Not having a hope is another disease of heart. In this lecture, we will get the message of hope from a beautiful passage from the glorious Quran. The discussion in this lesson is based on the following passage from Surah Aal Imran:

They feel happy to have received Allah’s grace and bounty and have come to know that indeed Allah does not waste the reward of the believers.

Of those who answered the call of Allah and the Apostle even after being deeply wounded; For those who do right and refrain from wrong, there is a great reward.
And who, when the people told them: "Your enemies have mustered a great force against you: fear them"; whereupon this only increased their faith, so that they answered, "God is enough for us; and how excellent a guardian is He!"

And they returned with Grace and Bounty from Allah: no harm ever touched them; for they had been striving after God's goodly acceptance - and God is limitless in His great bounty.

Now you must have realized that it was the Shaitan who was trying to prompt you to fear his followers. But have no fear of them. Fear Me, if you are true believers.

And be not grieved by those who vie with one another in denying the truth: surely they can do absolutely no harm to Allah. It is God's will that they shall have no share in the [blessings of the] life to come, and tremendous suffering awaits them.

Those who trade belief for disbelief will never harm Allah in the least, and they will suffer a painful punishment.

Those who disbelieve should not think that living longer is good for them. They are only given more time to increase in sin, and they will suffer a humiliating punishment.

Allah will not leave the believers in their present condition; you are in this condition only until He separates the Evil from the Good. Allah will not do this by disclosing to you the secrets of the unseen. As for disclosing the unseen, Allah chooses those of His Messengers whom He pleases. Therefore, believe in Allah and His Messenger. If you have faith and guard yourselves against evil, you shall have a great reward.

And let not those who hoard up that which Allah has bestowed upon them of His bounty think that it is better for them. Nay, it is worse for them. They will be leashed by their necks on the Day of Judgment with whatever they used to withhold. For unto God [alone] belongs the heritage of the heavens and of the earth, and God is aware of all that you do.

(Quran 3:171-180)

Reflections on the battle of Uhud:

The loss of Muslims in the battle of Uhud after not following the instructions of the Prophet and the leader

The passage above deals with the aftermath of the Battle of Uhud - the second major conflict in Islamic. This is the battle in which the Prophet ﷺ was almost killed; he fell unconscious. His face covered in blood and a lot of companions actually thought he's been killed. They were completely demoralized until it was discovered, later on, that he was still alive and had fallen unconscious. There were some major losses for Muslims in this battle as seventy of the great companions were martyred and the Muslims had to actually retreat. At first, they were winning but because of a strange turn of events, the Muslims had to go and go into a retreat. The Quran captures that
moment and tells the believers that when they were climbing up the hill and weren’t even turning back to look at anybody else to save their lives, the Messengerﷺ was actually still left behind because a lot of people thought he had already died. So, the Messengerﷺ was still on the battlefield and he then called you from behind. This was the situation when catastrophe after catastrophe and emotional disaster on top of disaster struck you. So, this is a really deeply painful scenario in the Muslim community. The Muslims that survived were deeply injured and wounded.

A mistake by Quresh

The Quresh made a mistake at this point. They did not pursue the Muslims up the mountain. They spoke and talked trash to the Muslims from the bottom of the mountain. They left the Muslims in this state. Now the Muslims who’ve been demoralized also been humiliated in a sense are trying to gather their losses and are barely able to stand up. The news and intelligence came that the enemy had a thought a discussion in their ranks on their way back that they should come back and finish the Muslims, once for all. They thought that the Muslims are pretty injured right now and they’re pretty demoralized and this can yield them a great opportunity to make another decisive blow.

