**Legendary Motivation**

**(Nouman Ali Khan)**

Assalamualaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh,

First of all, again, I am very grateful that I have the opportunity to address all of you. And those of you that are familiar with my work know that I try to emphasize reflection and study of the Qur’an. And I recognize that it’s not the only area of study or contemplation that is necessary in the life of a Muslim .But I do believe it is central in the life of a Muslim that they have a direct relationship with the Qur’an and they extract from it as much counsel and as much advice as they possibly can.

I am speaking to you in this final session with a little bit of a heavy heart because you know, as I, as I walk around in the conference I meet a lot of people and they come to me, and we have like 30 seconds with each other before someone else comes into the conversation and they tell me all kinds of really heavy things. And I realize that on the one hand we are talking about the book of **Allah** and we are talking about the time of sahaba and we are talking about this ideal era that we learn about in our sacred text, and on the other hand, in stark contrast to that is our reality. Our reality is so far from the things we talk about sometimes, right! And we have to bring those two things together. Sometimes these two things are so far apart from each other that it even feels like the Qur’an or the Sunnah or the religion, for some people it feels like it’s talking about a different reality, it’s not even talking about my reality. A lot of people feel like when they are hearing about the sahaba or when they are hearing about the great accomplishments of the prophets (alaihimus salatu wassalaam) that these are some legendary superheroes, that these are some amazing things that is so far removed from where I am or anybody else I know is. and we are just so much below any of that, it doesn’t even apply to us.

So what that does psychologically for a people, is that it reduces the advice and the counsel of the Qur’an and Sunnah, to literally the same as the criticism of the kuffar, meaning the kuffar said, you know:

**“Asaateerul-awwaleen.”** (Qur’anic term used in many verses for e.g. (16:24), (8:31) etc.)

‘These are stories and legends of old time, of earliest nations.’

That all this is, this is just stories. And we unfortunately in our discourse sometimes have created an environment and a culture in which we talk about the past in a way, that we completely disconnect it from ourselves and we make it feel like we are never ever ever going to even come close to what has already happened in the past. And therefore, we stop looking for counsel and advice from the same text. Like, this is not about us, this is about people that are far better than ourselves, you know. And this is actually detrimental. It is very damaging. To give you an example of this, before I can talk about the ayah that I really want to talk to you about. To give you an example of that, you have for instance, in the case of the sahaba (radhi**Allahu** ta’ala anhum majma’een), you have the case of Abu Bakr as-Siddique (radhi**Allahu** anhu), the hero of Islam, Umar bin Khattab (radhi**Allahu** ta’ala anhu), these are heroes of Islam. When it comes to spending in the path of **Allah** and people are encouraging in a fundraiser or in a talk to have people donate, so they give the example of Abu Bakr as Siddique (radhi**Allahu** ta’ala anhu) who gave all...Or first they start with Umar (radhi**Allahu** anhu) who gave , how much of his belongings? You guys remember the story? Half of his belongings! Right! And then, and he felt like he has accomplished something and Abu Bakr as Siddique walks through and gives how much? All of his belongings! And you here this thing, you’re like yeah! I should give too! But you know what there are lot of people in the same audience that are saying,” I will never give half my belongings and I will never give all of my belongings.” So, and by the way it’s not even fair. It’s not even fair. Let me tell you why. Because they are not the only Sahaba (radi **Allahu** ta’ala anhum ajma’een). You know they are not the only Sahaba. There are thousands and thousands of companions. And many of them didn’t give half and didn’t give all. Many of them gave less. But **Allah** spoke about all of them and said:

**“Radi Allahu 'anhum wa radu 'anhu.”**

**Allah** is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. [Qur’an, 58:22]

**Allah** is pleased with them and they are pleased with **Allah**.

In other words, what we do is, we take the highest examples sometimes to motivate. The highest examples we can find in Islam of sacrifice to motivate people, but don’t realize that some people are motivated by that, but other people are actually completely demoralised by it and say,” That’s impossible! That must be for that era, it’s not for me anymore.”

