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A Unified Division

The Pasuk says **יחד גם אחים** שבת אחים גם יחד, how good and how pleasant is the dwelling of brothers, moreover, in unity.¹ How pleasant it is to Hashem when Jews get along. The word **גם** seems unnecessary.

There can be Jews sitting together but since each has their opinions and outlooks, there is a unity lacking. It of course is greater when they are in unity although they have different views and opinions.² The Pasuk can be understood as how good and pleasant it is to Hashem when Jews sit together (**שבת אחים**) although (**גם**) they have differences, as **יחד** is an acronym for **יש חלוקי דעות**, there are differences of opinion.

In a similar vein, R' Dovid Kviat (1920-2009) explained the word **גם** in this Pasuk. The Gemara³ tells us that Beis Shamai rules that if one gave a *zonah* wheat kernels as her payment and someone made them into flour or olives made into olive oil or grapes into wine, it is still prohibited for a Karbon. Why does Beis Shamai hold it is prohibited even after they have undergone a change? Because it says the word **גם** there in the Pasuk and this comes to include their changed forms—**גם לרבות שינוייהם**. The word **יחד** in **יחד גם יחד** includes

שינוייהם, Jews of all types—Ashkenazim, Sefardim, Chassidim, etc.⁴

We may sometimes let little differences get in the way of our unity. We must internalize that what connects is far more important and vital than what divides us.⁵ If a person is Jewish enough for the Nazis to send him to the gas chambers then he is Jewish enough to be loved.

R' Kalman Krohn was once in a cab in Israel driven by an anti-religious driver. Although R' Kalman tried to be friendly, the driver was very curt and abrupt. Suddenly, in middle of the ride, R' Kalman told the driver "we are brothers." With hostility, the driver retorted "we are not brothers. You are religious and I am not." R' Kalman replied, "my rebbe taught me that we are brothers." Who is that, the driver inquired. The response: "Hitler. He didn't differentiate between those who were religious and those who weren't. He killed them all."

The Ahavas Yisrael of Viznitz would say that one must be good to everyone but not with everyone!!! That is to say, one must be friendly to everyone but not be friends with everyone.

Real Reliance

מן represents Parnassa and as the Yerushalmi states one who says the **פרשה** of **מן** every day is assured that his food won't be lacking.⁶ The Levush says it teaches us that Hashem provides each day's sustenance just as He did with the **מן** each day in the Midbar. Indeed, on Tuesday Parshas Beshalach we say **פרשת המן** as a Segula for Parnassa. We are told in regard to the **מן** that everyone gathered according to how much he eats whether they took more or less. The portion for everyone was the same: an Omer.⁷ The same applies with Parnassa as it is fixed from Rosh Hashanah whether we put in more effort or not.⁸ This is alluded to in the custom of dipping our Challah in honey: our Parnassa is set from Rosh Hashana and the **מן** represents reliance on Hashem. In regard to the **מן** (symbolizing Challah⁹) it says **כצפיחת בדבש**, like a cake fried in honey.¹⁰ Dipping the Challah in honey represents that we rely on Hashem for Parnassa. Is it any

⁴ R' Asher Weiss once described the perfect Jew: One with a chassidishe heart, a litvish mind, the integrity and honesty of a yekke, kavod hatorah of a sefardi and the love of Eretz Yisrael of a dati leumi Jew.

⁵ A Chabad rabbi told a Jew who observed Shabbos, Kashrus and a few other mitzvos that we agree on many more issues than we disagree on. And the things that we agree on are much more important than the things we disagree on. We agree on the value of human life. We agree that Hashem is unique, that He created the Universe and that the continued existence of the world depends on His Will.

⁶ It is interesting to note the word **מן** and money sound similar as if they are related.

⁷ Shemos 16:17 Rashi, 16:18.

⁸ Beitza 16a. R' Yeruchem in Daas Torah, Beshalach, 16:4.

⁹ As this is a reason for Lechem Mishna on Shabbos and as it says **לקטו לחם משנה** (Mishna Brura, Hilchos Shabbos 274:1).

¹⁰ Shemos 16:31.

¹ Tehillim 133:1.

² It has been said, "we don't have to agree with each other but we have to be there for each other."

³ Baba Kamma 65b.

surprise that מן is from the term אמונה?! Indeed, מן הוא¹¹ comprises the word אמונה. We are taught it is called מן because מן הוא¹²—meaning it is beyond intellect, complete Emuna.¹³

With acquiring this Emuna one attains the proper outlook. In the town of Brisk a fire broke out and it seemed a neighboring store would be burned down. The investor told the storeowner I'll buy half of your goods for a cheaper price and if your store burns down, I'll lose out. However, if it doesn't then I gain. He declined the offer. In the end the store didn't burn down making the owner feel smart and arrogant. R' Chaim Brisker said really what he did wasn't smart since according to the laws of nature it should have burned down and therefore he should have sold it. He said we see that if there is a decree from Hashem not to lose your money, you won't lose it even if you're foolish.

In another story with R' Chaim Brisker someone complained to him about a competitor in a similar type of store near him who was successful whereas he wasn't. R' Chaim replied sharply this is because you are running two stores: yours and his and this consumes up your energy.

