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Twenty Sixth Assembly

Met on 22nd of the month of Ramadhan in the year 409 Hijrah. Narrations heard by Abul Fawaris alone. Our grand Sheikh al-Mufid, Abu Abdillah Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn al-Nu'man – may Allah bless him, said:

1. Imam 'Ali (as)'s Testament

He said: Abu Hafs Umar ibn Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Sayrafi, commonly known as Ibn al-Zayyat, reported to me from Abu 'Ali Muhammad ibn Hammam al-Iskafi, who reported from Ja'far ibn Muhammad ibn Malik, who reported from Ahmad ibn Salamah al-Ghanawi, who reported from Muhammad ibn al-Husayn al-Ameri, who reported from Abu Muammar, who reported from Abu Bakr ibn Ayyash, from al-Fujay' al-Aqilee who said:

Al-Hasan ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Talib reported me that when my father was nearing his death, he began to enjoy, saying:

"This is testified by 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, the brother of Muhammad, messenger of Allah, his cousin, his successor and his companion. My first testament is that, I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that, Muhammad is His messenger and His chosen one. He chose him by His knowledge and by His selection. And that Allah will resurrect all those in the graves and take the account of their deeds from the people; and He knows what they conceal in the hearts.

Now, I enjoy upon you, O Hasan and you are a sufficient successor, all that the messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his progeny, enjoined me to do.

When things are as they are, make it a habit to remain indoors and weep over your lapses. And do not let the worldly affairs become your main worry. And I enjoy upon you to perform daily prayers at their right time and to pay alms to the deserving people on the right occasion; and to remain silent when in doubt, and to maintain a balance in your acts, and to be just when pleased or angry, and to observe good neighbourliness and to be cordial to the guest, and kind to the one in difficulty and those in

adversity, and to keep good relation with the kinsmen, and to love the poor and to give them company, and to remain humble, for that is the best form of worship, and to cut short your long deluding hopes and to remember death and to detach yourself from the worldly distraction, for indeed you are mortgaged to death, targeted by afflictions and illnesses.

And I enjoy upon you to be in fear of Allah in your private as well as public affairs; and forbid you to be impetuous in speech and act. And when any matter concerning the life hereafter springs up before you, initiate it; and when any matter related to this world comes up, be patient till you are rightly guided about it. And refrain from being at places where you can be accused (of evil), and avoid the company of those who are known for the vices. Surely, an evil companion influences a change over his associate.

O my son, always work for Allah and restrain from obscenity; and enjoy good and forbid evil. Promote brotherhood among friends for the sake of Allah; and love a righteous man for his virtue. Divert the sinful from (tampering with) your faith, and abhor him with your heart and break away from him by your deeds, so that you do not become like him.

And avoid sitting in the streets and hold back from arguments and disputations with those who neither have wisdom nor knowledge. Be economic in your living and also maintain a balance in your acts of devotion and worship; adopting among them that which you can perform with regularity. Remain silent and you will be saved, and send forth in advance for yourself and you will benefit. Learn the ways of good and you will know, and always remember Allah. And be kind to the tender ones in your family and show reverence to the older ones. And do not eat any food till you have given away from it in charity before eating it.

And have a habit of fasting, for that is the purification of the body and a shield for its people. Fight your base desires, warn your friends, avoid your enemies and attend the gatherings where Allah is remembered. Be frequent in your supplications, for I am not going to be back for advising you – and this indeed is the parting between us.

And I enjoy upon you to be kind to Muhammad, who is your brother; the son of your father. And you know how much I love him.

And as for your brother al-Husayn, he is your mother's son; and I do not wish to add anything to that. I leave you in the care of Allah and to Him I pray for your well being and beseech Him to save you from the rebellious despots. I enjoy upon you patience, patience, till Allah decrees His command and there is no might but by Allah, Most High, Most Powerful."

2. Abu Layla seeks clarification from 'Ali (as)

He said: Abul Hasan 'Ali ibn Muhammad al-Katib reported to me from al-Hasan ibn 'Ali al-Za'arani, who reported from Abu Ishaq Ibrahim ibn Muhammad al-Thaqafi, who reported from al-Mas'oodi, who

reported from Muhammad ibn Katheer, from Yahya ibn Hammad al-Qattan, who reported from Abu Muhammad al-Hadhrami, from Abu 'Ali al-Hamdani, that once Abdul Rahman ibn Abu Layla called upon Amirul Mu'mineen 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, peace be upon him and said:

"O Amirul Mu'mineen! I want to ask you so as to learn from you, (though) we have waited (for long) to hear you say something about your matter, but you never said anything. Would you not tell us whether it was a covenant from the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, or was it something you had opined? We have had a lot of false sayings about you! However, we have found what we have to accept from you and what we have heard from your mouth is most reliable. Indeed, some of us say that if Caliphate were to return to you after the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, no one would have disputed with you.

By Allah, I do not know what to reply if asked. Should I consider that the people who took over were more worthy than you? And if I say so, then for what purpose did the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, appoint you at the Farewell pilgrimage, when he said: 'O People, of whosoever I am the Master, 'Ali is also his Master.' So, if you were worthier for the authority than them, then on what score should we accept their authority?"

Amirul Mu'mineen, peace be upon him, said: "O Abdul Rahman, surely, when Allah, Most High, called back His Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, I was worthiest of all people for the authority. But I had a covenant with the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, as a result of which I had to submit to the will of Allah even if they were to lead me by the nose.