So how do we reconcile both of those things? Because if you study, truly study the stories of our companions (radi **Allahu** ta’ala anhum ajma’een), the first followers of Islam, right! What does it mean to be a follower of Muhammad Ur rasool **Allah** (sall**Allahu** alaihi wa sallam)? It’s the companions! If you study their stories you don’t find one kind of story. You find a lot of variation. You find people of incredible sacrifice and you find people that were struggling. And **Allah** acknowledged and appreciated and loved all of them. **Allah** even talked about the degrees between them in the Qur’an, you know:

**“la yastawee minkum man anfaqa min qabli alfathi” ,** you know, **“waqataloo wakullan waAAada Allahu alhusna”.** (Qur’an 57:10)

‘Not equal among you are those who spent before the conquest [of Makkah] and fought [and those who did so after it]. Those are greater in degree than they who spent afterwards and fought. But to all **Allah** has promised the best [reward].’

The people who spent and sacrificed before victory came are not the same as the people who spent and sacrificed after victory came. But every one of them **Allah** promises the best.

It’s incredible, isn’t it! **Allah** said, **‘al husna’** which is the superlative form of the Arabic language, the very best and He didn’t say if the very best is for those who struggled in tough times and not so much for those who came afterwards and had easier struggle. **Allah** in His mercy said in the ayah every one of them will have the very best. You just do what you can. You do what you can. So there are people that are going to be able to do a lot more than you and there are people who are able to do a lot less than you. But the base, **Allah** promises the best to all of them. So I want to give in this final session a little bit of a picture of how to mentally break apart, to delineate the Muslim population, the community that we have and then take some advice from the Qur’an in shaa **Allahu** ta’ala because the advice from the Qur’an applies to all of us.

 The point I am trying to make is the way in which it applies to us is different. It does, the way it applies to me is not the same as the way it applies to you. It is, the standards are a little bit different.

So, let’s start at the very beginning. At the very baseline, at the very very basic level of this deen, you and I all know we have our five pillars and I don’t have to give you a Sunday school class about the five pillars, all of you know what that means. At the very baseline, at the very minimum what applies to every single one of us is actually, you know, stay away from things that are Haram, that are clearly Haram and make sure you fulfil the obligations that are clearly obligatory. What you have to do, you have to do. What you stay away from, you have to stay away from. Now that is the baseline for every single Muslim. That’s the baseline. Now above and beyond that when I speak to a congregation like this, there is a bunch of people here in the audience that I don’t know where you come from. You come from different cities. You come from different neighbourhoods. Some of you have been studying Islam for years. Some of you know more Islam than I will ever know. Some of you are uhh… some Imams are sitting in the audience. I just met an ‘Alim who studied Islam for 8 years. He is sitting in the audience and there are some people here who became Muslim this weekend, who know almost nothing. There are some people who are raised in a Muslim family but have nothing to do with Islam and their parents forced them to sit here and they are sitting in the back like, ’ why am I here?’ And every time they try to escape their mother gives them the look of death and they sit back down.

Look, the crowd is diverse. Not everyone here is on the same page. That’s just a reality, isn’t it? So we, it’s impossible to think that the way in which the advice of the Qur’an is going to affect you is going to be the same. Or the way you have to live by it is going to be the same. There are some minimal expectations that are expected from all of us. Now let’s talk above that. Let’s talk one step above that. My job as a daa’ee, my job as a speaker is actually to try to speak to the person here who is the least committed to Islam. My job is to try to address the person who doesn’t even want to be here. That’s the person I am trying to reach. Why am I trying to reach that person when I am speaking in a general public setting? Because that person maybe holding on to Islam by a thread. They may barely be holding on. They may already be convinced, ‘I don’t even want to be Muslim. I don’t even know. I am not so sure if I want to be Muslim.’ And they are sitting in this audience. And that person, if I start giving him examples of spending half of his wealth or all of his wealth, you know what they are going to say, ‘I wasn’t even sure about giving a hundredth of my well and you’re asking for half or all. Forget it! I am out of here. This is way too much to ask.’ The guy already walked in thinking that Islam has way too much to ask and I helped him out. I helped him out by giving him the highest standards. The standards that not even all of the other companions could live by, not only the very very very top of them could live by. And I am presenting that almost as though that is what you’re expected to do. It isn’t fair. It’s just not fair.

