

# A DEEP ANALYSIS OF THE FIRST WORD: THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE OF BISMILLAH<sup>1</sup> AND THE INTERSECTION OF BEDIUZZAMAN WITH POPULAR SCIENCE - PART 2 (CONTINUED)

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*“With eight little stories, listen to a few profound truths, together with my inner self”*

## ❖ "Eight Little Stories"

Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's unique approach stands as a milestone in conveying religious and moral teachings to the heart through the universal power of stories. This original methodology revolutionizes the simplification of complex concepts, making them more accessible.

It is known that stories not only reflect the narratives they contain but also the universal truths that lie at the common denominator of all humanity. In this regard, stories can appeal to everyone, transcending cultures, languages, and geographies. Through the "eight little stories," Bediuzzaman harnesses the strength of this universal language, offering lessons that touch the human soul.

Stories serve as powerful tools for learning, ensuring that the acquired knowledge is retained in the mind. Conveying information through stories is particularly effective in rendering complex and abstract concepts tangible. Even the challenging concepts of science, history, or philosophy become more comprehensible and memorable when told within the framework of a story.

Bediuzzaman's "eight little stories" approach presents religious and moral teachings in this universal language, enabling people of all ages and backgrounds to internalize these teachings. The messages within these stories offer listeners a mirror to reflect upon their own life experiences, thoughts, and emotions, serving as a guide on how one can apply these teachings to their own lives.

Bediuzzaman's "eight little stories" approach presents religious and moral teachings in a universal language, enabling people of all ages and backgrounds to internalize these lessons. The messages within these tales act as reflective mirrors for listeners, relating to their own life experiences, thoughts, and emotions, thus guiding individuals on how to apply these teachings to their personal lives.

Through his stories, Bediuzzaman emphasizes not just religious teachings, but also the intricacies of life, the profound depths of the human psyche, and the significance of spiritual values. These tales serve as invaluable guides aiding individuals in their spiritual growth, self-exploration, and the quest for life's meaning.

Bediuzzaman's method with the eight short tales exemplifies a universal mode of teaching and learning. Whether he's narrating a scientific fact, a moral principle, or the complexities of existence,

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<sup>1</sup> MEANING "IN THE NAME OF ALLAH"

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the potency of storytelling remains paramount in conveying knowledge in a more profound, enduring, and impactful manner.

Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's advising approach through storytelling holds profound pedagogical and communicative implications. Let's delve into the power of stories, examining them from both a pedagogical and communicative perspective:

- a. **The Power of Stories from a Pedagogical (Educational) Perspective:** In education, stories make complex ideas more tangible and understandable. Information imparted to students or listeners through stories transforms abstract concepts into concrete and relatable experiences. This facilitates the individual's internalization of knowledge and promotes lasting learning. Bediuzzaman's approach aims to optimize the learning process and make religious concepts more accessible.
- b. **The Power of Stories from a Communicative Perspective:** Throughout history, humans have conveyed knowledge through stories. Stories engage listeners by forming emotional connections. This connection ensures that information is understood not just at an intellectual level, but also at a heart level. **Bediuzzaman's objective is to address the listener's heart, ensuring his message has greater impact.**
- c. **Comparison with Popular Science:** Popular science strives to present complex scientific concepts and findings in a language that's accessible and comprehensible to the general public. In this field, too, the potency of storytelling is utilized. A scientist's life story or the tale behind a scientific discovery can assist the general reader in grasping intricate scientific concepts.

There are similarities between Bediuzzaman's approach and the storytelling strategy employed in popular science. Both approaches aim to make abstract and complex ideas tangible and reach a wide audience. However, Bediuzzaman's approach primarily conveys spiritual and moral teachings, while popular science is geared towards conveying scientific concepts and profound truths.

In conclusion, Bediuzzaman's method of advising through stories is highly effective in knowledge transmission and the learning process. This method mirrors the tactic of storytelling, a strategy also evident in popular science. Both approaches leverage the universal language of stories to make intricate concepts more understandable and accessible. Yet, Bediuzzaman's approach stands out due to its distinctiveness and depth in this field, further underscoring the value and significance of his work.

#### ❖ "Little Story (Hikayecik)"

To comprehend the wisdom and distinctiveness behind Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's use of the term "Little story (Hikayecik)", one must pay attention to the nuances of language and to Bediuzzaman's style of teaching.

