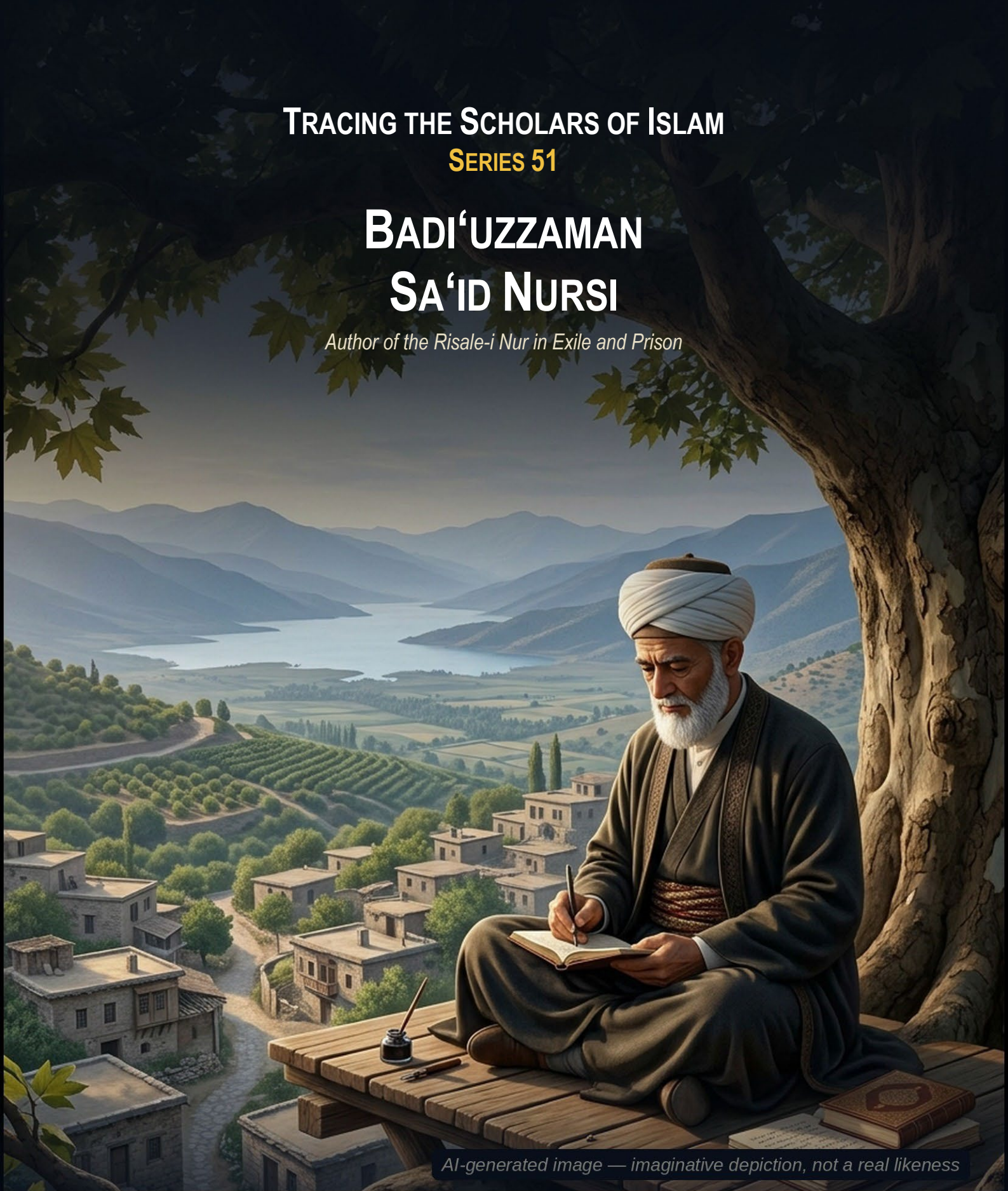
TRACING THE SCHOLARS OF ISLAM

SERIES 51

# BADI'UZZAMAN SA'ID NURSI

*Author of the Risale-i Nur in Exile and Prison*



*AI-generated image — imaginative depiction, not a real likeness*


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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## TRACING THE SCHOLARS OF ISLAM

### SERIES 51

# BADI'UZZAMAN SA'ID NURSI

*Author of the Risale-i Nur in Exile and Prison*

فَٱنظُرْ إِلَىٰٓ ءَاثَٰرِ رَحْمَتِ ٱللَّهِ كَيْفَ يُحْىِ ٱلْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَآ ۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ لَمُحْىِ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

"So observe the effects of the mercy of Allah - how He gives life to the earth after its lifelessness. Indeed, that [same one] will give life to the dead, and He is over all things competent."

SURAH AR-RUM 30:50

**HJ CHE ALIM HJ CHE HARON**

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All praise is due to Allah, who gives life to the earth after its death. Blessings and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and upon his family and his Companions.

This eBook is specially dedicated to my beloved wife,

**ZAHARAH MOHD LATIF**;

my dear children,

**MUHAMMAD HAFIZ, NOOR HAZWANI, ABDUL HAKIM, NOOR HIDAYAH, NOR AQILA** and **NOR ATIQAH**;

and my sons- and daughters-in-law,

**FAZILAH, MALEK, HANIN, FAIRIZAL** and **FIRWAN**.

This fifty-first book of Tracing the Scholars of Islam tells the story of Badi'uzzaman Sa'id Nursi — a scholar from eastern Anatolia who spent over 20 years in exile and prison, and wrote the Risale-i Nur, a commentary on faith of more than 6,000 pages. May his story teach us to see the signs of Allah in creation, and to be patient when tested.

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## ABOUT THE COVER OF THIS EBOOK

The cover of this eBook is an **AI-generated image** — an ***imaginative depiction, not the real likeness*** of Sa'id Nursi. This label is also printed on the cover. An elderly white-bearded scholar in a white turban and dark robe sits cross-legged on ***a wooden platform among the branches of a great tree***, ***writing by hand*** in a notebook.

This recalls the well-known story that in ***Barla***, his place of exile, he often wrote and prayed on ***a wooden platform in a plane tree***. Beside him are ***ink, a pen, books and manuscript pages*** — symbols of ***the Risale-i Nur***, which was copied by hand.

Below spreads ***a mountain village of Anatolia*** with stone houses, ***terraced orchards*** and ***a blue lake*** in the valley — a view that recalls this eBook's motto verse: ***"observe the effects of the mercy of Allah"***.

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# CONTENTS

**BADI'UZZAMAN SA'ID NURSI** — *Introducing the scholar*

**1. OBSERVE THE EFFECTS OF ALLAH'S MERCY** — *ar-Rum 30:50*

**2. ALLAH IS THE LIGHT OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH** — *an-Nur 24:35*

**3. BACKGROUND: THE LATE OTTOMANS AND THE TURKISH REPUBLIC** — *History note*

**4. A BOY FROM THE VILLAGE OF NURS** — *Timeline*

**5. BADI'UZZAMAN: WONDER OF THE AGE** — *Sahih Muslim 2699*

**6. VAN AND THE DREAM OF A UNIVERSITY** — *Sahih al-Bukhari 71*

**7. ISTANBUL AND THE DAMASCUS SERMON** — *History note*

**8. WAR AND CAPTIVITY IN KOSTROMA** — *al-'Ankabut 29:2; Sahih Muslim 2999*

**9. THE OLD SAID AND THE NEW SAID** — *Figure: three stages; Sahih al-Bukhari 6416*

**10. EXILE TO BARLA** — *Al 'Imran 3:190–191; Figure: places*

**11. THE RISALE-I NUR** — *al-Isra' 17:44; al-Kahf 18:109*

**12. COPIED BY HAND** — *Sahih Muslim 2674*

**13. PRISON AS THE SCHOOL OF JOSEPH** — *Yusuf 12:33; Sahih al-Bukhari 3612*

**14. OVER 20 YEARS IN EXILE AND PRISON** — *Figure: exile; al-Baqarah 2:286*

**15. SIGNS IN CREATION AND IN THE SELF** — *Fussilat 41:53; al-Mulk 67:3*

**16. FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE** — *Sahih al-Bukhari 100*

**17. STUDENTS AND BROTHERHOOD** — *Sahih al-Bukhari 13*

**18. ACQUITTAL AND THE FINAL YEARS** — *Sahih al-Bukhari 5027*

**19. CONVEY EVEN ONE VERSE** — *Sahih al-Bukhari 3461*

**20. ESTABLISHED REPORTS AND POPULAR STORIES** — *al-Isra' 17:36*

**21. HIS DEATH AND LEGACY** — *Sahih al-Bukhari 1*

**22. LESSONS AND CONCLUSION** — *Twelve lessons*

**GLOSSARY AND REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

**REFERENCES**

**SUPPORT & DONATIONS**

*Colour guide: green box = verses of the Qur'an; gold box = Hadith; brown box = history note (reports from the books of history and biography); blue table = comparison. Underlined blue narrator names can be clicked to open the narrator's page on sunnah.com.*

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# BADI'UZZAMAN SA'ID NURSI

The fifty-first book of **Tracing the Scholars of Islam** tells the story of ***Badi'uzzaman Sa'id Nursi*** (1876/77–1960 CE), a scholar from ***eastern Anatolia***, Turkey, who was given the title ***"Badi'uzzaman" — "Wonder of the Age"***.