Prophet’s call and the response of companions

It’s at that point that the Prophetﷺ said that before the enemy gets back, we are going to get up and go after them! Note that he is not talking to an army that is deeply motivated and full of zeal and shouting takbirs. He’s talking to an army that has seen many of their loved ones being slaughtered - including the Prophet’s own uncle who was like a brother to him. On top of that, the ones that many of those who survived were deeply injured. In this demoralized situation, the Prophetﷺ is asking to get up and go after the enemy – the same enemy from whom they had to run away and climb the mountain to save their lives. Now they’re being told to get up - forget defense, we’re going on the offense! That’s what they’re being told; and on that call, the companions that could barely stand up, got up. They stood up! They are bleeding themselves but still, they got up and came before the prophetﷺ saying ‘We hear and we obey’. These incredible human beings answered the call of the Prophetﷺ. Allah swt Himself decided to comment on this remarkable and timeless moment in our history.

So, this was the situation in which this passage was revealed.

Guidance of you and me

Quran is talking about you and your situation. How do these remarkable words of Allah swt apply to us? I will not elaborate that; it is for you to ponder upon this and take action.

Allah does not waste any good deed or action

In the few ayahs before this passage as well as the first ayah, Allah swt is talking about those who have been slain in the battlefield and they’re already Shahada.
They feel happy to have received Allah's grace and bounty and have come to know that indeed Allah does not waste the reward of the believers.

Allah says about those Shuhada that they are already in the company of Allah and enjoying themselves full of happiness; they're waiting for people that haven't yet joined them and in the moments of their joy, they're anticipating that there are more people who are going to make it into Jannah. Allah says about those seventy people that couldn't be happier; so don't be sad for them. They are really happy right now and they are enjoying the glorious favors of Allah. They are overjoyed; they have now seen that Allah never wastes any of the compensation of believers whether they win or loss. When you did something for Allah, whether you saw results or not, none of it would ever go to waste. If I am delivering this lecture, it does not matter how many people are listening to it; my reward is recorded with Allah swt and I have nothing to be upset about why there are this many listeners in the group and not that many. That's irrelevant. We're clear about why we do things. None of what the believers go through is going unrewarded. So the people of Jannah are very clear about this, as Allah swt mentions in this ayah. It assures the future people of Jannah that their efforts are not going to go unrewarded and they should not think any less of anything that they do.

**Our responsibility in the times of trial:**

In times of great trial, we start thinking ‘what is my little effort going to do’, ‘what is me helping out at a Sunday school or doing a little thing here and there at iCAN or being an Islamic school teacher or helping out in a relief organization going to result in?’. We often fall into the trap of thinking ‘I don’t feel like I’m making any difference’. That’s when you need this Ayah. Allah will not waste the compensation of any of those who believe in Him. If we respond to His call and the call of His Messenger ﷺ, He will make us “of those who answered the call of Allah and the Apostle even after being deeply wounded”.

These are the people who respond to the call of the Messenger ﷺ even after deep injury had struck them, even when they've been defeated, even when they're depressed and demoralized, and even when they have been crushed by their enemy - they still respond to Allah and the Messenger ﷺ.

**Don’t be depressed when the injury strikes you**

The word ُحَرُقَة* used in the second ayah of the passage does not represent a normal injury. It is an injury is an injury that goes through your flesh and cuts inside of your bone - a very deep injury which could even be lethal. Those blessed companions who were deeply wounded still got up. As they get up, the people who are already in Jannah are cheering up that they are not alone; there are other people will join them too; they're watching us when we are hit with injury. They're happy because it's time for us now to earn our Jannah too. So, we shouldn't be depressed when we are struck with an injury, when we're hurting, and when we're down. This is the time to earn the
greatest rewards. This is the time to celebrate; we have been honored to be put in this position that we are going to answer the call of our Messenger even when we are deeply wounded.

The faith of true believers increases when the trials come their way

Those believers who can excel, who can find the beauty of this deen and continue to do good and remain conscious and fearful only and only of Allah - such people are going to have great compensation from Allah swt.

