

**RELIGION AND THE
MORAL BEING OF MAN:
A CRITICAL ANALYSIS
ON SAID NURSI'S THOUGHT
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IN ADDRESSING THE
POSTMODERN CLAIMS
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RELIGION AND THE MORAL BEING OF MAN: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS ON SAID NURSI'S THOUGHT AND ITS RELEVANCE IN ADDRESSING THE POSTMODERN CLAIMS AGAINST RELIGIOUS MORALITY

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Abstract

Nursi is a renowned scholar for his idea of reform who addressed to various challenges of the modernism. This paper aims at exploring “The Short Words” and its relevance to respond to the challenge of postmodern nihilism. With the latest developments in human life, ideas on postmodernism receive more attention and has been a threat to religions especially Islam. To achieve the aim, the paper analyses Nursi’s point of views in his epistles known as *the Short Words* which highlights the meaning of religion in life and the meaning of moral being. It later explores the stance of postmodernism on the role religion in morality and the status of man as moral being with special focus on Nietzsche’s view. Nursi offers balanced arguments and justification for the meaning of true faith. Instead of limiting man’s freedom and choice, the true faith boosts the spirit of ideal morality in man. Not only Nursi is successful in refuting the false understanding of postmodern thinkers towards religion, but also his notion of true faith as presented in allegorical stories can be the answer to the quest for a proper system in enhancing the achievement of individual moral excellence.

Keywords: Short Words, Nursi, Morality, Postmodernism, Nietzsche.

الدين والأخلاق الأخلاقية للإنسان: تحليل نقدي لفكرة النورسي وأهميتها في معالجة دعاوى ما بعد الحداثة ضد الأخلاق الدينية

مستخلص

إن بديع الزمن سعيد النورسي عالم مشهور لديه فكرة إصلاح لمواجهة تحديات الزمن. تهدف هذه الورقة إلى استكشاف “الكلمات القصيرة” وأهميتها للاستجابة لتحدي العدمية في فلسفة ما بعد الحداثة، حيث أصبحت العدمية تستحوذ على اهتمام المزيد من الدارسين، وتشكل تهديداً للأديان وخاصة الإسلام. ولتحقيق هذا الهدف، تقوم الورقة بتحليل معنى الدين في حياة الإنسان بوصفه عاملاً يعطي تأثيراً لدور الإنسان ككائن أخلاقي كما شرحه النورسي في “الكلمات القصيرة” وتستكشف الورقة البحثية موقف عدمية ما بعد الحداثة من العلاقة مع الدين، ومكانة الإنسان ككائن أخلاقي مع التركيز بشكل خاص على وجهة نظر نيتشه

نم النورسي حجاً ومبررات متوازنة لمعنى الإيمان الحقيقي، بدلاً من تقييد حرية الإنسان واختياره، ويعزز (Nietzsche). 'إيمان الحقيقي' لروح الأخلاق المثالية في الإنسان. لم ينجح النورسي فقط في دحض الفهم الخاطئ لمفكري ما بعد الحداثة تجاه الدين، بل إنه نجح كذلك في تقديم الإيمان الحقيقي باعتباره هو الرد على سعيهم وإلى تحقيق نظام مناسب لتعزيز تحقيق التميز الأخلاقي الفردي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الكلمات القصيرة، سعيد النورسي، الأخلاق، بعد الحداثة، نيتشه

INTRODUCTION

Being the latest trend of thinking and development, postmodern thought generally attracts the people's attention easily. The word postmodern is used in many spheres including arts, architecture and even tourism. When it comes to the issues of humanities and value system, it is yet to be widely accepted because of its controversial standpoint of antagonistic to any established teachings prior to it, including modern and religious systems. However, its strength of approaching human beings in dealing with the uncertainties in life and rapid change as well as empowering individuals will attract many people to it.

Said Nursi (1878-1960) is a reform icon who lived in the era of transition between modern and postmodern. He is one of the most prominent Turkish thinker and reformer in the 20th century. The geographical location of Turkey has made the country to be exposed to the Western modern influence earlier than many other Muslim countries though it was not officially colonized by the West. Politically, Turkey is a Muslim country which declared its acceptance of modern secularism. This situation caused reformers such as Nursi to seriously played a role in restoring sound faith among the Muslims.