He spent ***over 20 years in exile and prison***, and in that time wrote the ***Risale-i Nur*** ("Treatises of Light") — a collection of commentary and explanation of faith of ***more than 6,000 pages***, ***copied by hand*** by his students.

This eBook explains ***the verses on Allah's signs in creation***, the background of the late Ottoman era, his life as ***student, fighter and prisoner of war***, the years of ***exile in Barla***, ***the Risale-i Nur***, prison as ***"the School of Joseph"***, and his legacy.

*Note: The translation of Qur'anic verses in this eBook is that of Sahih International. The grading of each Hadith is stated in the Hadith box. Information from books of history and modern research is* **biographical narration (not Hadith)** *and is placed in the brown "History Note" boxes. The cover image is an AI-generated image and is marked as such. Some stories about him are popular reports, and their status is noted in chapter 20.*

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## OBSERVE THE EFFECTS OF ALLAH'S MERCY

**SURAH AR-RUM 30:50**

فَٱنظُرۡ إِلَىٰٓ ءَاثَٰرِ رَحۡمَتِ ٱللَّهِ كَيۡفَ يُحۡيِ ٱلۡأَرۡضَ بَعۡدَ مَوۡتِهَآۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ لَمُحۡيِ ٱلۡمَوۡتَىٰۖ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ قَدِيرٞ ٥٠

So observe the effects of the mercy of Allah - how He gives life to the earth after its lifelessness. Indeed, that [same one] will give life to the dead, and He is over all things competent.

*Translation: Sahih International* — quran.com/30:50

Allah calls: ***"So observe the effects of the mercy of Allah - how He gives life to the earth after its lifelessness"***. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 30:50.

This verse is the ***motto*** of this eBook because Sa'id Nursi's main method was ***reading creation as a book***: every tree, flower and season is ***evidence*** of the Creator. He reflected often on verses like this in the Risale-i Nur.

| EFFECTS OF MERCY IN CREATION | LESSON OF FAITH |
|---|---|
| The earth revives in spring | Allah is able to give life to the dead. |
| A small seed becomes a great tree | The wisdom and design of the Creator. |
| Provision for every creature | Allah's mercy embraces everything. |
| Beauty and balance | The Most Beautiful and Most Wise Creator. |

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## ALLAH IS THE LIGHT OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH

**SURAH AN-NUR 24:35**

ٱللَّهُ نُورُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ مَثَلُ نُورِهِۦ كَمِشۡكَوٰةٖ فِيهَا مِصۡبَاحٌۖ ٱلۡمِصۡبَاحُ فِي زُجَاجَةٍۖ ٱلزُّجَاجَةُ كَأَنَّهَا كَوۡكَبٞ دُرِّيّٞ يُوقَدُ مِن شَجَرَةٖ مُّبَٰرَكَةٖ زَيۡتُونَةٖ لَّا شَرۡقِيَّةٖ وَلَا غَرۡبِيَّةٖ يَكَادُ زَيۡتُهَا يُضِيٓءُ وَلَوۡ لَمۡ تَمۡسَسۡهُ نَارٞۚ نُّورٌ عَلَىٰ نُورٖۚ يَهۡدِي ٱللَّهُ لِنُورِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُۚ وَيَضۡرِبُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلۡأَمۡثَٰلَ لِلنَّاسِۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيۡءٍ عَلِيمٞ ٣٥

Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The example of His light is like a niche within which is a lamp, the lamp is within glass, the glass as if it were a pearly [white] star lit from [the oil of] a blessed olive tree, neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil would almost glow even if untouched by fire. Light upon light. Allah guides to His light whom He wills. And Allah presents examples for the people, and Allah is Knowing of all things.

*Translation: Sahih International* — quran.com/24:35

***"Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth"***. This ***Verse of Light*** likens Allah's guidance to ***"a niche within which is a lamp"***. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 24:35.

The name of Sa'id Nursi's main work, ***Risale-i Nur***, means ***"Treatises of Light"***. For him, a scholar's task was to bring ***the light of faith*** to people's hearts in a dark age.

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## LIGHT UPON LIGHT

The same verse says: ***"Light upon light"***, and ***"Allah guides to His light whom He wills"***.

| LIGHT | ITS MEANING IN LIFE |
|---|---|
| The light of faith | A heart certain of Allah and the Hereafter. |
| The light of knowledge | A mind that understands the signs of Allah. |
| The light of deeds | Good character and worship. |
| The light of the Qur'an | Guidance that lights the path of life. |

The Risale-i Nur sought to kindle ***all four lights***: faith, knowledge, deeds and the Qur'an — especially in an age when many people ***doubted religion***.

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## BACKGROUND: THE LATE OTTOMANS AND THE TURKISH REPUBLIC

Sa'id Nursi lived through ***three eras***: the late ***Ottoman Empire***, ***the First World War***, and the early ***Turkish Republic*** (proclaimed 1923).

**HISTORY NOTE: AN AGE OF GREAT CHANGE**

After the Ottoman Empire collapsed, the Turkish Republic made ***sweeping changes***: a new education system, and in ***1928*** Turkish writing was changed from ***the Arabic script*** to ***the Latin alphabet***.

In this setting, traditional religious learning became difficult. Sa'id Nursi chose to ***write about faith*** — and his students ***copied his works by hand in Arabic script***.

**REFERENCES:**

Wikipedia, "Said Nursi". https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Said_Nursi

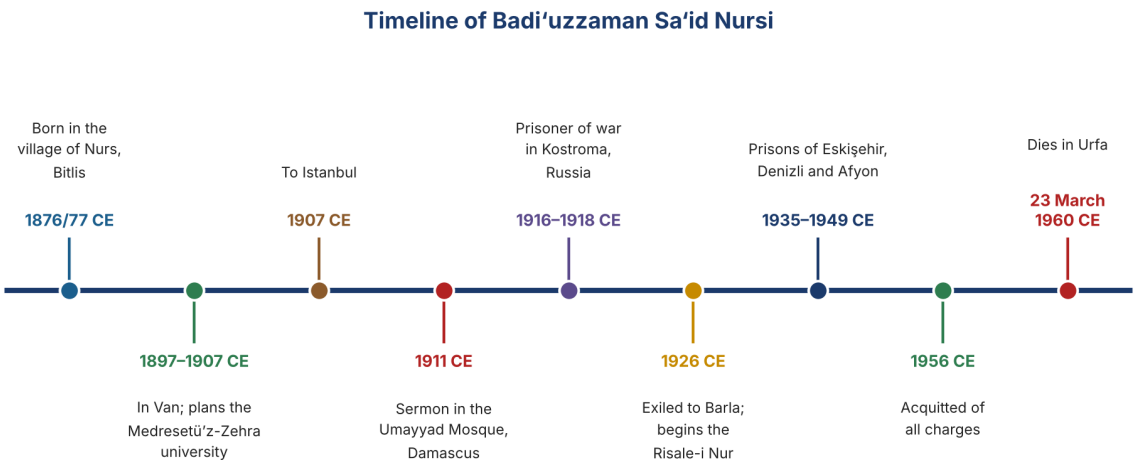
| YEAR | EVENT |
|---|---|
| 1914–1918 CE | The First World War. |
| 1923 CE | The Turkish Republic is proclaimed. |
| 1926 CE | Sa'id Nursi is exiled to Barla. |
| 1928 CE | Turkish writing changes to the Latin alphabet. |

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## A BOY FROM THE VILLAGE OF NURS

Sa'id was born in ***1876 or 1877 CE*** in the village of ***Nurs***, near Hizan, in the province of ***Bitlis***, eastern Anatolia. The name "Nursi" means ***"from Nurs"***.