- a. **Nuances of Language and Diminutives:** In Turkish, suffixes such as "-cik" or "-cek" are used to denote a smaller version of something or to speak about something with affection, tenderness, or intimacy. These suffixes make an expression more endearing, more loving, or more straightforward. The term "Little Story" might be used to indicate that the stories are presented in a brief, concise, and simple manner.
- b. **Teaching Style and Simplicity:** Bediuzzaman, in his "Risale-i Nur Collection", has taken care to express complex philosophical and theological<sup>3</sup> matters in a plain language. The term "**Little Story**"

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<sup>3</sup> The word "**Theology**" derives from the Greek words "theos" (deity) and "logos" (word, study). Theology is a field of study that systematically examines beliefs, thoughts, and practices related to a deity or deities. It takes

reflects this approach of simplification and conciseness. Thus, Bediuzzaman aims to present profound truths to the listener or reader in a short and concise manner.

- c. **Humility and Modesty:** The word "Little Story" mirrors Bediuzzaman's humility and modesty. Even when imparting knowledge on such profound subjects, presenting his knowledge and teachings in a "humble manner" to the reader or listener reflects his modest teaching style.
- d. **Purpose of the Story:** It's not the length or complexity of a story that matters, but the depth of the message it carries. The term "Little Story" emphasizes that these stories might be little, yet they contain profound truths.

***Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's use of the term "Little Story" reflects his mastery of the nuances of language, his approach of simplification and conciseness in teaching, his humility, and his emphasis on the purpose of stories.*** This choice influences readers' or listeners' approach to the stories and the lessons they draw from them.

Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's use of the word "Little story" highlights his delicate sensitivity to language and how meticulously he selects his words. This serves as a reminder that when we approach his writings, we should recognize this profound meaning and engage in a more attentive, careful, and contemplative reading.

The Risale-i Nur Collection is renowned for the depth of its language and the breadth of the topics it covers. ***Bediuzzaman employs words in such a manner that at times, one can reflect upon a single sentence or paragraph for hours and may need to read it multiple times to grasp the profound meaning within.***

This isn't just a matter of language; it's also about a style of teaching. ***Bediuzzaman doesn't just provide information to the reader; he also encourages them to engage in deep thought and contemplation.*** Therefore, when reading the Risale-i Nur Collection, it's crucial to look beyond the surface meaning and be attentive and careful to grasp the depth of each word, sentence, and paragraph.

Such a reading approach not only bestows knowledge but also aids an individual in experiencing an internal transformation and deepening. Thus, when reading Bediuzzaman's works, considering this depth and meticulousness is crucial for unveiling the wisdom and meaning amidst his words.

In the "Life History of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi" section of the Risale-i Nur, the introduction of Bediuzzaman is marked by a particularly striking statement:

***"The Master is a genius who measures this profound sense of frugality not merely through basic actions like eating, drinking, or dressing; but rather by ensuring there's no wastage or squandering of spiritual and intangible values such as thought, mind, talent, capability, time, moment, self, and breath."***<sup>4</sup>

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a comparative approach to the understanding of deities across different religions, sects, and movements, analyzing their sacred texts, worship methods, moral codes, and historical evolutions. The goal of theology is to explore and explain the nature, origin, and meaning of divine reality.

In philosophy, the term "Theology" refers to the philosophical examination concerning the existence, nature, and relationships of the creator. Theology is closely related to the philosophy of religion, but while the latter primarily explores the rational foundations and critiques of religion, theology delves into the consistency and meaning within a specific religion.

<sup>4</sup> Life History of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi - 14 (From the section of the Introduction on "Frugality," starting with the paragraph that begins "For instance...")

An individual's existential depth in life is determined not just by external practices but also by internal attitudes and approaches. Bediuzzaman reveals to us that 'wastefulness' in every facet of life isn't only material but also spiritual. Beyond physical needs like “eating, drinking, dressing”, he emphasizes the value of spiritual entities such as “thought, intellect, aptitude, talent, time, moment, self, and breath” and underscores their preservation. This unique perspective of Bediuzzaman suggests that he opposes wastefulness not just in the physical realm but also in the spiritual domain.

**THINK, WOULD SUCH A METICULOUS INDIVIDUAL WASTE EVEN A SINGLE WORD IN HIS DEVOTED MASTERPIECE, THE RISALE-I NUR COLLECTION?** His magnum opus should be regarded not just as a source of knowledge, but also as a guide to life. *When reading the Risale-i Nur, keeping in mind Bediuzzaman's meticulousness, we should strive to grasp the profound meaning behind each word and sentence.* This is not just a reading practice, but also a way to connect with our heart, mind, and soul. In this context, approaching the Risale-i Nur Collection with this depth and sincerity can be a key to discovering the unshakeable truth behind his words.

