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Echad: The Necessity for Unity

We at 119 Ministries know that those who teach will indeed be held to a higher standard in judgment. And we acknowledge that we are teachers trying to pursue what’s right. But you must understand that our attitude is always that we are just fellow brothers who are simply sharing our findings along the way, fellow beggars, if you will, just showing others where the bread is.

We are grateful for this opportunity to share with the Body and we want to say thank you for watching our teachings and joining us in testing everything. We know that there are many views in understanding the scriptures. And it is because of that very fact that we wanted to make this message.

We recorded a teaching early in our ministry titled “Divided by Truth or United in Error.” This whole teaching is focused on the division that comes between those who accept the Word and those who hold to the teachings of men.

The teaching is based on Matthew chapter 10 where Yeshua says in verse 34, [“Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.”](#)

The sword He is referring to is obviously the Word. Thus, it is the eternal Word that is to be the foundation of our faith. Yet, have you ever been presenting the truth of the Word to someone, and suddenly they change the topic to how we should keep the unity of the body? This begs the question: Are we to compromise truth for the sake of unity or is truth to be the source of our unity?

What is the Biblical definition and calling of unity?

Yeshua brought the Eternal Word and rebuked those who set aside the Word to follow after the traditions of man, just like we find in Mark 7. Compare:

Mark 7:8-9

[You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men. And he said to them: You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions!](#)

Thus, the purpose of that teaching is showing how we should not be surprised of the sharp division that comes from those who wish to continue in the traditions of man when you choose to pursue the eternal Word. However, we have noticed a trend that has been growing stronger and building momentum in the body of Messiah over the recent years. This trend is that of the willingness and heartfelt obligation to part ways from those who interpret the eternal word differently than themselves. And yet for some, it's not always the interpretation of the Word that brings division. For some people, it could be a topic that is completely silent in the Scriptures.

We receive many e-mails every day. We once had an individual contact us to inform us that an image we used in a teaching regarding the Ark of the Covenant was wrong and that if we didn't change it that they would stop sharing our teachings.

We were greatly saddened by this. Not so much that this individual wouldn't share our teachings but rather that this person was so willing to break fellowship with us because of an opinion of how the Ark of the Covenant looked. There are several opinions on how the ark could have looked. And who is to say just who is really right? And more than that, where in the Scriptures does it tell us to break fellowship with an individual because they believe the ark looks different from what they believe it looks like?

If there is ever a time for unity in the body of Messiah, it's now more than ever. Yet now is the time that it seems to be crumbling all around us.

While in the modern church, I saw many "in house" debates. Debates such as these were what created separate groups of opinions and in some cases was the cause of different denominations all together. Yet in all those differences, there was a common unity because they all knew they were pursuing the same God. Hardly ever did I personally hear harsh slander or defaming towards others who differed with them. Yet today, with those who are pursuing Torah, the opinion of "It's my way or the highway" seems to overrule any and all differences of opinions. There are many points of division. Like those of the name (how to say it, should we avoid the transliterations), the Calendar (sliver, conjunction or Hillel), can the first month start before the equinox or does it have to start after it? What translation should we use? Is there a Hell? Is there really a lake of fire? And the ever heated debate of the trinity.

We understand that there are differences of opinions. Truly we do. And it's obvious that someone must be right and someone must be wrong on these topics. Yet it seems to us that slandering others dishonors His name far more than them pronouncing it wrong or holding something in error.

Are these topics reasons that the scriptures tell us to break fellowship over? Consider:

1 Corinthians 13:9-10

[For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears.](#)

Think about that. "We know in Part." This means that we don't know it all. This is Paul talking 2000 years ago. How much more do we know in PART now? Let's continue:

1 Corinthians 13:11-12

[When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. NOW we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. NOW I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully](#)

known.

We at 119 Ministries truly believe that everyone is right on something and everyone is wrong on something. We all currently see but a poor reflection, but when Yeshua returns, He will make everything clear.

But until then, we need one another all the more to help each other in the walk of pursuing the WHOLE Word of God. And we must understand that it's OK that we differ here or there. In fact, it's only common that we differ on some things and it should really be expected to disagree. If someone differs with us on how one should pursue a certain element of the Torah, we are NOT offended. We're just excited that they are pursuing the Torah and not rejecting it like so many others are indeed doing today.