His father, ***Mirza***, and mother, ***Nuriye***, were said to be descended from ***the Ahl al-Bayt***. They had ***seven children*** and lived ***modestly***. Source: Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Said_Nursi




*Sources: Wikipedia and the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism. His birth is given as 1876 or 1877.*

*Figure 1: Timeline of Badi'uzzaman Sa'id Nursi.*

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## BADI'UZZAMAN: WONDER OF THE AGE

Sa'id began studying at ***the age of nine***, with several scholars in and around Bitlis. He did not attend formal school, but studied in ***madrasahs and with local shaykhs***.

**HISTORY NOTE: THE ORIGIN OF THE TITLE BADI'UZZAMAN**

According to Wikipedia, the scholars of ***Siirt*** gave him the title ***Badi'uzzaman*** after he ***memorised a page of al-Hariri's Maqamat after reading it once***.

He is also said to have ***completed a madrasah curriculum of over 100 books in three months*** at the age of 13–14 — something that usually takes ***10–15 years***.

**REFERENCES:**

Wikipedia, "Said Nursi". https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Said_Nursi

Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, "Nursî, Bediüzzaman Said". https://ktb.gov.tr/EN-119463/nurs-bediuzzaman-said.html

### THE PATH TO PARADISE

**HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2699**

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ يَحْيَى التَّمِيمِيُّ، وَأَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ وَمُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْعَلاَءِ الْهَمْدَانِيُّ - وَاللَّفْظُ لِيَحْيَى - قَالَ يَحْيَى أَخْبَرَنَا وَقَالَ الآخَرَانِ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو مُعَاوِيَةَ، عَنِ الأَعْمَشِ، عَنْ أَبِي صَالِحٍ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم «مَنْ نَفَّسَ عَنْ مُؤْمِنٍ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرَبِ الدُّنْيَا نَفَّسَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرَبِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ وَمَنْ يَسَّرَ عَلَى مُعْسِرٍ يَسَّرَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالآخِرَةِ وَمَنْ سَتَرَ مُسْلِمًا سَتَرَهُ اللَّهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالآخِرَةِ وَاللَّهُ فِي عَوْنِ الْعَبْدِ مَا كَانَ الْعَبْدُ فِي عَوْنِ أَخِيهِ وَمَنْ سَلَكَ طَرِيقًا يَلْتَمِسُ فِيهِ عِلْمًا سَهَّلَ اللَّهُ لَهُ بِهِ طَرِيقًا إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَمَا اجْتَمَعَ قَوْمٌ فِي بَيْتٍ مِنْ بُيُوتِ اللَّهِ يَتْلُونَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَيَتَدَارَسُونَهُ بَيْنَهُمْ إِلاَّ نَزَلَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّكِينَةُ وَغَشِيَتْهُمُ الرَّحْمَةُ وَحَفَّتْهُمُ الْمَلاَئِكَةُ وَذَكَرَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِيمَنْ عِنْدَهُ وَمَنْ بَطَّأَ بِهِ عَمَلُهُ لَمْ يُسْرِعْ بِهِ نَسَبُهُ».

**TRANSLATION:**

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Whoever relieves a believer of one of the hardships of this world, Allah will relieve him of one of the hardships of the Day of Resurrection. Whoever makes things easy for one in difficulty, Allah will make things easy for him in this world and the Hereafter. Whoever covers the faults of a Muslim, Allah will cover his faults in this world and the Hereafter. Allah helps His servant as long as the servant helps his brother. **Whoever follows a path in search of knowledge,**

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**Allah will make easy for him a path to Paradise.** No people gather in one of the houses of Allah, reciting the Book of Allah and studying it among themselves, except that tranquillity descends upon them, mercy covers them, the angels surround them, and Allah mentions them among those who are with Him. And whoever is held back by his deeds will not be hastened forward by his lineage."

**CHAIN OF NARRATION:** Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Yahya ibn Yahya at-Tamimi, Abu Bakr ibn Abi Shaybah and Muhammad ibn al-'Ala' al-Hamdani, from Abu Mu'awiyah, from al-A'mash, from Abu Salih, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه.

**REFERENCE:** Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Remembrance, Supplication, Repentance and Seeking Forgiveness, chapter on the virtue of gathering to recite the Qur'an and remember Allah, Hadith No. 2699a.

**GRADE:** SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim, the second most authentic book of Hadith after Sahih al-Bukhari.

*Source:* https://sunnah.com/muslim:2699a

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## VAN AND THE DREAM OF A UNIVERSITY

From ***1897 to 1907***, Sa'id Nursi lived in ***Van*** under the protection of its governor, ***Tahir Pasha***. In the governor's library he is said to have ***studied the modern sciences***.

**HISTORY NOTE: MEDRESETÜ'Z-ZEHRA**

Sa'id Nursi planned a university in eastern Anatolia called ***Medresetü'z-Zehra***, ***combining religious and scientific education***.

Sultan ***Mehmed V*** funded it, and ***construction began in 1913***, but it was ***halted by the First World War***.

**REFERENCES:**

Wikipedia, "Said Nursi". https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Said_Nursi

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## UNDERSTANDING OF THE RELIGION

**HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 71 (MUTTAFAQ 'ALAIH)**

حَدَّثَنَا سَعِيدُ بْنُ عُفَيْرٍ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا ابْنُ وَهْبٍ، عَنْ يُونُسَ، عَنِ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، قَالَ قَالَ حُمَيْدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ سَمِعْتُ مُعَاوِيَةَ، خَطِيبًا يَقُولُ سَمِعْتُ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَقُولُ «مَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ بِهِ خَيْرًا يُفَقِّهْهُ فِي الدِّينِ، وَإِنَّمَا أَنَا قَاسِمٌ وَاللَّهُ يُعْطِي، وَلَنْ تَزَالَ هَذِهِ الأُمَّةُ قَائِمَةً عَلَى أَمْرِ اللَّهِ لاَ يَضُرُّهُمْ مَنْ خَالَفَهُمْ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ».

**TRANSLATION:**

Humayd ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman said: I heard Mu'awiyah رضى الله عنه delivering a sermon, saying: I heard the Prophet ﷺ say: **"Whoever Allah wishes good for, He gives him understanding of the religion. I am only a distributor, and Allah is the One who gives. This nation will remain upright upon the command of Allah; those who oppose them will not harm them, until the command of Allah comes."**

**CHAIN OF NARRATION:** Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Sa'id ibn 'Ufayr, from Ibn Wahb, from Yunus, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from Humayd ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman, from Mu'awiyah رضى الله عنه.

**REFERENCE:** Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Knowledge, Hadith No. 71. Also narrated by Muslim (No. 1037).

**GRADE:** SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

*Source:* https://sunnah.com/bukhari:71

The dream of Medresetü'z-Zehra shows Sa'id Nursi's conviction that ***religious knowledge*** lights the heart and ***scientific knowledge*** lights the mind — and the two must be ***united***.

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## ISTANBUL AND THE DAMASCUS SERMON

In ***1907***, Sa'id Nursi went to ***Istanbul*** to propose his university to Sultan ***Abdulhamid II***. His proposal was rejected, and according to the Turkish Ministry of Culture, he was ***sent to an asylum and then to prison***.

**HISTORY NOTE: THE SERMON IN THE UMAYYAD MOSQUE (1911)**

In ***1911*** he delivered ***a sermon in the Umayyad Mosque, Damascus***, later known as ***the Damascus Sermon***. Afterwards he returned to teach students at ***the Horhor Madrasah in Van***.

In ***1919*** he became a member of ***Darü'l-Hikmeti'l-İslamiye***, the Islamic academy in Istanbul.

