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Ninth Assembly

Met on Saturday, 29th of the month of Ramadhan. On this day, our grand Sheikh al-Mufid Abu Abdillah Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Nu'man, may Allah perpetuate His support and beneficence to him, said:

1. The four virtues of the people of Paradise

He said: Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Umar ibn Salim ibn Al-Baraa' al-Ji'abi reported to me from Abu Muhammad Abdullah ibn Bared al-Bajali, who reported from Muhammad ibn Thawab al-Hubbari, who reported from Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn Ja'far, from his father, who reported that his brother Musa ibn Ja'far reported from his father through his forefathers, peace be upon them all, that:

The Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, said: "Whoever has four virtues, Allah shall write his name among the people of Paradise: One who saves oneself by testifying that there is no god but Allah and that I, Muhammad am His Messenger; and one who says: Praise be to Allah, when blessed with any bounty from Him; and one who says: I seek forgiveness from Allah, for the sin committed; and one when afflicted by any calamity, says: To Him we belong, and unto Him shall we return."

2. The Prophet commanded to reveal virtues of 'Ali (as)

He said: Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Umar al-Ji'abi reported to me from Abu Muhammad Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn Saeed ibn Ziyad al-Muqri from his book, reporting from Ahmad ibn Isa ibn al-Hasan al-Hawbi, who reported from Nasr ibn Hammad who reported from Amru ibn Shimr, from Jabir al-Ja'fi who reported from Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Baqir, peace be upon him, that Jabir ibn Abdullah al-Ansari said:

The Angel Jibraeel descended unto the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, and said: "Allah commands you to address the people around you, informing them about the excellence of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (as) and has commanded all the angels, to listen to what you will say; and He reveals to you that

whoever will oppose you about his affair, he shall enter hell fire, and Paradise is for him who obeys you."

Then the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, caused the announcement: "(Join) the congregational prayers." People assembled and the Prophet climbed the pulpit and commenced first by saying: "I seek refuge from Satan, the condemned and I begin in the name of Allah, Most Merciful." Then he said:

"O people, I am the bringer of good tidings and I am the warner. I am the Prophet, born in Ummul Qura'. I am now conveying to you, from Allah, Most High, about a man whose flesh is from my flesh and whose blood is from my blood; he is treasure-house of the knowledge and he is the one who Allah has selected from this Ummah, chosen him, befriended him and guided.

Allah created me and him from one essence and blessed me with the Prophethood and blessed him with the task of purveying on my behalf. He made me city of the knowledge and made him its gate. He made him a treasurer of the knowledge and the source from whom divine laws are received. He blessed him with specific divine appointment, made clear his position, forwarned against animosity to him and made affection towards him obligatory, enjoining all people to obey him.

And He, Most High, says: "Whoever hates him, hates Me and whoever befriends him, befriends Me. Whoever rises against him, rises against Me and whoever opposes him, opposes Me. Whoever disobeys him, disobeys Me and whoever harms him, harms Me. Whoever despises him, despises Me.

And whoever loves him, loves Me and whoever obeys him, obeys Me. Whoever pleases him, pleases Me and whoever protects him, protects Me. Whoever fights him, fights Me and whoever helps him, helps Me. Whoever intends foul against him, does so against Me and whoever plots against him, plots against Me."

O People! Listen to my command and obey it. For I warn you against the severe punishment by Allah. On the Day when every soul will find present before it every good deed it has done; and whatever evil it has done, it will wish that there be between it and the evil it has done, a great distance. And Allah cautions you of Himself."

Then he took Amirul Mu'mineen (i.e. 'Ali ibn Abi Talib), peace be upon him, by his hand and said: "O people! This is the master of the believers and the annihilator of the infidels and the proof of Allah to all mankind. O Allah, I have indeed, conveyed and they are your servants. And You are able to reform them so reform them by Your mercy, O Most Merciful."

Then he came down from the pulpit and the angel Jibraeel came unto him saying: "O Muhammad, Allah sends you Salaam and says: May Allah reward you best for having conveyed. You have indeed conveyed the message from your Sustainer and given your Ummah the correct advice. You have pleased the faithfuls and constrained the infidels. O Muhammad, your cousin will be stricken with affliction and because of him, some will be surely tried. And those who do wrong, shall soon come to

know what punishment awaits them."