We do not condemn anyone for pursuing Torah differently than we do. And we pray that no one condemns us for pursuing Torah differently than they are.

Some are all too willing to separate fellowship and even look down or mock others who pursue the Father's Holy Days on different days from them. In fact, one individual told us that a curse is on us because we don't follow the Holy Days the same as they do.

When in reality, the Father's Holy days CANNOT be FULLY observed in obedience today by ANYONE. Did you hear that? The Father's Holy Days CANNOT be observed in FULL obedience today by ANYONE.

For the most part, we can only memorialize them. Remember them. NO where in the Scriptures do we find a commandment to memorialize them correctly.

The biggest issue we find in the calendar is the timing for the High Sabbaths, which is indeed something that CAN be obeyed. So having that said, there is indeed a cause to pursue the right calendar to observe the correct High Sabbaths.

It is in this that we perfectly understand the willingness to observe the Holy Days differently from others if you believe that they are observing them on the wrong days. But our concern is when someone will mock or ridicule others for not observing the same days that they are observing.

A couple years ago, we had some friends who came and celebrated Sukkot with us. However, they celebrated it a day off from us. Our friends knew that we celebrated it a day off from them. We knew that they celebrated it a day off from us. But we didn't let this difference keep us from supporting one another and growing from each other's fellowship together.

Neither side ridiculed or looked down on the other. We simply disagreed. We briefly discussed it at one point but that was it. There are just so many topics to reason on and discuss. We felt it didn't make sense to part ways on one opinion that will most likely be debated 'til Yeshua returns. When He returns, He'll set us all straight.

But until then, to divide over or even declare curses on someone because they are remembering His days on a different calendar than you, truly seems counterproductive to the purpose of the body of Messiah.

We cannot ridicule or put down any other messianic Torah believer for different calendar dates, 12 hour or 24 hour sabbath, or anything of the like. We've seen so many people devouring one another over

these subjects that it has saddened us to an overwhelming degree. Sure, we all have our stances on these topics as to what we believe is wrong or right. But if you believe your brother, who has accepted that the Torah is truly for us to pursue today, is indeed wrong on something, should you condemn them or pray for them? Should we blatantly rebuke them with intent to shame or prove wrong, or should we ask the Father to reveal His way for all of us?

None of us, and I mean NONE of us are 100% accurate on everything. I personally believe that these things are difficult to work out BECAUSE it could actually be revealing our heart. No one wants to be wrong. And when challenged, the first normal, knee jerk reaction is a prideful "I'm not wrong."

Yet, ultimately what really matters is that we have a desire to keep His Feasts and keep them on the right days along with His Sabbaths. Our heart is to keep the Torah. That is our desire. This is the first and greatest accomplishment. Having the DESIRE to obey ALL the Word of God. Working it out into action is obviously the next.

Yet, if we keep bringing His appointed times down to silly arguments and vicious biting of each other, then we have completely missed the point. That point is to walk humbly before our God.

James 1:21

Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

Humbly accept. Not boastfully declare. Not pridefully point the finger. But humbly accept.

Consider also:

Micah 6:8

He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does (Yahweh) the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

Act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with God.

Walk HUMBLY with your God. Not boastfully, not pridefully, but rather humbly. If someone does not hold to the same view of the Scriptures as you, that's OK. Walk humbly with your God.

And let us not forget the first two, to act justly and love mercy. Is condemning someone or complaining about others for not holding to the exact same beliefs as you acting justly or even loving mercy? Hardly.

Complaining about it to others will get you nowhere. In fact, if it's worth complaining over, it's worth FAR more praying over! Don't plant a root of bitterness in your fellow brothers and sisters by complaining to them about others. Take the matter to the Father.

Complaining drives the mind to focus on the problem. Praying drives the mind to focus on the problem solver. And just as praying changes US more than it changes our circumstances, so does complaining. So don't complain, don't grumble against, don't cut down. Pray.

Have you ever wondered what complaining stems from? If we really break it down, it stems from life not going the way WE think it should. There's really no other reason to complain. We are simply trying to force our opinion above our circumstances or the opinions of others. That's really it.

Let me say that again. If we really break it down, complaining stems from life not going the way WE think it should. There's really no other reason to complain. We are simply trying to force our opinion above our circumstances or the opinions of others.

And when we try to force our own opinions over others, it only divides. That's all it ever does. So the next time you find yourself trying to force your opinion on someone else, please remember the phrase, "When you force things, you break things."

Perhaps that's why we see Paul saying to the Romans:

Romans 12:3

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.

Consider what Paul said to the church in Philippi.

Philippians 2:3

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.

Can we really cut others down if we are considering them better than ourselves? Can we really slander or try to humiliate someone if we are considering them better than ourselves? No. However, we CAN share with them our perspective of the scriptures and reason together. AND if we still differ with them afterwards, we can agree to disagree and pray that the Father helps us ALL to learn and grow together. Consider what Paul says to the church in Philippi in chapter 2.

Philippians 2:14-16

¹⁴ Do everything without complaining or arguing, ¹⁵ so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe ¹⁶ as you hold out the word of life — in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing.

"Do everything without complaining or arguing"

If others disagree with you, pray. Do everything without complaining or arguing.

All too often we have seen where disagreements arise and suddenly it becomes an issue of who is more spiritual than the other because their perspective is right and all the others are wrong. To which we believe could have been the very issue that Paul addressed to the Church at Corinth when he said:

1Corinthians 11:17-19

¹⁷ In the following directives I have no praise for you, for your meetings do more harm than good. ¹⁸ In the first place, I hear that when you come together as a church, there are divisions among you, and to some extent I believe it. ¹⁹ No doubt there have to be differences among you to show which of you have God's approval.

Is your attitude to prove yourself right? Thus, trying to prove that YOU have His approval?

Are we to seek God's approval? Of course! It should be our desire to please Him every moment of the day. But we don't see how slandering, defaming or arguing with others who are pursuing the Torah differently could be pleasing to the Father either.

The prophets of old preached repentance to those who rejected the law, not to those who pursued it. It's one thing to reject it. It's a completely different situation to be pursuing it in error. If you believe a brother, or sister, is in error, reason with them. And regardless of the outcome, pray for them.

We are NOT belittling the fact that we should be pursuing the RIGHT way. Not at all. That should be the desire in all of us. We simply want to bring out that if there is a disagreement in HOW something should be obeyed the "right way," that we should be willing to disagree out of love and at least rejoice that those who we disagree with are attempting to PURSUE the right way. And then pray that they keep searching the scriptures for clarity on the matter. And, if I may add, pray that we keep an open heart to be willing to change our own perspectives if needed.

It's all about love.

Allow me to go back and read from 1 Corinthians 13 again to focus on a verse that we have not covered yet.

1 Corinthians 13:9-12

⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰ but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. ¹¹ When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. ¹² NOW we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. NOW I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

And now verse 13:

1 Corinthians 13:13

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

It's time to LOVE. You don't have to accept someone else's views. But you can't reject them just because their views of pursuing the Father's ways are different than yours. At least they are pursuing His ways. If they are pursuing HIS ways and not the traditions of man, what grounds do you have for dividing? Just pursue differently on those matters and walk after the Father together as much as possible.

The day will come when Yeshua will arrive and straighten us all out. We all have something right and we all have something wrong. And He will teach us all the correct way in every aspect.

No one is required to CHANGE someone else's mind. All we can do is present what we believe and move on while being willing and open to change when presented the Word in a rebuttal.

Consider the words of the Father through Isaiah.

Isaiah 1:18

"Come now, let us reason together," says (Yahweh) the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet,

they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.”

“Come now, let us reason together.”

Even the Father seeks to reason and not just “set us straight.” Yet He is clearly the ONLY one in the right. So even here we see that He sets us an example in trying to work with others and not dictate to others.

Our heart’s desire should be to please the Father and not just be right! And we need to pray for others to have that same desire. As a dear fellow Torah teacher once said, we have to get OUR hearts right first. OUR hearts, not everyone else's.

Once our heart is right before Him, we begin our journey of obedience. Learning and growing with one another, humbly helping and humbly receiving help.

So why divide? Can we not just differ? If one rejects the Torah, then the reasoning could at least be better understood. But because one pursues Torah differently on a few topics, where is the grounds for separation? Just keep pursuing and differ on these few topics.