Bediuzzaman's deep insights and his stance on life, when viewed from a popular science perspective, demonstrate how one can address a person's inner world and spirituality beyond the scientific way of thinking. Let us compare the approach of popular science with Bediuzzaman's perspective in this light:

- a. Deep Understanding and Internalization:** Popular science often employs simple and comprehensible language to explain intricate scientific concepts to a broad audience. However, in this process, some details might get lost. *Bediuzzaman's approach is built upon grasping every nuance and depth in words. He pursues not just a superficial, but a profound understanding and assimilation.*
- b. Holistic Perspective:** While popular science typically focuses on a particular topic or finding, Bediuzzaman emphasizes the need to consider life in all its facets, both material and spiritual, as an integrated whole. This necessitates addressing life not only in its physical aspects but also its emotional, mental, and spiritual dimensions.
- c. Values and Ethics:** In popular science, the ethical and value dimensions of scientific discoveries and progress are often overlooked. Bediuzzaman's approach advocates that an individual should be recognized not only by their knowledge but also by their values, ethics, and moral stance.

### **Conclusion:**

Bediuzzaman's perspective serves as a reminder that, in contrast to the approach offered by popular science, our focus should encompass not just the scientific and physical aspects of life, but its spiritual and ethical dimensions as well. He encourages us to think deeply, not just about possessing knowledge, but about how this knowledge will be utilized, the values that will guide its use, and the kind of life that will be built upon it.

Furthermore, Bediuzzaman's choice of the term “Little Story”, which could be loosely translated as "Little story", reflects his profound understanding of the nuances of language, the style of teaching, and the purpose behind the narratives. This choice indicates that his writings aim not merely at transferring knowledge, but also at prompting individual transformation and deepening of understanding.

When approaching his writings, this depth and meticulousness remind us that a profound comprehension is required from both a scientific and spiritual perspective. In conclusion,

Bediuzzaman's unique approach offers a deep perspective not only on the value of knowledge but also on how we present, evaluate, and live by that knowledge.

❖ ***"Listen to a few profound truths, together with my inner self"***

Bediuzzaman's statement, "Listen to a few profound truths, together with my inner self" combined with his belief that **"one who does not reform their inner self cannot reform others"**<sup>5</sup> underscores the relationship between personal learning, self-improvement, and making a positive impact on society. This relationship holds true even in the context of popular science.

The idea that "one who does not reform their inner self cannot reform others" emphasizes that an individual must first enhance their knowledge and understanding, learn from their mistakes, and embark on a journey of self-improvement. Without advancing one's own comprehension, it's challenging for an individual to enlighten or educate others. In the realm of science, this signifies that a scientist should primarily expand their knowledge and keep abreast with new information. Science is an ever-evolving discipline, demanding its practitioners to keep pace. A scientist who continuously updates and refines their knowledge can be a more effective educator and communicator of science.

The phrase "Listen to a few profound truths, together with my inner self" reveals Bediuzzaman's intent both to share his insights and to expand upon them. This is often what popular science communicators and educators do. As they strive to make complex scientific subjects understandable to a broad audience, they simultaneously expand their own knowledge and insights. While sharing their "profound truths" with listeners, they gain new perspectives and broaden their understanding.

Indeed, in this context, following the statement "Listen to a few profound truths, together with my inner self," Bediuzzaman continues with, ***"Once upon a time, I had conveyed eight phrases I derived from eight verses a bit lengthily to my inner self."*** This emphasizes that learning and interpreting is an ongoing process. Bediuzzaman revisits verses he has previously studied, striving for a more profound understanding and insight. This reveals that his approach to knowledge is dynamic and evolutionary. Reflecting repeatedly on what he has learned and re-evaluating the same subject at different times is his way of broadening and enriching his understanding.

This practice of ongoing learning and in-depth contemplation is frequently employed by popular science communicators. When science communicators and educators present information to wide audiences, they continuously reassess and expand their understanding of that information. Bediuzzaman's approach demonstrates that he is not just a teacher, but also a lifelong learner. This reflects his profound reverence for knowledge and the sanctity he attaches to the act of learning.

Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's statement, "Listen to a few profound truths, together with my inner self," conveys a deep understanding that self-reflection and learning are ongoing processes. This statement doesn't solely denote introspective inquiry but emphasizes the importance of sharing that knowledge and insight with others. Just as science communicators and educators simplify complex topics to reach larger audiences, Bediuzzaman aims to touch people's hearts and minds through his teachings.

In conclusion, Bediuzzaman's expressions resonate with the continual learning and knowledge-sharing processes seen in popular science. While scientists and communicators constantly refine their understanding, they also aim to share that knowledge with a vast audience. This provides a meaningful analysis of Bediuzzaman's statements from a popular science perspective.

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<sup>5</sup> Words-269 (The Twenty-First Word - First Chamber - Before the section on warnings)