalted..." would be accepted as a good deed.

That is to say, like the vast majority of the luminous guides among the people of Abraham were the family of the prophet and the lineage of Abraham. The Prophet also saw in the community, like the prophets of Israel, the spiritual roles of the family of Muhammed performing the great duties of Islam, and most of the religious brotherhoods and orders. Therefore, being commanded to say:

قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَىٰ

"Say: I ask of you no recompense except loving kindness among kinfolk." By this, he wanted his community to love his family. For those who were the source and guardians of the Prophet's traditions and practices (the Sunnah) and were charged with complying with them in every respect was his family.

Thus, this is why this truth was made known in Hadiths under the heading of adhering to the Book (the Qur'an) and the Prophet's practices (the Sunnah). What was required from the family of the Prophet in respect to the function of prophethood was the Sunnah. Just as someone who abandoned the Prophet's practices could not truly be a member of his family, so too such a person could not be a true friend to them.

Also, the reason he desired his community to gather around his family was that, with Allah's permission, he knew his family was going to become very numerous with the passing of time. Also, Islam was going to become weak. Therefore, an extremely strong and numerous mutually supportive group of people was necessary so that it could be the means to and central for the spiritual and moral progress of the World of Islam. With Divine permission, he thought of this, and desired that his community should gather round his family.

Indeed, even if the members of the Prophet's family were not greatly in advance of others in matters of belief and faith, they were still greatly ahead of them in regard to submission, commitment and partisanship. For by nature, birth, and temperament they were followers and adherents of Islam. Even if family partiality is weak and unworthy, or even unjusti-

fiable, it cannot be given up. So, would it be possible for a person to give up his support for a truth he felt clearly to be so fundamental and natural? Or, to give up a truth to which all his forefathers, who were most strong, most constant, most true, and most renowned, had been bound and through which they had won eminence and sacrificed their lives?

Thus, due to this intense commitment and innate submission, the family of the Prophet accepted the least hint in favor of the religion of Islam as though it was a powerful proof. They were committed by their innate nature, whereas the others become committed to the truth by a powerful proof.

FOURTH POINT

In connection with the third point, we shall indicate briefly a matter, which is a point of dispute between the Shia and the Sunnis and has been magnified to such an extent that it has entered the books on the tenets of faith and among the fundamentals of belief. The issue is this:

The Sunnis say: "ÿAli (May Allah be pleased with him) was the fourth of the rightly-guided Caliphs. Abu Bakr 'al-Siddiq' (May Allah be pleased with him) was preferable to him and was more deserving of the Caliphate; therefore it passed to him first. " While the Shia say: "It was ÿAli's right. An injustice was done to him. The most worthy of them all was ÿAli." A summary of the arguments for their claims is this: Shias say: " By the Hadiths of the Prophet about ÿAli, and through his title of 'Leader of Walayah², ÿAli being the source for the vast majority of the friends of Allah and for

2. Walayah: Trusteeship, guardianship

spiritual paths, and his extraordinary knowledge, courage, worship and the Prophet's (Peace and blessings be upon him) intense concern for him and towards his descendents all show that it was he who was the most worthy. The Caliphate was always his right. It was seized from him."

The Answer: The fact is that ĵAli (May Allah be pleased with him) followed the first three Caliphs, whom he repeatedly acknowledged, and held the position of their Shaykh-ul-Islam. This refutes the claims of the Shi'a. Furthermore, the victories of Islam and the struggles against its enemies in the time of the first three Caliphs and the events in ĵAli's time, refute the Shi'a's claims, again, from the point of view of the Islamic Caliphate. That is to say the Sunnis' claim is rightful.

It is said that the Shi'a are two groups: one is the 'Shia of Walayah', and the other is the 'Shia of Caliphate'. Through mixing grudge and politics the second group may have been unjust, but the first group was not concerned with resentment and this kind of politics. However, the Shia of Walayah joined the Shia of Caliphate. That is, some of the leaders of the religious orders and Sufi orders considered ĵAli to be superior and they endorsed the claims of the Shia of Caliphate.

The Answer: It is necessary to consider ĵAli (May Allah be pleased with him) in two respects. One is from the point of view of his personal perfections and rank, and the second is from the point of view of his representing the collective personality of the Prophet's family. As for this collective personality, it displays an aspect of the Most Noble Prophet's (Peace and blessing be upon him) essential nature.

In regard to the first point of ĵAli being foremost, all the people of truth gave precedence to Abu Bakr and ĵUmar (May Allah be pleased with them all). They saw their ranks as higher in the service of Islam and closeness to Allah. As for the second point, in respect of being the representative of the collective personality of the Prophet's Family, representing the true message of Prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings be upon him), ĵAli has no equal. Thus, the highly laudatory Hadiths about ĵAli look to this second point. There is a sound narration which corroborates this fact. The Most Noble Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) decreed:

"The descendents of each prophet are from himself. My descendents are those of ĵAli."