When the companions heard that everybody's gathering against them, that message made them even stronger in their faith and they turned back to Allah and said 'Allah is enough for us and he's enough to take care of everything we're going through'. When we hear the message that people are ganging up on us, that is not a reason to lose our faith in Allah. When the people of Jannah hear that, their iman becomes even stronger. These are efforts that the enemy makes thinking that this will make the Muslims weaker. However, what happens to the real believers is that these hardships and attacks on them make them stronger than before.

So, when the Muslims answered the call of the Prophet and the Quresh came to know that the Muslims themselves are coming after them, they got scared. Though the Quresh were almost victorious in Uhud before they suddenly left the battlefield, they still go scared. When the Muslims went out, the enemy had already fled. There was no Uhud 2.0. There was no rematch. The enemy could not face these devoted Muslims. This is how Allah gives protection to the true believers. All we have to do is to answer the call of Allah swt and His messenger with the best of our abilities and then Allah will take care of our affairs. However, we have to do our bit and we have to fulfill our pledge and promise and then Allah swt will give us the rewards that we deserve.

Allah swt also explained further:

No harm touched them. They followed only the pleasure of Allah. They went out there to make only and only Allah happy. They didn't go for victory. They didn't go to crush the enemy. They didn't go for revenge. The only thing before them was that our Messenger asked them to get up and go after the enemy as this would please their Rabb. Allah said that when people get up for me I will let no harm come to them.

Fear Allah alone and be a grateful servant

That whole propaganda that people are coming, and that they're gathering against you in order to uproot your, is actually from Satan.
Allah told us that he wishes to put the fear of his friends in the heart of the believers. He wants you to be scared of his friends. The ayah can also mean that only the people who are his friends, get scared of the enemy. He's only successful in scaring his friends. Allah swt guides us that we should not be afraid of them but Him if we in fact believe.

Every time you and I stand in front of Allah, it's not just because we worship Allah, it's not just because we only believe in one God, that is also an acknowledgment that we fear no one but Allah and that we bow before no one but Him. We also acknowledge that we humble ourselves before no one but Allah. Every Salah is a reminder there is no political circumstance, no rhetoric no media, no bias against us, and no crimes against that instill the fear of anyone other than Allah in our hearts. Despite all this, we choose to be His faithful servant.

Understand the reality of matters

Allah swt tells us about those who are making a lot of efforts to look for the furthering the cause of disbelief, those who are making so many efforts to destroy Islam, those who are making so many efforts to turn believers into disbelievers, those who are making so many efforts to spread the disbelief on earth, spend all their wealth and resources for this task - don't let all of their efforts ever worry you.

Allah swt tells us that despite all these efforts, they will not be able to harm Allah swt. Don't worry about their schemes and their plans and their plots and their propaganda, they can't harm Allah at all.

Now, one can think that I'm not worried about them harming Allah – He is all powerful and no creation can harm the Creator. I am actually worried about them harming me; so I was expecting that Allah will say ‘don't worry about their schemes; they won't harm you’. But Allah says, instead, ‘don't worry about their schemes; they can't harm Allah’. Why is that?

It is because Allah swt is our protection and our shield. They can't do anything about this shield. So you're safe because your Allah is with you and He is sufficient for you and He is the best protection. With Allah on your side, you have nothing to worry about. Make an effort to make Allah your friend and your protection. Fall in love with him and abandon all forms of disobedience to Him.

Why does Allah not stopping the oppressors in the first place

A question can arise that why is Allah giving the enemies this opportunity to scheme and plot and to further their cause? Why is He allowing them to make things more and more difficult for the believers? Allah swt answers:
Allah wants that they get nothing in the hereafter - not even a little bit of the akhirah. So the people that are evil and they want to continue to do more evil, they wish to continue on the path to injustice and oppression, Allah says I’d like to let you dig your hole a little deeper. Allah gives them the freedom in this world that if they wish to go the way of the kufr, they are free to do that. The longer they keep doing it, they harder their punishment would be.