Nursi is critical in investigating Islamic teachings and revolutionary in his approach. He took a different approach from the traditional schools of theology as well as sufis. Rather, he traces the root of faith (Usul al-din and aqidah) from the understanding of revelation namely the Qur'an and Prophetic tradition to reach at "the truths" of Islam. He believes that the traditional way of adhering to Islamic doctrines is not sufficient and eventually can shake one's belief. His Risale-I Nur is known to be a unique commentary of the Qur'an focuses at strengthening the true understanding of faith which he wrote while he was mainly in prison. Risale-I Nur also is known to be a synthesis approach of the Islamic Sciences and spirituality which makes the discussion able to respond to the problems and issues of the current time. He used this commentary method which he believes to a quicker and stronger way of defeating the philosophical misguidance of his generation.

Many studies have been undertaken to study the reform idea of Nursi in many aspects including faith, sciences, modernism and education. This study examines Said Nursi's views in the role of religion in morality which has been challenged by the Postmodern Nihilism. Though Said Nursi did not mention specifically the postmodern challenges, his explanation of Islam is found to be also relevant to address the issue. The role of the



postmodernists cannot be underestimated and should be explored, mainly to grasp the opportunities it might offer and respond to its challenges as stated by Malpas (2005). The idea of Nietzsche is chosen to represent the idea of Nihilism. Though Nietzsche’s views are specifically addressed to Christianity, his criticism can be made universal since the result of his stance is generally negating all religions.

Overview of The *Short Words* in the *Risale-i Nur*

The Short Words is the first eight Words in *Risale-I Nur* (Nursi, n.d). It was written in 1927 in Barla, Isparta after Nursi’s decision to focus on the service of faith and the Qur’an. As preliminary to other epistles, *the Short Words* are meant to prepare the mind of the readers with preliminary understanding of the content of faith. Therefore, it is very significant since it is considered to be the gateway to other discussions in other parts of the epistle.

The content of *the Short Words* mainly focuses on the importance of true faith and its implications in human life. The faith issues which are considered as distant realities are simplified with allegorical stories to support the discussion. The allegorical stories are considered as ‘binoculars’ tool which can make one to look through to see things far away more clearly. This signifies that approaching faith issues is complicated, and Nursi has done it in a unique way.

Each word or epistle in *The Short Words* is a reflection from Qur’anic verse/s or phrase of the Prophetic traditions which is shown in the following table:

The First Word	On Bismillah (In the name of Allah)
The Second Word	On the verse of “Those who believe in the Unseen”
The Third Word	On the verse: “O people! Worship your Lord (Al-Baqarah: 21)
The Fourth Word	On the benefit of prayer

The Fifth Word	On the verse: “Surely Allah is with those who are god fearing and with those who do good. (al-Nahl: 128)
The Sixth Word	On the verse: “Surely Allah has bought from the believer their own selves and possessions, that Paradise might be theirs” (Al-Tawba: 111)
The Seventh Word	On the effect of “I believe in Allah” and “I believe in the Last Day”
The Eighth Word	On the verse: “There is none worthy of worship but Him, the Living, the Self-subsisting Sustainer” (AL-‘Imran: 2); and “The true religion before Allah is Islam” (Al-‘Imran: 19)

Table 1: The themes of ‘Short Words’.

The most consistent message in *the Short Words* is about the effect of being a believer and good servant to Allah. Interestingly, Nursi does not highlight consequence of true faith in the next life. Instead, the effects of believing in true religion is demonstrated in man’s facing real experiences of life which promotes the true faith over wrong one.

Nursi emphasizes that belief in the unseen is distant. This may mean at one hand, that the belief is something that is very difficult to attain, and on the other hand, it is a relationship that cannot be understood as the relationship of man to any creature in this world. In achieving this difficult aim of bringing this subtle relationship into human understanding, Nursi uses analogy of journey or situation of undertaking certain task which symbolizes a person navigating his life. In those analogies, a person has two options and choices being the true path and the wrong one. Each option has implications on the self which is told to the person and the real result can be seen at the end of his journey or after doing his task. The choice made in those allegorical stories symbolizes one’s approval or denial of faith or its way of life.

