

# A KEY MASTER PREVENTS MANY NEGATIVE ACTIONS: RISALE-I NUR'S POSITIVE ACTION AS A MODEL

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## Abstract

Everyone tends to do anything positively, so does Said Nursi, but then Nursi sets up a positive action as a method of life in all circumstances. According to Nursi, a positive action is a lifelong principle. Basing it on both guidances of Quran and Sunnah, Said Nursi believes that many negative actions will be encountered easily by positive actions. Towards preventing religious radicalism and violent extremism, Nursi had a spiritual-moral jihad (*Cihad-i Mânâvî*). The same goes to uproot the unbelief, hypocritic, misguidance, sin and vice, Said Nursi had also a positive action which is strengthening a faith (iman) of believers. This part actually of Risale-I Nurs' positive action called by service of belief which is the most elevated ones among the positive actions. So, to have a complete understanding of what actually a positive action means by Nursi, the researchers will study Risale-I Nur, a magnum opus (the greatest work) of Nursi in the qualitative study.

**Key Word:** Risale-I Nur; Said Nursi; Positive Action; Key Master

## INTRODUCTION

Bediuzzaman Said Nursi is an intellectual and reformer of Islamic thinking. He was self-taught and became deeply learned in the traditional Islamic religious and intellectual sciences, instead of mastering Western sciences before the age of twenty. Basing a divine spiritual jihad (cihad i-mânâvi) of positive action towards encountering the attacks of secularism, atheism, positivism, and communism, Said Nursi became a success regenerator in serving a faith of believers. Despite having a personality that could not tolerate various injustices and cruelties, He had never responded to these conditions with violence. Therefore, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi should be aligned with other reformers in the Islamic world (Fordian and Turk Cemiyeti (2010); [http://www.iais.org.my/e/attach/NURSI\\_SAID.pdf](http://www.iais.org.my/e/attach/NURSI_SAID.pdf)).

To the best our knowledge, Said Nursi was born in 1877 in the Kurdis hamlet of Nurs, in Bitlis province of eastern Turkey (Said Nursi (2004). *Sirah ad-Dzatiyyah*)

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## POSITIVE ACTION AS A LIFELONG PRINCIPLE

The literal meaning of positive in some arabic dictionaries is 'established, proved and affirmed. Quoted by Reinhart Peter Anne (2000: 6/432, 11/40) as mentioned in the Arabic text below:

إيجابي: صِدِيقِي: إثباتِي، تَأْكِيدِي.

Meanwhile, a negative means expelled, banished, denied and negated. Noted by Alaaddin Basar, which is in line with the lexical meaning of negative in Arabic quoted by Ahmad Mukhtar Abdul Hamid Umar (2008: 2/1089) as shown in the following Arabic text:

سَلْبِي [مفرد]: اسم منسوب إلى سَلَب: غير فعّال، خامد، عكس إيجابي "جواب"/

موقف سَلْبِي".

Perhaps, Said Nursi mastered the Arabic language, about eighty to ninety books of Islamic knowledge resources in Arabic had been memorized and overwhelmed. Basing the positive action on the lexical meaning of positive in Arabic, Said Nursi (1995:7/241). *Malahiq*) asserts his lifelong principle in preaching and conveying Islam:

*"Our duty is to act positively; it is not to act negatively. It is only to serve belief in accordance with Divine pleasure; it is not to interfere in God's business. We are charged with responding with patience and thanks to all the difficulties we may encounter in this positive service of belief which results in the preservation of public order and security."*

To elaborate further the concept of Risale-I Nur's positive action on daily life activities, Professor Alaaddin Basar (1995: 148) says:

*"To work solely for God's pleasure is positive; to struggle hypocritically for self-advertisement is negative.*

*Service of belief is positive; to work for unbelief, misguidance, sin, and vice is negative.*

*Reliance on God is positive; interfering in God's business is negative.*

*The maintenance for public order is positive; causing conflict and differences, and disturbing public order and security is negative.*

*Patience and thanks are positive; impatience and rebellion are negative"*

In fact, there are so many practices of positive action in our social community which is based on our worldview, how to figure our action and our attitude as a positive action. So, to simplify the understanding of positive action, the young

researcher, Muhammad Faiz (2017: 39) through his study on Risale'l Nur's positive action to discharge a radicalism and terrorism points out:

*"With the concept of positive action, Said Nursi strived to revoke all potentials of committing violent and terrorism as well as to prevent the effect all those negative actions in order not being spread out to the society. Among the advanced way of positive action taken by Nursi to encounter anarchy, radicalism and terrorism are:*

- *Strengthening the values of positive action such as unity, compassion, and brotherhood among Moslems.*
- *Taking the divine spiritual jihad (cihad i-mânâvi) as the advance path of preaching.*
- *Redesigned the structure of Islamic education throughout Medrasah az-Zahra."*

### **THE SERVICE OF BELIEF (IMAN-I TAHKIKÎ)**

Said Nursi practiced a positive action in many ways to renew a faith and refresh the centrality of the Quran for the religious life of modern Turks. So, a positive action even though varies, but the most advanced of it is the service of belief. It was found in these words:

*"Our contemporary time is the time for saving the faith of Ummah."* (Said Nursi (2011: 7/22). *Malahiq*)

In Risale-I Nur, the same statement or looks like the same found so many. Here are some of them:

*"Our prevailing time is the time for protecting belief, not for taking a Sufism tarika as the elevated way for it."* (Said Nursi (2011: 7/22). *Malahiq*)

The same goes into the below statement:

*"Saving belief of Ummah is the greatest bestowed in this present time."* (Said Nursi (2011: 7/259). *Malahiq*)

Another one in the different part of Risale-I Nur, Said Nursi (2011: 4/420). *As-Syuaat*) says:

*"I abandoned the affairs of the world, a political context, and social life. So, no time for all those, my time is only for maintaining a belief of Ummah."*

What kind of belief does Nursi wish for?