**REFERENCES:**

Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism. https://ktb.gov.tr/EN-119463/nurs-bediuzzaman-said.html

| YEAR | IN ISTANBUL AND DAMASCUS |
|---|---|
| 1907 CE | Proposes a university to Sultan Abdulhamid II. |
| 1911 CE | Sermon in the Umayyad Mosque, Damascus. |
| 1918 CE | Returns to Istanbul after escaping from Russia. |
| 1919 CE | Member of Darü'l-Hikmeti'l-İslamiye. |

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## WAR AND CAPTIVITY IN KOSTROMA

In ***the First World War***, Sa'id Nursi led ***a volunteer brigade*** against the Russian invasion on the eastern front. His leg was ***broken***, and he was ***captured***.

### HISTORY NOTE: TWO AND A HALF YEARS IN RUSSIA

He was held for about ***two and a half years*** in the prisoner camp at ***Kostroma***, Russia. After ***the February Revolution*** in Russia, he ***escaped*** and returned to Istanbul in ***June 1918***.

The Turkish Ministry of Culture says he was captured and exiled to ***Siberia*** in ***1916***.

**REFERENCES:**

Wikipedia, "Said Nursi". https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Said_Nursi
Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism. https://ktb.gov.tr/EN-119463/nurs-bediuzzaman-said.html

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## EVERY BELIEVER WILL BE TESTED

**SURAH AL-'ANKABUT 29:2**

أَحَسِبَ ٱلنَّاسُ أَن يُتْرَكُوٓاْ أَن يَقُولُوٓاْ ءَامَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ ﴿٢﴾

Do the people think that they will be left to say, "We believe" and they will not be tried.

*Translation: Sahih International* — quran.com/29:2

***"Do the people think that they will be left to say, "We believe" and they will not be tried"***? Tafsir Ibn Kathir 29:2.

**HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2999**

حَدَّثَنَا هَدَّابُ بْنُ خَالِدٍ الأَزْدِيُّ، وَشَيْبَانُ بْنُ فَرُّوخَ، جَمِيعًا عَنْ سُلَيْمَانَ بْنِ الْمُغِيرَةِ، - وَاللَّفْظُ لِشَيْبَانَ - حَدَّثَنَا سُلَيْمَانُ، حَدَّثَنَا ثَابِتٌ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ أَبِي لَيْلَى، عَنْ صُهَيْبٍ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم «عَجَبًا لأَمْرِ الْمُؤْمِنِ إِنَّ أَمْرَهُ كُلَّهُ خَيْرٌ وَلَيْسَ ذَاكَ لأَحَدٍ إِلاَّ لِلْمُؤْمِنِ إِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ سَرَّاءُ شَكَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ وَإِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ ضَرَّاءُ صَبَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ».

**TRANSLATION:**

Suhayb رضى الله عنه reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **"How wonderful is the affair of the believer, for all of his affairs are good for him, and this is for no one except the believer. If something pleasing befalls him, he is grateful, and that is good for him; and if hardship befalls him, he is patient, and that is good for him."**

**CHAIN OF NARRATION:** Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Haddab ibn Khalid al-Azdi and Shayban ibn Farrukh, both from Sulayman ibn al-Mughirah, from Thabit al-Bunani, from 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Abi Layla, from Suhayb ar-Rumi رضى الله عنه.

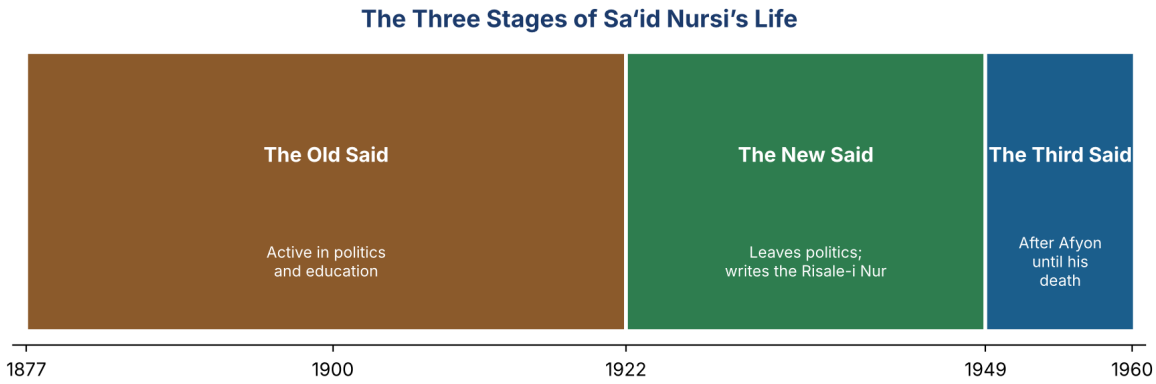
**REFERENCE:** Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Asceticism and Softening of Hearts, Hadith No. 2999.

**GRADE:** SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim, the second most authentic book of Hadith after Sahih al-Bukhari.

*Source:* https://sunnah.com/muslim:2999

## THE OLD SAID AND THE NEW SAID

Sa'id Nursi himself divided his life into ***stages***: ***"the Old Said"***, active in politics, and ***"the New Said"***, who left politics to devote himself to ***faith and the Qur'an***. After 1949 he spoke of ***"the Third Said"***.




*A division used by Nursi himself; transition years approximate (early 1920s and 1949). Source: Wikipedia.*

*Figure 2: The three stages of Sa'id Nursi's life.*

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## LIKE A STRANGER IN THIS WORLD

**HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 6416**

حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ أَبُو الْمُنْذِرِ الطُّفَاوِيُّ، عَنْ سُلَيْمَانَ الأَعْمَشِ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي مُجَاهِدٌ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عُمَرَ ـ رضى الله عنهما ـ قَالَ أَخَذَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم بِمَنْكِبِي فَقَالَ «كُنْ فِي الدُّنْيَا كَأَنَّكَ غَرِيبٌ، أَوْ عَابِرُ سَبِيلٍ». وَكَانَ ابْنُ عُمَرَ يَقُولُ إِذَا أَمْسَيْتَ فَلاَ تَنْتَظِرِ الصَّبَاحَ، وَإِذَا أَصْبَحْتَ فَلاَ تَنْتَظِرِ الْمَسَاءَ، وَخُذْ مِنْ صِحَّتِكَ لِمَرَضِكَ، وَمِنْ حَيَاتِكَ لِمَوْتِكَ.

**TRANSLATION:**

'Abdullah ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ took hold of my shoulder and said: **"Be in this world as though you were a stranger or a traveller."** Ibn 'Umar used to say: "When evening comes, do not wait for the morning; when morning comes, do not wait for the evening. Take from your health for your sickness, and from your life for your death."

**CHAIN OF NARRATION:** Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Ali ibn 'Abdullah al-Madini, from Abu al-Mundhir at-Tufawi, from Sulayman al-A'mash, from Mujahid, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما.

**REFERENCE:** Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Softening of Hearts, Hadith No. 6416.

**GRADE:** SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

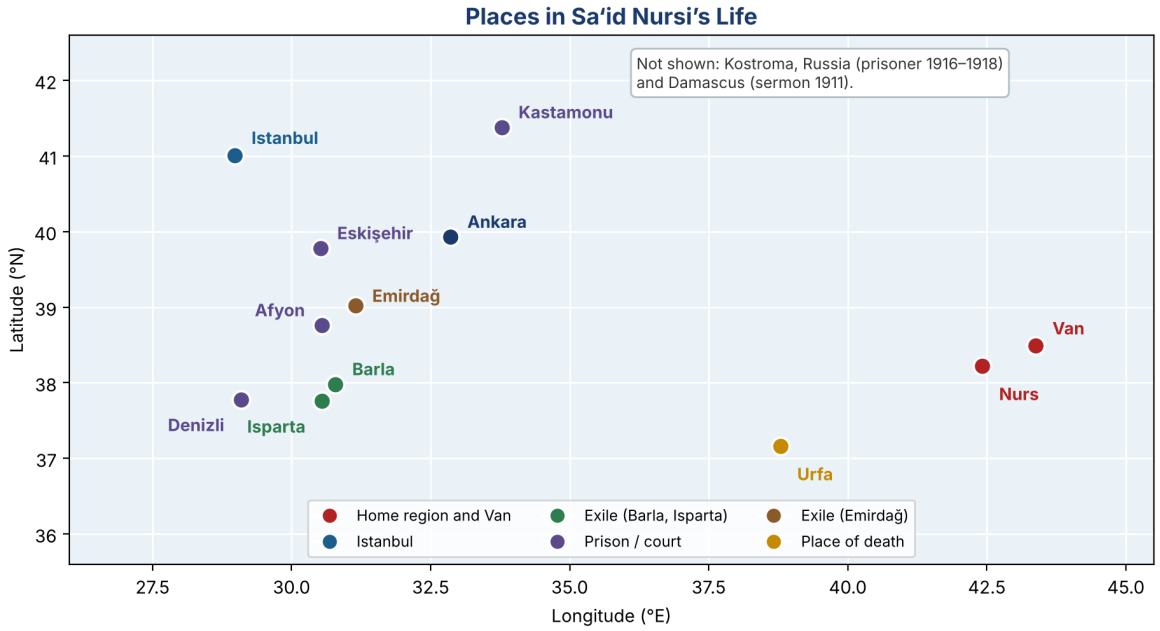
*Source:* https://sunnah.com/bukhari:6416

The change to "the New Said" was a change from ***the world of politics*** to ***preparation for the Hereafter***: saving people's ***faith*** mattered more than seeking power.