The reason the Hadiths praising ĵAli more than the other three Caliphs have become so widespread is that the Sunnis, the people of truth, spread many narrations about him in response to the Umayyads and Kharijites attacking and disparaging him unjustly. Since the other Rightly-Guided Caliphs were not subject to such criticism and detraction, no need was felt to spread Hadiths widely about them.

Furthermore, the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) saw with the prophetic foresight the grievous events and internal strife to which ĵAli would be exposed in the future, and in order to save him from despair and to save his community from thinking unfavourably of him, he consoled him and guided his community with important Hadiths like,

مَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلَاهُ فَعَلَيْهِ مَوْلَاهُ

"When I am anyone's master, ĵAli is his master also."
(Ahmed and Tirmizi)

The excessive love of the Shia of *Walayah* towards *ġAli* (May Allah be pleased with him) and supported by the praise of the religious orders their deeming him superior does not make them answerable to the degree of the Shia of Caliphate. For by reason of their practice, those who follow the path of *Walayah* look towards their spiritual guides with intense love. And the mark of love is excess; it wants to see the beloved as greater than his rank. And that is how it sees him. Ecstasies may be forgiven for their excess of love. So, on condition that their deeming *Ali* more worthy, which arises from their love, does not turn into disparagement of and enmity towards the other Rightly-Guided Caliphs and does not go beyond the fundamental teachings of Islam, it may be excused.

As for the Shia of Caliphate, since political prejudice took hold of them, they could not be redeemed from hatred and attack, and they lost their right to be excused. Even, confirming the saying,

لَا حُبَّ عَلِيٍّ بَلْ بُغْضَ عُمَرَ

"Not for love of ġAli, but out of hatred of ġUmar," since Persian national pride was wounded at *ġUmar's* hand, they demonstrated their revenge in the form of love of *ġAli*. So also the rebellion of *Amr b. al-As* against *ġAli* and the tragic war against *Husain* by *ġUmar b. al-Sa'd* aroused in the Shi'a an intense anger and enmity towards the name of 'Umar.

The Shia of *Walayah* do not have a right to criticize the Sunnis, for the Sunnis have not belittled 'Ali. Indeed, they love him sincerely. But they avoid the excessive love, which is described as dangerous in Hadiths. The Prophet's praise of *ġAli's* followers in the Hadiths refers to the Sunnis. For those of *ġAli's* followers who love him in a moderate fashion are

the Sunnis, who are the people of truth. As excessive love of Jesus (Upon whom be peace) is dangerous for Christians, so has it been made clear in sound Hadiths that that sort of excessive love for ĵAli is dangerous. If the Shia of Walayah say: "Once ĵAli's consummate spiritual attainments are accepted, it is not possible to prefer Abu Bakr, the Truthful, to him."

The Reply: It was as though the personal perfections of Abu Bakr 'al-Siddiq al-Akbar' and ĵUmar al-Faruq ' (May Allah be pleased with them) had been placed on one side of the scales together with their achievements in the time of their Caliphates, the achievements realized through their carrying out the functions inherited from prophethood, and on the other side of the scales had been placed ĵAli's (May Allah be pleased with him) extraordinary personal perfections together with the internal Caliphate struggles, which arose from the tragic events he was compelled to enter upon and were the object of suspicion and distrust. And the Sunnis saw that al-Siddiq's or al-Faruq's scales weighed heavier and so they preferred them.

Moreover, as is proved in the Twelfth and Twenty-Fourth Words³, the Prophethood is so elevated in comparison to Walayah that a tiny manifestation of it is superior to a large display of Walayah. In regard to this, the successes of Siddiq al-Akbar and Faruq al-A'zam during their Caliphates became an indication for the Sunnis that their share in the legacy of prophethood and the establishment of its laws had been divinely bestowed. Since ĵAli's personal perfections did not dismiss that greater share, which arose from the inheritance of prophethood, he acted as Shaykh-ul-Islam for Abu Bakr and ĵUmar, the

3. In the book titled "Words" by Said Nursi

Shaykhayn al-Mukarramayn, in the time of their Caliphates, and respected them. How should the Sunnis, who love and revere *ġ*Ali, not love and revere the *Shaykhayn*, whom *ġ*Ali loved and esteemed sincerely? Let us make this truth clear by means of an example:

One of the sons of a very rich man is given twenty batmans⁴ (160 kg) of silver and four batmans of gold from his father's legacy, and another is given five of silver and five of gold. So if the third is given three of silver and five of gold, of course the last two will receive less in quantity, but more in quality. Like this example, the lesser amount of the *Shaykhayn*'s share of the gold of the truth of 'Divine immediacy,' which was manifested in the legacy of prophethood and the establishment of its laws, would weigh heavier than the great amount of 'Divine proximity' and the perfections of Walayah, which sprang from the jewel of Walayah. These points should also be taken into account when weighing them up. But if they are compared with one another from the point of view of personal courage, knowledge, and Walayah, the matter takes on another complexion.