Surely, the first loss that was sustained was the invalidating of our right in Khums; and when our position was weakened, then the herdsmen of Quraish pounced upon us with greed. Thus, the people were indebted to us, and if they had voluntarily returned to me my rights, I would have accepted and managed it, even for a stipulated time.

So I lived among them as a creditor, for a stipulated time. If they paid back earlier, the creditor would repossess his goods and thank them; and if they delayed it, he would take it without considering them deserving any gratitude. So, I was like a person accepting easy terms, yet living among them full of grief.

The right guidance is identified by a small group of people who accept it. So when I am silent, excuse me. And if the time comes when you need my reply, I shall reply you. So withhold from me what I have withheld from you!"

Then Abdul Rahman said: "O Amirul Mu'mineen, by your soul, you are like the one of whom the earlier poet said:

*"By your soul, you have indeed awakened the one who was asleep
and you have caused the one with two ears to hear."*

3. Nabighah al-Ja'diy

He said: Abu al-Tayyib al-Husayn ibn Muhammad al-Nahwiyy reported to me from Muhammad ibn al-Hasan, who reported from Abu Hatim, from Abu Ubaidah who said:

Nabighah al-Ja'diy was a monotheist even in the pre-Islamic era, rejecting all wines and intoxicants and avoiding idol worshipping and fortune telling as abominations. And among his statements during the pre-Islamic era is what he said:

*"All Praise be to Allah, Who has no associate,
Whoever does not say so, wrongs himself."*

He professed the religion of Ibrahim and was Hanif, always praying and fasting, abstaining from things in which people indulged. And he called upon the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, and said:

*"I have come to the messenger of Allah, as he came with guidance;
And recites the Book, (the wisdom of which is) spread like a constellation;
And I tried my best together with my companions, but failed to see,
the Canopus star as it rose and then disappeared;
And I have adopted the path of Taqwa, fearing no disbeliever,
and have always held back from the fearful fire."*

He said: Nabighah was inclined towards 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (as) and after the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, he left to meet Amirul Mu'mineen (as) at the battle of Siffin. He arrived at night and was straitened to see the situation. So he said:

*"Both the Misrs (i.e. Egypt and Hijaz) and Iraq know well, that 'Ali is its highborn;
He is the brilliant master and of pure nobility,
His mother is the one for whom dowry became high;
The most honourable among those for whom one may tighten his belt,

The others may be your contemporaries but can not excel.
They have their own field, and you have your own.
And your companions have distinguished them;
you have led to the path of true guidance.
While they have led to a group where hypocrisy is the way of life."*

4. Virtue and nobility

He said: Abul Qasim Ja'far ibn Muhammad ibn Qawlawayh – may Allah bless him with mercy, reported to me from 'Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn Musa ibn Babawayh, who reported from 'Ali ibn Ibrahim ibn Hashim, from Ahmed ibn Muhammad ibn Isa, from al-Haytham ibn Abi Masrooq al-Nahdi, from Yazid ibn Ishaq, from

al-Husayn ibn Atiyyah, that:

Abu Abdillah Ja'far ibn Muhammad, peace be upon him, said: "Nobility and virtue has ten characteristics and if you can acquire them, do your best. For a man may have them and his son may not. Or a son may have them, while the father may not. A slave may have them, while a free man may not." They asked: "What are those traits, O son of the messenger of Allah?"

He said: "Truthful speech, faith at the time of hardship and peril, honesty and trustworthiness, mending relations with the consanguinal kith and kin, hospitality, feeding the beggar, to be rewarding and grateful for a good turn, to protect the neighbour, to protect the friend and above all, to be bashful and modest."

5. Six great virtues

He said: Abul Hasan 'Ali ibn Khalid al-Maraghi reported to me from Al-Qasim ibn Muhammad ibn Hammad, who reported from Ubaid ibn Ya'eesh, who reported from Yunus ibn Bukair, who reported from Yahya ibn Abi Hayyah Abu Janab al-Kalbi, from Abu al-Aliyah, who said:

I heard Abu Amamah say: I heard the messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his progeny, say: "There are six great virtues. If a person was to act on any one of them, it would prevail on his or her behalf on the day of Judgement till it enters him the Paradise; saying: 'O Lord, this person had acted upon me during his or her lifetime on earth.' They are: Daily prayers, almsgiving, Haj, fasting, trustworthiness and mending relations with the consanguinal relatives."

6. The conclusive authority of Allah

He said: Abul Qasim Ja'far ibn Muhammad reported to me from Muhammad ibn Abdillah ibn Ja'far al-Himyari, from his father, from Harun ibn Muslim, from Mas'adah ibn Ziyad, who said:

I heard Ja'far ibn Muhammad, peace be upon him, say when he was asked about the verse in Qu'ran:

'To Allah belongs the conclusive authority' (6: 149),

he said: "Surely, Allah, Most High, will ask His slave on the Day of Reckoning: 'O my slave, were you learned?' If he said: 'Yes,' Allah would say: 'Did you not act according to your knowledge?' And if he said: 'I was unlearned, ignorant'; Allah would say: 'Did you not acquire knowledge so that you could act accordingly?' That will be the time of His argument against him and that is the conclusive authority."

And may Allah bless our master Muhammad and his progeny.

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