

Fortitude of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi

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Abstract

Imam Bediuzzaman Said Nursi performed all his religious services undoubtedly only because Allah orders them. He abandoned not only all worldly status but also his after life for the sake of safety of people's faith. We can see that both in his life and his works. It can be said that Imam Bediuzzaman lived not for himself but for people to die with their faith. He was worried about his dawah so much so that it was recorded in his biography that when he fell down from Van Castle and had a close brush with death, he shouted "Oh my dawah!" Patience and fortitude are at the top of the issues Bediuzzaman focused on the most for success in the service of faith. No matter how separate these concepts may seem, they are actually complementary concepts that complete each other. Stating that one of the biggest factors in reaching the goal is to show fortitude against the difficulties, Bediuzzaman strongly recommends his students to have fortitude. **Key words:** Persistence, Fortitude, Success, Maturation, Service of Faith.

صلافة الإمام بديع الزمان سعيد النورسي

لا شك أن الخدمة الدينية التي قام بها الإمام بديع الزمان سعيد النورسي إنما قام بها لأن الله أمر بها، فهو كما ترك المناصب الدنيوية من أجل سلامة الأمة فقد ترك الآخرة أيضًا، ونحن نرى ذلك في مؤلفاته وفي حياته كذلك، ولهذا يمكن أن نقول إن بديع الزمان عاش من أجل أن يدخل الناس القبر بالإيمان.

وقد سجل في سيرته الذاتية أنه حينما كان في قلعة وان عاكفا على العبادة انزلت قدمه في أعلى القلعة، وفي أثناء السقوط كاد أن يموت، إلا أنه لم يفكر في نفسه، بل قال: وا دعوتي.

ومن الأمور التي يقف عليها الإمام النورسي للنجاح في خدمة الإيمان ويؤكد عليها كثيرا هي الصبر والصلافة، فهذان المفهومان يبدو أنهما متفرقين غير متصلين غير أنهما مفهومان يكمل بعضهما البعض الآخر، فالإمام النورسي يشدد على الصلافة والصبر والتحمل التي هي من العوامل المهمة في الوصول إلى الغاية المنشودة، ويوصي تلاميذه بها مرارا وتكرارا.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الثبات، النجاح، النضج، خدمة الإيمان

Introduction

The core of faith is sincerity and intention. The core of sincerity is persistence and fortitude. In dictionaries, persistence means to stand still, to hold on, being stable. To keep one's word, to be faithful to the oath. It means to be firm in serving faith and Islam, in worship and obedience to Allah. Fortitude means strength, clarity, durability, persistence, and effort. Imam Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, who has said "It is necessary to have endless fortitude" in many places in his letters, emphasized fortitude. In addition, Imam Nursi stated in some of the letters he wrote to his students, "Your persistence and fortitude is failing all the plans of the masons and hypocrites" reveals the importance of fortitude. Therefore, at the time when all kinds of finesses, traps and tricks are used, if endless fortitude is not maintained it will be difficult to nullify the plans of these opponents.

Imam Bediuzzaman devoted about eighty years of his life to the service of faith and the Qur'an with sincerity and truthfulness. Accordingly, it is clear that it will not be possible to mention all the indescribable difficulties he faced during his struggles for the salvation of the people's faith and his fortitude towards them in this paper. We will try to present in this paper his persistence and fortitude in the service of faith in summary and to frequently include his expressions in his own works. It is possible to briefly present his fortitude in his service of faith under the following headings:

A. Bediuzzaman's Fortitude in His Service of Faith and Qur'an

The great scholar and renovator (mujaddid) Bediuzzaman Said Nursi (1878-1960) devoted his whole life to the service of faith with sincerity and truthfulness. In order to be fully successful in his dawah services, he abandoned all the worldly pleasures by distancing himself from everything but Allah. He had such a sincerity, such persistence and fortitude, and such loyalty and truthfulness in the service of faith and the Qur'an that even the severe persecution and oppression against him could not make him give up on his dawah and make him even hesitate.

Imam Bediuzzaman burnt the candle at both ends in the service of faith and the Qur'an with patience and fortitude, and he always instilled hope in his fellows and students without falling into despair even in the most troubled and

difficult times. He also risked all kinds of material and spiritual gains for the sake of dawah of saving faith. He calls out on this subject as follows: "I sacrificed my hereafter for the safety of people's faith. I have neither passion for paradise nor fear of hell in my heart. May a thousand Said be sacrificed for the faith of the people, not one Said. If the Qur'an is left without a congregation on earth, I do not want paradise; it will be like a dungeon for me. If I see our nation's faith in safety, I accept to burn in the flames of hell. Because while my body is on fire, my heart becomes a bed of roses." (Nursi, *Life of Bediuzzaman*, p. 544)

In the dawah of Risale-i Nur, Imam Bediuzzaman had such confidence, such loyalty and devotion, such persistence and fortitude, such a sincerity that he never gave up on his dawah in despite of the fierce persecution and oppression, attacks and pressures of the enemies of religion. Besides, he had some financial problems.