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## EXILE TO BARLA

In ***1926***, Sa'id Nursi was ***exiled to Barla***, a mountain village in ***Isparta*** province, and lived there for ***about eight years***. In Barla he wrote ***Sözler*** (The Words), ***Lem'alar*** (The Flashes) and ***Mektubat*** (The Letters) — the core of the Risale-i Nur.




*Approximate positions. Sources: Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism; Wikipedia.*

*Figure 3: Places in Sa'id Nursi's life (approximate positions).*

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## REFLECTING ON THE CREATION OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH

**SURAH AL 'IMRAN 3:190–191**

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱخْتِلَٰفِ ٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّأُو۟لِى
ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿١٩٠﴾

Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding.

ٱلَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ قِيَٰمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَٰذَا بَٰطِلًا سُبْحَٰنَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ
﴿١٩١﴾

Who remember Allah while standing or sitting or [lying] on their sides and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], "Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You [above such a thing]; then protect us from the punishment of the Fire."

*Translation: Sahih International* — quran.com/3:190-191

People of understanding are those who ***"give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth"***, saying: ***"Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly"***. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 3:190.

In Barla, far from the cities, Sa'id Nursi reflected on ***mountains, lake and trees*** — and wrote about ***the signs of Allah*** he saw.

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## THE RISALE-I NUR

***The Risale-i Nur Külliyatı*** is Sa'id Nursi's collection of works, ***more than 6,000 pages*** long. According to Wikipedia, ***about two-thirds*** of it was written in Barla, and most of it was written ***in exile or prison***.

**SURAH AL-ISRA' 17:44**

تُسَبِّحُ لَهُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ ٱلسَّبۡعُ وَٱلۡأَرۡضُ وَمَن فِيهِنَّۚ وَإِن مِّن شَيۡءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ
بِحَمۡدِهِۦ وَلَٰكِن لَّا تَفۡقَهُونَ تَسۡبِيحَهُمۡۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورٗا ٤٤

The seven heavens and the earth and whatever is in them exalt Him. And there is not a thing except that it exalts [Allah] by His praise, but you do not understand their [way of] exalting. Indeed, He is ever Forbearing and Forgiving.

*Translation: Sahih International* — quran.com/17:44

***"there is not a thing except that it exalts [Allah] by His praise, but you do not understand their [way of] exalting"***. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 17:44.

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| MAIN PART | MEANING OF THE NAME |
|---|---|
| Sözler | The Words. |
| Mektubat | The Letters. |
| Lem'alar | The Flashes. |
| Şualar | The Rays. |

Allah says (18:109): ***"If the sea were ink for [writing] the words of my Lord, the sea would be exhausted before the words of my Lord were exhausted"***. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 18:109.

The Risale-i Nur is not a verse-by-verse tafsir, but ***a thematic explanation*** of ***divine unity, prophethood, resurrection*** and ***worship***, with examples from creation.

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## COPIED BY HAND

At first the Risale-i Nur was not freely printed. It was ***copied by hand in Arabic script***, especially in the village of ***Sav***, and passed from hand to hand through what was called ***"the Nur postal system"***.

**HISTORY NOTE: THE PEN AS A PATH OF DA'WAH**

After Turkish writing changed to the Latin alphabet in 1928, copying in Arabic script required ***determination and courage***. Many students — men and women — spent years ***copying manuscripts***.

This is an example of how ***knowledge is conveyed*** even in difficult times.

**REFERENCES:**

Wikipedia, "Said Nursi". https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Said_Nursi

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**HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2674**

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ أَيُّوبَ، وَقُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، وَابْنُ حُجْرٍ، قَالُوا حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ، - يَعْنُونَ ابْنَ جَعْفَرٍ - عَنِ الْعَلاَءِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ «مَنْ دَعَا إِلَى هُدًى كَانَ لَهُ مِنَ الأَجْرِ مِثْلُ أُجُورِ مَنْ تَبِعَهُ لاَ يَنْقُصُ ذَلِكَ مِنْ أُجُورِهِمْ شَيْئًا وَمَنْ دَعَا إِلَى ضَلاَلَةٍ كَانَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الإِثْمِ مِثْلُ آثَامِ مَنْ تَبِعَهُ لاَ يَنْقُصُ ذَلِكَ مِنْ آثَامِهِمْ شَيْئًا».

**TRANSLATION:**

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **"Whoever calls to guidance will have a reward like the rewards of those who follow him, without that diminishing their rewards in the least.** And whoever calls to misguidance will bear a sin like the sins of those who follow him, without that diminishing their sins in the least."

**CHAIN OF NARRATION:** Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Yahya ibn Ayyub, Qutaybah ibn Sa'id and 'Ali ibn Hujr, from Isma'il ibn Ja'far, from al-'Ala' ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman, from his father 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Ya'qub, from Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه.

**REFERENCE:** Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Knowledge, Hadith No. 2674.

**GRADE:** SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim, the second most authentic book of Hadith after Sahih al-Bukhari.

*Source:* https://sunnah.com/muslim:2674

Everyone who copies and reads treatises of faith shares in ***a continuing reward***, by Allah's will.

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## PRISON AS THE SCHOOL OF JOSEPH

**SURAH YUSUF 12:33**

قَالَ رَبِّ ٱلسِّجۡنُ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِمَّا يَدۡعُونَنِيٓ إِلَيۡهِۖ وَإِلَّا تَصۡرِفۡ عَنِّي كَيۡدَهُنَّ أَصۡبُ إِلَيۡهِنَّ وَأَكُن مِّنَ ٱلۡجَٰهِلِينَ ٣٣

He said, "My Lord, prison is more to my liking than that to which they invite me. And if You do not avert from me their plan, I might incline toward them and [thus] be of the ignorant."

*Translation: Sahih International* — quran.com/12:33

The Prophet Yusuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ prayed: ***"My Lord, prison is more to my liking than that to which they invite me"***. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 12:33.

Sa'id Nursi called prison ***"the School of Joseph" (Madrasah Yusufiyyah)*** — after the Prophet Yusuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ — because there he and his students ***studied, wrote and worshipped***.

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**HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 3612**

حَدَّثَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْمُثَنَّى، حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى، عَنْ إِسْمَاعِيلَ، حَدَّثَنَا قَيْسٌ، عَنْ خَبَّابِ بْنِ الأَرَتِّ، قَالَ شَكَوْنَا إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَهْوَ مُتَوَسِّدٌ بُرْدَةً لَهُ فِي ظِلِّ الْكَعْبَةِ، قُلْنَا لَهُ أَلاَ تَسْتَنْصِرُ لَنَا أَلاَ تَدْعُو اللَّهَ لَنَا قَالَ «كَانَ الرَّجُلُ فِيمَنْ قَبْلَكُمْ يُحْفَرُ لَهُ فِي الأَرْضِ فَيُجْعَلُ فِيهِ، فَيُجَاءُ بِالْمِنْشَارِ، فَيُوضَعُ عَلَى رَأْسِهِ فَيُشَقُّ بِاثْنَتَيْنِ، وَمَا يَصُدُّهُ ذَلِكَ عَنْ دِينِهِ، وَيُمْشَطُ بِأَمْشَاطِ الْحَدِيدِ، مَا دُونَ لَحْمِهِ مِنْ عَظْمٍ أَوْ عَصَبٍ، وَمَا يَصُدُّهُ ذَلِكَ عَنْ دِينِهِ، وَاللَّهِ لَيُتِمَّنَّ هَذَا الأَمْرَ حَتَّى يَسِيرَ الرَّاكِبُ مِنْ صَنْعَاءَ إِلَى حَضْرَمَوْتَ، لاَ يَخَافُ إِلاَّ اللَّهَ أَوِ الذِّئْبَ عَلَى غَنَمِهِ، وَلَكِنَّكُمْ تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ».