Psalm 133:1

How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity!

Does it say “agree in unity”? No. It says to live in unity. What happened to the phrase, “agree to disagree”?

What are the odds of walking side by side with someone while being in 100% agreement on everything in the Scriptures? This will ONLY happen when Yeshua returns and sets us all straight.

We all have different gifts, talents and abilities. When we reject someone in the faith because they don’t interpret the Torah the way we do, we’re not only hurting them, we’re hurting ourselves. We are neglecting so many opportunities of growing deeper in the faith when we reject a fellow brother or sister in the Lord for a disagreement that may not bear as much weight as we make it out to. I can’t help but think of the time when a teacher of the law came to Yeshua.

Luke 10:25-26

²⁵ On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

²⁶ “What is written in the Law?” He replied. “How do you read it?”

“How do you read it?” I absolutely LOVE this. “How do you read it?”

Meaning what? There were most likely SEVERAL ways to “read it.” Several that it could have been interpreted pending one’s viewpoint.

Luke 10: 27-28

²⁷ He answered: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind”; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

²⁸ “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

We are all pursuing the Torah. Can we not agree on that? Is there any of us correct on everything? No. Not at all. We are all right on something and we are all wrong on something. So let us pray for wisdom and insight and work together until He returns. It will be far more enjoyable for us all in this journey as we pursue His Eternal Word.

Even if we celebrate certain days a little differently here or there or view other elements of the Torah from a different perspective, we still truly NEED one another.

1 Corinthians 12:14-27

¹⁴ Now the body is not made up of one part but of many.

¹⁵ If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body.

¹⁶ And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body.

¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be?

¹⁸ But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.

¹⁹ If they were all one part, where would the body be?

²⁰ As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!"

²² On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable,

²³ and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty,

²⁴ while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it,

²⁵ so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.

²⁶ If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

We are the body of Messiah. We need one another.

Have we forgotten that love covers a multitude of sins? Are we not to love one another?

Think about the 12 disciples. They were so diverse from the beginning. Think about it. We have Simon the Zealot next to Matthew the tax collector. Simon is all about overthrowing Rome while Matthew is aiding Rome. Talk about tension in the room. But over the course of Yeshua's ministry on earth they learned to love one another and focus on learning His ways and helping others to do the same.

Have we truly become like the Pharisees and Sadducees that become so easily and sharply divided at a moment's notice? Consider how Paul so easily divided them in Acts 23.

Acts 23:6-10

⁶ Then Paul, knowing that some of them were Sadducees and the others Pharisees, called out in the Sanhedrin, "My brothers, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee. I stand on trial because of my hope in the resurrection of the dead." ⁷ When he said this, a dispute broke out between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the assembly was divided. ⁸ (The Sadducees say that there is no

resurrection, and that there are neither angels nor spirits, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.)
⁹ There was a great uproar, and some of the teachers of the law who were Pharisees stood up and argued vigorously. "We find nothing wrong with this man," they said. "What if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?" ¹⁰ The dispute became so violent that the commander was afraid Paul would be torn to pieces by them. He ordered the troops to go down and take him away from them by force and bring him into the barracks.

If Paul divided these two groups so easily over the topic of the resurrection, how easily is the enemy dividing us over these other topics? To differ is one thing, but to divide is another. And when we are divided, we cannot stand.

Please know that we are NOT asking anyone to accept someone regardless of his or her beliefs. But there is a difference between one who rejects the Torah in Messiah and one who is trying to pursue Torah in Messiah. We are NOT to follow any man besides Yeshua Himself. He is our Shepherd to whom we are to look. No one else.

1 Corinthians 11:3

Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

The order has been established. Let us join together under HIS leadership as much as we can.

May none of us ever reject someone in Messiah who is pursuing the Torah in obedience to the great Shepherd with all their heart because they pursue it differently on a few points than ourselves. We are all walking the same path. We are just at different levels, learning different things at different times. As Philippians 2 says, we are to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. May it be our heart's desire to pray for others to do the same.

As we've once heard someone say, "More important than being 'right' is being 'right before Yahweh!'"

May we always have a heart that reaches out in prayer for one another. God knows, we all need it. We hope you have enjoyed this message. Remember, continue to test everything.

Shalom.

For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

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