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Twenty Ninth Assembly

Met on Wednesday, eleventh of the month of Ramadhan, in 409 Hijrah. Our grand Sheikh al-Mufid, Abu Abdillah Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn al-Nu'man, may Allah bless him with His support, narrated:–

1. Praising Allah

He said: Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Umar al-Ji'abi al-Qadhi reported to me from Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn Ibrahim, who reported from Muhammad ibn Abu al-Ambar, who reported from 'Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn Waqid, from his father, from Abu Amru ibn al-Ala, from Abdullah ibn Buraidah, from Bashir ibn Ka'b, from Shaddad ibn Aws, who said:

The Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, said: "The confirmation of faith by asserting 'there is no god but Allah' fills half of the scale, and when one expresses praise and gratitude to Allah, the scale is fully supplemented."

2. How Surah 'Al-Kafirun' was revealed

He said: Abu Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Abu Sheik reported to me with permission to report from Abu Abdillah Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Hakimi, who reported from Abdul Rahman ibn Abdillah Abu Saeed al-Basri, who reported from Wahab ibn Jareer, from his father, who reported from Muhammad ibn Ishaq ibn Yasar al-Madani, who reported from Saeed ibn Meena, from more than one companions, that:

A group of Quraish comprising of Utbah ibn Rabeeah, Umayyah ibn Khalaf, Waleed ibn al-Mughaira and al-Aas ibn Saeed once confronted the messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his progeny, saying:

"O Muhammad, let us compromise, so that we worship what you worship, and you worship what we worship, and thus both of us come to an equitable word in this matter. If the truth is with us, you will have shared it, and if the truth is with you, we will have our share from it." So Allah revealed (unto the Prophet):

***'Say, O unbelievers! I do not worship what you worship; nor do you worship what I worship; nor do I worship what you have worshipped, nor do you worship what I worship. You have your religion and I have mine.'* (al-Kafirun, 109)"**

Then once Ubay ibn Khalaf came with withered bones and crushed them in his hands. Then blowing it up, he said: "O Muhammad, do you claim that your Lord will give life to what you now see?" Then Allah revealed (unto the Prophet):

***'And he produced an equal for Us, forgetting Our creating him; he said: Who brings the bones back to life, once they are withered? Say: He who originated them the first time will bring them back to life, and He has knowledge of every creation.'* (Yasin, 36:36);**

till the end of the Surah."

3. What 'Ali (as) said to Kumail

He said: Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn al-Husayn reported to me from his father, from Muhammad ibn Abul Qasim Majeelawayh, from Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Sayrafi, from Nasr ibn Muzahim, from Amru ibn Sa'd, from Fudhail ibn Khudaij, from Kumail ibn Ziyad al-Nakh'ee who said:

Once I was with Amirul Mu'mineen in the mosque of Kufa, and when we completed our late evening prayers (i.e. Isha), he took me by his hands and came out of the mosque. He did not say a word till we arrived at the rear part of Kufa. As he entered the desert, he heaved a sigh and said:

"O Kumail, no doubt these hearts (i.e. minds) are containers, and the best of them are those who retain most. Remember from me what I say; people are of three categories: the learned men (of piety), the students on the path of salvation, and (the third one) the riffraff of the society, following every croak of the crows, bending as the wind blows; never benefiting from the light of knowledge, nor finding a refuge with a strong supporter.

O Kumail, knowledge is better than wealth; for knowledge guards you, while you have to guard wealth; and wealth is diminished when spent, while knowledge grows and increases when put in use.

O Kumail, to have liking and affinity for a learned man is the best way to entrench ones faith in Allah, it enables one to be obedient to Him during lifetime, and to be praiseworthy after one has died.

O Kumail, dividend from wealth disappears with its loss, O Kumail, the hoarders of wealth have died, while the learned men exist for ever; their bodies have disappeared but their teachings and wisdom are ingrained in the hearts."

(And then pointing to his chest, he said): "Here is well-grounded, plentiful knowledge; I wish it had true recipients and adherents, (I would have imparted it).

But, unfortunately, some unscrupulous men of understanding have tried to misuse it, using religion as a weapon to earn the worldly gain, and seeking undue power by divine authority over Allah's creatures, abusing His bounties which He bestowed upon them. So the feeble-minded people accepted them as reliable; or took them as compliant with (divine) wisdom, discarding the true guardians of truth. (The truth is that) such people (who they have adopted as their guides) have no insight into its ramifications; with the result that with the slightest confusion, doubt enters their minds. Neither of them could be the true carrier of knowledge.

And then there are those with insatiable lust, easily misled by the pleasures of flesh, or enticed by accumulating wealth, not at all among those who care for religion. They very much resemble the grazing cattle. Thus, knowledge dies with the death of such carriers.

Yet, the earth is never devoid of either a manifest divine power, or the one in concealment, ensuring that His clear signs are not lost. Surely, with those fewer people of enormous import, Allah protects His proof, till they succeed to transmit it further to their likes, and plant it deep in their hearts. They are the ones overwhelmed by the (true) knowledge of certitude, and have made it easy for themselves to tread on the path which men in luxury found difficult. They derive pleasure and enjoyment from things which repel the ignorant. Though they live on earth with their bodies, their souls hang onto the higher plane. They are the (true) representatives of Allah on His earth, and the ones who invite (people) to His religion.

Alas! How keen I am to have sight of them! And I seek forgiveness from Allah for me and for you all."

Then he {i.e. 'Ali (A.S.)} withdrew his hand from mine and said: "You may leave when you like."

4. Islam begins and ends with the Prophet and Ahlul Bayt

He said: Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Umar al-Ji'abi reported to me from 'Ali ibn Ishaq al-Makhrami, who reported from Uthman ibn Abdillah al-Shami, who reported from ibn Luhayah, from Abu Zura'h al-Hadhrami, from Umar ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, from his father, peace be upon him that:

The Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, said: "O 'Ali! With us Allah completed His religion, the same way as He initiated it, and with us He will unite your hearts (in love) after the enmity and hatred."

5. Al-Mazni's verse on patience

He said: Abu al-Tayyib al-Husayn ibn Muhammad al-Tammar reported to me from Abu Bakr ibn al-Anbari, who said that he heard 'Ali ibn Haman recite the following poem by al-Mazani:

"When I refused to accept from life all that
I abhor, I continued my reproach to it;
till I started loving it, and so comforting myself led to patience;
My affinity for misfortune taught my heart to embrace it,

though, before that, at times my heart felt distressed.
And as I despaired of the people, I turned hopeful
Of the quick reprieve from Allah, from the source I never knew."
And may Allah bless our master Muhammad and his pure progeny

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