Then what do we do? In the communal discourse, in the conversation that we have to have with our communities. The khateeb at jum’uah for example, he has to understand that people are at different level and you have to take it easy. You have to talk about the very basics and take it easy and give hope.

But then you have a, you know in every masjid there is like a halaqa, there is a study circle and there is like 6 or 7 people that attended. It’s not like two hundred people or whatever. It’s very few people and they stick at it. They come every week, they come every week, they come every week. They sit with the Imam. They learn more and they learn more and they learn more. And as they demonstrate that they are more serious, guess what? The leader, the imam, the scholar, the teacher has to expect more from who? From them, from them .You should give them higher examples. For them you should actually elevate their expectations, because you want to make them rise to the occasion. But even as they rise to the occasion you know what the next challenge becomes? They turn around, as you, for example some of you didn’t know much about the deen four years ago. But you started learning some Arabic, you started attending some seminars and courses and classes and you started listening to download after download after download and you started taking all these crazy notes and then you started giving a khutba at your MSA or something or a talk or a halaqa, and now you know a lot more than you did four years ago. But you know what happens? As you know more you realize more is expected from you. And as you realize more is expected from you, you turn around to everybody else and think that more is expected from them too, which isn’t true. More is simply expected from you. But you can’t put your burdens on them.

Nobody had a larger burden on their shoulders than Rasoolullah (sall**Allahu** alaihi wa sallam). No one in human history ever had it, and no one in the human future will ever have a larger burden than this man had to carry (sall**Allahu** alaihi wa sallam) for 23 years, which is no time at all to do what he did. And yet when he is sending people on a mission to spread the word of Islam, he is telling companions,” yassiru wa la tu'assiru yassira wa la tu'assira.” ‘Make ease and don’t make difficulty.’ Make things easy on, go easy on people. Don’t go hard on them. Subhan **Allah**! He is telling, it’s his instruction to Sahaba. He is not telling, ’Tell people to submit to **Allah** and they better become the best example of submission immediately.’ NO no no, just go easy on people. Take it easy. ‘Yassiru wa la tu'assiru’ you know. It’s an incredible bit of advice. And the optimism! We don’t talk enough about the optimism of the messengers (alaihum salatu wassalaam). You know over and over again in the Qur’an **Allah** describes that the prophets of **Allah** are givers of good news and givers of warning,**’ wa bashshireena wa munzireen’** , **‘ basheeran wa nazeeran’,** right!. These occur over and over again in the Qur’an. They came to give good news and they came to give warning.

 Now how many of you are in their teaching profession or have taught in any capacity? Sunday school, halaqa anything? Ok listen, if you have a difficult crowd, is it easy to stay optimistic? Is it easy to keep smiling? It becomes impossible. Doesn’t it? If you’re kids are, if the kids aren’t listening in a classroom or people are talking while you’re talking or I am giving a lecture and people are getting up and walking away, is it agitating to the speaker or the..Uh… is it disturbing? Does it bother? Or people are talking over my, I can’t even hear myself. I am teaching a class I can’t even hear myself, people are talking so much. There’s one, there is a true story. This actually happened at another ICNA convention. It was Uh.. it may be 6 or 7 years ago. I am giving the lecture, uncle sitting in the first row. Sorry uncle I hope you’re not here today. But, so, sitting in the first row he gets a phone call and apparently was from Pakistan, because when you get a phone call from Pakistan you have to speak extra loud. HAAN HAAN SAB THEEK HAI! HAAN! OKAY! EVERYTHING IS OKAY, OVER AND OUT. You know like those helicopter thing, you can talk to the military. This guy, I mean you are having a long distance conversation in the front row, and I can’t even hear myself over this guy. But at that time I have to remind myself, the prophets were given the instructions not to warn first but to give good news first. But in order to give good news you have to have a positive attitude. You can’t have a positive; it’s very hard to have a positive attitude when people in front of you are agitating to you. But the prophets were told (alaihum assalatu wassalaam) that they have to maintain a positive attitude even if people aren’t receptive. And that’s incredible! That, not easy. If only thing were givers of good news is easy, but to give good news to people that are just obnoxious , they don’t want to hear what you have to say and you maintain your positive attitude and you continue to give good news that’s amazing! And yes ‘ nazeeran’, and also to give warning. But the first thing mentioned every time is good news. Every time! They were givers of good news, spreaders of optimism. They were positive people. And what that means that is the Islamic discourse, the conversations about Islam that are happening from the mimbar, that are happening in a halaqa , that are happening in an MSA, that are happening in your family, that are happening in a community, they have to be overwhelmingly positive. The conversation about Islam has to be overwhelmingly positive in light of the fact that the prophets are first ‘basheer’ and then ‘nazeer’. They are first ‘basheer’. They are first givers of good news. They are first ‘mubashshir’. By the way, by the way, Subhan **Allah**! **Allah** azza wa jal in His remarkable eloquence what He talks about when He, you know even when the verbal forms are used and I won’t get technical with you but I’ll try to keep it as I can but it’s a beautiful point. Allah azza wa jal talks about the Qur’an itself :