The allegorical stories in *the Short Words* are summarized in the following table:

Word	Actor	Decision/choice	Effect of the choice
First Word	Two men travelled through the	A humble man who affiliates	Roamed freely, in perfect security

	deserts of the Arab Bedouin that must affiliate with the chieftain tribe	with chieftain	wheresoever he went	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conceited man who refused to affiliates	Endured unspeakable tribulations, constantly trembling and plead to himself			
Second Word	Two men travelled for leisure and trade	Self seeking and pessimist	Saw disheartening and distressing circumstances. Experiencing psychological distress though has the same king with the God-seeking person.	
God-seeking and objective	Witnessed cheerful situation and friendly people because he recognises the Creator and knows of his role in life and understands the tests in life.			
Third Word	Soldiers following two roads	Road with great profit, subject to military rule, need to carry a bag containing essentials and a rifle.	He was keen to be saved from indebtedness and fear, dare to carry a bag on his back with rifle and followed the rules. He went on his way with peace and was indebted to no man and not fear of anyone. He successfully reached his destination and being	

			rewarded as a dutiful soldier.
Road with no advantage and lead to loss, there is no rule or regulations, need not arm nor take any baggage	Refused to be constrained by the system and get rid of carrying the weight but his heart collapsed and crushed with indebtedness and fear. Needed to beg from everyone along his way.		
Fourth Word	Two servants to a great ruler travelling to sell products from farm	Careful in making use the money given by the ruler and obtained successful business	Successful in the journey and had profitable business Finished the money given and could not have anything sold.
Only left with one coin, using the rests of the money in entertainment and gambling			
Fifth Word	Two soldiers in a training	Struggled in training to fulfil his responsibilities towards state and be responsible to the equipments.	Cognizant of religious obligations.
Did not care for military training and	Drowned in worries about making livelihood and		



expecting everything to take care for him	leaves his religious obligations.		
Sixth Word	Two subjects being entrusted by the king to trade fruits with a private farm		
Seventh Word	Soldier in disastrous situation was given talisman and ticket for travelling	Follow good advise in using the talismans and ticket	Passed the time in mercy
Spend time with fulfilling pleasure and do not take advice though knew that it was right	Stucked in the journey		
Eigth Word	Two brothers in a trip	Virtuous brother following right road that needs commitment to upholding the law and order	Underwent smooth journey and saw beautiful scenery because he accepted rules and conformed to it, so the life is made easy for him.
Corrupt brother who chose the left road of freedom but with danger and misery	Faced a lot of difficulties and danger in the trip and failed to manage things in the journey since he did not know the higher principles in the trip		



Table 2: Allegorical stories in the ‘Short Words’.

From the above table, each epistle/word came with at least one allegorical story. The story is about a situation where a person has two options to follow in life. All options are given the conditions and implications in advance. Though things are made clear beforehand, there are still people who follow the wrong path for being attracted to easiness and therefore sacrificing higher objectives in life.

Each reflection from the Qur’an and hadith is discussed by Nursi with its lesson behind every story to make the readers understand what has been given by God. People are easily cheated with physical attraction and easiness which block their mind from the real understanding which Nursi attempted to enlighten.

The following table shows how Nursi relates the story to the lessons in life.

Word	Lesson
First word	“affiliate yourself with the Endless Owner and the beginningless Ruler of the desert so that you can be free from having to beg from created beings and free from fear of every event
Second Word	“True faith transforms human life into a joyous journey, whereas disbelief causes even the good to appear to be bad”.
Third word	worship is an immense gain and happiness, and sin and debauchery are ultimately massive loss and ruin.
Fourth Word	prayer gives great comfort to the spirit, heart and mind. The rests of actions are worship actions, and turn entire lifetime capital into gain for the Hereafter.
Fifth Word	making the next world as true goal, and this world a means and a tillage, will make one a great commander of all living creatures and an honoured guest by Allah and making this worldly life an end in itself, and strive always for its sake, will be a mere sparrow.
Sixth Word	The sale of one’s self to Allah is the most rewarding of transactions
Seventh	Practising Islam and especially recognising one’s own powerlessness and

Word	the Absolut Power of Allah, is the secret to happiness and success; tribulations are transformed into blessings through faith in Allah and the Hereafter
Eighth Word	The positive attitude that stems from having trust in Allah is the key to success and happiness in this life and in the next.

Table 3: Lessons of every words in ‘Short Words’

The most important conclusion behind these lessons is about the position of religion in human life. Religion, then, is the most precious gift from Allah. In fact, consequences of good faith and practice are various and a lot.