You can think of this by imaging an experiment that has been previously done with some animals. If the animal is put in a small cage and the walls restrict its movement, it wouldn’t get much hurt when it hits the walls. However, if it is allowed to run freely in a long lane and then suddenly the motion is stopped by placing a barrier, the impact and its consequences would be much much stronger. Same is the case with the non-believers. It is extended for a period of time and then pulled back. That would be the moment when they would get the severest of the punishments.

**Don’t sell your religion for short-term and temporary things**

Allah swt now turns out towards those who sell their religion.

There are those who have sold their belief with disbelief. There are those who under the pressure of the enemy say that this Islam thing is too much for me to handle. When people look at them in a certain way, they give up their identity as Muslims. They think that I should rather be like everyone and do what others in the society do. They think that if I’ll fit in better, I would be able to be more better off in the society that I am living in. Allah swt says about them that they are also not going to do any harm to Allah’s cause. They are only harming themselves and harvesting the punishment for themselves unless they repent. If they do so, Allah will turn their bad deeds into good deeds.

The disbelievers should not think that if they are given the freedom to do whatever they want to do is good for them. What they are doing is that they are increasing the punishment for themselves.

**Be steadfast when the tests come – it is how the impure is separated from the pure**

After the above description, Allah swt turns his attention to you and me. He says

The tests in this life are inevitable. This is how Allah swt separates the pure from the impure. Allah will not leave you alone in the state that you’re in. Allah will not just leave you be and let you just think that you have faith. He will separate the good ones among you from the filthy ones. Some of us have filth inside of our hearts and when the state of fear comes, the pressure comes, and the stereotyping comes, some of us abandon our faith and the filth in their hearts take over whatever
good they had in it. Allah says, he will put you and I through terrible difficult circumstances so that He can separate the filthy from within the pour and cut them out. May Allah not make us see any of us from them.

**Do not be concerned about what Allah has chosen not to let you know**

In this regard, we should also keep in mind that Allah will never be the one to inform you of the unseen.

People come to the Sheikh or the Imam and ask about when the problems of the world are going to finish. This information is with Allah alone and not with the sheikh. Sheikh, just like you, is also going through the trials and the tests. Allah told us this thing very clearly so that we don’t remain deluded. Allah is not going to tell you and me about these matters of unseen. However, Allah does select from his messengers whoever he wants - meaning Allah chose his Messenger ﷺ and decided to tell him what you needed to know. Focus on what Allah told you and not what Allah did not tell you. Don’t get obsessed with the things that Allah Himself didn’t give you. If it was valuable for you, Allah would have given it to you. So don’t be so obsessive-compulsive about unnecessary details.

Allah swt then tell’s the criteria for success and the strategy to follow in tough situations.

Just believe in Allah and His Messenger ﷺ and if you can continue to believe and continue to be fearful only of Allah, then you will have a great reward. What else do you and I want? Just have faith and be fearful of Allah in the most toughest of times. The belief in Allah and His messenger is all you need. Everything else will work itself out. Don’t be overdrawn into the problems.

**Only Allah will remain and all the rest will perish**

Don’t ever think about those who are cheap, greedy, and miserly with what Allah has given them that they are better off. What they are considering good for them is actually bad for them. They are not realizing that the things they are trying to hoard and with-hold are not genuinely their own. They have come from Allah swt. They didn’t earn it themselves. This thing that they are falling in love with, will become the collar around their neck on the day of judgment with which they will be punished.

We accordingly have to spend from the resources that Allah swt has given us. It is not just the money. All the blessing of Allah that He has given us and we are not using in His cause will be questioned. In this, there is a call for all the Muslims, particularly the youth. They’re going to have to give up their free time that Allah gave them. Their free time cannot go into eight hours of video games anymore. There’s no time for you to watch the next Netflix and Amazon series. You don’t
have that kind of time. O Muslim youth! Allah has given you free time. Allah has given you
talent. Allah has given you creativity. That creativity cannot go be wasted by you making stupid jokes on
social media. It needs to be used in much more productive ways.