Also, there can be no comparison with respect to the collective personality of the Prophet's family, which was represented in the person of *ġ*Ali (May God be pleased with him), and of the Prophetic Truth, which was manifested in that collective personality through the absolute legacy of prophethood. For contained in it is the mighty secret truth of the Prophet Muhammed (Peace and blessings be upon him).

As for the Shia of the Caliphate, they have no rights before the Sunnis other than regret. For although they claim to have tremendous love for *ġ*Ali, they

4. 1 batman: Approximately 8 kg.

disparage him, and their creed necessitates accusing him of vice. For they say that although Abu Bakr al-Siddiq and ŷUmar were acting unjustly, ŷAli feigned approval of them; according to Shi'i terminology, he dissimulated. That is, he was apprehensive of them and behaved hypocritically. But it is not love to see someone who was such a hero of Islam, who won the title 'Lion of Allah,' and who was the commander and guide of the faithful as simulating love for people he did not love out of fear and deception, as feigning approval for them in fear for more than twenty years, and as following wrongdoers. ŷAli (May Allah be pleased with him) would disclaim love of that sort.

Thus, the creed of people of truth in no way disparages ŷAli, nor levels accusations of amorality at him. It does not attribute cowardice to such a remarkable courage, but says: "If ŷAli had not considered the Rightly-Guided Caliphs to be right, he would not have recognized them for a minute, nor obeyed them. It means that since he thought them right and preferable, he surrendered his endeavor and courage on the way of justice."

In Short: Going either to excess or much below moderation (the two extremes) is not good. Moderation is the middle way, and that is the way the Sunnis have chosen. But, alas, Kharijite type ideas have infiltrated the Sunnis under the cover of so-called Ehl-ul-Sunnah way to an extent; also addicts of politics and some heretics criticize ŷAli.

They say, God forbid, that since he did not understand politics, he was not entirely worthy of the Caliphate and could not govern. And because of these unjust accusations of theirs, Shias feel affronted at the Sunnis, whereas the principles and basic beliefs

of the Sunnis do not necessitate having these ideas. Indeed, they prove the opposite. The Sunnis cannot be condemned because of ideas such as those which come from Kharijites and renegades. Rather, the Sunnis are firmer followers of ĩAli than the Shias. They mention ĩAli in the laudatory fashion he deserves in all their khutbas and prayers.

Particularly the spiritual leaders and pious scholars, the overwhelming majority of them in the Sunni school, recognized him as spiritual guide and the supreme leader of Walayah. The Shias should ignore the Kharijites and heretics who have deservedly earned the enmity of both the Shias and the Sunnis, and not take sides against the people of truth. Some Shias even abandon the Prophet's Sunnah out of spite for the Sunnis. Anyway, we have said too much on this matter, for it has been discussed to excess by the religious scholars.

And so, O Sunnis, who are the people of truth, and Shias, whose way is love of the Prophet's family! Quickly put an end to this meaningless, unfaithful, unjust, and harmful dispute between you. Otherwise the irreligious and atheistic current, which is now so influential, will make one of you a tool against the other, and use the one to crush the other. And after defeating the one then it will destroy the tool. Since you are believers in Divine Unity, it is essential to leave aside unimportant matters which necessitate division while there are a hundred fundamental sacred bonds between you, which command brotherhood and unity.



Note: Second Level, Quranic Ayat (9:129), which is not related to Sunni-Shia issue, is discussed as The Eleventh Radiance.

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 irra-

tional 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 em-

ployed 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.

And so, O Sunnis, who are the people of truth, and Shias, whose way is love of the Prophet's Family! Quickly put an end to this meaningless, unfaithful, unjust, and harmful dispute between you. Otherwise the irreligious and atheistic current, which is now so influential, will make one of you a tool against the other, and use the one to crush the other. And after defeating the one then it will destroy the tool.

The Fourth Radiance (Dördüncü Lem'a)
FROM THE "RISALE-I NUR COLLECTION"

NUR INSTITUTE OF AMERICA

www.risaleusa.com

E-mail: risaleusa@gmail.com

Milwaukee, Wisconsin USA