From the stories which narrate the nature of man, life and the place of religion, the role of man as moral being is lucid. Instead, of being an authoritative God, Allah granted man with a set of teachings and moral rules which will guide man to the ultimate goodness in this world as well as in the Hereafter. Each person is to make effort and good choice following the right way shown to attain the real success.

Nursi is not only successful, but also should be congratulated for demonstrating important principles of the Qur’anic morality in a simple way. These principles are also important to know about the nature of morality in Islam. The first principle that can be traced from making choice in life is the personal nature of responsibility. Muhammad Abdullah Draz (2008) asserts that one of the conditions of moral and religious responsibility is being completely personal. For him, this is an established and clear formulation of the Qur’an. The verse related to that is *“For it (the soul) is what it has earned, against it what it has acquired”* (2: 285).

Another noble contribution of Nursi is the effort of enlightening man about clear meaning of true faith and its consequences in the Islamic morality. This endeavour supports another important and unique characteristic, that is, the Qur’anic principle of responsibilities is reachable and understandable to man (Draz, 2008).

Nihilistic Standpoint of Religion and Moral Being of Man

Being a trend in postmodernism, Nihilism basically stands on the principles of refuting absolute and universal claims including truths and values. It is often seen as denial of meaning and purpose with the argument that no standard system, including religion, can answer the problems of man’s life which is very complex and rapidly changing. Relativity of answers to man’s realities of life brought to other characteristics which are [skepticism](#) and subjectivism. Though nihilism is not an ideology supported by all postmodern

thinkers, relativism which is one of the most notable principles of postmodernity, finds its root in it. □

For the purpose of the current study, the view of Friedrich Nietzsche (d. 1900) is taken to be its representative. Nietzsche has been one of the most iconic figures among the postmodernists. Nietzsche is described as a European “turning point” which determines the difference in the direction of the postmodernist figures such as George Bataille, Jacques Lacan, and Michael Foucault on one side, and Heidegger and Derrida on the other (Pippin, 1996).

Nietzsche is known as a philosopher of nihilistic position who initiated and invited to re-evaluate all values and its foundations. To realize such project, he began to reconstruct “the highest value”, which is God in religious morality and came with his slogan “The Death of God”. Nietzsche casts his criticism of the concept of God, as construed to be timeless, substantial being removed from the temporal flux of nature and history. He treats God as the complete antithesis of life, time and human existence, indeed as hostile to man. Nietzsche’s disagreement with the religious concept of God is summarized by Houlgate (1986) as “deity is presented as a being which can tolerate no rival to its authority. Consequently, it imposes an exclusive, unchanging set of values on its subordinate worshippers and condemns alternative sets of values as ‘evil’”. The incident of the death of God was “*the Greatest recent event*”.(GS 343) which came to the consequences of the death of morality.

Nietzsche (1990) argues that religious morality is anti-natural morality because it is driven by God’s commands and prohibitions. The concept of will applied in religion is the result of will which is subject to the concept of God, the will to nothingness, it prevents humans from applying the concept of will to life or will to power. The concept of morality in religion therefore, teaches the principle of ‘negation of the will to life’ which is contrary to natural morality which is “governed by an instinct of life.” Human purpose is the fulfilment of the will to power and to life. Hence, religious morality produces an ‘instinct of decadence’ for humans as it teaches weakness, obedience and diverts from world life towards redemption in the afterlife.

Nietzsche’s criticism towards the implications of religion on human will is exemplified through the concepts of good and bad in the “slave morality” in his *Genealogy of Morality* (2006). The qualification of “good” in “slave morality” or “herd morality” refers to pity, patience, humility and friendliness, whereas strong and independent man are regarded as evil. Virtues according to “master morality” are regarded as “evil” by “slave morality”. Nietzsche sees that “slave morality” is reaction of resentment, which is a psychological reaction based on the powerlessness of the slave to master values. Nietzsche argues that ‘slave’ revolt in morality occurs when resentment itself turns creative and give birth to values. Nietzsche states that “master morality” grows out of a triumphant saying ‘yes’ to

itself, “slave morality” says ‘no’ on principle to everything that is ‘outside’, ‘other’, ‘non self. Moreover, Nietzsche (2006: 21) says:

“While the noble man lives in trust and openness with himself..., the man of resentment is neither upright nor naive nor honest and straightforward with himself. His soul squints”.