**Qayyiman liyunthira ba’san shadeedanmin ladunhu wayubashshira almu/mineena allatheenayaAAmaloona assalihati** (part of the aayah 18:2)

Right! And He started there with warning but He said ‘**Yunzira**.’’Yunzir *‘*in Arabic; ‘anzara’ means to warn. But technically if you say ‘nazzara’ one of its meanings is also to warn. ‘Nazzara’! But the difference would be , ‘anzara’ would be warn one time but ‘nazzara’ would be warn over and over and over again. Now on the other hand **Allah** says ‘**wa yubashshira’. ’ wa yubashshiral mu’mineen’** . So when He talked about warning He talked about it in the singular sense but when He talked about giving good news He actually talked about it in the continual sense. He overwhelmed the good news over the warning. Subhan Allah! And by the way in that particular case because it is ‘alamaatu saa’ah’ , its towards the end of times. Its suratul Kahaf, which is supposed to be recited when dajjal shows up and all of that, right! So its times of warning so it began with warning. But even when it began with warning it multiplied the good news immediately.

**wayubashshira almu’mineena allatheenayaAAmaloona assalihati anna lahum ajran hasana**(part of the aayah 18:2)

**Makitheena feehi abadan (18:3)**

There is no ‘ makiseena feehi abadan’ or they’ll live in it forever about the warning. There is only ….that’s only mentioned for the good news. Subhan Allah! Over and over and over again. So what does it practically mean for you and me?

 The mothers in this room that tell their children ,”You better listen to your father because Allah will put you in Jahannam”. What are you doing? You are negating the legacy of delivering the message of Islam with mercy, with love. Because you figure…you….like you like to instil the fear of your father……or …or …you know… the….the kid’s dad. “If papa comes home and I tell him.” “No! No don’t tell papa! Don’t tell papa! Please please please. You know. Or sometimes it’s the other way around the guy says, “I am going to tell mama.” “No! no don’t tell mama, anything but telling mama. Just hit me right here, right here( on the neck).” You know, right! haha! You know. But what do we do? We want to….. we think the only way to fix children even is by scaring them. We have to scare them to fix them or fix their behaviour. Now I am not saying that’s never good. Sometimes giving a little bit of warning is good. But overwhelmingly what should there be? Overwhelmingly there should be love and patience and good news and encouragement and….. You know being patient with children. Children are annoying. Look I’ve got six of them, I know they are annoying. They can get real…they can really get on your nerves, they can. And mothers here know! They can drive you crazy. You could go… I mean you go so crazy sometimes the husband looks scared. Like when your kids are really on your nerves the husband sees the look on your face he’s like, ”Oh! Okay! I am going to go outside, out in the backyard. I’ll just go sit on the grass.” You know like, “I don’t know what else to do?” You know. But you know what? Even in those cases we have to learn something about, about the way the prophets carried a message out, because at the end of the day we are teaching our children the message of Islam through this. Many kids are raised…they think the only thing that they know about…the only thing they know about Islam is everything is forbidden or you’re going to get punished, Allah will be really angry at you, Allah I going to get really mad. A little kid like two years old, “Abba I can’t eat ice cream right, because Allah I going to get really mad.” Oh that’s, that’s a tragedy. That’s a tragedy! A two- year old says that about Allah. That’s really sad. They should know wonderful thing about Allah. How much Allah loves them and cares for them. Like how Allah made the ice cream sweet. Not how Allah will punish them if they eat the ice cream, you understand. So you’re imposing your anger disorder onto Allah. That’s what you are doing and it’s not right.