**TRANSLATION:**

Khabbab ibn al-Aratt رضى الله عنه said: We complained to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ while he was reclining on his cloak in the shade of the Ka'bah. We said: "Will you not ask for help for us? Will you not pray to Allah for us?" He said: **"Among those before you, a man would be seized, a pit dug for him in the earth and he placed in it; then a saw would be brought and put on his head and he would be split in two, yet that would not turn him away from his religion. And he would be combed with iron combs that reached beneath his flesh to the bone or sinew, yet that would not turn him away from his religion. By Allah, Allah will surely complete this matter (of religion), until a rider travels from San'a' to Hadramawt fearing none but Allah, or a wolf for his sheep. But you are being hasty."**

**CHAIN OF NARRATION:** Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Muhammad ibn al-Muthanna, from Yahya ibn Sa'id al-Qattan, from Isma'il ibn Abi Khalid, from Qays ibn Abi Hazim, from Khabbab ibn al-Aratt رضى الله عنه.

**REFERENCE:** Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Virtues, chapter on the signs of prophethood, Hadith No. 3612.

**GRADE:** SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

*Source:* https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3612

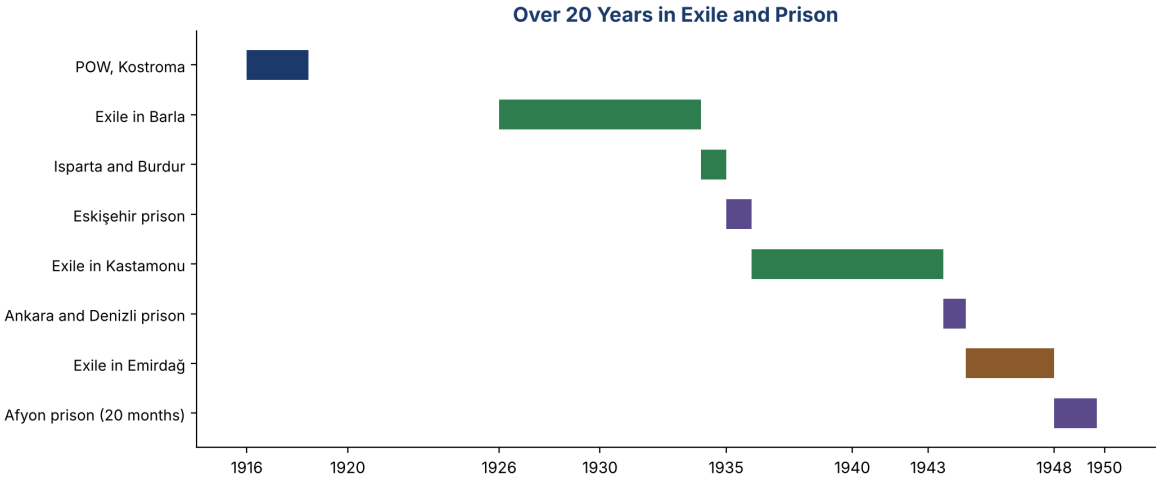
## LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Believers before us were tested more severely, yet they ***stood firm***. Like Hamka (Book 47) and Muhammad Abduh (Book 50), Sa'id Nursi turned ***trials into opportunities*** for learning and worship.

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## OVER 20 YEARS IN EXILE AND PRISON

From 1926 to 1949, Sa'id Nursi was moved from one place of exile to one prison, and back again. In all, it came to ***more than 20 years***.




*Approximate periods. Sources: Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism; Wikipedia. Most of the Risale-i Nur was written in this period.*

*Figure 4: Sa'id Nursi's periods of exile and prison (approximate).*

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| YEAR | PLACE |
|---|---|
| 1926–1934 CE | Exile in Barla, Isparta. |
| 1934–1935 CE | Isparta and Burdur. |
| 1935 CE | Eskişehir prison. |
| 1936–1943 CE | Exile in Kastamonu. |
| 1943 CE | Ankara and Denizli prison. |
| 1944–1948 CE | Exile in Emirdağ. |
| 1948–1949 CE | Afyon prison (20 months). |

Source: Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism. https://ktb.gov.tr/EN-119463/nurs-bediuzzaman-said.html

Allah says (2:286): ***"Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity"***. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 2:286.

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## SIGNS IN CREATION AND IN THE SELF

**SURAH FUSSILAT 41:53**

سَنُرِيهِمْ ءَايَٰتِنَا فِى ٱلْءَافَاقِ وَفِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ ٱلْحَقُّ ۗ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُۥ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿٥٣﴾

We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth. But is it not sufficient concerning your Lord that He is, over all things, a Witness.

*Translation: Sahih International* — quran.com/41:53

Allah promises: ***"We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth"***. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 41:53.

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Allah also says (67:3): ***"You do not see in the creation of the Most Merciful any inconsistency"***. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 67:3.

| READING "THE BOOK OF CREATION" | EXAMPLE OF REFLECTION |
|---|---|
| On the horizons | The courses of the sun, moon and seasons (see Book 48). |
| In plants | Dead earth brought back to life (30:50). |
| In the self | The making of the human body, mind and heart. |
| In balance | No flaw in creation (67:3). |

This is the method that makes the Risale-i Nur close to modern readers: ***faith built through reflection***, not memorisation alone.

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## FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE

Sa'id Nursi held that the Ummah needs ***a union of religious and scientific knowledge***. The dream of Medresetü'z-Zehra (chapter 6) and the method of the Risale-i Nur show that he saw ***science as a path to knowing Allah***.

**HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 100 (MUTTAFAQ 'ALAIH)**

حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ بْنُ أَبِي أُوَيْسٍ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي مَالِكٌ، عَنْ هِشَامِ بْنِ عُرْوَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرِو بْنِ الْعَاصِ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَقُولُ «إِنَّ اللَّهَ لاَ يَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ انْتِزَاعًا، يَنْتَزِعُهُ مِنَ الْعِبَادِ، وَلَكِنْ يَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ بِقَبْضِ الْعُلَمَاءِ، حَتَّى إِذَا لَمْ يُبْقِ عَالِمًا، اتَّخَذَ النَّاسُ رُءُوسًا جُهَّالاً فَسُئِلُوا، فَأَفْتَوْا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ، فَضَلُّوا وَأَضَلُّوا». قَالَ الْفِرَبْرِيُّ حَدَّثَنَا عَبَّاسٌ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ حَدَّثَنَا جَرِيرٌ عَنْ هِشَامٍ نَحْوَهُ.

**TRANSLATION:**

'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'As رضى الله عنهما said: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: **"Allah does not take away knowledge by snatching it from His servants, but He takes away knowledge by taking away the scholars, until, when no scholar remains, people take ignorant leaders. They are asked and they give rulings without knowledge; so they go astray and lead others astray."**

**CHAIN OF NARRATION:** Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Isma'il ibn Abi Uways, from Imam Malik, from Hisham ibn 'Urwah, from his father, 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'As رضى الله عنهما.

**REFERENCE:** Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Knowledge, Hadith No. 100. Also narrated by Muslim (No. 2673).

**GRADE:** SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

*Source:* https://sunnah.com/bukhari:100

### LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

If knowledge is taken away with the death of scholars, then ***writing*** is a way of ***preserving knowledge***. The Risale-i Nur is still read after its author's death.

## STUDENTS AND BROTHERHOOD

Sa'id Nursi's students — known as ***"Talebe-i Nur"*** (students of the Light) — read, copied and spread the Risale-i Nur. They formed ***a close brotherhood*** despite pressure.

**HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 13 (MUTTAFAQ 'ALAIH)**

حَدَّثَنَا مُسَدَّدٌ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى، عَنْ شُعْبَةَ، عَنْ قَتَادَةَ، عَنْ أَنَسٍ - رضى الله عنه - عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم. وَعَنْ حُسَيْنٍ الْمُعَلِّمِ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا قَتَادَةُ، عَنْ أَنَسٍ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ «لاَ يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّى يُحِبَّ لأَخِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ».

**TRANSLATION:**

Anas رضى الله عنه reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: **"None of you (truly) believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself."**

**CHAIN OF NARRATION:** Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Musaddad, from Yahya ibn Sa'id al-Qattan, from Shu'bah, from Qatadah, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه; and through a second chain from Husayn al-Mu'allim, from Qatadah.

**REFERENCE:** Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Faith, Hadith No. 13. Also narrated by Muslim (No. 45).

**GRADE:** SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

*Source:* https://sunnah.com/bukhari:13

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| PRACTICES OF THE NUR STUDENTS | THEIR MEANING |
|---|---|
| Copying manuscripts | Preserving and spreading knowledge. |
| Reading together | Deepening faith in small circles. |
| Bearing trials together | Brotherhood in hardship. |
| Putting faith first | Keeping away from struggles for political power. |

This brotherhood allowed the Risale-i Nur to ***survive*** the difficult years.

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## ACQUITTAL AND THE FINAL YEARS

After his release from ***Afyon prison in 1949***, Sa'id Nursi entered the stage of ***"the Third Said"***. In ***1956*** he was ***acquitted of all charges***, and the Risale-i Nur could be printed more freely.

**HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 5027**

حَدَّثَنَا حَجَّاجُ بْنُ مِنْهَالٍ، حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنِي عَلْقَمَةُ بْنُ مَرْثَدٍ، سَمِعْتُ سَعْدَ بْنَ عُبَيْدَةَ، عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ السُّلَمِيِّ، عَنْ عُثْمَانَ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ «خَيْرُكُمْ مَنْ تَعَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ وَعَلَّمَهُ». قَالَ وَأَقْرَأَ أَبُو عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ فِي إِمْرَةِ عُثْمَانَ حَتَّى كَانَ الْحَجَّاجُ، قَالَ وَذَاكَ الَّذِي أَقْعَدَنِي مَقْعَدِي هَذَا.

**TRANSLATION:**

'Uthman رضى الله عنه reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: **"The best of you are those who learn the Qur'an and teach it."** (Sa'd ibn 'Ubaydah) said: Abu 'Abd ar-Rahman (as-Sulami) taught the Qur'an from the caliphate of 'Uthman until the time of al-Hajjaj, and he said: "That is what has kept me sitting in this seat of mine."

**CHAIN OF NARRATION:** Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Hajjaj ibn Minhal, from Shu'bah, from 'Alqamah ibn Marthad, from Sa'd ibn 'Ubaydah, from Abu 'Abd ar-Rahman as-Sulami, from 'Uthman ibn 'Affan رضى الله عنه.

**REFERENCE:** Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the Virtues of the Qur'an, Hadith No. 5027.

**GRADE:** SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

*Source:* https://sunnah.com/bukhari:5027

### LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Sa'id Nursi's whole life — from the madrasahs of Bitlis to the prison of Afyon — was an effort to ***learn and teach*** the meaning of the Qur'an.

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## CONVEY EVEN ONE VERSE

**HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 3461**

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو عَاصِمٍ الضَّحَّاكُ بْنُ مَخْلَدٍ، أَخْبَرَنَا الأَوْزَاعِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا حَسَّانُ بْنُ عَطِيَّةَ، عَنْ أَبِي كَبْشَةَ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ «بَلِّغُوا عَنِّي وَلَوْ آيَةً، وَحَدِّثُوا عَنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَلاَ حَرَجَ، وَمَنْ كَذَبَ عَلَىَّ مُتَعَمِّدًا فَلْيَتَبَوَّأْ مَقْعَدَهُ مِنَ النَّارِ».

**TRANSLATION:**

'Abdullah ibn 'Amr رضى الله عنهما reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: **"Convey from me, even if it is a single verse. And narrate from the Children of Israel, there is no harm (in it). And whoever lies about me deliberately, let him take his seat in the Fire."**

**CHAIN OF NARRATION:** Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Abu 'Asim ad-Dahhak ibn Makhlad, from al-Awza'i, from Hassan ibn 'Atiyyah, from Abu Kabshah as-Saluli, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr رضى الله عنهما.

**REFERENCE:** Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the Prophets, Hadith No. 3461.

**GRADE:** SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

*Source:* https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3461

### LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Sa'id Nursi conveyed knowledge from ***a wooden platform in Barla***, from ***a prison cell***, and through ***hand-copied manuscripts***. No circumstance stopped him from conveying it.

| CIRCUMSTANCE | WAY OF CONVEYING |
|---|---|
| In exile | Writing treatises and letters to students. |
| In prison | Teaching fellow prisoners — "the School of Joseph". |
| Without a printing press | Manuscripts copied by hand. |
| After acquittal | The Risale-i Nur printed and translated. |

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## ESTABLISHED REPORTS AND POPULAR STORIES

**SURAH AL-ISRA' 17:36**

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلسَّمْعَ وَٱلْبَصَرَ وَٱلْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْـُٔولًا ﴿٣٦﴾

And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight and the heart - about all those [one] will be questioned.

*Translation: Sahih International* — quran.com/17:36

***"do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge"***. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 17:36.

**HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, INTRODUCTION NO. 5 — FROM IMAM MUSLIM'S OWN INTRODUCTION**

وَحَدَّثَنَا عُبَيْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ مُعَاذٍ الْعَنْبَرِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبِي ح، وَحَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْمُثَنَّى، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ مَهْدِيٍّ، قَالاَ حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، عَنْ خُبَيْبِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، عَنْ حَفْصِ بْنِ عَاصِمٍ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم «كَفَى بِالْمَرْءِ كَذِبًا أَنْ يُحَدِّثَ بِكُلِّ مَا سَمِعَ».

**TRANSLATION:**

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **"It is enough of a lie for a person to narrate everything he hears."**

**CHAIN OF NARRATION:** Narrated by Imam Muslim: from 'Ubaydullah ibn Mu'adh al-'Anbari, from his father Mu'adh ibn Mu'adh; and from Muhammad ibn al-Muthanna, from 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Mahdi, both from Shu'bah, from Khubayb ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman, from Hafs ibn 'Asim. In the following narration, Imam Muslim narrates it with a connected chain: from Abu Bakr ibn Abi Shaybah, from 'Ali ibn Hafs, from Shu'bah, with the same chain, from Hafs ibn 'Asim, from Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه.

**REFERENCE:** Narrated by Imam Muslim in the Introduction to Sahih Muslim, Hadith No. 5; the connected narration through Abu Hurairah is in the Introduction, narration 7 (sunnah.com/muslim/introduction/7).

**GRADE:** SAHIH — Imam Muslim placed it in the Introduction to Sahih Muslim and narrated it with a connected chain through Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه.

*Source:* https://sunnah.com/muslim:5

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## STATEMENTS AND THEIR STATUS

| STATEMENT | STATUS |
|---|---|
| He was born in 1877. | Wikipedia gives 1877; the Turkish Ministry of Culture gives 1876. |
| He finished over 100 books in three months. | Reported in Wikipedia; hard to verify. |
| He never received a traditional diploma. | Wikipedia; Turkish sources say he received a diploma from his last three teachers. |
| He wrote on a wooden platform in a tree in Barla. | A well-known story; shown as a symbol on the cover. |
| His family descended from the Ahl al-Bayt. | "Said to be" in the sources; not verified. |
| His grave is unknown. | Established: his body was secretly moved in July 1960. |

## REFLECTION — HONOURING WITHOUT EXAGGERATING

We honour Sa'id Nursi by ***reading and reflecting*** on the Risale-i Nur, and by being ***honest*** about stories that are not established.

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## HIS DEATH AND LEGACY

Sa'id Nursi fell ill while travelling, and died in ***Urfa (Şanlıurfa)*** on ***23 March 1960***. He was first buried ***opposite the cave believed to be the birthplace of the Prophet Ibrahim*** عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ.

**HISTORY NOTE: A GRAVE UNKNOWN**

After the coup of ***27 May 1960***, on ***12 July 1960*** soldiers ***opened his grave*** and moved his body to ***an unknown place*** near Isparta.

Though his grave is unknown, ***his works*** are still read by millions and have been translated into many languages.

