



Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura

Friday Sermon

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Lessons from The Story of Habil and

Qabil

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا
وَدَاعِيًا إِلَى اللَّهِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَسِرَاجًا مُنِيرًا وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ
وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدَهُ وَرَسُولَهُ
وَصَفِيُّ اللَّهِ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ وَحَبِيبُهُ إِمَامُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَسَيِّدُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ اللَّهُمَّ
صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلِّمْ تَسْلِيمًا كَثِيرًا.
أَمَّا بَعْدُ فَيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ
مُسْلِمُونَ

Blessed Friday Jemaah,

On this blessed day let us reflect upon ourselves and strive to strengthen our iman and taqwa to Allah s.w.t. May Allah s.w.t. accept all our deeds and efforts – no matter how small or imperfect they may be – as sincere acts of worship. Amin.

Respected Jemaah,

As we are still in the blessed month of Zulhijjah, let us take some time to reflect upon the story of the sons of Prophet Adam a.s., Habil and Qabil, and the sacrifices that they offered to Allah s.w.t.. Allah s.w.t. mentioned the tragic story of Habil and Qabil in Surah Al-Maaidah, verse 27:

﴿ وَأَتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ ابْنَيْ آدَمَ بِالْحَقِّ إِذْ قَرَّبَا قُرْبَانًا فَتُقْبِلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمَا وَلَمْ يُقْبَلْ مِنَ الْآخَرِ قَالَ لَأَقْتُلَنَّكَ ۗ قَالَ إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴾

Meaning: *“And recite to them the story of Adam's two sons, in truth, when they both offered a sacrifice [to Allah], and it was accepted from one of them but was not accepted from the other. Said [the latter], "I will surely kill you." Said [the former], "Indeed, Allah only accepts from the righteous [who fear Him].”*

Jemaah, we are all familiar with how this story ends; Habil's sacrifice was accepted by Allah s.w.t., whereas the sacrifice offered by Qabil was not, due to various shortcomings. The Quran then told us how Qabil, driven by jealousy and anger towards Habil over this incident, then decided to kill his own brother.

Jemaah, there are several lessons that we can learn from this story. **First: Sincerity is a key factor in determining Allah's acceptance of our deeds.**

Jemaah, noble intentions and a sincere heart will not only help us to get our deeds accepted by Allah s.w.t., but it will also enhance the quality of our worship and make us appreciate the wisdom behind every deed. The Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. mentioned in a famous hadith:

إنما الأعمال بالنيات، وإنما لكل امرئ ما نوى فمن كانت هجرته إلى الله
ورسوله فهجرته إلى الله ورسوله، ومن كانت هجرته لدنيا يصيبها، أو
امرأة ينكحها فهجرته إلى ما هاجر إليه

Meaning: *“Actions are according to intentions, and everyone will get what was intended. Whoever migrates with an intention for Allah and His messenger, the migration will be for the sake of Allah and his Messenger. And whoever migrates for worldly gain or to marry a woman, then his migration will be for the sake of whatever he migrated for.”* [Hadith reported by Imam Bukhari and Muslim]

For example, someone who understands the essence of marriage, and is blessed with loving children, will fulfil his or her responsibilities as a dedicated parent with full conviction. The same can be applied in the workplace. A team member or a leader who is dedicated and hardworking in fulfilling his/her

responsibility will be focused and determined. He/she will be confident in his/her objectives and will execute them well. Such individuals are valuable assets in any organization or firm. Essentially, all these begins with a sincere intention.

The Second Lesson: Human beings are easily attracted to hatred and violence.

Jemaah, the story of the two sons of Prophet Adam a.s. teaches us a valuable lesson on the status of our hearts and how it requires constant nourishment of good values and positive characters. A heart that is void of goodness will in turn be replaced with *mazmumah* or negative traits such as vengeance, jealousy, enmity and hostility. Allah s.w.t mentions in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 30:

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

Meaning: “And [mention, O Muhammad], when your Lord said to the angels, “Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority.” They said, “Will You place upon it one who causes corruption therein and sheds blood, while we declare Your praise and sanctify You?” Allah said, “Indeed, I know that which you do not know.”

Blessed Jemaah,

The story of the two sons of Prophet Adam a.s. is telling us that the earth is an arena between the good and the evil, between those who desire goodness and truth, and those who seek evil and destruction. This reality has existed since the early days of human history. The truth will prevail ever so often, yet sadly, evil gets the upper hand occasionally. This perpetual battle will continue until Allah s.w.t. grants this earth to His servants who love peace, tranquillity, and goodness. Allah s.w.t. mentions in Surah Al-Anbiya' verse 105:

وَلَقَدْ كَتَبْنَا فِي الزَّبُورِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الذِّكْرِ أَنَّ الْأَرْضَ يَرِثُهَا
عِبَادِي الصَّالِحُونَ

Meaning: *“And We have already written in the book [Zabur] after the [previous] mention that the land [of Paradise] is inherited by My righteous servants.”*

The state of our global affairs today shows that in many parts of the world, peace and harmony can be established. Nevertheless, there are areas in the world today which remain engulfed in conflicts and warfare. We acknowledge that it is indeed a complex phenomenon. Conflicts do not necessarily occur on the basis of religion. Factors such as politics, cultural and ethnic differences, economic interests and unresolved historical issues contribute to the cause of conflicts. The quest

for a peaceful solution cannot be achieved in a blink of an eye – negotiations requires time and patience as it involves various parties with conflicting interests.

Therefore, Islam teaches us two important lessons when faced with such challenges.

Firstly: Efforts to find solutions require meticulous planning, conducted in a state of calmness, and following the path which leads to peace and goodness.

Secondly: We have to be objective and not allow emotions and anger to overcome our judgement. An excerpt from the hadith of Rasulullah s.a.w. goes as such:

وَتَلَاثٌ مُنْجِيَاتٌ : خَشْيَةُ اللَّهِ فِي السِّرِّ وَالْعَلَانِيَةِ ، وَالْقَصْدُ فِي الْفَقْرِ
وَالْغِنَى ، وَالْعَدْلُ فِي الْغَضَبِ وَالرِّضَا

Meaning: “...As for the three things that save, they are: the fear of Allah in secret and public, and moderation in poverty and richness, and fairness in anger and pleasure.” [Hadith narrated by Ibn Hibban]

It is easy for irresponsible parties to leverage on the conflicts surrounding Muslims as a tool to pit us against non-Muslims. In fact, heart-wrenching photos of victims are circulated to stoke the flames of hatred in Muslims against other members of the community, although in reality, they are not directly involved in those conflicts. In these instances, we hope that the Islamic

values that we have been instilled with, will guide us and our families in addressing these conflicts.

Let us raise our hands and pray to Allah s.w.t. and ask Him to restore peace and tranquillity to countries that are engulfed in war and conflict. May Allah s.w.t. grant peaceful solutions to all parties involved. May He continue to grant peace and prosperity to us, and specifically to our region. Amin ya Rabbal Alamin.

بَارَكَ اللهُ لِي وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ، وَنَفَعَنِي وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ
الآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ، وَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ
الْعَلِيمُ، أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ الْعَظِيمَ لِي وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ
الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ فَيَا
فَوْزَ الْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ وَيَا نَجَاةَ التَّائِبِينَ.