“Master morality”, on the other hand, associates “good” with something that shows ‘superiority of power’ such as ‘the mighty’, ‘the masters’, ‘the commanders’ or refers to the most ‘visible sign of superiority’ such as ‘the rich’, ‘the Propertied’. “Bad” in “master morality” refers to “everything lowly, low-minded, common and plebeian”. Therefore, “the master” seeks to establish concepts about “good and bad” in order to form master moralities, as Nietzsche said: “The noble type of man feels himself to be the determiner of values..., he knows that he himself is the one to first confer honour on a thing, he creates values” (Nietzsche 2006: 155)

For Nietzsche, the “master morality” must be based on the will to power. He must go beyond the categories of good and evil. The “master morality” does not measure judgment through the good and evil categories, but the good and bad categories; What is good? –Everything that enhances people’s feeling of power, will to power, power itself. What is bad? –Everything stemming from weakness. He also asserts that human history proves that noble morality with self affirming characteristic brings the ascending life while herd morality with life-denying brings descending. instinct resentment brings the slave morality to descending and inferior life.

Nietzsche comes to conclude that each person should create his own value through encouragement of affirmation of life, and, it is the will to power. One must create good and bad concepts for themselves without having to refer to moral considerations of universal rationality or religious law, and therefore put aside religion as the source of morality. As Nietzsche (2006, 43) said:

“Humans gave themselves all of their good and evil. Indeed, they did not take it, they did not find it, it did not fall to them as a voice from heaven. Humans first placed values into things, in order to preserve themselves – they first created meaning for things, a human meaning!

Moreover he said in *The Will to Power* (1968: 33):

“The individual is something quite new which creates new things, something absolute; all his acts are entirely his own...Ultimately, the individual derives the values of his acts from himself; because he has to interpret in a quite individual way even the words he has inherited. His interpretation of a formula at least is personal, even if he does not create a formula: as an interpreter he is still creative.”



Therefore, only the higher type of man is able to go beyond good and evil because he creates values. The Resentment cannot poison him. He/Her brought himself to ascendi life and realized will to power as self-conscience. Moreover, according to Nietzsche, the ideal application of will to power is realized by the *Übermensch* or *Overman*.

For Nietzsche, *Übermensch* is an ideal human figure as well as the higher type of humanity. Overman is a joyous, guiltless, free human being, in possession of instinctual drives which do not overpower him. He is the master and not the slave of his drives, and so he is in a position to make something of himself rather than being the product of instinctual discharge and external obstacle (Danto, 1893).

The *Übermensch* is distinguished from ordinary man in terms of self-consciousness, as will to power. He optimized the will to destroy the old table of moralities and replaced it with his own table of values. *Übermensch* was not to be automatically attained or realized through the natural course but must go through a continual and creative self-expression of individual to constantly create their own value. In this context, Overman's attitude which creates values and morality resemble the conceptual idea of master morality.

Nietzsche emphasized that the Death of God was the birth of Overman: "God died: now we want – the overman to live" (2006, 232). *Übermensch* marks the transition from attaining value through God to attaining value through itself (Lory, 2011). For Nietzsche, with the death of God, humans no longer need to look for values from the sky because the world already has a new meaning teaches to affirm life fully, that meaning is overman.

All in all, Nietzsche's denial of God is not a real denial of it. It is actually coming from his frustration of the image of God and the religious teachings which deprive the practical needs of man and overlook the individual approach, which for him, disturbs the real meaning of freedom. His expectation towards morality is also to groom man in the real context of grooming the idealistic morality in man. Hence, Nietzsche's aim was not to destroy morality but to reconstruct it into a system which is malleable to human construct and needs, especially needs for individuals to raise up.

NURSI AND THE CLAIM OF POSTMODERN NIHILISM

The first claim of Nietzsche is that religious value systems is "anti-natural morality" and driven by God's commands and prohibitions. Therefore, religious morality needs to be abandoned.

The above claim is generally based on their understanding that religious morality is a system of moral with rigid restrictions in a narrow sense. Nursi on the other highlights the fundamental meaning of religion as the most precious gift from Allah to human beings in assisting them to navigate their life. Religion helps to answer the fundamentals of life which sharpens their understanding of the responsibilities as well pushing them to

be more determined man (First Words). Religion also makes a man to realize his position and challenges and difficulties that he needs to face. The rests of benefits from the true faith can be found in table 3.

The way of Nursi's emphasis on the relationship between man and the most superpower, the real Creator, makes the whole story acceptable to human reason. The concept of God in Islam is not as claimed by Nietzsche as "timeless, substantial being removed from the temporal flux of nature and history". Though Allah does not emerge physically in human experience, His will and power exist and witnessed by man. Allah is the real owner to this super mega universe, which is beyond human reach. The duty to adhere to His system had been there before the creation of man. Content of the teachings also covers many fundamental answers without which a man will not even be clear about his position in this life. In fact, the Muslims sense their attachment to Allah in their spiritual self as portrayed by Nursi.

Instead of being authoritative God, as claimed by the postmodern thinkers, Allah is merciful in endowing man with the best guide which in turn bring all good consequences to man upon fulfilling it. Allah gives every precious things to human beings, but only asking in return several things i.e. Remembrance of Him (*al-Dhikr*), gratitude to Him and Contemplation (*al-tafakkur*). Allah does not ask man to do heavy things (First Word)

The second claim by Nietzsche in specific is that human beings are not given the right to act according to their will. He claims that religious morality came with the principle of 'negation of the will to life'. However, Nursi shows that human beings are free to make choice. It is the true belief that assists man to be more functional in this life. The true belief would enlighten them with the straight path and appropriate consequence since it comes from the real Creator, and therefore is a blessing. It is with the mercy of God those human beings are not totally left with free choice which would place man in difficulty. And choosing the contrary path would just let him to be reckless and following wild desire and deviates from the real aim of life.

Instead of being controlled, Nursi highlights that affiliated man roams freely in his life (First Word). In a sense, his way of triggering the mind of every person towards the Islamic consciousness through the real meaning of true faith capitalizes the individual level. After all, there are always two paths in front of every person and it is his choice to choose either one which entitles him to be responsible of his life.

Instead of God interferes the human freedom, Nursi argues that it is man who is in need of assistance from God to achieve higher goals in life. Man is in need of God since the life is with a lot of problems and challenges, "such a man would not possibly be acting in his own name or through his own power alone." (Second Word).



The claim of negation of human will in the religious morality brings to another claim that the religious morality brings to man a low system of morality or known as 'Slave Morality'. This is because religious morality prioritizes values such as pity, patience, humility and friendliness, and classifying the characteristics of strong and independent to be pejorative. On the contrary, Nursi highlights on how the religious morality actually aims to boost the human potentials to be good and excellent. The more a person acknowledges his need of Allah and trust in him, the more a person will be liberated and honoured through his recognition (Seventh Word).

The claim that man will be low in thinking by following religion is absurd. Instead, a person with religion will be a strong determined, clear of objectives etc as well as psychologically sound. The idea of choosing a true faith according to Nursi, is to help man to achieve the highest achievement in life. True faith will make man to realize his position and tasks. Some examples that support the point are: life is about fulfilling various responsibilities (Third Word), struggling is part of attaining successful life (Fifth Word) and the importance of human attachment to Allah (Second Word, Sixth Word).

In fact, having good faith and its related principles is the only way to succeed. Nursi says: "Obeying the injunctions of the Qur'an is the only way to liberation – and without the aid of Divine revelation, science and philosophy can offer only terrestrial benefit (Seventh Word)

The idealistic expectation of Islamic morality is portrayed by Nursi in many parts of the epistles. One of the most interesting phrases which highlights Nursi's idealistic expectation is: "his capital and power extend only as far as his hand can reach. However, his hopes, desires, pains, and tribulations reach as far as the eye and the imagination can stretch" (First Word). The idea of full attachment to Allah is to highlight purely individual endeavour which is the beginning to idealistic aim as highlighted by postmodernists. It signifies the concept of freedom from any other party other than Allah. Every person can have the highest moral aim ever imagined and possible by him.

The rests of concepts as lessons from the Short Words are meant to support individuals in their endeavours. Without certain knowledge about position in life, other endeavours towards ideal moral performance cannot be attempted. The psychological state produced by true faith is also to boost the spirit of idealistic aim of morality. Some examples cited by Nursi are: a true believer endures difficult and distressing of this world and offers thanks in patience, since he sees it as the waiting-room for Paradise, (Third and Fifth Word). Through the true faith, man also should be positive in his life by looking on the good side of everything, and not to pay attention to the rotting things. Even the feeling of powerless and poverty brings a man to endless power and mercy (First Word).

CONCLUSION

Though Said Nursi did not specifically address any part of his epistles to the challenge of postmodernism, his balanced approach has made his epistles as relevant to address the problem of Nihilism. His discourse in *the Short Words* proves that the claims by the nihilists especially Nietzsche are not correct when it comes to Islamic morality. Instead of being pessimistic towards the role of religion or God, Nursi proves that people can only have the real meaning of morality through religion. Islamic morality, as what is demonstrated by Nursi, gives man his freedom to choose between right or wrong. Islamic faith plays a role of giving man clear information especially about fundamental answers in life which is the bottom line for man to boost in his moral. As moral system, the aim of Islamic morality as highlighted by Nursi is also idealistic by nature which underscores the excellence performance in life. Interestingly, many criteria that are looked forward in a system of morality by postmodern Nihilists as what is represented by Nietzsche are fulfilled by the Islamic morality. And scrapping away the belief in God or religion will not make a moral system a better one.

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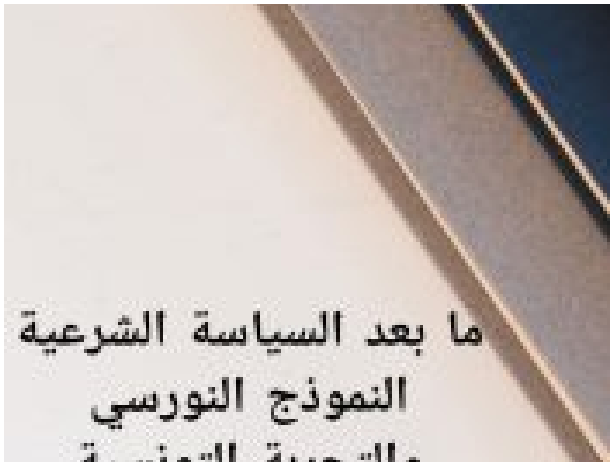


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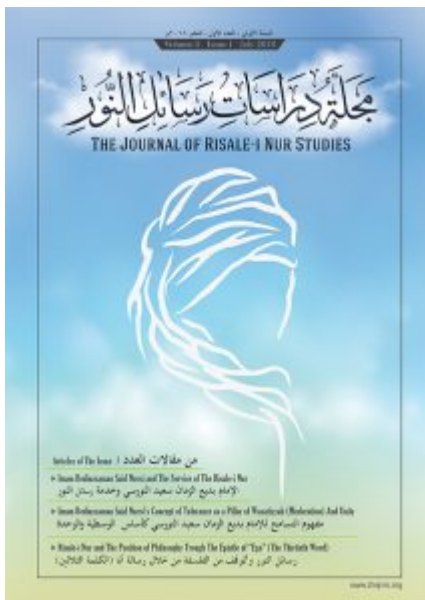


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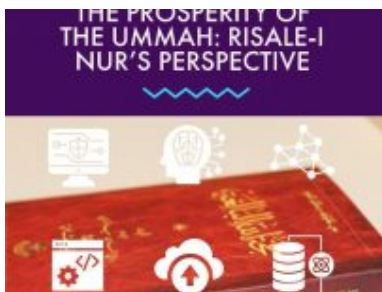
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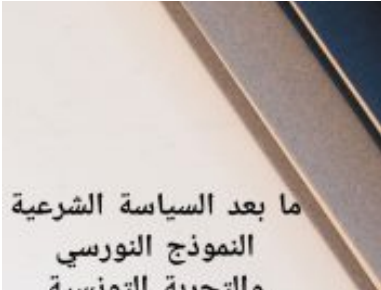
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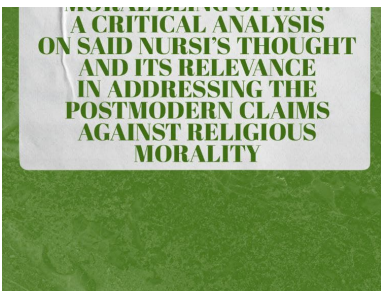
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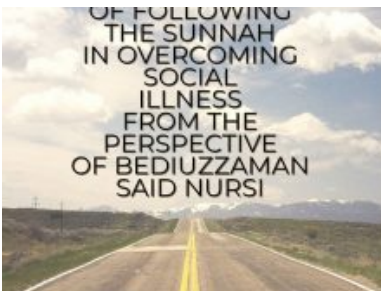
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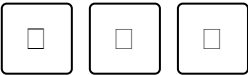


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