Similarly in the community setting, in the comm… and by the way in the marriage too, in marriages husbands (are) constantly telling their wife they are going to burn in hell if they don’t do this that or the other. And what kind of … what kind of marriage is that where you’re telling your wife, you’re comfortable talking to your wife about her burning in hell. You’re…. how is that normal? You’re not a normal person . You need serious therapy if you do this, you know.

Then on top of that in the communal setting if every single khutbah is about the day of judgement and about people being thrown into the fire and all of their deeds, all of their good deeds are wiped away because they were munafiqs. I am not saying those warnings don’t exist. I am certainly not saying that but I am telling you, you give so much doom and gloom and you’re going to have people at a large scale just lose hope. They will start believing that they are headed for punishment anyway. An once people stop…start losing hope and they become convinced that they are heading towards punishment then the doors to sin open wide. “What’s the point anyway I might as well go out with a bang.” You know! People just lose hope.

So now the aayah that I wanted to share with you in this talk, I have 8 minutes left and I think I’ll stick to it. I’ll finish on time in shaa Allah. The aayah is actually one that expects something very very high.It’s…..it expects one of the highest expectations in the entire Qur’an. Allah azza wa jal says:

**Inna Allaha ishtara minaalmu’mineena anfusahum waamwalahum bi-anna lahumualjannah (**part of the aayah 9:111)

No doubt about it Allah has already purchased from the believers, in fact Allah is the one who has purchased from the believers their money and their own lives their own selves in exchange for Jannah. So the aayah begins with a transaction, a business transaction if you will, in which Allah has purchased what? You tell me again. What has Allah purchased? Our money and what else? Our lives, he has purchased our money and our lives .And what have we received by selling those two things to him? What have we acquired? Jannah. This is the exchange Allah talks about in this aayah. So now, for some people who are at the highest level you know what that aayah means? That means they are going to go into the battlefield. The sahabi is going to go into the battlefield. He is going to spend all of his money and he is going to go in the battlefield and die on the battlefield.

**yuqatiloona fee sabeeli Allahifayaqtuloona wayuqtaloona** (part of the aayah 9:111)

Immediately he just goes in and he is …that’s it. That’s the highest level of that purchase.

But let me ask you something. Is every single Muslim going to go into a battlefield? No. But has every single Muslim sold himself and his money in exchange for Jannah? Yes. It’s true. What is the aayah teaching us? That the highest expectation of this purchase, the ultimate sale is when the sahabi is in the battlefield. But are there lesser purchases in that too? Yes, because not everybody is going to be in the battlefield. There is going to be a mother who will never see a battlefield. But has Allah purchased her life and her wealth and her…you know…her nafs in exchange for Jannah too? Yes, he has. Is there a scholar? Has Allah purchased his life, his wealth and his life in exchange for Jannah too? Yes. So what does it mean for them? And what does it mean for someone who just became Muslim? And what does it mean for someone who has been trying to do an Islamic work? What does it mean for a mother who is trying to raise a family? This aayah means different, this expression means different things to different people. And you have to understand what it means to you. What does it mean to you? And I won’t talk to you about what it means to you. I will talk to you about just the idea of sales and this is what I’ll use my last 6 minutes for, just the idea of sales and buying and selling and trading.

You know human beings, by nature we love immediate transactions, what the Qur’an calls ‘tijaratan hazira’, right! Immediate transactions, in other words I pay for something now, and I get it when? Now. The only time we like to delay a transaction is when we say I want the product now; I want the big screen T.V. now but I’ll pay you over six months. In other words we like to pay overtime but receive when, immediately. Otherwise we like, if we pay now when do you expect? You expect now too, right! So human beings like to pay late but receive immediately. That’s our nature. Everybody clear about that!

