

## ***Paḥad Yitzḥak: A Joyful Song of Affirmation<sup>1</sup>***

By: YAAKOV ELMAN

In his own lifetime Rav Yitzhak Hutner זצ"ל (1906–1980) was considered something of a paradox and he was certainly an anomaly; he was a Lithuanian rosh yeshiva who in his personal life, at least in his later years, adopted ḥasidic garb. But he was an anomaly and paradox in a number of other ways. Known as the “Varshaver *illuy*” even in his youth, and a masterful *lamdan* at a relatively young age, he published his first *sefer* with the approbations of the Gedolei Hador at age 26. At the same time he was also a poet and master of prose, an original thinker who produced a theological/psychological system that incorporates elements of many strands of Jewish thought, enriched with insights both from his own preternatural understanding of human nature and behavior, and from that of other sources. Perhaps most of all, he was a consummate educator, who quickly assessed the capabilities and the needs of his students, and nurtured them.

As an educator, he enlivened his yeshiva, Yeshiva Rabbenu Chaim Berlin, by introducing Hasidic/Musar elements into it, with discourses (*ma'amarim*) along the lines of a ḥasidic *tish* or *farbrengen*, and significantly, reminiscent of those of Slobodka, discourses that were devoted to matters of “laws of dispositions and the duties of the heart” (הלכות דעות וחובות) (הלכות) and interspersed with *niggunim*. This style of presentation was typical of the Hasidic courts of his youth, but of Slobodka as well—a yeshiva in which Rav Hutner spent eight formative years, from age 15 onward. His discourses were eventually edited and collected into the volumes of his *magnum opus*, *Paḥad Yitzḥak* (1964–1982). Aside from an early, youthful

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work, *Torat ha-Nazir*, these volumes remain, more than thirty years after his passing, his major legacy, one that is still as unique today as it was in his own time.

However, perhaps the most remarkable—and paradoxical—aspect of his work is that he dealt with very modern philosophical problems, employing his own terminology. In order to express the essence of these concerns in language that would be accessible to a non-ḥasidic yeshiva audience, Rav Hutner created a nomenclature uniquely his own, often based on references from the Siddur or Ḥazal. But once the existential—and existentialist—referents are made clear, his work becomes a compelling narrative of the encounter of a twentieth-century “prince of Torah” with the modern world and its concerns, concerns that continue, and indeed, have only intensified, in the generation that has passed since their publication. Rav Hutner sounded the eternal verities of a G-d-created Torah in the workings of G-d’s other creation, the human psyche. And thus within the pages of *Pahad Yitzḥak* one will find disquisitions on the difference between the psychologies of generalists versus specialists, the tensions of the individual within human society, other problems of identity and personality, of change and renewal, the problem of mortality and other aspects of the human condition, and much more. It is this attention to the existential side of Jewish thought that makes for such compelling reading.

Steven Schwartzchild’s pioneering study—about which Rav Hutner himself expressed approval—pointed to the sources of his thought in Slobodka Musar,<sup>2</sup> *ḥasidut*, and modern philosophy; Hillel Goldberg, in line with his own interests, emphasized the Musar aspect. The three most recent studies of *Pahad Yitzḥak* in Hebrew emphasize the parallels in modern philosophy, with Nietzsche, Rosenzweig, Heidegger and Levinas prominent among the moderns. Naturally, Rav Nathan Zvi Finkel, the “Elder of Slobodka,” is mentioned as well. In contrast, the influence of Reb Zadok ha-Kohen of Lublin, which Schwartzchild pointed out, has been somewhat stunted.<sup>3</sup> But it is clear that the wine of ḥasidic thought was poured into the methodological containers of Brisk.

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<sup>2</sup> One of the many desiderata in regard to the study of *Pahad Yitzḥak* is a comparison of its thought with that of the Alter of Slobodka, Rav Nathan Zvi Finkel’s *Or ha-Tzafim*.

<sup>3</sup> However, though Reb Zadok is mentioned only nine times in Kasirer’s dissertation, his concern with the ḥasidic roots of *Pahad Yitzḥak* is manifest throughout.

The existential aspects of Rav Hutner's work have been duly noted by Steven S. Schwarzchild, Hillel Goldberg, and, more recently, Tsippi Abrahamov<sup>4</sup> and Shmuel Vigoda.<sup>5</sup> And in 2009 Shlomo Kasirer submitted a dissertation on Rav Hutner's philosophy of repentance to the Jewish Philosophy Department of Bar Ilan University.<sup>6</sup> However, with the exception of Goldberg, who himself has written a valuable dissertation on Rav Yisrael Salanter,<sup>7</sup> the handful of articles (and the one dissertation) that have appeared have been written by professionals in the field of modern philosophy, and this perhaps gives a certain overly "academic" tinge to the analysis.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Tsippi Abrahamov, "Ma'avaq be-Yetser ha-Ra' o Hedvat Yetsirah?: Al Ra'ayon ha-Teshuvah be-Mishnat ha-Rav Yitzhak Hutner," *Da'at* 44 (5760), pp. 95–122.

<sup>5</sup> Shmuel Vigoda, "Be-Havlei ha-Zeman: Ha-Adam v'ha-Zeman be-Haguto shel ha-Rav Yitzhak Hutner," in Binyamin Ish-Shalom, ed., *Be-Darkei Shalom: Lyyunim be-Hagut Yehudit Mugashim le-Shalom Rosenberg*, Jerusalem: Beit Morasha of Jerusalem Press, 2007, pp. 399–427. For scans of these articles, and much more over the years, my thanks go to Mr. Zvi Erenyi of Gottesman Library, who has facilitated my research in this and many other endeavors for more than a quarter-century.

<sup>6</sup> Shlomo Kasirer, "Ha-Teshuva be-Haguto shel ha-Rav Yitzhak Hutner: Al Reqa' Meqorotav ba-Hasidut, bi-Tenu'at ha-Musar uve-Hagut ha-Me'ah ha-Esrin," Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University, Kislev, 5769. My thanks go to my former student Rabbi Dovid Bashevkin for alerting me to Kasirer's work and supplying me with a copy.

<sup>7</sup> *Israel Salanter, Text, Structure, Idea: The Ethics and Theology of an Early Psychologist of the Unconscious*, New York: Ktav, 1982. His *Between Berlin and Slobodka: Jewish Transition Figures from Eastern Europe*, Hoboken: Ktav, 1989 is also of importance in this context. More recently, another unpublished academic work has come to my attention, and here I wish to tender my thanks to Prof. Jonathan Meir of Ben Gurion University, to Mr. Menachem Butler of New York, and to Mr. Alon Shalev himself, for providing me with a copy of his masters' thesis, presented in 2013, "Qavim Merkaziyyim li-Demuto ule-Haguto shel ha-Rav Yitzhak Hutner al pi Sifrei Pahad Yitzhak," presented Elul 5773. Prof. Meir informs me that Mr. Shalev is now working with Prof. Benjamin Brown of Hebrew University; I have no doubt that the dissertation that Mr. Shalev will produce under Prof. Brown's direction will add substantially to our understanding of *Pahad Yitzhak*.

<sup>8</sup> Again, there are two exceptions: See also the adaptation/translations of Rabbi Pinchas Stolper, *Purim in a New Light: Mystery, Grandeur and Depth*, Lakewood, NJ: David Dov Publications, 2003, *Chanukah in a New Light: Grandeur, Heroism and Depth*, Lakewood, NJ: David Dov Foundation, 2005, and *Shabbos in a New Light: Majesty, Mystery, Meaning*, Lakewood, NJ: David Dov Foundation, 2009, and Leibel Rutta, *Reshimot Lev: Pesah, Sukkot, Hanukah, Purim*, Brooklyn, 1997, 2000 (2 volumes). Rabbi Rutta himself, of course, would not claim to have analyzed the thought of *Pahad Yitzhak*, but his references, and especially those of A.H.,

The world of *Pabad Yitzhak* is a joyful one: a dynamic world filled with creativity, renewal and innovation, one that celebrates the products of the individual and the individual human mind at its creative best, that is, in the study of G-d's Torah. It is also a world that does not denigrate the use of those intellectual tools when employed to enhance human life. Nor are those tools limited to rational discourse and logic; intuition and emotional engagement, and in particular the pleasures that accompany them, are essential parts of Talmud Torah. In short, it is the world of Slobodka but with a Hutnerian flavor, a world that proclaims not only the greatness of G-d, but also the greatness of His Creation, and, in particular, the summit of that Creation, humankind. It is thus a world in which the individual can—and *must*—contribute something of his or her own unique selfhood, for that is what we were created for.

It is also a world of poetic beauty and metaphor: the Maharal does not teach us, he “implants” knowledge in us; the GRA does not instruct, we “discover the pearl hidden beneath his words.” These metaphors are not mere literary flourishes, but reflect Rav Hutner's inner world, a world that he wishes to share with us. It is a world mysterious but knowable; the controlling metaphors reveal the inner workings of the world and of the human mind and psyche. It is a world of parallels and analogies, analogies that connect the parallels, a world of macrocosm and microcosm. It is also a world of paradox, and those too must be reconciled; a world of *din*, but a world of *hesed*. The metaphor of implanting reflects the Maharal's own view of the world, which is a world of potential that must be actualized by humans, as a plant grows from a seed. The world is mysterious, but can be understood, and, once understood, will be seen for all its beauty, as is the pearl. That is one of the sources of the dynamism of the Maharal's system, and that same dynamism characterizes the world of Rav Hutner.

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scattered throughout, give us an insight into the view of *Pabad Yitzhak* by those not alert to its hasidic antecedents. See also the popular articles of Rabbi Yaakov Feitman, a close *talmid*, especially his profile in *Mishpacha* 338, November 24, 2010, and that of Matis Greenblatt, “Rabbi Yitzchak Hutner: The Vision Before His Eyes” in *Jewish Action*, summer 5761/2001, pp. 1–7. I might also mention an excellent article of that type by Yeshaya Steinberger in *Musaf “Shabbat”* of *Maqor Rishon*, November 26, 2010.

Last but hardly least, let me note the *ma'amarim* by Rav Hutner's *talmid* and son-in-law, Rav Yonatan D. David, in a volume entitled *Quntres Pesah*, which continues the thought of *Pabad Yitzhak* in the same style as the original, and often takes *Pabad Yitzhak* as its point of departure, but, as we might expect, does not analyze his father-in-law's work from an “outside” perspective.

From the Maharal and from Reb Zadok ha-Kohen of Lublin he took not only that controlling metaphor, but a number of important exegetical principles by which he could transfer knowledge gained from one world to another; from the world outside to the world inside; from the Torah to the world and to the human psyche; from society to the individual and from the individual to society. Israel and the Torah are one, a principle he would have learned from Reb Zadok but also from the Alter of Slobodka; and from *hasidut* and Kabbalah: G-d made things parallel (“one opposite the other”), the world is a Book of Revelation, one of G-d's Two Books, each of which is a commentary on the other. Again, the dynamism inheres in the *search* for truth, which must be uncovered; thus it was from Creation, where first there was darkness before light was created, enslavement preceded the liberation of the Exodus, and for us, both as individuals and as societies, confusion and error pave the way for true understanding.

## I

This view of humankind, its purpose, history and future is built on a number of bundled concepts: individualism, autonomy, creativity, all of which foster innovation and renewal. In an earlier article, I traced the role of autonomy within this conception of humankind, which Rav Hutner roots in the statement of Rabbenu Yonah that “truth is one of the foundations of the soul.”<sup>9</sup> That truth cannot be denied, but must also conform to G-d's Torah; the occasional tension between them fuels the creativity that in turn enables the renewal of both the individual (as in repentance) and of society. In this article I will concentrate (though not exclusively) on the means of *attaining* that renewal. Before I do, however, let me point to one

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<sup>9</sup> See *Pabad Yitzhak* Rosh Hashanah 15.6-7, and my “Autonomy and Its Discontents: A Meditation on *Pabad Yitzhak*,” *Tradition* 42 (2014), pp. 7–40, especially pp. 25–27; see also Rabbenu Yonah, *Sha'arei Teshuvah* 3.184. I would like to stress here what I did not in that article: this striving for the truth of the soul mirrors the search for authenticity of Przysucha and Kotzk; see Michael Rosen, *The Quest for Authenticity: The Thought of Reb Simbah Bunim*, Jerusalem/New York, 2008, p. 16. Rav Hutner's maternal uncle was a Kotzker. Second, at least part of the solution of the problem of the grant of human free-will and autonomy and the consequent violation of the Divine Will is to be found in the Izbica doctrine that “all is in the hands of Heaven,” including “the fear of Heaven,” that is free-will; see *Ma'amarei Pabad Yitzhak* Sukkot 99.16–18, and Joseph Weiss, “A Late Jewish Utopia of Religious Freedom,” in Joseph Weiss, *Studies in Eastern European Jewish Mysticism & Hasidism*, ed. by David Goldstein, London: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1997, pp. 209–248 and Morris M. Faierstein, *All Is in the Hands of Heaven: The Teachings of Rabbi Mordechai Joseph Leiner of Izbica*, Hoboken: Ktav, 1989.

of the hallmarks of *Pahad Yitzhak*: its insistence that truth is defined by its reflecting reality, a point to which we will return below. Here is Rav Hutner's discussion of the meaning of truth from *Pahad Yitzhak*, *Quntras Birkeit Avot* (Sukkot, 5713), 15.2 (Shabbat/Sukkot volume, pp. 198-199).

ב...אמת והפוכה מתיחסות הן לדעתו של אדם. אם ציור המציאות בדעתו של אדם מתאים למציאות, הרי זה דעת אמת; אם ציור המציאות בדעתו של אדם אינו מתאים למציאות, הרי זו דעת שקר או דעת מוטעית. השתלשלותה של הדעת בתוך המציאות באה היא בתלתא בבי. היא נפעלת מן המציאות, פועלת על המציאות, ובאופן זה היא מקשרת את המציאות הפועלת עם המציאות הנפעלת. כשהדעת היא דעת אמת, כלומר שהמציאות הפועלת מתאימה עם ציור המציאות של הדעת, אז יעלה הקשר יפה והמציאות הנפעלת תתחבר ותתלכד עם המציאות הפועלת. ולהיפך כשהדעת היא דעת מוטעית, וציור המציאות של הדעת לא תתאים לעצם המציאות, הרי זה ניתוק השרשרת, והמציאות הנפעלת על ידי הדעת תהיה בודדה, כאין לה הזדווגות עם עצם המציאות הפועלת....

2... Truth and its reverse relate to a person's intellect. If the image (ציור) of reality in the mind (דעת) conforms to reality, this then is a true opinion (דעת אמת); if the image of reality in the mind of a person does not conform to reality, this is then a false opinion (דעת שקר) or a mistaken one (דעת מוטעית). The "enchaining" (השתלשלותה) of the mind (הדעת) within reality comes in three forms (lit., "cases"). [Either] it is acted on by reality, [or] it acts upon reality, and in this guise connects the reality that acts with the reality that is acted upon. When the opinion is a true opinion, that is, the reality that acts conforms to the image of the mind, then the connection is good, and the reality that is acted upon is connected and overlaps with the reality that acts upon [it]. And in reverse, when the opinion is a mistaken one, and the image of reality in the mind does not conform to the essential reality (עצם המציאות), this then constitutes a breaking of the chain, and the reality that is worked upon by the mind is isolated, without a connection (הזדווגות) with the essential reality that works [upon the mind].

By stressing the importance of the correspondence of an intellectual apprehension of the world with reality in assessing the truth of that apprehension even in regard to Divine promises, as evidenced by his concern with the problem of theodicy,<sup>10</sup> Rav Hutner is valorizing a modern, scientific approach to understanding that reality. Lest anyone suspect that Rav Hutner is proposing a "double truth" theory, note that in *Ma'amarei*

<sup>10</sup> See n. 18 below, and the text it covers.

*Pabad Yitzhak* on Sukkot, both aspects of truth are juxtaposed in successive paragraphs of *ma'amar* 65, paragraphs 3 and 4. Truth must conform both to the truth in one's soul *and* to outer reality. Ultimately, one's personal truth must correspond to the outer truth as well, but it must be remembered that this outer truth is also the truth of the Creator of that outer world, and thus the truth of the Torah.

To return to our discussion of the system as a whole, let us begin with the individual, for he stands at the center of Creation. In a revealing comment in *Ma'amarei Pabad Yitzhak* on Sukkot (99.15), Rav Hutner transforms a common staple of medieval philosophical and kabbalistic thought into an important observation on the individual and his place in the world:

...ידועה האימרה: "האדם הוא עולם קטן". ועדיף, ויותר נכון לומר שהעולם הוא אדם גדול. מרכז מחשבת הבריאה הוא האדם, והעולם אינו אלא "שפיגעל" (ראי) בהקבלה לעניניו של האדם. כל מה שנמצא בעולם מוכרח שימצא לו קו מקביל בקומת האדם....

There is a well-known expression: "Man is a microcosm ('small world'), [that is, his *Gestalt* reflects the world of which he is part]."<sup>11</sup> It is preferable, and more correct to say that the world is a macrocosm ['large man', i.e., a reflection of man's *Gestalt*]. Man is the center of the intent of Creation; the world is nothing more than a "mirror" that is parallel to the character and concerns (עניניו) of a human being: all that exists in the world must find a parallel line within the *Gestalt* of man....

Rav Hutner once commented that if his mind were to be compared to a building, the first floor would be the influence of the Alter of Slobodka and the top floor would be that of Rav Kook.<sup>12</sup> We may add that the basement would be the thought of that strand of Polish *hasidut* represented by his maternal uncle, who was a Kotzker Hasid, and the sub-basement would be the thought of the Maharal mi-Prague, who had such a great influence on Hasidic thought early and late, and on Rav Kook as well. Elsewhere I hope to trace these connections and assess them; here I only mention them.

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<sup>11</sup> This is of course more than a "well-known expression"; it belongs to that nebulous realm shared by medieval philosophy and Kabbalah, and may indeed refer to the structure of the upper worlds; for a parallel in the writings of the Maharal, see Yoram Jakobson, "Tzelem Elokim u-Ma'amado ke-Meqor Ra'ato shel Adam lefi ha-Maharal mi-Prague," *Daat* 19 (5747), p. 103–136, esp. pp. 106–107, 114.

<sup>12</sup> See the remembrances of Rav Z.Y. Neriyah, "Shemesh u-Ma'or," *Bi-Sedeḥ ha-Re'iyah*, Kefar Habad, 5651, pp. 419–438.

But there is no contradiction between these sources on this matter: from the Maharal to Peshischa (Przysucha), Kotzk, Izhbitz (Izbica), and Reb Zadok of Lublin, the status of the individual and his role in creation are stressed and celebrated. Nor should this be a surprise: all these sources are rooted in Ḥazal, in this case a plangent Mishnah, Sanhedrin 4:5.

נברא אדם יחידי ללמדך שכל המאבד נפש אחד מישראל מעלה עליו הכתוב כאילו איבד עולם מלא וכל המקיים נפש אחת מישראל מעלה עליו הכתוב כאילו קיים עולם מלא ומפני שלום הבריות שלא יאמר אדם לחבירו אבא גדול מאביך ושלא יהו מינין אומרים הרבה רשויות בשמים ולהגיד גדולתו של הקדוש ברוך הוא שאדם טובע כמה מטבעות בחותם אחד וכולן דומין זה לזה ומלך מלכי המלכים הקדוש ברוך הוא טבע כל אדם בחותמו של אדם הראשון ואין אחד מהן דומה לחבירו לפיכך כל אחד ואחד חייב לומר בשבילי נברא העולם....

Man was created singular in order to teach you that whoever destroys a single Jewish soul Scripture considers it as though he destroyed the whole world, and whoever preserves a single Jewish soul Scripture considers it as though he had preserved a whole world. Moreover, [he was created singular] for the sake of peace among men, that one might not say to his fellow: My father was greater than yours, and that the heretic might not say: There are many ruling powers in heaven; again, to proclaim the greatness of the Holy One, blessed be He, for if a man strikes many coins from one mold, they all resemble one another, but the supreme King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, fashioned every man in the stamp of the First Man, and yet not one of them resembles his fellow. Therefore every single person is obliged to say: The world was created for my sake.

While this rabbinic statement is found already in mSanh 4:5 and thus some discussion is found in the commentaries, it appears three times in the works of Reb Zadok.<sup>13</sup> However, as we shall see, Rav Hutner developed the idea in a different direction, one with an existential quality that perhaps owes something to the *Zeitgeist* of the twentieth century, and whose development is facilitated by a “Brisker” analytic approach, but also by the Maharal’s dialectal approach. *Paḥad Yitzḥak* may be seen as an application of the Brisker system of analysis to questions of Jewish theology and human psychology, not only in a descriptive sense but also in a

<sup>13</sup> *Peri Zaddiq* Shemot, Sheqalim 1, *Peri Zaddiq* Devarim, Rosh Ḥodesh Elul 1, and *Sibat Mal’akbei ha-Sharet*, ch. 3, p. 38a; see also *Tzidqat ha-Tzaddiq*, n. 154, p. 51b, regarding the requirement for a person to have faith in himself, and see my “Autonomy and Its Discontents,” p. 15, n. 32 and text. It also appears in *ma’amarim* written by students of the Alter of Slobodka, see *Or ha-Tzafun*, Bereshit, Jerusalem: Haskel, 5719, p. 13 (in “Zeh Sefer Toldot Adam”).



generative one. Rav Hutner expects to find—and often does—a binary dynamic within human and human-divine interaction that this dynamic assumes such large a role in his work. In this case, note that the individuality of the human being is not only an observed fact, but one that has a “faithful [Torah] source” (*maqor ne’eman*). Individualism alone can be destructive, and therefore requires a Torah source to give it validity. Having found one, he goes on to delineate the practical consequences of this biological fact.

Here, first, is Reb Zadok, from *Sīḥat Mal’akhei ha-Sharet*, chapter 3:

כי כלל גדול בידינו (שבת ע"ז ב) כל מה שברא הקדוש ברוך הוא לצורך בראו והכל לצורך האדם כדתנו (סנהדרין ל"ז א) כל אחד ואחד חייב לומר בשבילי נברא העולם ובברכות (ו' ב) כל העולם כולו לא נברא אלא בשביל זה ושם (נ"ה א) וברא כל אלו לשמשני. וגם הוא מבואר מסברא שאין ממדת אומן בשר ודם חכם גם כן לעשות דבר לבטלה וליגע לריק ואילו היה די באחד לא יעשה שנים. כל שכן הבורא יתברך בהכרח שכולם צריכים ובוראם יודע צורכם של כל פרט ופרט והצורך הוא לאיזה תשמיש מה. ועל כרחך שהתשמיש שישמש תבנית גשם זה לא ישמש תבנית זולתו:

וכח השימוש הנה הוא כח רוחני כאילו תאמר דרך משל תשמיש הכדורי או עגולי להתגלגל מה שאין כן בעל הקצוות אין לו כח המתנועע מעצמו והוא ינוח במקום שיפול הנה כוחות המתנועעי והמנוחי הם כוחות רוחניים ובלתי נתפשים בגשם שהרי כבר מצינו תנועה ומנוחה בנפש גם כן. וכללות הבריאה עגולות או כדוריות ויש להם כח התנועי וכן הנפש ומחשבת המוח לא ישקוט ולא ינוח אם לא במותו אז נקרא בפי חז"ל ובלשונם הצחה דנה נפשיה שקנה כח המנוחה:

וכיוצא באלה כל מיני שינויי הברואים כאשר נתבונן על טיב השינוי ההוא בענין צורך הבריאה אשר בעבורו חייבה הבריאה בתבנית כך וכך לצורך השלמת כח ההוא על ידי הגשם ההוא הנה אותו הכח הנרצה הוא כח פרטי עומד בפני עצמו בזולת הגשם. ואין צריך לומר בהבדליהם הרוחנים כמו הקשיות לדוממים והבדלי הקשיות והחיזוק בינם וההזנה והצמיחה לצומחים והבדלי איכות הזנתם והחיות ושאר כוחות הבעלי חיים להחיים וכיוצא באלה. וכן הבדלי גוונים שיש לכל גוון סגולה וענין מיוחד כידוע קצת לחכמי הטבע המעמיקים. ובוראן יודען על בורין וכן חכמי האמת ז"ל המשתמשים ברוח הקודש בידיעות המצטרכות להם להשלמת הנפשות אל הענין אשר הוסדו. [כמו שתמצא בדברי חז"ל בקיאות בחכמת הטבע מופלאת מאוד בעיני כל חכמי הטבע מאין זה להם כי לא למדו מעולם בבתי מדרשיהם חכמות טבעיות אבל ידעו זה על ידי ידיעתם בסודות הבריאה מסוד ה' ליראיו וכמו שנתבאר אצלנו במקום אחר]:

For we have an important rule: “Everything that the Holy One, blessed be He, created He created for a purpose” (Shab 77b), and it was all created [to fulfill] human needs, as we learn: “Everyone must say: “The world was created for my sake” (Sanh 37a), and “the entire world was created for this one” (Ber 6b), and there too: “and He created all these to serve me” (ibid., 58a). This can also be understood by logical deduction, for a wise human artisan does not make

any [feature of his manufacture] in vain and for no purpose, and if one were sufficient he would not make two [of the part when only one was necessary for the item's functioning]. All the more so in relation to the Creator, may His Name be blessed, it is necessary [to suppose] that each and every one [of His creations] is needed, and the Creator recognizes the function (lit., "need") of each and every individual—and the need for some particular purpose [that he serves]. And you must [understand] that the utility of one material being is not the same as another though similar one.

And the [essential] utility is a spiritual one, as though you would say, for example, that the quality of a circle or oval to roll is not the same as that of a geometrical figure with angles, which has no power to move on its own, but rather rests on the place it falls. [Similarly,] the powers of that which rolls or that which remains put are, [so to speak,] spiritual powers that cannot be apprehended by material beings, for, behold, we have found powers of movement and rest in the soul as well. In general, created beings are "oval" or "round" and have the power of motion (in the soul and in the thought of the mind as well)—they do not rest until death, as our Sages, may their memory be blessed, have put it in their euphemism [regarding death]: "his soul rested"—that [the deceased] acquired the power of rest.

And in similar fashion in regard to differences among beings, when we observe the nature of these differences in terms of their function in Creation, that is, whose utility was required by their creation in such and such a form, in order to fulfill some material function, that individual is required for a specific function; that is, the required power (בזולת הכחה הנרצח) exists by itself, independent of materiality (הגשם). And there is no need to emphasize that the same applies to spiritual differences as we may draw an analogy to things that are inanimate and plants in terms of nurture and growth, and, again, in regard to the differences between the quality of their nurture, their liveliness and other powers of living beings [that contribute] to their life, and similar matters, and animals and other animate beings; [we may say the same in regard to] the individual powers and needs of each, as is known to some extent to those versed in the natural sciences. Their Creator [of course] knows [these matters] completely, and the sages of Truth, may their memory be blessed, those who have divine inspiration in regard to matters that relate to the perfection of their souls [in the matter] for which they were created. [As you will find in the words of H<sup>a</sup>zal a wondrous knowledge of natural science that astonishes those versed in such matters—how do they know such things, since they never studied natural sciences in their

study halls, but they knew such things by their knowledge of the secrets of Creation, [as is written,] “G-d’s secret is for those who fear him” (Ps 25:14), as has been explained by us elsewhere].

Thus, each person has a function in G-d’s Creation simply by being born; as Reb Zadok notes in *Tzidkat ha-Tzaddiq* 154, everyone must believe in oneself, just as one must believe in G-d. However, *Pabad Yitzhak* introduces a new element: the centrality of the individual human being is contrasted with another aspect of the human condition—the world continues on its own way even after we pass from it, as Rav Hutner explains in *Pabad Yitzhak* Shavuot 21.4.

ד...יחידותו של אדם מהייבת אותו לומר "בשבילי נברא העולם." ובודאי במצבו של אדם הראשון בשעת יצירתו, היתה הכרה זו ש"בשבילי נברא עולם", גלויה לפניו בכל מלוא-פשיטותה. אבל לאחר שהניח עליו הקב"ה כפו ומיעטו, ונגזרה עליו מיתה, הרי הכרה זו ש"בשבילי" [י] נברא עולם, אינה באה לו לאדם אלא על ידי עמידה בנסיון. שהלא בפשוטם של דברים, הופעת המיתה נראית כסותרת את ההכרה של "בשבילי נברא עולם". שהרי העולם נשאר קיים ועומד, גם לאחר חליפתו ומיתתו של אדם. ורק מתוך האמונה, שסוף גזירת-המיתה היא גזירה דעבידא ובטלא, ...ואדרבה, המות היא הופעת זמנית, וחק-חיים היא חק-נצח,-- רק מתוך אמונה זו. מוכשר הוא האדם להחיות בנפשו את ההכרה כי "בשבילי נברא עולם".

4...Man’s individuality obligates him to say: “the world was created for my sake.” And certainly in first Adam’s situation when he was created [before death was decreed against him], this recognition was revealed in all its stark simplicity (מלוא-פשיטותה). But after the Holy One, Blessed Be He, placed His hand on him and diminished him, and death was decreed against him, this recognition that “the world was created for my sake” comes only through withstanding the trial [of realizing that death contradicts this recognition]. For in the plain sense of things, the appearance of death seems to contradict the recognition that “the world was created for my sake,” since the world continues to exist even after a person’s death and passing from the world. And it is only through the faith that the decree of death will be annulled [at the Resurrection of the Dead]..., and [that], indeed, death is a temporary phenomenon, and the measure of life is an eternal measure—only through this faith is a man prepared to enliven in his soul the recognition that “the world was created for my sake.”

Please note: “Man’s individuality (*yehiduto*) obligates him (*mehayyev oto*) to say: ‘the world was created for my sake.’” Man’s singularity *obligates* him; his individuality is not merely acknowledged or tolerated, but becomes a *positive value*. By his use of halakhic language—the language of obligation,

Rav Hutner signals Halakhah's approval of man's individual nature. Moreover, in 21:3 he asserts that the difference between human society and groups of animals (flocks, herds, and species) is precisely Man's individuality.

גם בחינת היחוד וגם בחינת האיחוד מושרשות הן בחידוש מידת היחידות ביצירתו של אדם. בלעדיה של יחידות זו אין כאן לא "יחוד" ולא "איחוד". ואין כאן אלא קיבוצים, קיבוצים, של עדרים, עדרים, אשר כל "קיומם אינם באיש אלא במין" (לשון חכמים קדמונים).

Both the aspect of individuality and that of the collectivity are rooted in the introduction (חידוש) of this facet of individuality [promulgated] with the creation of Adam. Without this individuality, there is no "individuality" (יחוד), nor any "collective society" (איחוד), but rather various groups of flocks, flocks whose "existence is not [by means of] individuals but rather the species" (as enunciated by the early scholars).<sup>14</sup>

Here again we see Rav Hutner's emphasis on the individual, and, in this case, his role in society, while Reb Zadok deals with his role in creation. But the contrast is greater: for Rav Hutner, death is a *challenge* and possible refutation of this view of humankind, and only the belief in eternal life will enable us to continue to believe in our unique role in creation. Reb Zadok views life and death as antonyms that must be understood in tandem: life cannot be understood apart from death, nor death apart from life. Both are joined by the view that despite the challenge or contradiction, light and darkness, life and death, constitute a whole, and each is a necessary part of that whole.

This is an important proviso, for even during the glory days of Slobodka, the Alter, Rav Nathan Zvi Finkel, was accused of naiveté, and a competing vision of the "lowliness of man" emerged from the Alter of Novaredok, Rav Yoisef Yoisel Horowitz, a vision strengthened by the likes of Hitler and Stalin, who destroyed Rav Hutner's family and homeland, that sensitive, alive and alert Warsaw Jewry of which he was an magnificent exemplar, and, by Fatah, which kidnapped him and held him captive for a month, along with a planeload of passengers. Slobodka did not remain unaffected by the bloody events that marked the twentieth century, both for humanity and especially for the Jewish people. Benjamin

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<sup>14</sup> See Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed*, III:17, fifth theory, where he denies providence to individual animals. See Moses Maimonides, *The Guide of the Perplexed*, trans. Shlomo Pines, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963, p. 471; *Moreh Nevukhim*, trans. Yosef Kapah, Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1972, p. 313.

Brown has shown that the Alter's successors withdrew somewhat from the Alter's glorious vision.<sup>15</sup> Despite the communal and personal catastrophes he faced, however, Rav Hutner did not withdraw from the Alter's view of humanity, and *Paḥad Yitzḥak*, which began to be published nearly two decades after the end of the Second World War, stands as a magnificent continuation of Slobodka "before the fall."

## II

To assess the personal dimensions of his achievement, consider the following. From his earliest years as a self-reflective individual, Rav Hutner kept a diary, one from which his daughter drew on and quotes frequently in her biography of him. But from 5707 to 5714 no entries survive. In *Sefer Zikaron*, p. 36, n. 139, his daughter notes: "In these years there appears a void (*halal*) in these original impressions (*yediot meqoriyyot*), from 5707 to 5714. However, these years were years of qualitative and quantitative growth and development for the yeshiva." These were also the years when the full dimensions of the destruction of Polish Jewry became apparent, and the yeshiva itself accepted at least one survivor of Auschwitz, David Weiss Halivni. It is difficult to disconnect the silence from the destruction. At the heart of *Paḥad Yitzḥak*, that measured theological assessment of G-d's universe and man's place in it—an assessment filled (*à la* Slobodka) with gratitude for G-d's grace and hope for the future (hence the repeated emphasis on the Messianic times)—there is that void into which his family and friends, and the cradle of his consciousness—vanished. And it is from that vantage point that we must view Rav Hutner's struggles to understand what had happened to the Jews of Europe, to the Jews of Poland, and, what had happened to him personally in the loss of his family.<sup>16</sup> We are informed that he was a first-born son, but not of any siblings. If there were any, they did not escape. What survivor's guilt underlies the insights of *Paḥad Yitzḥak* into life, death, and the recognition that we as persons will vanish even as the world continues!

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<sup>15</sup> See Binyamin Brown, "Gadlut ha-Adam ve-Haqtanato: Temurot be-Shittat ha-Musar shel Yeshivat Slobodka," in Immanuel Etkes, *Yeshivot u-Vatei Midrash*, Jerusalem: Merkaz Zalman Shazar, 2006, pp. 243–272.

<sup>16</sup> See Gamliel Smalo, "Radiqaliyyut Filosofit be-Olam ha-Yeshivot: Rav Yitzhak Hutner al ha-Shoah," *Hakirah* 19 (2015), pp. 35–56 [Hebrew numbering], and Lawrence Kaplan, "A Righteous Judgment on a Righteous People: Rav Yitzhak Hutner's Implicit Theology of the Holocaust," *Hakirah* 10 (2010), pp. 101–115, both of which advance our understanding of this issue. The topic requires more detailed treatment than is possible here; I hope to deal with it on another occasion.

It would be a mistake, however, to view this as a debate between Slobodka and Nevaradok as one over the nature of man alone; it is rather a debate over how to achieve a certain educational goal: to produce humans who would be a credit to themselves, their society, and their Maker. Some people react better to the carrot, some to the stick.

It is also a debate over priority, over the exact mixture and proportion of desirable qualities to encourage and develop. Is obedience the goal, or creativity? Here I must admit that I write as a convinced Slobodkan, but I do not deny that some people, perhaps many people, would be better served by Nevaradok. The question is: how to produce creative, autonomous individuals who are also moral, sensitive beings who will become exemplary *bnei Torah*? And here, without casting aspersions, I think the answer is clear: fearfulness, a feeling of one's unworthiness, and the consequent timidity do not produce creative individuals.

However, as noted above and as Brown emphasized, this debate did not take place in a vacuum, but against the landscape of deteriorating Jewish life in Europe before and after World War I, which caused massive dislocation of most Jewish communities of central and Eastern Europe, and then with the destruction of European Jewry. As my son Zev David, a therapist who has had experience treating the syndrome, has observed, world Jewry can be seen, under the shadow of that destruction, to be suffering a sort of communal Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome, which may go far in explaining some of the more bizarre developments of recent years. The effects of PTSD have been found to extend beyond those who underwent trauma to multi-generational trauma transmission.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, I might add, this phenomenon may go far in explaining some of the directions of Jewish life and thought throughout history.

Nevertheless, as noted, Rav Hutner held fast to his own version of that optimistic Slobodkan vision, despite his own experiences and those of his contemporaries; moreover, no one who has had even a glancing acquaintance with him could ever dream of accusing him of naiveté, and I would contend that he produced a vision of potential human achievement that mirrors the complex interaction of reason, evaluation and judgment, emotion and intuition, individualism, autonomy, initiative and self-fashioning that unite to produce the creative human being.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Such experiences can apparently affect the victim's DNA; see Rachel Yehuda, *et al.*, "Holocaust Exposure Intergenerational Effects on *FKPB5* Methylation," in *Biological Psychiatry: A Journal of Psychiatric Neuroscience and Therapeutics* (forthcoming). My thanks to my son for this reference.

<sup>18</sup> See Shlomo Kasirer, pp. 186-187.

### III

The primary method of attaining these goals is by means of the intellect, and so let us begin with judgment; here is *Pabad Yitzhak* Shabbat 1.4:

ד. המוציא אוכלין בכלי פחות מכשיעור פטור אף על הכלי, מפני שהכלי טפלה לאוכלין. כלומר, אף על פי דגוף פעולת ההוצאה של הכלי נגדרת היא בכל גדרי מלאכת הוצאה דחילול שבת, מכל מקום כיון דבשעת הוצאת הכלי היתה פעולת הוצאה זו טפלה לפעולה אחרת, הרי זה מוציא את פעולת הוצאת הכלי מכלל "מלאכת מחשבת". וממילא אין היא סותרת את שביתתה של השבת. ונכונים אנו בזה לקראת ההארה המחודשת של המאמר הזה: אין ענין זה של טפל ועיקר דין פרטי בין המון הלכותיה של שבת, אלא שענין זה של טפל ועיקר מהוה היא את המהלך הפנימי של שביתת שבת בראשית. לשם הבהרת דברים אלו, עלינו להזור לששת ימי בראשית שלפני השבת. בששת ימי בראשית פעלו עשרה המאמרות. בכחם של המאמרות הללו נאצלו, נבראו, נוצרו ונעשו כל חוקי ההנהגה של עצם טבע כל העולמות. אבל בכל העשרה מאמרות של ששת ימי בראשית לא הוזכר עדין ענין הקדושה כל עיקר. ורק עם הופעתה של שבת נזכרה בראשונה מציאות הקדושה. כלליות ענין הקדושה בכאן פירושה הוא, כי בעוד שעד עכשו בששת ימי בראשית יצא לפועל גופם של העולמות, הנה עכשו עם הופעתם של השבת יצא מן ההעלם אל הגילוי התכלית והמטרה של קיום העולמות, "אם לא בריתי יומם ולילה חוקות שמים וארץ לא שמת". הברית היא התכלית והמטרה של חוקות שמים וארץ.

4. One who takes food less than the amount that would make him liable for violating the Sabbath [law against carrying from one domain to another] in a container is also not guilty for carrying the container, because the container is only an accessory to the food [and he had not carried enough food to make him liable], that is to say, even though the essential act of taking out the container is defined by all the rules [forbidding] transferring [from one domain to another] that make the carrier liable for violating the Sabbath, nevertheless, since at the time of the transfer the container was only an accessory to another act, [that is, the forbidden one of transfer of the food], this aspect of the action takes the act of transferring the container out of the category of "intentional labor" [which defines acts that violate the Sabbath]. And thus [that act] does not contradict the [commandment of] resting on the Sabbath. [With our understanding of this rule] we are prepared [to understand] the particular insight [to which] this *ma'amar* [is dedicated]: This matter of essence and accessory is not a particular rule governing only this situation among the many other rules governing Sabbath rest, but rather this rule of essence and accessory constitutes the inner process governing the rules of resting on the Sabbath [instituted at] Creation. In order to clarify these matters, we must return to those six days that preceded the Sabbath of the week of Creation. During those six days the Ten

Statements [by which G-d created the Universe] operated. By dint of these sayings the laws governing the essential *nature* of the all the worlds were emanated, created, fashioned and made. However, [despite the operation of] the Ten Statements of the six days of Creation, the matter of sanctity was not yet mentioned at all. Only with the appearance of the Sabbath is the existence of sanctity mentioned for the first time. The general matter of sanctity here means that though until that point in the six days of Creation the substance of the worlds had become actual (*in actu*), only now, with the appearance of the Sabbath, did *the purpose and goal* of the existence of the universe issue from hiddenness (העלם) to its revelation. “If I had not created day and night, I would not have put in place the laws of heaven and earth” (Jer 33:25). The covenant is the purpose and goal of the laws of heaven and earth [playing on the likeness of *bariti*, “I created” and *beriti*, “my covenant”].

This covenant Rav Hutner equates with the Ten Commandments, representing the Giving of the Torah, which serves to lower the natural, created world to a secondary or accessory status, *tafel*.

זו היא עצמיות מציאותה של שביתת שבת בראשית, שמצד הופעת אורה של קדושת שבת, ירדה בחינת הטבע של העולמות וגופם למדרגת כלי וטפל—היא היא שביתתה של שבת בראשית.

This is the essence of the existence of the rest of the Sabbath of creation, for because of the appearance of the light of the sanctity of the Sabbath the importance of the nature of the worlds and their substance was relegated to the level of [merely] a vessel and accessory—that is [what] the rest of the Sabbath of creation [represents].

And, as he goes on to say in paragraph 5, the precipitating factor in all this is no less than the human intellect, *ba-da'at*.

ה. אבל הרי כל קביעת משקל הערכין של עיקר וטפל, אי אפשר לו שייעשה רק בכוחה של הדעת. רק הדעת היא השוקלת ומעריכה.



5. However, the determination of the weight of the values of essential and accessory cannot be accomplished without the power of the intellect.<sup>19</sup> Only the intellect weighs and evaluates.<sup>20</sup>

Rav Hutner selects the use of the intellect to exemplify the essence and meaning of the Sabbath, which, though the intellect can be equated with Torah study, nevertheless has a different valence when it is expressed as *da'at* rather than as *talmud Torah*. Indeed, Rav Hutner adds a second chapter to his first *ma'amar* on Shabbat, a chapter comprising no fewer than 6.5 pages in celebration of the uniqueness of the human intellect and its creativity.

ז. וממשיכים אנו את הקו הלאה. מתוך מה שנתבאר לנו בפרק ראשון של מאמר זה נלמד כי לגבי שביתת שבת יוצא הוא המאמר של "נעשה אדם"—הוא מאמר של יצירת כוח הדעת. והרי נתבאר לנו כי מהות שביתתה של שבת היא הנמכת ערכו של גוף העולמות עד כדי התבטלות לאורם של העולמות. ומכיון שהנמכה זו נעשית היא רק בכוחה של הדעת, הרי ממילא יוצא מזה שאי אפשר לומר שכוח הדעת נעשה לטפל. מאחר שכוח השביתה מתקיימת בכוחה של הדעת. הרי ברור הוא שלא תתכן שביתה בכוח הדעת עצמו. והנה בכוחה של הדעת להכיר גם את גופו של עולם וגם את אורו, ולקבוע את ערכם ההדדי כמו טפל לגבי עיקר, ומתוך כך להשיג את התבטלות פעולתם של עשרת המאמרות כלפי אורם של עשרת הדברות. ומכיון שהתבטלות זו היא שביתתה של שבת, הרי נמצא בדוקא בשעה שמאמרי-בראשית שובתים, דוקא אז מתאדר כוח הדעת בכל הנשגביות שבו. וממילא יוצא מזה כי דוקא בשעה שהכל שובת הדעת יוצרת. מאמר "נעשה אדם" הוא מאמר הבריאה של כוח הדעת. ועל כן אנו אומרים כי דוקא שביתתה של שבת המבטלת את "עיקריות" עולם הטבע שנוצר במאמרות-בראשית, היא היא המוציאה לאור את עיקריות כוח הדעת הנוצר במאמר "נעשה אדם". וזה הוא מה

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<sup>19</sup> See Rav Y.D. David, *Quntras Pesah* 13.5: הכרת האמת וגם הבחנה "כי הדעת כוללת גם הכרת האמת וגם הבחנה היפוכו—"אם אין דעת הבדלה מנין". ופעולה זאת של הבחנת האור מן החושך הוא ענין הדעת "המתייחס אל משה". For the intellect includes both [an appreciation of] the necessity of the truth and a discernment of its opposite—"If there is no *da'at*, wherefrom discernment?" (Yerushalmi Berakhot 5:2). And this action of distinguishing light from darkness is the matter of *da'at* which relates to Moses." See there for the meaning of the reference to Moses.

<sup>20</sup> As we shall see below, Rav Hutner also employs the term *sekel* for the intellect, but the emphasis there (*Pabad Yitzhak* Shavuot 17.8) is on the intellect's creative power, while here he emphasizes weighing and evaluation, for which he employs *da'at*. Whether this distinction is carried throughout *Pabad Yitzhak* requires more research. What is clear, however, is that *da'at* is not used in its kabbalistic sense, as contrasted with *hokhmah* and *binah*, as Reb Zadok does; and *sekel*, which he does use, does not have that kabbalistic valence, but refers to "mere" human intellect. In contrast, Reb Zadok emphasizes insights that are "beyond man's intellect" (*lema'aleh me-hasagat ha-sekel*) dozens of times in his writings.

שאמרנו כי לגבי קדושתה של שבת יוצא הוא המאמר של "נעשה אדם" מכללם של שאר מאמרות.

7. We [now] continue the line [of reasoning] further. From what was explained to us in the first chapter [of this *ma'amar*], that in regard to the Sabbath rest [of the week of Creation] the [Divine] statement of "Let us make man" is not in the same category (lit., "goes out of the general rule") of the other [Divine] statements. "Let us make man" is the command regarding the creation of intellect. And so we become aware (lit., "it is explained to us") that the quality of Sabbath rest involves the lowering of the value of the substance of the worlds [created at Creation] to the point of nullification of the light of those worlds. And because this lowering was accomplished only by means of the powers of the intellect, it is thus impossible to maintain that the powers of the intellect can become mere accessories [to a greater end]. Since the generality of the Sabbath rest exists by means of the powers of the intellect, it is clear that there can be no cessation in the powers of the intellect *per se*. And since it is within the powers of the intellect to recognize both substance of the world and also its light, and to establish their mutual value as accessories contrasted to essentials, and from this to apprehend the nullification of the workings of the Ten Statements [of Creation] in comparison to the light of the Ten Commandments. And since this nullification constitutes [an essential ingredient] of the Sabbath rest, it thus comes out that precisely at the moment that the [Divine] statement [of Creation] ceases, precisely then is the power of the intellect exalted in all its sublimity. Sabbath rest is created by the power of the intellect, with the inevitable consequence (וממילא יוצא מזה) that *when all ceases, then the intellect creates*. The [Divine] statement of "Let us make man" is the statement of the creation of the intellect, and so we say that precisely the Sabbath rest that nullifies the "primacy" of the natural world (עולם הטבע) that was created with the statements of Genesis—is what brings to light the primacy of the powers of the intellect that was created by the statement "Let us make man." And this is what we said that in regard to the sanctity of Sabbath the statement of "Let us make man" is no longer in the category of the other statements [of Creation].<sup>21</sup>

ט...וממילא גם בתוכו של האדם עצמו בטלים הם שאר הכוחות של האדם לגבי כוח המיוחד שבאדם, דהיינו לכוח הדעת שהיא ה"אדם שבאדם".

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<sup>21</sup> On man's power to remake himself by means of repentance, see Kasirer, pp. 140–146, and see below.

9. And thus also within the inner being of man himself all other human abilities are null as compared to this unique power within a person, that is, the intellect, which constitutes the inner core of humanity (lit., the “man within man”).<sup>22</sup>

In this Rav Hutner applies the Rambam’s understanding of the human intellect as reflecting the “image of G-d.”<sup>23</sup>

יד...ונמצא דעיקר ברכת השבת הוא דוקא בזה שיום השבת הוא הזמן המיוחד והמקודש להוספת מהות האדם. והוספת מהות האדם זו משמעותה כפולה: הוספת ה"מיוחד לאדם" בתוך כלליות האדם עצמו, והוספת אדם בכלליות העולם.

14...And thus the essence of the blessing of the Sabbath is precisely in this: that the Sabbath day is the unique and sanctified day for the addition to man’s (essential) quality. And this addition to man’s essential quality has a double meaning: the addition of that which is “unique to man” within the general category of man’s qualities, and the addition of man into the generality of the world.

טו. והננו נועצים את חתימת המאמר בפתיחתו: טועמיה חיים זכו. ועמדנו על שנתחסה הזכיה בחיים להרגשת טעמה של שבת. לפי כל המבואר לעיל למדים אנו טוב טעם ודעת ביחס זה. רואים אנו בפרשת בראשית, שאף על פי שענין החיות בכלל נתפרש גם לפני יצירת האדם, מכל מקום תיבת "חיים" לא נזכרה עד שעת בריאתו של נשמת אדם.... רואים אנו מכאן כי אותה החיות הנגדרת בתיבת "חיים" מיוחד היא אך ורק לאדם. על ענין זה המתפרש להדיא בפרשת בראשית עצמה העמידו חכמים את מטבע התפילה "טועמיה חיים זכו". "חיים" דוקא. כלומר, מכיון שאותה החיות הנגדרת בתיבת "חיים" מיוחדת היא אך ורק למהות אדם, והרי שורש ברכתה של שבת הוא הוספת-מהות-אדם, ממילא נמצא כי ההרגשה בטעם השבת היא הזיכוי באותו סוג חיות הנגדרת דוקא בתיבת "חיים". ומתחלף הוא הענין לפי הנושאים. הזכיה לחיים מתיחסת היא להרגשת הטעם של השבת עצמה, בעוד ש"גדולה בחרו" מתיחסת היא לאהבה דבריה של שבת. הם הם הדברים. הרגשת תוספת-מהות-האדם היא היא "טועמיה", והלא תוספת-מהות-האדם היא היא עצמותה של ברכת שבת, ואילו "בחירת הגדולה" משתייכת להבחנת עיקר וטפל, והערכת גדלות וקטנות של שבת, כמו שנתבאר באות ה' שהבחנות והערכות אלה הם *תולדותיה* של תוספת הדעת הנוצרת בשבת. ועל כן "בחירת הגדולה" מתיחסת היא לאהבת דבריה של שבת, בעוד שהזכיה ב"חיים" מתיחסת היא להרגשת הטעם של השבת עצמה. טועמיה חיים זכו וגם האוהבים דבריה גדולה בחרו.

15. We thus join the conclusion of this *ma'amar* to its opening: “those who taste [the Sabbath] merit life” (a line from the Sabbath Musaf Amidah). We have come to understand the relationship of meriting

<sup>22</sup> Note that Rav Hutner employs the term *da'at* rather than *sekhel* here. In kabbalistic terms, *da'at* would rank higher than *sekhel*.

<sup>23</sup> *Guide* I, 2.

life with the apprehension (lit., “the feeling”) of the taste of the Sabbath. From all that was explained above we learn the proper understanding of this relationship. We have seen from the Creation account that even though the matter of life in general precedes the creation of man, nevertheless the word “life” is not mentioned until the creation of man’s soul<sup>24</sup>...We see that that life that is defined by the word “life” is unique to man. The root of the blessing of the Sabbath is that additional-quality-of-man, and thus that feeling of the taste of the Sabbath is precisely in that category of life designated by the word “life” which varies with the context. Meriting life relates to the apprehension of the taste of the Sabbath itself, while (the phrase) “they chose greatness” relates to the “love of her *words*”—of the Sabbath. This is the same equation (הם הם הדברים). The feeling of the addition-to-the-quality-of-man on the Sabbath is “those who taste her.” And this addition-to-the-quality-of-man represents the essence of the blessing of the Sabbath. The (phrase) regarding “choosing greatness” belongs to the distinction between essential and secondary, and the valuation of greater and lesser in regard to the Sabbath, as was explained in paragraph 5—that these distinctions and valuations are the *consequences* of the increase (alternatively: enhancement) of the intellect that is created on the Sabbath. And therefore “the choice of greatness” relates to the love of *her words* of the Sabbath, while meriting “life” relates to the feeling of the taste of Sabbath itself. “Those who taste her merit life, and those who love her words choose greatness.”

This then is Rav Hutner’s summation of the lesson of this long—10-page—*ma’amar*. The Sabbath rest enhances man’s intellect and sharpens his ability to make fine distinctions in Halakhah, such as the example he opens with regarding moving foodstuffs less than the minimum amount required to constitute a violation of *hilkhot Shabbat*.

For Rav Hutner, the human intellect is the crowning point of Creation, and at its apex stands human creativity, which is an expression of an individual’s uniqueness (*Pahad Yitzhak* Shavuot 17.8). That uniqueness and creativity is actualized in *talmud Torah*, which requires autonomy for its achievement, as we have seen (*Pahad Yitzhak* Shavuot 15.6, repeated from Hanukah 6.6).

But taking a cue from Maimonides, Rav Hutner, in contrast to Reb Zadok, not only assigns the intellect a role unique to humans, but defines

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<sup>24</sup> Here again Rav Hutner employs the principle that the Torah’s placement of terminology is itself significant, a principle employed extensively by the Ramban and ḥasidic writers.

the essence of humanness in terms of the workings of the intellect, emphasizing as well the uniqueness of each individual (*Pabad Yitzhak*, Sha-vuot 17.8).

ח. והנה כשאנו אומרים שסגולת היחידות טבועה היא בשכלו של כל אדם, ממילא נשמע מזה, כי עיקר מהותו של השכל הוא בהיותו מחודש בהחלט, מפני שאם לא היה כל שכל ושכל הנמצא בעולם מחודש במהותו, הרי אי אפשר היה לו לשמש בכתר היחידות. כי מבלי תאר היחידות בעל כרחו שהיה בו משום "היינו-הך" עם עוד שכל אחר הנמצא בעולם, ועצם האפשרות של היחידות בשכלו של אדם, באה היא לו רק מפני שיש בכל שכל ושכל דבר מחודש מה שאין בשכל חברו. ונמצינו למדים, דמהותו של כל שכל ושכל הוא במציאות החידוש הנמצא בו. ומפני כן אמרו "אין בית המדרש בלא חידוש". כלומר, הבית המדרש הוא מקום פעולתו של השכל, ופעולתו של השכל היא בהתאם למהותו. ועל כן עיקר פעולתו של השכל הוא "חידוש". החידוש במהלך פעולתו של השכל הוא בגדר פסיק רישא, עד כדי כך שאמרו "אין בית המדרש בלא חידוש". אין השכל מוצא את עצמו במילוי ענינו, אלא בשעת יצירה. עיקרו של כח השכל, כח הולדה הוא. ורק זה הוא מהלך יגיעת השכל. כשהשכל עסוק בעיונו, הרי אין התעסקות זו, אלא רדיפה אחר התחדשות הפנים של הדבר הנידון. לפני העיון היה הנידון נראה בפנים אחרים, מאשר לאחר העיון. חידוש-פנים זה, הוא הוא ההולדה אשר בכח השכל, וחידוש-פנים של הנידון הבא על ידי השתקעות השכל בנידון--הוא הוא עמילות השכל. וכשאתה אומר "שכל בלי כח עמילות", הרי זה כאילו היית אומר "אבהת בלי כח הולדה".

8. Now, when we say that [a person's] unique quality inheres (טבועה) in the intellect of each person, we infer from this that the essence (lit., "quality") of an intellect is that it is absolutely unique (מחודש) (lit., "quality") of an intellect is that it is absolutely unique (בהחלט), for were it not that each and every intellect in this world were unique in its essence (lit., "quality"), it would not be possible for it to symbolize (lit., "serve as") the crown of [human] uniqueness). For without the attribute (תאר) of uniqueness, one intellect would be identical to another, while the potential for uniqueness (as inherent) in a person's intellect comes precisely from [the fact] that every intellect has something unique about it that is different from another's. We learn from this that the [unique] quality of each and every intellect inheres in the creative capacity (במציאות החידוש) that is found in it. And it is because of this that they said: "There is no *bet midrash* without any innovation."<sup>25</sup> That is to say, the *bet midrash* is the place for the workings of the intellect, and the working of the intellect is in accordance with its essence (lit., "quality"). Therefore, the essential [product and proof] working of the intellect is the "*hiddush*" [=an innovation in Torah learning]. (Producing a) "*hiddush*" in the course of the workings of the intellect is inevitable, to the point that it is

<sup>25</sup> Hag 3a.

said that “there is no *bet midrash* without a *biddush*.” The intellect finds its proper fulfillment in the full meaning of the word only at the time when it creates (lit., “of creation”). The essential quality of the intellect is the power to conceive. This alone is the intellect’s mode of operation (מהלך יגיעת השכל). During its [work of] analysis, the intellect’s activity [may be perceived] as the urgent search (רדיפה) for a new perception (התחדשות פנים) of the thing being analyzed: [that is,] before the analysis takes place, the object of the analysis was seen in a different light (פנים) than it is after the analysis. This new aspect (חידוש פנים) is the conception (ההולדה) brought about by the power of the intellect. And this new aspect brought about by the intellect’s occupation with the matter at hand—is precisely the labor of the intellect (עמלות השכל). And when you say “intellect without the power of (intellectual) labor,” it is as though you said: “Fatherhood without the power of conception” (אבהות בלי כח ההולדה)!<sup>26</sup>

Please note that *Pahad Yitzhak*’s “labor of the intellect” (*amelut ha-sekbel*) may be seen as an amalgam of the Lithuanian *amelut ba-Torah* and the ḥasidic *avodah be-gashmiyyut* (conventionally rendered as “worship through corporeality”).<sup>27</sup> Here though the *avodah* is not so much worship as another prime mitzvah, *talmud Torah*; in essence, what Rav Hutner has done is extend Reb Zadok’s notion of the Sabbath’s rendering of *oneg Shabbat*, which includes bodily pleasures (to whatever limited extent), as a mitzvah, to both a full-fledged concept and one that explains the function of *talmud Torah* as well.

#### IV

And so, let us look at *Pahad Yitzhak*, Shavuot, 15.6-7.

ו. אמנם לא יהיה ענין זה שלם אם לא נעתיק בכאן את לשונו של ספר פחד יצחק, קונטרס וזאת חנוכה, מאמר ו' --- -- החידוש אשר מצינו בענינו של תלמוד תורה, כי לעולם ילמד אדם מה שלבו חפץ. והלא פשוט הוא כי אין מקומה של הכרעה זו אלא בלימוד התורה...אשר בו התעסקות במקום שלבו חפץ הוא הכרעתו של הדין עצמו. והסברת הדברים היא, כי כל שייכותו של אדם עם מציאות שחוצה לו, הרי

<sup>26</sup> See Rav Moshe Mordechai Epstein, *Levush Mordechai al Bava Metz'ei'a/Bava Batra*, Jerusalem: Makhon Yerushalayim, 5774, p. 14a, where Rav Epstein refers to נשמה בלי נשמה, “knowledge without the addition of [further] analytic understanding is like a body without a soul.” Rav Epstein (1866-1934), was, of course, long-time *rosh yeshiva* at Slobodka and brother-in-law of the Alter.

<sup>27</sup> See Norman Lamm, *The Religious Thought of Hasidism: Text and Commentary*, Hoboken: Ktav, 1999, pp. 371–386, and *passim*.

היא בדרך של חבור. כל החושים פועלים את פעולתם בדרך חבור. חוש המשוש פועל הוא את פעולתו על ידי החבור בכחה של הנגיעה. גוף הדבר נוגע הוא בגוף האדם. חוש הראות פועל הוא את פעולתו על ידי החבור אל כחם של קוי אור. חוש השמיעה פועל הוא את פעולתו על ידי החבור בכחם של גלי הקול. ועלינו לדעת כי הוא הדין והיא המדה גם בנוגע להשגת השכל. אי אפשר לשכל לבוא לכלל השגה כי אם על ידי חבור עם ענינו של המושג. חבור זה של השכל עם ענינו של המושג נעשה הוא בכחו של התענוג הטמון בהשגה. כחו של השכל בלי פעולת התענוג הוא כמו כחה של העין מבלי פעולת האור, וכמו כחה של האוזן מבלי פעולת האויר. ואשר על כן כשהעין מתענגת על מראות של יופי, או כשהאוזן מתענגת על קולות של מתיקות, הרי התענוג הזה הוא דבר נוסף על פעולתו של כח הראיה או השמיעה; ואילו בשעה שהשכל מתענג על ההשגה, הרי התענוג הוא נפשה של תנועת ההשגה, אשר בלעדו ינוח השכל כאבן דומם. ועל כן חפץ הלב הכרעה היא רק בתלמוד תורה. משום דמצות תלמודה של תורה מתקיימת היא בכחה של ההשגה וההשכלה. וכל תוספת תענוג בשעת השגה—הרי היא ממילא תוספת השגה. ולא עוד אלא שרואים אנו כי רק ביחס לתלמוד תורה נתקנה ברכת תחנונים על ערבות הדברים, שהרי לא מצינו דוגמתה של ברכת "והערב נא" בנוגע לשום מצוה מלבד תלמוד תורה. והם הם הדברים. כי התענוג בהשגת דברי תורה נכנס הוא בכלל גוף המצוה, ואילו בשאר מצוות אינו אלא עטרה של ראשם. עכ"ל של ספר פחד יצחק, קונטרס וזאת חנוכה.

ז. ונמצינו למדים כי אף על פי שניתן כתר תורה בראשו של כח השכל להשתלט על שאר כחות הנפש, מכל מקום גופו של שלטון זה מותנה הוא בפעולתו של כח התענוג. וטעם הדבר הוא משום דשלטון השכל על כחות הנפש ומדותיה, עיקר הגדרתו הוא כי פעולת השכל יש לה כח ממשלה, ואשר על כן אין ממשלה זו מתחלת אלא לאחר שבא השכל ליד פעולה, אבל כח התענוג שהוא הוא המביא את השכל לידי פעולה, לא נכנס לעולם בכללם של כחות הנפש הנמצאים בתחום שלטונו של השכל.

6. However, this matter will not be complete[ly explained] if we do not repeat a passage from *Pabad Yitzhak* on Hanukah, Ma'amar 6—the innovative aspect that we find in regard to *talmud Torah* [in contrast to other mitzvot] [is this: In regard to *talmud Torah* we have the rule] that a person should study what his heart desires. It is clear (פשוט) that this decision relates to the study of Torah...in which involvement (התעסקות) in matters that his heart desires is the decisive point (הכרעה) of the law (דין) itself. The explanation of this matter is that all of man's relation to reality outside of himself (השתייכותו עם) is by means of connection (חיבור). All the senses work by means of connection. The sense of touch works by means of a connection to touch. The substance [of the thing touched] (גוף) touches a man's body. The sense of sight works by means of its connection with light rays; hearing works by means of its connection to sound waves. And it is incumbent on us to know that the same is true in regard to intellectual apprehension. It is impossible

for the intellect to come to comprehension [of any matter] except by means of connection with the thing apprehended. This connection of the intellect with the matter to be comprehended is accomplished by means of the pleasure (תענוג) that is embodied (טמון) in the matter to be comprehended. The power of the intellect without the working of pleasure is like the power of the eye [to see] without the stimulation of light (פעולת האור), or the power of the ear [to hear] without the stimulation of air (פעולת האויר). However, when the eye is pleased by a beautiful sight, or the ear by sweet sounds, the pleasure is something added to the essential action of the power of sight or hearing, while when the intellect is pleased by its apprehension [of something], that pleasure is the very soul of the action of apprehension, which, without it, the intellect [may be compared] to a dumb stone. Therefore, the heart's desire [to understand] is a decision relevant only in matters of [the mitzvah of] *talmud Torah*, for the mitzvah of the study of Torah exists only by the power of apprehension and understanding. And [thus] any enhancement of the pleasure [of learning] at the moment of comprehension—is thus an enhancement of the apprehension [itself]. Not only that, but we see that it is only in relation to *talmud Torah* that a blessing [that includes] a request for the pleasure of the words [of Torah] was ordained, for we do not find an example of the blessing of “Ha’arev Na” (“Please make it pleasant”) in regard to any mitzvah aside from *talmud Torah*. And that is the point (והם הם הדברים), for the pleasure at apprehending the words of Torah enters into the very substance of the mitzvah, while in regard to other mitzvot it is [merely] a crown at its head—thus far the quotation from *Pahad Yitzhak* on Hanukah.

7. The upshot is that even though we give the intellect the crown of Torah to rule over the other powers of the soul, nevertheless, the essence of this sovereignty is predicated on the workings of the capacity (כח) for [intellectual] pleasure. And the reason for this is that the sovereignty of the intellect over the powers of the soul and its characteristics (מדותיה), its essential definition (עיקר הגדרתו) inheres in [the fact that] the powers of the intellect have the quality of dominion, [but] this dominion comes into being only after the intellect is energized (שבא השכל ליד פעולה)—and it is this pleasure that brings the intellect into play, [and without it] the powers of the soul that are located in the realm of the intellect's dominion never enter [into operation] at all (בכללם).

This is a remarkable analysis on several grounds. First, Rav Hutner assigns pleasure a role in the workings of the premier mitzvah, and moreover, he compares the role of desire and pleasure in Torah learning to the



workings of the senses,<sup>28</sup> and thus understands that desire as a *natural* outgrowth of the pleasure to be attained in the course of Torah study. In this way he also emphasizes the role of human autonomy within the domain of *talmud Torah*, as he assigns it a role within the process of repentance (see below). But perhaps the most remarkable of all is the fact that pleasure here is viewed positively, and, indeed, *the joy of intellectual discovery in the very essence of talmud Torah; without it, one has not fulfilled the mitzvah of talmud Torah*. The importance of pleasure in Slobodkan thought is well attested,<sup>29</sup> but Rav Hutner's application of this importance to an essential role in Talmud Torah is his own innovation.

The personal importance of creativity Rav Hutner expressed in a letter in 1933.

I am now becoming steeped in studies. . . . Study in its various guises absorbs me, and yet I know that the essence of my personality is the life of my soul and not the life of my mind. . . . For me to live a life of the soul means to live a life of soul-creativity. For myself, I cannot imagine any realm of life of the spirit to be without creativity. But this is the rub: I am not able to be creative in the life of the soul without first taking important strides—creative ones—in study and *mada*. And so, I am stuck between the insistent claims of the soul, which penetrate to my depths, and between the command of my personality to overcome these claims temporarily (as I pursue my studies) to build for greater soul-creativity at a later time.<sup>30</sup>

The stress on creativity and the joy of intellectual cognition in *Pabad Yitzhak* thus expressed a deeply felt need on the part of its author, one that will resonate with other creative individuals. While the *ma'amarim* in *Pabad Yitzhak* were addressed, first and foremost, to a yeshiva audience, it holds a message for the wider society of whose tradition it is part: stagnation is as much a danger as unbridled innovation.

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<sup>28</sup> Note the parallel to Reb Zadok's use of geometry to explain the workings of the soul (see above).

<sup>29</sup> See *Or ha-Tzafun* II, "Memadei Ta'anugot ha-Adam," Jerusalem: Havaad le-Hotza'at Ma'amarei Maran ha-Sava mi-Slobodka ztl, 5728 (1967/8), pp. 190–193, esp. pp. 192–193, Dov Katz, *Tenuat ha-Musar: Toldoteha, Isbeha, ve-Shitoteha*, vol. 3, Tel Aviv: Tziyoni, 1967, pp. 199–207 ("Ha-Ta'anugim ve-Simhat ha-Hayyim"), and Binyamin Brown, "Gadlut ha-Adam ve-Haqtanato: Temrot be-Shittat ha-Musar shel Yeshivat Slobodka," pp. 248–250. See now his short book, *Tenu'at ha-Musar ha-Lita'it*, Moshav Ben-Shemen: Modan/Misrad ha-Bitahon, 2014, esp. pp. 84–96 on Slobodka.

<sup>30</sup> See Goldberg, p. 27.

How do we differentiate the two? Here another *ma'amar*, this one from *Ma'amarei Pabad Yitzhak* Sukkot 27, will help us. In it Rav Hutner discusses the difference between a Torah scholar who has *da'at*, and one who does not.

ג. התחלת הדברים היא בביאור דברי חז"ל על "ויקרא אל משה" (ויקרא א, א), שהיה צריך משה לקריאה מיוחדת לבא אל המשכן. "מכאן לתלמיד חכם שאין בו דעה שנבלה טובה הימנו" (ויקרא רבא א, ט). בודאי במה שנקטו בלשון "נבלה טובה הימנו" הוא משום שדבר חי שמת הוא יותר גרוע מאשר לא היה בו חיים מעולם. והוא הגריעותא בנבלה. אולם בתלמיד חכם הוא עוד יותר גרוע מזה. כלומר, שטוב לתלמיד חכם שאין בו דעת אילו לא נעשה לתלמיד חכם לכתחלה. ד. אלא שעלינו לפרש בשפה ברורה מהו תלמיד חכם ומהו "תלמיד חכם שיש בו דעת". מה היא המעלה של "יש בו דעת" שבלעדה יותר טוב לתלמיד חכם אילו נשאר עם הארץ.

ה. סדר העבודה מתחלק לשני מהלכים. א) מצוות ממש ב) דברי רשות. הראשון הוא שכבר מבורר שהוא רצון השם וכבוד שמים. השני הוא שעדיין תלוי ועומד, והאדם בעצמו צריך לבררו ולחשוב מחשבות איך למצות [מ"ם פתחה] ככל היותר כבוד שמים מתוך פעולותיו (ווי אויסקצוקוועטשן דאס גרעסטע מאס כבוד שמים), מכל המצבים והענינים שניתנו לאדם להשתמש בהם לצרכו. כמו שאמרו "כל מעשיך יהיו לשם שמים" (אבות פרק ב). ויהיו דברינו להלן בהחילוק בין סוגי הדעת הדרושים להוראה בשני ענפים אלו.

ו. בהקבלה לחילוק זה הוא החילוק בדרגה על תלמיד חכם סתם ותלמיד חכם שיש בו דעת. הדעת ותלמיד חכם היא בזה שעל ידי לימודו בגופי תורה ממש, הדורה בו החיות איך לנצל עניני האי עלמא ודברי רשות לריבוי כבוד שמים במדה היותר גדולה. ואילו תלמיד חכם שאין בו דעת—הוא שקנה קנין בגופי תורה ממש מבלי היכולת להרכיבם לסניפי דברי רשות. אין כוח ההוראה שלו מתפשט על תחום דברי רשות. בלשון דאמרי אינשי, היינו אומרים: תלמיד חכם הוא בד' חלקי שולחן ערוך; ותלמיד חכם בדעת הוא גם "שולחן ערוך החמישי".

3. The beginning of these matters inheres in the explanation of the words of *Hazal* on "He called to Moshe" (Lev 1:1), that is, that Moshe required a special invitation to come to the *Mishkan*: "From here [we learn] that a Torah scholar who has no *de'ab*—even a *neveilab* is better than he" (Lev. Rabba 1:9). Certainly, *Hazal*'s choice of metaphor—"a *neveilab* is better than he"—relates to the fact that a living being that has died is greatly inferior to one that never had life at all—so much for [our understanding of] the inferiority of a *neveilab*. But a Torah scholar [of this sort] is even more inferior. That is to say, it would have been better for a Torah scholar who has no *da'at* had he not become a Torah scholar at all!

4. However, we must clearly explain what a "Torah scholar" is and what a "Torah scholar who has *da'at*" is, and what the advantage of "who has *da'at*" is, to the point that it would have been better for a

Torah scholar to have remained an *am ba-aretz* [if he remains without *da'at*].

5. The order of Divine service may be divided into two paths: a) the mitzvot themselves, b) matters of personal choice. The first category is clearly one [that reflects] the Will of Hashem and [an increase of] the honor of Heaven [i.e., a *kiddush Hashem*]. The second category is in suspension, and each person must clarify and consider how to extract the greatest accrual of Heavenly honor through his actions in all the matters and situations available to an individual to make use of for his needs. As H̄azal said: “All your deeds should be for the sake of Heaven” (Avot, chapter 2). Our explanation below will refer to the requisite distinction between these two types of knowledge of instruction.

6. The distinction between an ordinary Torah scholar and one who has *da'at* is in parallel to this distinction. The *da'at* of [that latter] Torah scholar inheres in this: by means of his study of the essentials of Torah he becomes imbued with the knowledge of how to utilize the matters of this world and of personal choice for the increase in the honor of Heaven in the greatest measure. In contrast, a Torah scholar who has no *da'at*—[that is,] one who acquired the essentials of Torah without the capability of harnessing them to those matters of personal choice; his powers of Torah instruction do not extend to the realm of matters of personal choice. As the popular saying goes: He is a Torah scholar in the four sections of *Shulhan Arukh*, while a “Torah scholar with *da'at* has also mastered the ‘Fifth [Section] of *Shulhan Arukh*.’”

Rav Hutner here adverts to a popular Yiddish saying that I shall explicate by means of another one: “*Sekbel iz an eidler zach*”—“common sense is a rare thing.” Matters that relate to human relations, specifically, to the increase of the honor of Heaven within the highly complex realm of human relations, require a sharply honed sense of the norms, expectations and needs of the society within which the Torah scholar lives and works, beyond those of the conventional four sections of *Shulhan Arukh*. A Torah scholar who represents that honor must always take that role into account in his dealings with people, and if he does not—a *nevelah* is better than he.

Talmud Torah also requires evaluation and judgment, as we saw in *Pabad Yitzhak* Shabbat. Halakhah is tempered by a sense of proportion in evaluating its stringencies. *Hefsed merubbeh, piqqu'ah nefesh, ein gozerin gezerah al ha-tzibbur ela im ken rov ha-tzibbur yekholin la'amod bab*, and other principles of halakhic decision-making are all intended to fulfill this requirement, and all require good judgment not only of Halakhah, but of the “carrying

capacity”—the amount of extra effort and expense and danger the *tzibbur* can tolerate. And that requires intimate knowledge of, and the capacity to take into account, the *tzibbur*'s limitations.

The ultimate purpose of Torah study, as of the mitzvot in general, is thus to increase the honor of Heaven, and this must be kept in mind even as the student of Torah enjoys the pleasures of the creative use of his intellect and the expression of individuality inherent in Torah study. And woe betide any Torah scholar who somehow fails in that task and thus does not increase, or even worse, diminishes that honor. In the end the expression of one's creativity and the joy of intellectual labor must contribute to the task of preparing the way for the creation of a Torah society that will be a *kiddush Hashem*. But if we succeed, even partially, we will have fulfilled both ourselves as individuals and our designated role in society, and with it, brought the Redemption that much closer!

## V

Humans' powers of evaluation and judgment, creativity, renewal and self-(re)fashioning are no more evident than in the process of *teshuvah*, as described by Rav Hutner in *Pahad Yitzhak*, which has been investigated by Shlomo Kasirer in his dissertation. In describing this Hutnerian approach, Kasirer focuses on *Pahad Yitzhak*, Yom Kippur 19.3-4. Paragraph 4 traces the implications of the Maharal's interpretation of Yoma 86b:

אמר רבי יצחק, אמרי במערבא משמיה דרבה בר מרי: בא וראה שלא כמדת הקדוש ברוך הוא מדת בשר ודם. מדת בשר ודם, מקניט את חבריו בדברים - ספק מתפייס הימנו ספק אין מתפייס הימנו, ואם תאמר מתפייס הימנו - ספק מתפייס בדברים ספק אין מתפייס בדברים. אבל הקדוש ברוך הוא, אדם עובר עבירה בסתר - מתפייס ממנו בדברים, שנאמר קחו עמכם דברים ושובו אל ה', ולא עוד אלא שמחזיק לו טובה, שנאמר וקח טוב, ולא עוד אלא שמעלה עליו הכתוב כאילו הקריב פרים, שנאמר ונשלמה פרים שפתינו. שמא תאמר פרי חובה - תלמוד לומר ארפא משובתם אהבם נדבה.

R. Isaac said: In the West [Israel] they said in the name of Rabbah b. Mari: Come and see how different from the character of one of flesh and blood is the action of the Holy One, blessed be He. As to the character of one of flesh and blood, if one angers his fellow, it is a matter of doubt whether he [the latter] will be pacified by him or not. And even if you would say [that] he can be pacified, it is doubtful whether he will be pacified by mere words. But with the Holy One, blessed be He, if a man commits a sin in secret, He is pacified by mere words, as it is said: Take with you words, and return unto the Lord (Hos 14:3). Still more: He even accounts it to him as a good deed, as it is said: And accept that which is good. Still more: Scripture

accounts it to him as if he had offered up bullocks, as it is said: So will we render for bullocks the offerings of our lips. Perhaps you will say [the reference is to] obligatory bullocks. Therefore it is said: I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely (Hos 14:5).

The Maharal is astounded that one who sins and thus throws off the yoke of mitzvot still has an obligation to repent, and, moreover, his repentance is considered by G-d as equivalent to a free-will offering.<sup>31</sup> After noting that this interpretation “pierces the heavens” and that “it is impossible to exaggerate the magnitude of this *hiddush* and its profundity,” Rav Hutner lays out the paradox it embodies: while one who performs a mitzvah is deemed as one who merely fulfills his obligations, one who repents after sinning and performs a mitzvah is deemed as one who has gone *beyond his obligation* and has volunteered a free-will offering, Rav Hutner explains:

ד....מכיון דעבודת התשובה היא עבודה של התחדשות ושינוי מן הקודם, הרי השינוי והתחדשות הקיום יוצרים הם את התחדשות ההתחייבות. הקיום וההתחייבות של אותו קיום בבת אחת הם חלים. כאילו הקיום הוא שיוצר את ההתחייבות, ואין כאן התחייבות הקודמת לקיום. וכל זה הוא כי מכיוון שהקיום הוא מחודש, הרי הוא נחשב התחלה, ואין שום דבר קודם להתחלה....ובזה אנו אומרים שאותה נקודת התחלה שהתשובה מחזירה לה את בעליה היא התחלה ממש המפקיעה את בעליה מכל ענין קודם ממנה. וכל קיום שאין לו התחלה של התחייבות הרי הוא בודאי קיום נדבה. וזה הוא שהנבואה אומרת על בעלי תשובה 'אוהבם נדבה'....

ו....אם הפרישה מן החטא היא בתורת תשובה, בעל כרחך שיש כאן דעת של שינוי ודעת של התחדשות, ודעת של ניתוח בין העבר להוה. וכל שיש כאן ניתוח ומקום חתך, ממילא נוצרה בכאן נקודת התחלה, ונקודת-התחלה זו מפקיעה היא כל התחייבות קודמת, כמו שגילתה לנו הנבואה במאמרה "אוהבם נדבה", וכל פרשת התשובה מתרוממת ומתעלית מריצוי של חובה לעודף ריצוי של נדבה.

4....Since the [spiritual] work of repentance is one of renewal and change from what precedes (התחדשות ושינוי מן הקודם), this change and renewal of the fulfillment [of the mitzvah of repentance] create the renewal of obligation [which has been nullified by the previous sin—YE] which came into being at the same time, as though the fulfillment [of the mitzvah of repentance] is what *creates* [italics mine—YE] the obligation [as though] there had been no previous obligation [which had been nullified by the sin]....In this [respect] we say that that point of beginning to which repentance returns him [=the one who repents] is truly a beginning that frees (מפקיע) him from every issue that preceded. And any fulfillment [of a mitzvah]

<sup>31</sup> *Netiv ha-Teshuvah*, p. 155.

that has nothing to precede it is certainly deemed an offering, and that is why the prophecy says of one who repents “I love them freely (lit., ‘as a freewill offering’)....

6....If this separation from (his previous) sinning comes by means of repentance, inevitably there is an awareness of change and an awareness of renewal, and an awareness of a break from the past to the present. And insofar that there is that break and a place of separation (מקום החרד), ineluctably there is a point of a (new) beginning, and this frees (מפקיע) [the sinner] from any previous obligation, as the prophecy reveals to us with the phrase “I love them as a free-will offering.” And this process of repentance is elevated (מתרוממת) (ומתעלית) from the (mere) status of obligation to that of a free-will offering.