One of the most repeated and persistently emphasized principles in Risale-i Nur epistles, which includes extremely important dawah principles, is "persistence and fortitude". Many different aspects and dimensions of persistence and fortitude, which are the most important conditions of success in dawah, are mentioned.

As a result of Bediuzzaman's faithfulness, persistence and fortitude under those difficult conditions, he succeeded in his religious dawah and trained thousands of Risale-i Nur students. The Risale-i Nur students also adopted the loyalty, persistence and fortitude that Bediuzzaman had and took lessons from him, and they embraced this dawah.

B. Bediuzzaman's Fortitude in Authoring of the Risale-i Nur

Imam Bediuzzaman had the distinct honour of serving the Qur'an and faith with his six thousand-page Risale-i Nur Corpus and the lessons on faith and Islam he published with complete persistence and fortitude. In these studies, which are the exegesis of the Qur'an, especially the principles of faith are explained and proven. Today, Risale-i Nur has been translated into tens of languages and widely disseminated all over the world, and is read and benefited by millions of people.

Imam Bediuzzaman, who was exiled to Burdur and then to the Barla village of Isparta in 1925, wrote most of his works with persistence and fortitude, not caring about the difficulties, troubles and illnesses in his exile, without resting and stopping. He rejected to be a public preacher in the East of Türkiye in the place of sheikh Sinusi in return for a salary of three hundred liras – which was offered by the new secular government.

Even while he was in the cell of Eskişehir prison, he did not stay idle and wrote some of his epistles here. We can give the Second Ray as an example. He wrote some of his works in a vineyard, garden, or on a mountain, without any books or resources. The Nineteenth Letter, in two or three days, and in three or four hours each day, twelve hours in total, on the mountain, in the vineyard, the Thirty Word at a time of sickness, in five or six hours, the Twenty-Eighth Word, which is about paradise, was written in one or two hours, in the garden of brother Süleyman. All efforts are examples of Imam Bediuzzaman's sincerity, faithfulness, patience and fortitude.

C. Imam Bediuzzaman's Advices on Fortitude

Imam Bediuzzaman always opened up his students' horizons; he said that there is no room for pessimism even in the most difficult conditions at a time when dark clouds are covering the sky. According to Imam Bediuzzaman, the only way to cope with troubles in such a horrific century is to resist with "steel-like fortitude". Imam Nursi advised his students that they should always keep their enthusiasm alive in all circumstances and conditions for the development of both their individual progress and their general services.

Very important point here is to show patience, persistence and fortitude in the truth way. As Imam Nursi said, "The reward of patience is victory. The reward of persistence is victory." (Nursi, *The Letters*, p. 808).

Some of the Imam's recommendations on fortitude in his epistles are as follows:

...the most important principle in our dawah after a full ikhlas is persistence and fortitude... (Nursi, *Kastamonu Appendix*, p. 248)

I wonder, what is the reason for this exertion and strength, this self-denial and self-sacrifice, and this degree of persistence and loyalty in the Risale-i Nur Students? The answer to this question will surely be as follows: The unshakable high truths in the Risale-i Nur and the service of faith only for the sake of Allah's consent and the utmost sincerity of Imam Bediuzzaman. (Nursi, Life of Bediuzzaman, p. 165)

...Your activity and your persisting works make us and many places move in the same way as the arc of the Risale-i Nur circle. May Allah be pleased forever. A thousand of âmîn âmîn. (Nursi, Kastamonu Appendix, p. 105)

... It is to establish a firm wall of the Qur'an and faith by revealing a great spiritual person from the devotees of faith in the face of currents of misguidance, and to be the point of reference of believers. It is to awaken Islamic love and excitement in the souls of believers, with the determination and persistence shown in the holy cause, which he believes in, by giving the hearts of the believers to the utmost care... (Nursi, Life of Bediuzzaman, p. 23)

...Yes, your persistence, sincerity and seriousness have defeated the people who live only for this worldly life and are doing so. Otherwise, the reason why they could not detain a single man with one hundred and thirty epistles and those who withheld one hundred and twenty men with a single epistle which is about veiling. It is your sincerity and fortitude... (Nursi, Kastamonu Appendix, p. 143)

Conclusion

The great Islamic scholar and mujaddid (renovator) Bediuzzaman Said Nursi adopted fortitude as a motto in his life and attributed a special importance and meaning to this issue. The secret of his great success and conquest is his maximum patience and fortitude. Despite all kinds of difficulties and troubles, Imam Bediuzzaman devoted his entire eighty years of his life to the spiritual service of faith and the Qur'an with persistence and fortitude, and did not submit to any persecution and pressure inflicted on him because of his faith and service to the Qur'an. He is worked for not a town, nor a city; he worked for the spiritual restoration of Anatolia (Türkiye) and even the entire Islamic world. While doing this spiritual struggle, he never branched off from the road of the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

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