3. The Prophet's prayers for his descendants

He said: Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Umar al-Ji'abi reported to me from Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Ziyad, who reported from al-Hasan ibn 'Ali ibn Affan, from Yazid ibn Harun, from Hamid, from Jabir ibn Abdillah al-Ansari who said:

Once, the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, came upon us holding the hands of al-Hasan and al-Husayn, peace be upon them and said: "These are my two sons, who I have brought up from infancy and for whom I have prayed to Allah as they grew up. I prayed for them for three things, out of which He granted two and restrained one. I beseeched Allah to keep them pure and cleansed from all evil and make them chaste. Allah granted my prayer.

And I prayed that they and their progeny be guarded together with their followers, from the hellfire. Allah granted my prayer. And I asked Allah that the Ummah be united in their love for them." He said: "O Muhammad! I have decreed and I have determined. A group from among your Ummah will remain faithful to the covenant you have made with the Jews, the Christians and the Magians and will break your covenant regarding your descendants. And I have so decreed that, whoever does that, shall not have a place at My honoured station, nor will I allow him to enter My Paradise, nor shall I have an eye of mercy upon him on the Day of Judgement."

4. The Assassination of Malik al-Ashtar

He said: Abul Hasan 'Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Hubaysh al-katib reported to me from al-Hasan ibn 'Ali al-Za'farani, who reported from Ibrahim ibn Muhammad al-Thaqafi, from Muhammad ibn Zakariyya, from Abdullah ibn al-Dhahhak, from Hisham ibn Muhammad, who said:

When news of the assassination of Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, reached Amirul Mu'mineen, peace be upon him, he wrote to Malik ibn al-Harith al-Ashtar, may Allah bless him with mercy, who was then residing at Nasibayn. (He wrote): "You are surely among those from whom I seek help to keep the banner of Islam high and to crush the haughtiness of the disobedient and to fortify the threatened borderline.

I had appointed Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, may Allah bless him with mercy, to govern Egypt, but the rebels attacked him and as he was inexperienced about warfare, he was martyred – may Allah bless him with mercy. Now, come over to me so that we may look into the matter concerning Egypt, and appoint in your place a reliable, sane person from your companions." Then Malik – may Allah be pleased with him, appointed Shabib ibn Amir al-Azadi to succeed him, and proceeded till he arrived to meet Amirul Mu'mineen, peace be upon him. Then he (i.e. 'Ali) explained to him the situation in Egypt and informed him about its people.

Then he said: "There is no one for this assignment except you, so be ready to go. And if there is anything, about which I have not guided you, you will depend upon your judgement and seek assistance from Allah for your intention. (In your dealing with them), mix severity and harshness with tenderness and gentleness, and be friendly for as long as friendliness serves the purpose. And be resolute when there is no alternative to severity."

He said: Then Malik al-Ashtar – may Allah be pleased with him, rose and prepared for his journey to Egypt. And ‘Ali, peace be upon him, sent a letter to the people of Egypt, before (Malik) arrived there:

"In the name of Allah, Most Merciful, Most Benevolent, I praise Allah, none to be worshipped but He; and beseech Allah to bless His Prophet, Muhammad and his progeny. Surely, I have sent unto you a servant from the servants of Allah, who does not sleep in the days of fear and does not recoil from the enemy fearing any disaster. He is from the strongest among His servants and the noblest; and to the transgressors, more threatening than the burning fire.

And from ignorance and blemish, he is the farthest. He is Malik ibn al-Harith al-Ashtar, neither a cutting tooth nor a blunted edge. He is patient amid threats, calm and composed at the time of war. He has an original judgement and an agreeable patience. So listen to him and obey him. If he commands you to march forth, march, and if commands you to halt, halt. For he does not advance or halt except by my order. I have sent him to you in spite of my need for him, for the sake of your welfare and because of my deep concern about your adversaries. May Allah guard and protect you with guidance and keep you steadfast with Taqwa. May He bless us and you with what He likes and loves. May peace and mercy of Allah and His Blessing be upon you."

