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Book Review

Unique Rational Explanations on Resurrection and the Hereafter from the Man of the Millennium

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Abstract: "Unique Rational Explanations on Resurrection and the Hereafter from the Man of the Millennium" by Bediüzzaman Said Nursi presents a profound exploration of resurrection and the afterlife through the lens of Islamic theology. This review delves into the significance of Nursi's work, highlighting its logical rigor, theological insights, and relevance across various disciplines. Drawing inspiration from the Quran, Nursi's treatise offers compelling arguments and metaphors to elucidate the core tenets of Islamic eschatology. The review emphasizes the book's contribution to fostering a rational understanding of these timeless subjects, making it essential reading for scholars, practitioners, and seekers interested in delving deeper into matters of faith, philosophy, and

psychology.

Keywords: Resurrection, Hereafter, Islamic Theology, Said Nursi, Quranic Interpretation.

Research Contributions:

"Unique Rational Explanations on Resurrection and the Hereafter from the Man of the Millennium" by Bediüzzaman Said Nursi contributes significantly to the discourse on Islamic eschatology and theological thought. Grounded in Quranic interpretation, Nursi's work offers novel insights into the concept of resurrection and the afterlife, challenging philosophical skepticism and affirming the fundamental beliefs of Islam. By weaving together metaphors, comparisons, and stories, Nursi elucidates complex theological concepts with clarity and depth, making them accessible to a wide audience. This review underscores the book's relevance across disciplines, highlighting its implications for theology, philosophy, psychology, and beyond.

Review of Previous Research:

Nursi's exploration of resurrection and the hereafter builds upon a rich tradition of Islamic scholarship while offering fresh perspectives and insights. His treatise engages with theological and philosophical inquiries dating back centuries, demonstrating the enduring relevance of these timeless themes. Moreover, Nursi's work challenges prevailing philosophical currents that question the rationality of belief in resurrection, offering a compelling counter-narrative rooted in Quranic wisdom. By situating his arguments within the broader context of religious and philosophical discourse, Nursi underscores the novelty and significance of his contributions to Islamic theology.

Discussion:

The discussion section serves as a critical platform to elucidate the field findings derived from Nursi's research results. By contextualizing his theological insights within relevant theories and frameworks, this section deepens the reader's understanding of the implications of resurrection and the hereafter. Nursi's treatise not only presents theological arguments but also invites readers to reflect on the existential significance of these concepts in their lives. Through a rigorous analysis of Ayats in the Quran and metaphysical principles, Nursi elucidates the transformative potential of embracing belief in resurrection, offering profound insights into the nature of existence and divine providence.

Summary:

Bediüzzaman Said Nursi (1877-1960), an Ottoman and Muslim theologian, wrote the Risale-i Nur Collection, a tafsir directly inspired by the Quran.^{1,2} The

¹Nursi, Said. (2024). From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Said_Nurs%C3%AE.

²Açıkgenç, Alparslan. (2018). Said Nursi (1878-1960). The late Ottoman scholar and the founder

Resurrection and the Hereafter (or Risale on Hashr) is one of the Risale-i Nur Collection consisting of one hundred and thirty treatises.³ Risale (or risalet, the plural form is resail) refers to address, book, letter, article, review, research, and monograph.⁴ Tafsir refers to the term expressing the explanation and interpretation of the Ayats of the Quran. The science of interpreting the Ayats of the Quran and the common name of the works in this field.⁵ Hashr refers to gathering all beings resurrected to be brought to account on the Day of Judgment. Belief in hashr has been among the basic principles of faith in all true religions sent to humanity and Islam since the Prophet Adam (Alayhi As-Salam), the first man and Prophet. Hashr is one of the main messages of the Quran, and one-third of the Quran is about resurrection.^{6,7,8}