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**HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 1 — THE FIRST HADITH OF AL-ARBA'IN AN-NAWAWIYYAH**

حَدَّثَنَا الْحُمَيْدِيُّ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ الزُّبَيْرِ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ سَعِيدٍ الْأَنْصَارِيُّ، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ التَّيْمِيُّ، أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ عَلْقَمَةَ بْنَ وَقَّاصٍ اللَّيْثِيَّ، يَقُولُ سَمِعْتُ عُمَرَ بْنَ الْخَطَّابِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ عَلَى الْمِنْبَرِ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، يَقُولُ «إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ، وَإِنَّمَا لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مَا نَوَى، فَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى دُنْيَا يُصِيبُهَا أَوْ إِلَى امْرَأَةٍ يَنْكِحُهَا، فَهِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى مَا هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِ».

**TRANSLATION:**

'Alqamah ibn Waqqas al-Laythi said: I heard 'Umar ibn al-Khattab رضى الله عنه say on the pulpit: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: **"Actions are only by intentions, and every person will have only what he intended. So whoever emigrated for worldly gain he would attain, or for a woman he would marry, his emigration is for that to which he emigrated."**

**CHAIN OF NARRATION:** Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from al-Humaydi 'Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr, from Sufyan ibn 'Uyaynah, from Yahya ibn Sa'id al-Ansari, from Muhammad ibn Ibrahim at-Taymi, from 'Alqamah ibn Waqqas al-Laythi, from 'Umar ibn al-Khattab رضى الله عنه.

**REFERENCE:** Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the Beginning of Revelation, Hadith No. 1 (the first Hadith of Sahih al-Bukhari); also narrated by Muslim (No. 1907).

**GRADE:** SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

*Source:* https://sunnah.com/bukhari:1

## A LEGACY FOR US

| LEGACY | LESSON FOR US |
|---|---|
| The Risale-i Nur | Faith is built through reflection and knowledge. |
| The School of Joseph | Trials can become a place of learning. |
| Hand-copied manuscripts | Determination to preserve knowledge. |
| Medresetü'z-Zehra | Religious and scientific knowledge must unite. |
| The New Said | Putting the Hereafter before power. |

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# LESSONS AND CONCLUSION

## LESSONS FROM THIS EBOOK

**First: Observe the effects of Allah's mercy in creation** (30:50).

**Second: Bring the light of faith to people** (24:35).

**Third: Seek knowledge with determination** (Sahih Muslim 2699).

**Fourth: Unite religious and scientific knowledge** (Sahih al-Bukhari 71, 100).

**Fifth: Every believer will be tested** (29:2; Sahih Muslim 2999).

**Sixth: Live in this world like a stranger** (Sahih al-Bukhari 6416).

**Seventh: Reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth** (3:190–191; 41:53; 67:3).

**Eighth: All creation glorifies Allah** (17:44; 18:109).

**Ninth: Make trials into a school** (12:33; Sahih al-Bukhari 3612).

**Tenth: Allah does not burden beyond capacity** (2:286).

**Eleventh: Be brothers in the struggle for knowledge** (Sahih al-Bukhari 13).

**Twelfth: Be honest about stories that are not established** (17:36).

## CONCLUSION

Sa'id Nursi lost his freedom and later even his grave, yet ***the light*** he wrote continues to brighten the hearts of millions of readers. The next book of **Tracing the Scholars of Islam**, in sha' Allah, will tell the story of ***Muhammad Iqbal***, the poet and thinker of Lahore who called for the self-revival of the Ummah. And Allah knows best.

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# GLOSSARY AND REFLECTION QUESTIONS

## GLOSSARY

| TERM | MEANING |
|---|---|
| Badi'uzzaman | "Wonder of the Age" — Sa'id Nursi's title. |
| Risale-i Nur | "Treatises of Light" — his collected works. |
| Madrasah Yusufiyyah | "School of Joseph" — his name for prison. |
| Old / New Said | The stages of life he named himself. |
| Medresetü'z-Zehra | The religious and scientific university he planned. |
| Barla | A village in Isparta, his first place of exile. |
| Talebe-i Nur | Students of the Light. |
| Thematic tafsir | Explaining the Qur'an by theme, not verse by verse. |

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

**1.** How does verse 30:50 reflect Sa'id Nursi's way of reading creation?

**2.** What does the name Risale-i Nur mean, and how is it linked to verse 24:35?

**3.** Why did he call prison "the School of Joseph"?

**4.** What is the difference between "the Old Said" and "the New Said"?

**5.** How did the Risale-i Nur keep spreading without a printing press?

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

**Activity 1:** Choose a plant around you and write three signs of Allah's greatness you can see in it.

**Activity 2:** Copy a verse of the Qur'an by hand neatly, and reflect on its meaning.

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## HADITH

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**SURAH AL-BAQARAH 2:261**

مَّثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمۡوَٰلَهُمۡ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنۢبَتَتۡ سَبۡعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنۢبُلَةٖ مِّاْئَةُ حَبَّةٖۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُضَٰعِفُ لِمَن يَشَآءُۚ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ٢٦١

The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like a seed [of grain] which grows seven spikes; in each spike is a hundred grains. And Allah multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing.

*Translation: Sahih International* — quran.com/2:261

**SURAH SABA' 34:39**

قُلۡ إِنَّ رَبِّي يَبۡسُطُ ٱلرِّزۡقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ مِنۡ عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَقۡدِرُ لَهُۥۚ وَمَآ أَنفَقۡتُم مِّن شَيۡءٖ فَهُوَ يُخۡلِفُهُۥۖ وَهُوَ خَيۡرُ ٱلرَّٰزِقِينَ ٣٩

Say, "Indeed, my Lord extends provision for whom He wills of His servants and restricts [it] for him. But whatever thing you spend [in His cause] - He will compensate it; and He is the best of providers."

*Translation: Sahih International* — quran.com/34:39

**HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2588**

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ أَيُّوبَ، وَقُتَيْبَةُ، وَابْنُ، حُجْرٍ قَالُوا حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ، - وَهُوَ ابْنُ جَعْفَرٍ - عَنِ الْعَلاَءِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ « مَا نَقَصَتْ صَدَقَةٌ مِنْ مَالٍ وَمَا زَادَ اللَّهُ عَبْدًا بِعَفْوٍ إِلاَّ عِزًّا وَمَا تَوَاضَعَ أَحَدٌ لِلَّهِ إِلاَّ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ ».

**TRANSLATION:**

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Charity does not decrease wealth.

Allah does not increase a servant who forgives except in honour. And no one humbles himself for the sake of Allah except that Allah raises him in rank."

**CHAIN OF NARRATION:** Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Yahya bin Ayyub, Qutaibah bin Sa'id and 'Ali bin Hujr, from Isma'il bin Ja'far, from al-'Ala' bin 'Abd al-Rahman, from his father 'Abd al-Rahman bin Ya'qub, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه .

**REFERENCE:** Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Virtue, Good Manners and Joining the Ties of Kinship (Kitab al-Birr wa al-Silah wa al-Adab), chapter on the encouragement of forgiveness and humility, Hadith No. 2588.

**GRADE:** SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

*Source:* https://sunnah.com/muslim:2588

**HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 1631**

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ أَيُّوبَ، وَقُتَيْبَةُ - يَعْنِي ابْنَ سَعِيدٍ - وَابْنُ حُجْرٍ قَالُوا حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ، - هُوَ ابْنُ جَعْفَرٍ - عَنِ الْعَلاَءِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ « إِذَا مَاتَ الإِنْسَانُ انْقَطَعَ عَنْهُ عَمَلُهُ إِلاَّ مِنْ ثَلاَثَةٍ إِلاَّ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ جَارِيَةٍ أَوْ عِلْمٍ يُنْتَفَعُ بِهِ أَوْ وَلَدٍ صَالِحٍ يَدْعُو لَهُ ».

**TRANSLATION:**

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "When a person dies, his deeds come to an end except for three: an ongoing charity, knowledge that is benefited from, or a righteous child who prays for him."

**CHAIN OF NARRATION:** Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Yahya bin Ayyub, Qutaibah bin Sa'id and 'Ali bin Hujr, from Isma'il bin Ja'far, from al-'Ala' bin 'Abd al-Rahman, from his father 'Abd al-Rahman bin Ya'qub, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه .

**REFERENCE:** Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Wills (Kitab al-Wasiyyah), chapter on the reward that reaches a person after his death, Hadith No. 1631.

**GRADE:** SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

*Source:* https://sunnah.com/muslim:1631

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