Said Nursi tends to see in the heart of Ummah Iman-i Tahkikî, which is the highest level of faith (iman). It may be translated as verified or confirmatory belief; or belief ascertained through inquiry or resulting from investigation. It is the opposite of "Taqlîdî Iman," or belief through blind imitation or habit (Sukran Vahide (n.d).

That is why Said Nursi (2011: 4/373) with full confidence said in *Risale-I Nur*:  
*“Risale-I Nur helps out people to put a side doubts and troubles, places in their heart a deeply Iman-i Tahkikî and earns them the blessed Islamic life.”*

When this kind of belief is firmly established in a heart, all varieties of good morals and elevated virtues will flourish. So, whatever virtues and good morals we want to develop, whether in personal life or in the life of society, the way to do this is by establishing the truths of belief in people’s hearts in certain and varified fashion. This the way Badiuzzaman Said Nursi took, on which he was succesful (Alaaddin Basar (1995: 150).

### **THE SPIRITUAL-MORAL JIHAD (CIHAD-I MÂNAVÎ)**

In Islam jihad is not oppression, but justice; not transgression, but defence; not to kill, but to protect life; not to violate the law and people’s rights, but to defend them. The proof of this is that during the 1400 years of Islamic rule, the lives of the innocent, the old, women, and children were protected thanks to jihad, whereas the world witnessed great atrocities and oppressions occurring under European dominance after the decline of Islamic rule (Muhammed Zakir Çetin (2012).

So, what is about spritual-moral jihad in Nursi’s perspective?

Moral jihad or jihad with words (manevi cihad) against various torments and the destructive atheism. It is realized by strengthening the faith of Ummah, especially those who held certain post in the government of the Democratic Party, and to preserve peace and strengthen Islamic solidarity in order to deal with moral and spiritual damage due to the influence of atheism that can threaten the stability of internal security (Fordian & Turk Kultur Cemiyeti (2010: 30).

Said Nursi Nursi (2011: 1/440) says:

*“We have confidence in the Democrats not to fall into the pit because they know the condition of the people of the Republic who are fallen by their distorted politics themselves against the believers and followers of Nur (Tullab Nur), the owners of the many pearls of wisdom in the Quran.*

*Indeed, the worst motto of the previous regime has been known by people. Therefore, if Democrats still want to sit in the government, They have to strongly take decisions against atheism, keep the religious order of Moslems, grant adherents a safety and wealth.*

*We, Risale-I Nur’s students, will not be involved in politics. Our utmost hope is to maintain a religious freedom in this country and revoke cruelty and restraint over Islam and its adherents, and over Risale-I Nur’s students (Tullab Nur) for a quarter of a century.”*

*Alhamdulillah*, this jihad performs a good result, which is one of them made us being proud of having Islam as our religion. In 1950, prayer can be announced by Islamic Adzan, which is in Arabic form according to Islamic Shari'ah, after being forced to be in the Turkish language (Said Nursi (2011: 7/334-335). *Malahiq*)

## **NON-VIOLENT REVOLUTION**

Revolution is not always defined by using power to conquer, but certain changing some times goes by wisdom and divines words. It was that Said Nursi struggled for, which is called by the *non-violent campaign*.

His campaign was sparked by Nursi's refusal to support an uprising for Kurdish independence against Mustafa Kemal's government in the Syekh Said revolt of Feb. 1925, which was crushed by the Ankara Regime. This was led by the Naqshbandi Syekh of Palu, who had who had solicited Nursi's support in a letter. His reply is extant, "*For Muslims to kill Muslims is against the Shariah; Muslims are brothers (Turk and Kurd); and fighting is only permitted against external enemies for defense.*" (Said Nursi (2011: 1/206-208). *Sirah ad-Dzatiyyah*)

Nevertheless, Nursi was suspected by the Republican regime of involvement, and this led to his internal exile or confinement as part of its anti-religious policies: first in the town of Burdur; then in Barla near Lake Eşiridir; then in Kastamonu south of the Black Sea; finally to Emirdağ (Said Nursi (2011: 3/68). *Al-Lamaat*)

*Alhamdulillah*, within this blessed revolution, Bediuzzaman Said nursi was successful in sustaining Islamic faith and restoring the centrality of Quran in the daily-life of Ummah.

## **CONCLUSION**

Through out an analytic study on Risale-I Nur's positive action towards the betterment for Ummah, we point out the significance of this preaching method:

- [1] Revitalizing the spirit of faith.
- [2] Developing an emancipatory religious vision.
- [3] Maintaining Multiculturalism and the diversity of civilizations.
- [4] Dismissing a negative nationalism.
- [5] Promoting an attitude of tolerance.

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