In this aayah Allah says you give me money, you give me your life and I will give you; what is Allah giving you? He i s giving you Jannah. We like to receive immediately or later? We like to receive immediately. Is Jannah coming immediately or later? Jannah is coming later. And when do you have to make the payments to Allah? Now. And you have to make them one time or you have to keep making them? You have to keep making those payments with your time, with the way you live, with the way you dress, with the way you talk, with the things you want to do but you can’t do because they are haram, with the money that you can’t earn because it’s not the permissible way of earning money, the money you want to spend but it’s not the right way to spend that kind of money and you are constantly holding yourself back because you are in a transaction with Allah. And every time you hold yourself back you have to remind yourself,’ well I am doing this in exchange for what?’ Jannah. But human nature is if you are paying a price to earn something you want to see it. You want to see it. Even if you do 40 hours of work at a job at least two weeks later you are going to see a pay check. You are going to see something. But what we buy….when Allah buys us for Jannah do we see Jannah? No, all we get is a verbal confirmation from Allah. ‘I’ll give it to you trust me.’ That’s all we get we get nothing else. Ok, I’ll describe it to you. It’s got trees, and iIt’s got rivers, it’s got lots of fruits and you get married and stuff and...It’s got lots of description of Jannah but do we have a brochure, a catalogue, a picture, maybe a video, a short trailer.’ Give me a trailer for Jannah. I don’t want the whole movie just give me like 30 second trailer so I know what’s coming.’ Nothing! All you get is Allah’s word. Now let us stop here for a second and take a step back.

I am going to pretend to be a sleazy salesman. I come to you and say, “Hey! I’ve got this property, prime real estate location in Long Island. It’s like 5 acres. It’s a mansion. It’s amazing. I want to sell it to you for 5000$. It’s worth 50 million but I want to sell it to you for 5000 bucks.” I get really….you get really excited. First of all do you believe that transaction or no? I was l like ….’You sleazy scam artist! What are you talking about? Don’t waste my time.’

“No no no! Listen! Listen! Listen! Give me the 5000 now and in about 20 years I’ll tell you where it is. This deal is only open right now. If you take it right now, I will give it to you. I’ll…the mansion is yours. But mansion is yours when? After 20 years. But now you have to pay me 5 grand when? Right now!

This is similar to the sale Allah is offering us for Jannah .When is Allah going to give you Jannah? Allah is telling you He is going to give you Jannah when there is dirt being poured on your face, when you’re in the ground. ‘That’s when I’ll give you Jannah.’ But when do you pay Him? Right now. And you’re like, umhhhh… and He says, ‘Trust me.’ He says, ‘Just trust me.’ Doesn’t it take an incredible amount of trust? It does, doesn’t it? That’s what you mean… that’s what I…what we mean when we say believing in the unseen. That’s what it means to believe and trust Allah. It’s not an easy thing. It’s easy to say, it’s not easy to do.

You see the disobedience to Allah …shaitaan by the way the opposite. Shaitaan says, ‘Listen! Listen! I’ve got some amazing dunya luxuries for you, some pleasures for you. You can have them right now! Just tap this. Just click it. Just click it. Just do it. It’s right there. So easy! You might get in trouble later but it ain’t right now. You’re good. You’re good. You’re fine. At least for next 20 30 years there is not going to be any problem, alright!’ And he comes to you and offers you immediate reward and no payme nts. Obviously far more tempting, far more powerful. To take immediate reward and leave off what is going to come so… far…. later…And so many people, because we are impulsive buyers, when a good, juicy product comes in front of us we just put it in the cart. We can’t hold ourselves. So shaitaan makes us the sale and most of us do what? We become customers. We become immediate customers. And Allah makes us a promise but we don’t see the product so what do we say? ‘Hainn…. You know, maybe Ramadan.’ You know! ‘We’ll see.’ But even Ramadan doesn’t survive. Like last Ramadan in the last ten nights I think batman came out or something came out and there was a huge crisis among Muslim youth. ‘Like it’s Ramadan, so I …but I really want to go and watch batman. How do I reconcile these two things?’ You know. Those are really like spiritual crisis because it wasn’t shaitaan doing waswasa, obviously he is chained. That was all you homie! That was all you. That wasn’t even shaitaan, you know. So now when I...I’ve presented this transaction to you because I wanted to leave you with what Allah says at the end of this transaction. He says:

**fastabshiroo bibayAAikumuallathee bayaAAtum bihi wathalika huwaalfawzu alAAatheem** (part of aayah 9:111)

Come take… you know, appreciate and, be congratulated…, feel congratulated over the sale you just made, the sale of giving yourself up and your money up in exchange for Jannah. Feel congratulated over that sale. Everyone around you 2will say, ‘You’re a fool. You’re missing out on life. You could’ve been doing so much with your youth. Man you’re, you’re a good looking guy. You’re a young woman. You could’ve had anything you wanted and you are wasting it away with that hijab on your head and that scruffy beard you are trying to grow and you’re trying to go to the masjid and pray and this and that. Man! We could’ve have been having so much fun. You only live once. YOLO. You know you only live once.’

Apparently to the kaafir, yes, and he says, ‘You’re such an idiot. You’re just wasting your entire college years. You’re in the dormitory. You’re by yourself, your parents aren’t here. You can hear the BOOM! BOOM! BOOM from down the hall. You could be part of that party man they are having the time of their life. You know, I think your lab partner likes you too. It’s all good. Don’t worry about it. It’s not even Ramadan yet, you know.’

And you say, “No, I just want Jannah.”

“You’re, you’re stupid man… you’re stupid. Why can’t you get smart?”

And then you just say, “I…I can’t…I can’t take this pressure anymore. Everybody is telling me I am dumb. I am making dumb…..am I really missing out on life? Am I doing this right?”

And then you open Allah’s Book and Allah says, ‘Congratulations! You made a good sale.’

The only one to congratulate you in this scenario is not going to be your friends, is not even going to be your family sometimes. The only one to congratulate you will be Allah. The congratulations will come from nowhere else. Nobody else ill think you’re making a wise decision. There are so many families; a farther who owns like a liquor store decides he is going to get rid of it and when he gets rid of it they have to sell the house because he can’t make the house payments anymore. So they are going to go from a house to an apartment and the whole family is going crazy.

“What are you doing? We are…we need the house. How are we going to live in an apartment? This is the…this is the wrong…. I don’t know what has happened to daddy. He’s gone crazy.”

But the father knows the only one who is telling him, ‘Congratulations! My slave, you’ve made the right call.’ The only one who is telling him that is who? It’s Allah. It’s Allah. When you trust Allah then, let me tell you, people around you will question that trust, and they will make you lose that trust, and that is when you need to hold on to Allah’s book. Because when you open that book and you read it to find hope… that’s the only way to survive.

This is why I started by saying we need an ummah that is directly connected with the word of Allah, promise of Allah, the promise that never fails, which was the title of that talk. Every one of you needs to hold onto that promise. I see it as part of my mission tom try to understand that promise and try to share what that promise is about as best I can. But that’s not enough. All of you have to be on your own journey to understanding Allah’s book. And not for any other purpose but to seek Allah’s advice and strength of char…. of will, of decision that you can hold on to the right decisions and not back off again, not slip back into the darkness again. Some of you guys that are here you’ve done some horrible things this year but at least you’re here now and at least you heard some of this and maybe some of this goes into your heart. And you decide from here on out, ‘I will take the promise of Allah seriously. Whatever happened happened. You know what it’s in the past but it’s not going to determine my future.’

I tell you this is the last one, I promise. I am 3 minutes over my time already. People will give up on you; people will give up on you. Allah never gives up on you. People will give up on you all time. Parents will give up on you. A spouse will give up on you. Friends will give up on you. But Allah will not give up on you. People will judge you and can condemn you like, ‘this guy is bad and that’s it.’ Case closed. Allah will never close your door….door…His doors off of you. The only one who can close those doors permanently is yourself. Allah doesn’t do it. Allah does not do that Subhanahu wa ta’alaa. So I hope that all of you are able to revive and rejuvenate your relationship with Allah azza wa jal at the… by the end of this conference. I really truly enjoyed myself (in) this conference and I hope you guys did too. Thank you so very much for listening attentively.

Baarakallahu li walakum.

Wassalaamualaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakaatuh.