יג אלול תשעו September 16, 2016

פרשת כי תצא

The holy Remak

Much has been said about the greatness of R’ Moshe Cordevero, also known as the Remak (1522-1570),[[1]](#footnote-1) author of the acclaimed Sefer Tomer Devora.[[2]](#footnote-2) Some of his greatness is revealed from the fact that he heard Torah from Eliyahu Hanavi, who revealed himself to him.[[3]](#footnote-3) The Rema Mipano called the Remak his רב מובהק (main Rebbe), although he never saw him. This was because of what he learned from the Remak’s Sefarim. The Rema Mipano also writes that I am therefore obligated to fear and honor the Remak in both worlds, just like other disciples.[[4]](#footnote-4) The Chida relates that the Rema Mipano paid the Remak’s widow to have the Sefer אור יקר copied- a voluminous commentary from the Remak on the Zohar.[[5]](#footnote-5) The Beis Yosef in eulogizing the Remak said here is buried the ארון התורה. The Arizal testified to two pillars of fire at the Remak’s coffin.[[6]](#footnote-6)

In the revealed aspects of Torah- נגלה, his Rebbe was R’ Yosef Cairo (1488-1575),[[7]](#footnote-7) author of the Shulchan Aruch.[[8]](#footnote-8) In נסתר; hidden aspects of the Torah, his Rebbe was his brother in-law, R’ Shlomo Alkebetz[[9]](#footnote-9) (1505-1584)- author of Lecha Dodi.[[10]](#footnote-10)

When the Remak passed away, the Arizal interpreted a Pasuk in our Parsha in relation to the greatness of the Remak. It says וכי יהיה באיש חטא משפט מות והומת ותלית אתו על עץ; if a man has committed a sin whose judgement is death, he should be put to death and you should hang him on the gallows. The Arizal commented the following: וכי יהיה באיש חטא משפט מות- there is a person, a Tzadik[[11]](#footnote-11) that lacks[[12]](#footnote-12) reason to be judged for death as he doesn’t have any sin. והומת- still he dies. ותלית אתו על עץ- this is because of the sin of the עץ הדעת which brought death to the world and as the Gemara says that there are those who died only because of the עטיו; counsel of the Nachash, not because of sin.[[13]](#footnote-13)

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The heart of the week

The three days prior to Shabbos as well as the three days after Shabbos are connected to Shabbos[[14]](#footnote-14) and as we say in Shabbos Zemiros ימינא ושמאלא וביניהו כלה; three preceding days to the right, three succeeding days to the left and amid them the Shabbos Kalla. For this reason, in the Yom of Wednesday- three days prior to Shabbos- we say לכו נרננה, although it is not in that chapter of Tehillim as the rest of the Yom.[[15]](#footnote-15) We say this because from Wednesday on, it is connected to Shabbos.

The Pasuk says ...ובקציר תשבות; on Shabbos, you should desist from plowing and harvesting.[[16]](#footnote-16) חרש; plowing, are the initials of **ח**מישי, **ר**ביעי, **ש**שי; Wednesday, Thursday and Friday- the three days we prepare ground for Shabbos as this is what plowing is. The three days after Shabbos are קצירה, harvesting, as if one observes Shabbos, he will reap the benefits.[[17]](#footnote-17)

Shabbos is like the heart.[[18]](#footnote-18) Just as the heart is in the center of the body, Shabbos is the center of the week as it is surrounded by the three days prior to it and the three days that succeed it. Additionally, just as the heart gives life and sustenance to the body so does Shabbos do to the week[[19]](#footnote-19) and as we say in Lecha Dodi it is theמקור הברכה.

There are those who don’t work on Friday so that they can prepare for Shabbos. In this light, we can explain the Chazal that says מת בערב שבת סימן יפה לו; one who dies on Erev Shabbos, it is a good sign for him-[[20]](#footnote-20) on Friday we should make ourselves as if we are dead in that we should be dedicated to preparing for Shabbos.[[21]](#footnote-21)

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Timing is everything

In regard to Zeman Tefila the following analogy is given. If one has a crumpled check, it nevertheless can still be cashed. This is because the date on the check is still valid. This is in contrast to a fancy check that even if it is written for a large sum of money can’t be cashed if it is passed the expiration date. The same applies to Tefila that even if one has an amazing Tefila, it needs to be within the Zeman. An inferior Tefila within the Zeman is much greater.

When the Imrei Emes[[22]](#footnote-22) (1865-1948) became the Gerrer Rebbe, he changed the custom to now davening with Zeman Tefila. When he was challenged- how could he change what his father did, he retorted, that back then they would get up early, recite Tehillim and prepare for a powerful Tefila. This was similar to the חסידים הראשונים who would prepare for an hour before davening.[[23]](#footnote-23) So it is understandable to daven late. However, nowadays many arise late and then daven. The Imrei Emes then gave the metaphor of one who comes home and is waiting for dinner. Although it is 7 in the evening, it is still not ready. 7:30 comes and the food still isn’t ready. The same is at 8 p.m. The husband thinks to himself if is not ready yet, she must be preparing a lavish feast. Then at 9:00, his wife comes and gives him a tuna sandwich for dinner. What a disappointment! The same applies with Tefila. In the earlier generations, although they davened late, it was easy for Hashem to overlook that, since they made it worthwhile with their preparations prior to davening. But nowadays where many get up late and don’t daven like earlier generations, to offer a Tefila after the Zeman is improper.

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Think

It seems the art of thinking has been lost for many. The Divrei Bina[[24]](#footnote-24) explains סוף מעשה במחשבה תחלה- that we should think before our actions. How many times have we seen people including ourselves get into trouble because of acting too quickly or not thinking before we talk and as it says אל תצא לריב מהר וגו'.[[25]](#footnote-25) We shouldn’t rush into decisions. “Haste makes waste.” It is because of this that Moshe knew the idea of the Meraglim was bad as Rashi says it was בערבוביא- disorderly.[[26]](#footnote-26) The repercussions of acting hastily we see from Reuvain who was פחז כמים.[[27]](#footnote-27) Acting impulsively, without proper thought is rooted in the נחש which is sourced in חיש[[28]](#footnote-28); quickly, swiftly- since rushing causes confusion. The Pasuk states צדק ילין בה; righteousness lodged in her.[[29]](#footnote-29) On a deeper level it means if you want to give a righteous judgement, or any decision, then ילין בה- sleep on it as we shouldn’t act impulsively.

The Alter of Kelm once remarked that if we want to know if an idea of ours is correct, we should ask ourselves if it came from thinking about it deeply or out of impulse. When R’ Chaim Volozin approached his Rebbe, the Gra about opening a yeshiva, he declined him. However, a little while later he asked his Rebbe again to which he gave his ok. The Gra explained the first time he was afraid it was coming from acting too quickly. We need to let ideas sit in our mind first.[[30]](#footnote-30) This is a trait that is proper to work on in Elul as is alluded to in[[31]](#footnote-31)**ו**אני **א**תנהלה **ל**אטי **ל**רגל; I will make my way at my slow pace, as it contains the initials אלול.

To receive this on a weekly email, feedback, comments or to support this publication please contact Yehoshua Alt at parshadt28@gmail. לעילוי נשמת אברהם יצחק בן שמואל עוזיאל

1. The exact date he passed away was Wednesday, the 23rd of Tamuz in the city of Tzefas. רמ"ק is an acronym for ר' משה קורדוברו. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. In fact, תומר דבורה has the same Gematria as משה קורדברו, 863. R’ Simcha Zissel of Kelm remarked that the Sefer Tomer Devora is a Shulchan Aruch on Middos. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Pardes Rimonim, Mevo [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Pelach Harimon, Hakdama [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. To date (approximately 15 years ago) 14 folio sized volumes of this work have been published. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The holy R’ Chaim Vitaal (1543-1620) learned Kabbala under the Remak, as well as being a student of the Arizal. On Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan in the year 1572, 3 months after the Arizal passed away, R’ Chaim Vitaal had a dream in which the Remak appeared to him. In the dream, the Remak said that the Kabbala of the Arizal is אמיתית ופנימית (deep). In Olam Haba, he learned Kabbala according to the path of the Arizal (Shem Hagdolim, Maareches Sefarim, Ohr Yakar). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. See שו"ת אבקת רוכל, 91 and שו"ת בית יוסף, Even Haezer, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. In response to the Spanish expulsion in 1492, R’ Yosef Cairo moved to Constantinople, Turkey. In 1535, he moved to Eretz Yisrael. R’ Yosef Cairo began his commentary on the Tur while he lived in Turkey in which he worked on for nearly 20 years. This traces the rulings of the Tur to the Talmudic source, cites other opinions relevant to each ruing and concludes with a decision. This, which was finished in 1542, was named Beis Yosef. He then spent another 12 years revising it and added notes (see his note at the end of Choshen Mishpat in the Beis Yosef). After publishing the entire Beis Yosef, he compiled a synopsis and index for it- Shulchan Aruch, where there was only Halacha decisions there, without sources and reasons. One reason for this was that he divided the Shulchan Aruch into 30 sections so that one can review a section per day, learning it in a month. In later generations, they tried to even shorten the final Halacha- in Kitzur Shulchan Aruch, Chaye Adam and Shulchan Aruch Harav. R’ Yosef Cairo also wrote the Kesef Mishna as well as a commentary on Rashi and the Ramban on Chumash which was lost. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Due to the amount of wisdom R’ Shlomo Alkebetz possessed, our enemies were jealous of him. An Arab (Yishmaeli) ambushed and killed him and buried him in his garden near a fig tree. This fig tree ripened prematurely and it produced big, beautiful figs. This news eventually got back to the king and after seeing it, the king asked this Arab how he knew to make figs ripen before its time. Because of his fear, the Arab was unable to answer. The king then commanded that he be punished with severe suffering to the extent that this Arab was forced to admit what happened. He said from the day he killed this Jew, R’ Shlomo Alkebetz, the tree began to produce figs prematurely. The king then commanded to have this Arab hanged on that tree (Taamai Minhagim, pgs 247-8, s.v. וכדמצינו). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. R’ Yosf Cairo and the Remak both attended the lectures of R’ Shlomo Alkebetz. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. The word איש can refer to one of stature as in נח איש צדיק (Breishis 6:9). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. חטא can also mean to lack as in והייתי...חטאים (Melachim 1, 1:21, Rashi). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Baba Basra 17a. Mayana Shel Torah, Ki Seitzei 21:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Pesachim 106a. For this reason, one may recite Havdala up until Tuesday, the 3rd day after Shabbos (Tur, Orach Chaim, 299:6). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. The Yom of Wednesday is from Tehillim, chapter 94 whereas לכו נרננה is from chapter 95. The Yom of all the other days of the week is exclusively from one chapter of Tehillim. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Shemos 34:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. All the events of the week are in the Parsha of the week which we read on Shabbos. The Parsha is therefore called the סידרא; order of the week, since that is what it is. The following story illustrates this point. A Baal Korai was needed in the Beis Midrash of the Magid of Mezerich. A man named Shneur Zalman (who later became the famous Baal Hatanya) was recommended. Before appointing him, the Magid asked him if he sees the connection of the weekly events to the Parsha. After responding yes, he was asked if he sees the daily occurrences in that day’s Aliya (until Sheini are the occurrences of Sunday, from Sheini until Shlishi are what happens on Monday, and so forth) to which he also answered in the affirmative. He was then asked do you know why the one who is called up for an Aliya, why it was him that was called up? Answering yes, the Magid then said that he can be the Baal Korai. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. In the Hakdama to the 3rd volume of the Mishna Brura, he writes the following: there are different punishments for sins. There is a punishment for that which is anאיסור עשה as well as that which is a לאו which is even more stringent. More severe of a punishment is for that which is punishable by מיתה בידי שמים. Then that which is כרת followed by that which is מיתה בידי אדם. Within מיתה בידי אדם there is חנק; strangulation, הרג; execution by the sword, שריפה; burning with hot lead and then סקילה; stoning. The punishment for Shabbos desecration is stoning. The Mitzvos parallel the limbs of the body. Just as there are limbs of the body that one can live without although he will be blemished, so too the same applies to the Mitzvos. Thus it says ...וחי בהם (Vayikra 18:5) and כי הוא חייך וגו' (Devarim 30:20). Shabbos is like a limb which life depends on- like the heart. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Shabbos brings bounty to the world. The first Shabbos of existence gave only enough energy for the existence of the world for just the following 6 days. The same applies to each week as by the time Shabbos arrives, there is no more energy left for the world to continue to exist as Shabbos only gives energy to the world for the upcoming 6 days. This is just as when a battery dies and is then recharged until it dies again. This explains why it says כי ששת ימים עשה ה' (Shemos 31:17) and not בששת ימים as Shabbos gives renewal for the upcoming week. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Kesubos 103b [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. See Nesivos Shalom, Emor, s.v. מקראי קדש [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. He moved to Eretz Yisrael in 1940. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Brachos 30b [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Moadim, 150. Before we perform a MItzva we should say what is the reason for the Mitzva and the like. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Mishlei 25:8. Someone recently mentioned that 1% of people think, 4% think they think and 95% would rather die than think. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Devarim 1:22, Rashi. It is known that Hashem is found where there is calm (see Melachim 1, 19:11-12). [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Breishis 49:4. Also see Nedarim 9b [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. as in גז חיש ונעפה- Tehillim 90:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Yeshaya 1:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. That which is technical should be spoken out contrary to that which is deep. Also see Tzidkas Hatzadik, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Breishis 33:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-31)