When the people who Allah has given wealth, luxury, opportunity, health, and talent are cheap and
miserly with it and they only use it for themselves, then they are missing the whole point. Much of
they accumulate; they will never be able to make any benefit from it. Much of what they fill their
bank accounts with will remain there while they will not be there to use it. If not used where it is
required to be used, that accumulation will be turned into a rope around their necks choking them
on the Day of Resurrection. If you don’t put these resources to the right cause, it is going to come
and choke you on the day of resurrection. May Allah not make us of them.

َمَثْلَ الْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۚ ﴿۱۹﴾

Allah alone owns the entire inheritance of the skies and the earth. Allah is telling you and me
whatever you own, whatever I own, whatever I enjoy in this life, I'm not going to get to keep it at the
end of the day. I'm going to be in the ground and somebody else will be wearing my clothes. I'm
going to be in the ground and somebody else will be driving my car. And they won't be driving it for
that long either. They're going to be in the ground too. Somebody else will be living in that house
that we have built we so much effort and hard work. 100 years from now somebody else is going to
be eating the fruit of that tree that I have in my backyard. It’s not going to be mine. And at the end
of it all, all of it will return back to Allah. Everybody and everything will finish; only He will remain.
We have to understand the temporal nature of the material world. Do not become materialistic in
your goals and your aspirations. The only thing to worry about is what you will earn with Allah swt in
the hereafter. Put your efforts in this world. Do your very best. If you just want this world and have
no concern for the hereafter, that that is what is exactly choking you; it will ultimately destroy you.

Our Deen is so beautiful; it provides us with a beautiful balance between what we want in the next
life and what we get in this life - it merges the two of them. We’re not just people of Akhirah alone
and we are not the people of Dunya alone; we are the people of ‘Rabban Aatina Fid-Dunya Hasanah,
Wa Fil-Aakhirat Hasanah’ (Our Rabb! Grant us goodness in this world and goodness in the hereafter).
We have to make a sincere effort to attain this.

َوَلَّٰهُ ﴿۲۰﴾

Allah has full news and full account and a full perspective on everything that you’re doing. He knows
how we spend our resources. What inflictions come in our way and how we respond to them. He
knows if our Imaan is increasing when the afflictions hit us or we let our gratitude go in such
situations. He knows what is inside our heart and what we are doing to purify that.

The time for change is now

I sincerely remind myself and I remind all of you that this Quran is a living document. It’s a living
book. It will inspire. It will empower. Sometimes, it will scare. Sometimes, it will set you straight and
calibrate you. If you want to turn to Allah swt, then this is the book that you have to hold on tight. Sometimes you just need to get a slap in the face and get set out straight. The book of Allah will give you that too. It'll give you what you need because Allah is your Rabb; he's your master; He doesn't have to cater his message to what might make you feel better. He'll cater the message to what you need and what your heart needs. This is the time to change.

Allah swt is telling us that if you are in the middle of a crisis, grow a spine and get strong. Don't be afraid of anybody else. Prove yourself to Allah and none of the efforts you do will go unacknowledged. May Allah azzawajal make us a courageous ummah, especially our youth. May Allah make them a source of confidence and a revival of this faith for the Ummah around the world. I make so many prayers for the youth in Muslim youth that they become the light which would brighten the whole face of the earth. My prayers are with you. I am so so very proud of you. So what if you've made mistakes in the past! So what if you haven't realized your potential in the past. That's okay! You're still breathing which means Allah still has hope in you. If you were a lost cause you wouldn't be breathing anymore. The fact that Allah has given you life is because Allah expects things from you. It's a new day. It's a new beginning and let us prove ourselves before Allah azzawajal and show Him what goodness we can bring into this world.

CONTEMPLATION TASK FOR LESSON 22

Think about how you can make a contribution to the ummah? What is the special talent that you would utilize for serving the nation of Muhammad ﷺ? What can you do to happily face Allah swt and His messenger ﷺ on the day of judgment? Think about that and start work from today!