Parshas Beshalach, which speaks about the מן, is saturated with Emuna in addition to what we already mentioned. The end of Parshas Beshalach deals with Amalek who is the opposite of Emuna as it says אז נבהלו¹⁴ and soon after they started up with us. The Jews asked ה' בקרבנו אם אין¹⁵ is Hashem in our midst or not. This was a problem in Emuna. Therefore, the next words are ויבא עמלק, the antithesis of Emuna (עמלק is the same equivalent as ספק). This originates from the Nachash¹⁶ by whom it says דשיאני. Examining this word we notice it is composed of ויש and אין. How does Parshas Beshalach end? With ויהי ידיו אמונה עד בא השמש¹⁷ Moshe implanted Emuna into us until Moshiach arrives.

A Dying Dyer

The Gemara¹⁸ teaches that in the future the Yetzer Hara will be slaughtered and as we say in the Hagadda עשה הקב"ה ושחט למלאך המות. This seems perplexing since the Yetzer Hara is fulfilling his purpose. So why is he punished?¹⁹

¹¹ Shemos 16:15. One explanation in this is being that they only received enough for that day, it required Emuna not to worry about having for tomorrow.

¹² When the מן descended, the Jewish people didn't know what it was, and they said to each other מן הוא (Shemos 16:15). R' Menachem Mendel of Rimanov explained מן הוא as not only a reference to the מן, but also to the people who ate the מן, as they were constantly being elevated and spiritually uplifted by this divine nourishment. מן הוא: They didn't recognize each other and the positive transformation it had on the people.

¹³ The Baal Haturim tells us the word (16:14) מחספס has a Gematria of 248 since there was no waste from it as it was completely absorbed in the 248 limbs (Yoma 75b).

¹⁴ Shemos 15:15.

¹⁵ Shemos 17:7.

¹⁶ Breishis 3:13. Amalek, who descends from Esav, originates from the Nachash as it says ויצא צפע... So it comes as no surprise that דשיאני has a Gematria 376, the same as עשו.

¹⁷ Shemos 17:12.

¹⁸ Succa 52a. see Breishis 8:21, Rashi.

¹⁹ Poras Yosef p. 127.

The Agra D'kalla tells us that the Yetzer Hara doesn't tell us here is a sin, now, go and do it. Rather, he says it is a Mitzva when it really is not. Here are a few of the more common examples.

1) He may say go on vacation so that you will be able to learn better. Although at times this may be true, many times we may be fooling ourselves.

2) Another example may be that he tells a person to eat more in order to have energy to learn when in truth, it stems from desire. People say before they eat on Shabbos לכבוד שבת קודש, for the honor of Shabbos. The Kotzker Rebbe would say in Yiddish,²⁰ "for the honor of my stomach."

3) At times, a person may stay in bed a few extra minutes thinking he will have more energy that day because of it. However, those few minutes may turn into a few hours.

4) The Yetzer Hara may encourage a person late at night to continue learning when this may cause a great disturbance the following day. The Chofetz Chaim would shut the lights in his Yeshiva at 10 p.m.

When one thinks he is motivated by spirituality, he can commit grave transgressions. This can be done when one is convinced that he must take a stand for example to avenge Hashem's honor, thereby fighting with an individual. The Imrei Noam comments that this is hinted in אלמלא הקב"ה שעוזר לו אינו יכול לו²¹ if not for Hashem who aids him he would be unable to withstand the Yetzer Hara, as it can be understood that if it weren't for the Yetzer Hara's claim that it must be done for Hashem's honor, אינו יכול לו—the Yetzer Hara couldn't convince a person to do such awful deeds.

The Gemara²² asks שוחט משום מאי חייב, if one performs Shechita on Shabbos, why is he liable, which Melacha does he transgress. Rav says because of צובע, dyeing. The Baal Shem Tov²³ gives us a deeper meaning: שוחט משום מאי חייב—why is the Yetzer Hara Shechted in the future, he is doing his job as this is why he was created? The answer: because of צובע—he disguised himself as the Yetzer Tov as he didn't say this is a sin rather he tried to dye the sin into a Mitzva.

Rabbi Alt merited to learn under the tutelage of R' Mordechai Friedlander ztz"l for close to five years. He received Semicha from R' Zalman Nechemia Goldberg ztz"l. Rabbi Alt has written on numerous topics for various websites and publications and is the author of the Sefer, Fascinating Insights: Torah Perspectives on Unique Topics. His writings inspire people across the spectrum of Jewish observance to live with the vibrancy and beauty of Torah. He lives with his wife and family in a suburb of Yerushalayim where he studies, writes, and teaches. The author is passionate about teaching Jews of all levels of observance.

²⁰ Incidentally, it is interesting that Japanese linguist Kazuo Ueda in southern Japan worked 20 years, including taking several trips to Israel, on a 1,300-page, 28,000-entry Idishugo Jiten, or Yiddish-Japanese dictionary, compiling the world's first Yiddish-Japanese dictionary — the first time the Jewish language has been translated into a non-European language other than Hebrew. He devoted many years of his life to a language few Jews understand, and even fewer Japanese have even heard of. His wife testified that every day, he would sit down to work on his dictionary immediately following breakfast and never took any time off. For him, it wasn't work but sheer joy. He says that he wrote it purely for the pursuit of learning. The dictionary costs more than \$700.

²¹ Succa 52b.

²² Shabbos 75a.

²³ Breishis 147.