When Malik al-Ashtar completed his preparations for journey to Egypt, the spies of Mu’awiyah from Iraq wrote to inform him. He was very much distressed, because he had his eyes set on Egypt. He knew that he would lose Egypt if al-Ashtar arrived there and to him al-Ashtar was a more powerful person than the son of Abu Bakr.

So he contacted a chief who paid the revenue at a place called al-Qulzum, informing him that ‘Ali (as) has appointed al-Ashtar to govern Egypt and if you got rid of him on my behalf, I shall gift away the revenue to you for as long as you live. So plan to kill him in every way possible. Then Mu’awiyah collected the people of Syria and said: "Verily, ‘Ali has sent al-Ashtar to Egypt. Come and let us pray to Allah that He may relieve us of him." Then he prayed, and so did the people with him.

Al-Ashtar travelled on till he came to al-Qulzum. The chief received him and greeted him and then said: "I am among those who is liable to pay the revenue. And you and your companions have a right upon all that grows on my land. So be my guest and allow me to serve you and your companions and let your animals freely graze on my land, and I will count it from my liability."

So, al-Ashtar became his guest and he served him (al-Ashtar) and his companions for all their needs. And he brought to them food, including some honey, which had poison. When al-Ashtar drank from that

honey, it killed him and he died because of that.

Mu'awiyah got the news, so he collected the people of Syria and said: "Happy tidings for you! Allah, Most High, has answered your prayers; has relieved you of him and has killed him." They rejoiced.

And when the news of Ashtar's death assailed Amirul Mu'mineen, peace be upon him, he sighed and grieved, saying: "What an excellent man Malik was! Had he been a mountain, he would have been its firm rock, and had he been from stone, he would have been solid. By Allah, some men in the world will be placated by his death; but it behaves for the mourners to mourn over him."

Then he said: "We are for Allah and unto Him shall we return; and all praise to Allah, the Lord of all Universe. I shall seek reward from You for this sacrifice, for surely, his death is among the greatest worldly calamities. May Allah bless Malik with mercy; no doubt, he faithfully dispersed his charge and completed the appointed term (of life) and met his Creator; while we have reconciled ourselves to forbear every adversity after being bereaved of the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, for that was the greatest calamity."

5. Imamat, a continued covenant

He said: Abu Ghalib Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Zurari reported to me from Abdullah ibn Ja'far al-Himyari, from al-Hasan ibn 'Ali from Zakariyya, from Muhammad ibn Sinan and Yunus ibn Ya'qoob, from Abdul A'ala ibn A'ayan who said:

I heard Abu Abdillah, peace be upon him, say: "Our first one is the ushering guide to our next one, and our next one is the conformer of the first one. And among us, the tradition is constant. Surely, when Allah ordains, He implements it."

All Praise be to Allah, the Lord of all Universe and Allah
bless our master Muhammad, the Prophet and his progeny
and send peace upon them.

Al-Shaikh al-Mufid Abu Abdillah Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn al-Nu'man – may Allah perpetuate his capabilities – narrated to us on Monday, the end of Shawaal, in the year four hundred and four.

6. A recitation to open the eight gates of Paradise

He said: Abul Hasan Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ibn al-Waleed reported to me from his father, from Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Saffar, from Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Isa, from al-Husayn ibn Saeed, from Muhammad ibn al-Fudhail, from Abu al-Sabah al-Kanani, that:

Abu Abdillah Ja'far ibn Muhammad, peace be upon him said: "Whoever recites the following in the morning before sunrise, (and in the evening before sunset), Allah will open for him the eight gates of the

Paradise and he will be told: 'Enter from any gate you choose'; and he will avert from him the misfortunes of that day:"

"I testify that there is no god but Allah Alone,
and He has no partner,
and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and His messenger,
and that the religion is according to the path he showed,
and Islam is what he promulgated,
and the (true) word is what he said,
and the book is as it was revealed (to him),
and that Allah is the Evident Truth."

And then he should mention Muhammad and his progeny in a befitting good way, greeting them with peace.

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