The belief of hashr has also occupied philosophers who researched the secrets and pearls of wisdom of existence throughout history. Most of the philosophical currents, based on reason in everything, did not accept the resurrection creed. Philosophers who follow true religions, on the other hand, argue that the belief of hashr cannot be adopted through reason and prefer a heartfelt surrender. Even a master of philosophy such as Ibn Sina⁹ (980–1037), a polymath who is regarded as one of the most significant physicians, astronomers, philosophers, and writers of the Islamic Golden Age, said that "hashr cannot be understood by rational criteria". "Risale of Hashr", inspired by the Ayats of the Quran, proves Allah's existence and His names and attributes and explains the reality of hashr with unshakable truths. "Risale of Hashr" reveals the falsity of the philosophy claim and completely refutes denial views.

The book, "Risale on Hashr", was first published in Turkish in 1926 in 1000 copies. The second edition was published in 1928.¹⁰ In the following decades, around

of the Nurculuk movement (in Turkish). *Turkish Religious Foundation. Encyclopedia of Islam*. Istanbul: TDV Publishing, Printing and Trading Business. <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/said-nursi>

³Editor. (2022). As it is known, the Risale-i Nur Collection is collected in fourteen books. However, one hundred and thirty-odd treatises are mentioned in the works. Can you explain what these treatises are? (in Turkish). Sorularla Risale. Istanbul: Feyyaz Science and Development Association. <https://sorularlarisale.com/bilindigi-gibi-risale-i-nur-kulliyati-on-dort-kitapta-toplanmistir-ancak-eserlerde-yuz-otuz-kusur-risaleden-bahsedilir>.

⁴Er, Rahmi. (2008). Risale (in Turkish). *Turkish Religious Foundation. Encyclopedia of Islam*. Istanbul: TDV Publishing, Printing and Trading Business. <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/risale>.

⁵Birişik Abdulhamid. Tefsir (in Turkish). *Turkish Religious Foundation. Encyclopedia of Islam*. Istanbul: TDV Publishing, Printing and Trading Business. <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/tefsir>.

⁶Toprak, Süleyman. (1997). Haşir (in Turkish). *Turkish Religious Foundation. Encyclopedia of Islam*. Istanbul: TDV Publishing, Printing and Trading Business. <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/hasir>.

⁷Bulgen, Mehmet. (2018). Reincarnation (tanasukh) according to Islam: comparative, historical and contemporary analyses (in Turkish). *Journal of Religious Inquiries*, 1(01):127-162. <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.1488657>

⁸Editor. (2017). What is the relationship between the four main subjects of the Qur'an, tawhid, prophethood, resurrection and justice-worship? (in Turkish). Sorularla İslamiyet. Istanbul: Feyyaz Science and Development Association. <https://sorularlaislamiyet.com/kuranin-dort-ana-konusunun-tevhid-nubuvvet-hasir-ve-adalet-ibadet-arasindaki-iliski-nedir>.

⁹Avicenna. (2024). From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avicenna>.

¹⁰Editor. (2021). When, in what environment and why was the Risale on Hashir written? (in

100 million copies of the book were published by various publishing houses. Recently, the book has been translated into 60 different languages.¹¹ While walking around the gardens, Bediüzzaman Said Nursi remembered the Ayat below, and after he heard it forty times shouting, the Ayat was opened to his mind and wrote "Resurrection and The Hereafter" on the same day.¹⁰ Then behold (O man!) the tokens of Allah's Mercy!- how He gives life to the earth after its death: verily the same will give life to the men who are dead: for He has power over all things.¹²

The book was written using metaphors, comparisons, and stories. The author explains the reason for this as follows: The reasons for my writing these treatises in the form of metaphors, comparisons, and stories are to facilitate comprehension and to show how rational, appropriate, well-founded, and coherent the truths of Islam are. The meaning of the stories is contained in the truths that conclude them; each story is like an allusion pointing to its concluding truth. Therefore, they are not mere fictitious tales but veritable truths.¹³

"After the representative story, the author showed twelve aspects of the Supreme Tribunal: a realm of reward and generosity and a realm of punishment and incarceration. He also noted the following paragraphs:

Beware, do not imagine that the proofs of the creation transfer from one realm to another are restricted to these twelve. There are indications and proofs beyond counting and enumeration, all showing that this impermanent, changing kingdom will be transformed into a permanent and immutable realm. There are also innumerable signs and pieces of evidence that men will be taken from this temporary hospice and sent to the eternal seat of rule of all creation.¹⁴

I will show one proof stronger than all the twelve aspects taken together. Come now, look, amid the great assembly visible in the distance, the same noble commander we previously saw on the island, adorned with numerous decorations, is making an announcement. Let us go and listen. See, that luminous and most noble commander [The Prophet Muhammad (Salla Allahu Alayhi Wa Sallam)] conveys a beautifully inscribed supreme edict. He says: "Prepare yourselves; you will go to another and permanent realm, a realm such that this one will appear as a dungeon by comparison. You will go to the seat of rule of our king, and there receive his compassion and his bounty if you heed this edict well and obey it. However, if you rebel and disobey it, you will be cast into awesome dungeons." Such is the message that he conveys. If you look at the decree, you will see that it bears such a miraculous seal that it cannot in any way

Turkish). Sorularla Risale. Istanbul: Feyyaz Science and Development Association. <https://sorularlarisale.com/hasir-risalesi-ne-zaman-nasil-bir-ortamda-ve-nicin-yazilmistir>.

¹¹Yavuz, Ahmet. (2015). Dead end of risale (in Turkish). From Milli Gazete. <https://www.milligazete.com.tr/haber/973415/risale-cikmazi>.

¹²Surah Ar-Rum. (2024). The Holy Quran. Surah 30; Ayat 50. The World's Largest Quran Portal. https://kuran.gen.tr/hud-suresi-english-quran-by-a.-yusuf-ali?x=s_main&y=s_middle&kid=14&sid=30.

¹³Nursi, Bediüzzaman, Said. (2013). *From the Risale-i Nur Collection. The Resurrection and the Hereafter. A Decisive Proof of Their Reality*. Istanbul: Sözlere Neşriyat. p. 5.

¹⁴Nursi, Bediüzzaman, Said. (2013). *From the Risale-i Nur Collection. The Resurrection and the Hereafter. A Decisive Proof of Their Reality*. Istanbul: Sözlere Neşriyat. p. 24-25.

be imitated. Everyone apart from idiots such as yourself knows the decree is from the king.

Moreover, the noble commander bears such bright decorations that everyone except those blind like yourself understands fully that he is the veracious conveyer of the king's orders. Is it possible that the teaching of transfer from one realm to another, challengingly conveyed by that noble commander in the supreme edict he has received, should be open to objection? No, it is impossible unless we deny everything we have seen.¹⁵

Later, the author set forth twelve interrelated truths with an introduction corresponding to the abovementioned aspects. After explaining the twelve truths very detailed and convincingly, he noted the following paragraphs as a conclusion:

From the previous truths, it has become apparent that resurrection is so firmly rooted in a truth that not even a power capable of lifting the globe, breaking it and casting it aside could shake it. For Allah Almighty Himself affirms this truth under the meaning of all His Names and attributes; His Noble Messenger confirms it with all of his miracles and evidences; the All-Wise Quran establishes it with all of its truths and Ayats; and the cosmos itself bears witness to it with all the creational signs it contains and all the wise processes that take place within it. Is it at all possible that the Necessary Being should unite with all of His creation (excepting only the unbelievers) on this question of resurrection, and doubts feebler than a whisker and satanic insinuations should shake and uproot that exalted and firmly-rooted truth which resembles a mountain? No, by no means!¹⁶

The preceding twelve truths confirm, supplement and support each other. Coming together in union, they demonstrate the required result. Is it in the capacity of any doubt to penetrate those twelve firm walls, each like steel or diamonds, to shake the belief in resurrection housed within their closed citadel? The Ayat, "Your creation and resurrection is but like a single soul,"¹⁷ indicates the following meaning: "The creation and resurrection of all men is as easy for Allah's power as the creation and resurrection of a single man."¹⁸

The author noted the following reminder and warning to the readers: O brother studying this treatise with an open mind! Do not say, "why cannot I immediately understand this 'Resurrection and The Hereafter' in all its details?" and do not be saddened by your failure to understand it completely. For even a master of philosophy such as Ibn Sina (Avicenna) said that "resurrection cannot be understood by rational criteria." His judgment was that we must believe in resurrection, but reason cannot aid our belief. Similarly, all the scholars of Islam unanimously have held that resurrection rests entirely on traditional proofs; it cannot be rationally examined. Naturally, so profound, and at the same time, so

¹⁵Ibid., p. 25-26.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 92-93.

¹⁷Surah, Luqman. (2024). The Holy Quran. Surah 31; Ayat 28. The World's Largest Quran Portal. https://kuran.gen.tr/hud-suresi-english-quran-by-a-yusuf-ali?x=s_main&y=s_middle&kid=14&sid=31.

¹⁸Nursi, Bediüzzaman, Said. (2013). *From the Risale-i Nur Collection. The Resurrection and the Hereafter. A Decisive Proof of Their Reality*. Istanbul: Sözler Neşriyat. p. 95.

exalted a path cannot suddenly become a public highway for the exercise of the reason. But we would offer a thousand thanks that the Merciful Creator has bestowed upon us this much of the path, by means of the effulgence of the All-Wise Quran and His own mercy, in an age when belief by imitation is past and meek acceptance has disappeared. For the amount vouchsafed to each of us is enough for the salvation of our faith. Being content with the amount that we have been able to understand, we should reread the treatise and seek to increase our comprehension.¹⁹

One of the reasons that it is impossible to approach a rational understanding of resurrection is that since the supreme gathering, resurrection, is through the manifestation of the Greatest Name, only through beholding and demonstrating the great deeds evident in the maximum manifestation of the Greatest Name of Allah as well as His other Names, is it possible to prove it as certain; and unshakably believe that resurrection is as simple as the spring.²⁰

Lastly, Nursi noted the following about "Risale on Hashr" in his other book entitled Barla Letters: The value of "Risale on Hashr" has not been fully appreciated. I have personally and carefully read it fifty times, and each time, I have enjoyed it and felt the need to read it. Some people read such a risale once and say it is enough like other scientific resail. However, this risale is one of the sciences of faith. Just as we need bread daily, that knowledge is always needed.²¹

Conclusion:

In conclusion, "Unique Rational Explanations on Resurrection and the Hereafter from the Man of the Millennium" by Bediüzzaman Said Nursi stands as a seminal work in Islamic theology, offering profound insights into the nature of resurrection and the afterlife. Through meticulous reasoning and Quranic interpretation, Nursi decisively affirms the existence of life beyond death, while elucidating the implications of these beliefs for human existence. Directly inspired by the Quran, it opens a highway leading to a rational understanding of these vital subjects. This review highlights the book's significance as a scholarly resource and a source of spiritual guidance, recommending it to everyone curious about the resurrection and the hereafter and seeking evidence on these subjects. It is also a reference book for theologians, philosophers, thanatologists, psychologists, behavioral therapists, psychiatrists, child psychiatrists, and pediatricians. Nursi's treatise not only deepens our understanding of Islamic eschatology but also offers

¹⁹Ibid., p. 101.

²⁰Ibid., p. 102.

²¹Nursi, Bediüzzaman, Said. (2012). *From the Risale-i Nur Collection. Barla Letters. Third Part of the Letters* (in Turkish). Istanbul: Söz. <http://www.erisale.com/#content.tr.8.424>.

timeless wisdom for navigating the complexities of the human condition.

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