As Kasirer explains:

After [the sinner] has thrown off G-d’s yoke, and thus has explicitly announced that he is no longer under the yoke of [the] mitzvah [that he has transgressed], from then on the obligation [to perform mitzvot] no longer serves as an authoritative motivation for fulfilling the mitzvot. For that reason, [the sinner’s] decision to repent is thus an original movement (תנועה ראשונית)—a voluntary gesture, the expression of the free-will offering of the heart. Thus, the fulfillment of mitzvot after repentance is conceived as the expression of good will that issues from total freedom....The motivation of a *ba’al teshuvah* not to repeat his sin is different from that of the “usual” G-d-fearing individual [who has not sinned]. The refraining from sinning again of the former is tied to his repentance, which opened up an absolutely new chapter in his life, [different] from the obedience to an obligation that had existed before (Yom Kippur 19.6; Rosh Hashanah 29.6)....<sup>32</sup> The *ba’al teshuvah* accepts the yoke of the mitzvot autonomously, in contrast to the righteous person [who has not

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<sup>32</sup> As Kasirer notes, here Rav Hutner “neutralizes” the kabbalistic intent of the Maharal, for whom “the concept of returning to the beginning functions...in a Neo-Platonic sense: an ontological return to G-d,” while Rav Hutner interprets the concept of return to the beginning in only a practical sense, as a conscious sign of the ability to break the bond of the past and turn a new page. This example may serve as an additional example of [Steven S.] Schwartzschild’s observation regarding the rationalization of mysticism in Rav Hutner’s work (Kasirer, p. 142). However, it should be noted that Rav Hutner may well have modeled his policy on that of the Maharal, who almost always does the same. The result has been an ongoing debate over whether there are kabbalistic elements in the

sinned], whose acceptance of the mitzvot has a heteronomic character. More precisely: in the *ba'al teshuvah* autonomy and heteronomy converge [for the heteronomy spoken of here is not Kantian, and does not relate to the substance of the Law, which remains totally divine, but only as a decision of acceptance]. In this concept Rav Hutner's immanent goal comes to expression, along with the intention to mix the obligation that comes from without with the free-will decision that comes from within. Similarly, the view of repentance as a present without a past is based on the original meaning of continual becoming (ההתהוות המתמדת), which expresses in a complete manner the present....<sup>33</sup>

As Kasirer rightly stresses, this stress on “continual becoming” has a goal: the unification of a person's character and abilities in order to employ even his “evil inclination” for good, which we, for our part, may identify with the ḥasidic *avodah be-gashmiyut* (“worship through corporeality”), along with intense Torah study, as we noted above.<sup>34</sup> The theoretical grounding of the place of renewal within one's spiritual life is set out in *Pabad Yitzhak*, Pesah 76.14-5, but its length and complexity cannot be presented here; instead, here is Kasirer's reworked and condensed version:

Rav Hutner emphasizes the ideal situation of repentance rather than discoursing on the parameters of sin. However, in the few places he deals with sin, evil is described as an outgrowth of the failure of the forces of renewal in coming to expression.<sup>35</sup> In this way he interprets the statement of Ḥazal that “a person's evil inclination gathers strength over him and is renewed every day, and were it not for the help that the Holy One, blessed be He, provides, he would not overcome it, as it is said: ‘The wicked watch the righteous, and seek to slay him’ (Qid 30b).”<sup>36</sup> The entire goal of the evil inclination is to enable the existence of free will by setting the person before two equally powerful choices. Therefore, in essence there is no place for the strengthening of the creation of the evil inclination to the point

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Maharal's thought, and if there are, to what extent. Indeed, the same debate could be carried out in regard to *Pabad Yitzhak*.

<sup>33</sup> Kasirer, pp. 141-142. The translation is mine.

<sup>34</sup> See Norman Lamm, *The Religious Thought of Hasidism: Text and Commentary*, New York: Yeshiva University Press, 1999, pp. 371–385.

<sup>35</sup> For a similar thought see Rav Yonatan David, *Quntras Pesah* 4.7: והכלל הוא שיצירה או רעיון שהתחיל לצאת לדרך ולא נתמשש קורין לו "נפל". The rule is that a creation or thought that is about to come forth but is not actualized is called a “stillbirth.”

<sup>36</sup> As Kasirer notes, this is a combination of two statements in Qid 30b, that of R. Yitzhak and that of R. Shimon b. Levi.

of making a person unable to cope with it without divine help. Moreover, the phrase “a person’s evil inclination is **renewed** against him every day,” does not fit the nature of evil, for the power of renewal is a power of the good, and is nurtured by an expectation of the future of which it is said, “In the future the Holy One, blessed be He, will renew the world,” and this future, which approaches and comes into being, extinguishes the power of evil. If so, what then is the meaning of evil’s power of renewal? The answer is that indeed, by itself, evil has no independent power of renewal, but its powers are nurtured in a parasitical fashion by the powers of the renewal of the good which do not come to expression in a positive and holy manner. Since evil receives its nourishment as a product of the weakening of the good, the person himself, by means of his free will, creates the powers of renewal for evil. That is the meaning of the verse “the wicked look to the righteous,” that is, evil looks for [the opportunity when] the powers of renewal of the good will fall into its possession from the righteous person’s table ([*Pabad Yitzhak*,] Pesah 76, 15). The upshot is that evil has no basic and original power of its own, but such powers are a defective by-product of the life-force that has not found its expression in an ordered manner. These words remind one of the modern humanistic concept that sees the origin of the human problematic is a defective life that does not bring the person’s powers and abilities to full fruition.<sup>37</sup>

Another aspect of this question is brought out in *Ma’amarei Pabad Yitzhak* Sukkot 65.7:

ז. מעתה יתבאר לפנינו קטרוגה של מדת האמת לפני הקב"ה בשעת בריאת האדם שטענה "אל יברא שכולו שקרים". וכנגד קטרוג זה נאמר "ותשלך אמת ארצה", ורק על ידי השלכת מדת האמת ארצה נתאפשרה בריאת האדם. ואל לנו להתפס לקטנות הדעת בהבנת דברי חז"ל אלו, שהחשש שאדם יוכל להכשל באמירת שקר הוא שמוליד טענת "אל יברא". אלא שכך הוא מובנה של טענת "אמת": מדת האמת מחייבת נאמנות ותלות על המקור. ומכיון שמהות האדם מונחת בכוח הבחירה שלו, ובמדה שאדם הוא בעל בחירה יכול לעשות עצמו אמצעי מבלי להשאר נאמן למקורו, (ולא רק בבחירת הרע, אלא בעצם עובדת היותו בוחר, יש בו עצמאות), לכן באה מדת האמת וטוענת נגד בחירה זו: "אל יברא".

And now the charge of the characteristic of Truth before the Holy One, blessed be He, at the time of the creation of humanity can be explained: [Truth] argued “Let him not be created since he is all falsehood.” And against this charge it is said: “He flung truth to the earth” [Genesis Rabba 8.4, Dan 8:12]. And it was only through this flinging of truth to the earth that the creation of humanity was made

<sup>37</sup> Kasirer, pp. 138-139.



possible. Let us not be small-minded in our understanding of the words of our Sages, may their memory be blessed, that [it is only] because of the concern that humanity may stumble in uttering falsehood that brought forth the argument that “let him not be created.” Rather, this is the argument of the “Truth”: the characteristic of truth requires faithfulness to and dependency on the Source. And since the essence of humanity lies in his power of free-will, to the degree to which a person is a creature of free-will he is able to make himself independent without remaining faithful to his Source, (and not just in choosing evil, but from the mere fact of his possessing free-will, he has this independence), that is why Truth comes and argues against this choice: “Let him not be created.”

In light of all this we may understand Rav Hutner’s declaration that there are people whose stature is not diminished by their sin(s), though there are also people whose stature is diminished. Here are parts of *Pabad Yitzhak* Yom Kippur 11:

נפלא הוא הענין העומד כאן לדיון, כי על כן נושא הדיון הזה את חזונו על סוגי מדת סליחתו יתברך, כפי שהם משתקפים בנפשו של אדם הזוכה לסליחה. ונתחיל ונאמר. על כחה של מדת התשובה אמרו חכמים: גדולה תשובה שמקרבת את הגאולה שנאמר ובא לציון גואל ולשבי פשע ביעקב. גאולה בסמיכות לשבי פשע. וכתב על זה המהר"ל: והיינו דמצינו דיום כיפור דשנת היובל הוא זמן גאולה תתנו לארץ, גאולה תהיה, זמן שעבדים משתחררים ושבים לבתיהם, שבו שדות ונחלות חוזרות לבעליהן, בזמן שהכל שבים למצבם הראשון. יום-כיפור שהוא זמן התשובה, בו מתקיימת המצוה של גאולה תהיה לכם. וברור הוא דכונתו של המהר"ל בהוספה היא להורות לנו שלא נחשוב כי הצירוף הזה של תשובה לגאולה, לא נאמר אלא בגאולה דאחרית הימים, וכפשוטו של הפסוק דשבי פשע ביעקב. ובכדי להוציא שורש גדול לצירוף זה של תשובה לגאולה. ואף על גב דכל יום כיפור הרי הוא מיוחד לתשובה, וצירוף זה של גאולה לתשובה אינו מתקיים אלא ביום-כיפור של יובל. מכל מקום, דעת לנבון נקל, כי כל האורות של יום-כיפור של יובל אינם אלא קיבוץ אורות של כל מועדי יום כיפור של היובל. וכל יום כיפור ויום-כיפור של כל שנות היובל מוסר את אורו ליום-כיפור של היובל. והסך הכל של האורות הללו מוליד הוא את השלהבת הקודש של כל מיני הקדושה של יום-כיפור של שנת היובל. ואם אנו רואים את הצירוף של תשובה לגאולה מופיע במלא הדרו ביום כיפור של שנת החמישים, בעל כרחך שכל יום כיפור לחוד יונק הוא את כחו מן הצירוף הזה של תשובת גאולה, אלא שאין הצירוף הזה מתבלט עד שנת החמישים, שרק אז בשנת החמישים מסתכמים כל חמישים ימי-הכיפור ליחידה אחת. אבל בעצם יונק הוא כל יום-כיפור לחוד את כחו מצירוף זה של גאולה לתשובה.

1. The matter that stands before us for discussion is wondrous, for the subject of this discussion is the vision of the types of [G-d’s] characteristic of forgiveness, may He be blessed, as they are reflected

in the soul of one who merits forgiveness. And so we will begin. On the power of the characteristic of repentance our Sages have said: Great is the power of repentance that brings the Redemption closer, as it is said: "And a redeemer shall come to Zion, and to the repentant of the sin of Jacob"—Redemption together with repentance. And the Maharal has written on this: That is, we find that the Yom Kippur of the Jubilee year is the time of "give redemption to the land," "there shall be redemption," a time when slaves are freed and return to their houses, when fields and estates return to their [original] owners, at the time when everyone returns to their original status. Yom Kippur, which is the time of repentance, is the time in which the mitzvah of "there shall be a redemption for you" is fulfilled. It is clear that the Maharal's intention with this addition [to the Sages' words] is to teach us that we should not think that this combination of repentance and redemption was meant only for the Redemption of Messianic times, as the simple meaning of the verse "to those who repent in Jacob" would seem to indicate. In order to preclude such an understanding, the Maharal wrote that even in regard to the laws of the Torah is this combination of repentance and redemption to be found at this time, even though every Yom Kippur is specially dedicated to repentance, and this combination of repentance and redemption is fulfilled only on the Yom Kippur of the Jubilee year. Nevertheless, understanding is easy for the discerning, [and we must understand] that all the lights of the Jubilee Yom Kippur are only the gathering of the lights of the festivals of the Yom Kippur[s] of the Jubilee. And each and every Yom Kippur of all the years of the Jubilee [cycle] contributes its light to the Yom Kippur of the Jubilee. And the sum total of these lights kindles the holy flame of all the types of holiness inherent in the Yom Kippur of the Jubilee year. And if we see the joining of repentance and redemption appear in its full glory in the Yom Kippur of the fiftieth year, we must understand that each individual Yom Kippur receives its nourishment from this joining of repentance and redemption, but this joining is not discerned until the fiftieth year, for only in the fiftieth year do all the Yom Kippurs sum up to one unit. But in essence each individual Yom Kippur gains its power from the joining of repentance and redemption.

ג. ...העמוד הזה [של טיבו של תשובה] נתגלה לנו מתורתו של הגר"א. הנה המקרא אומר על דוד המלך שהוא הגבר הוקם על. ופירשו חכמים בזה שהוא הקים עולה של תשובה. וכתב הגר"א דעולה של תשובה בכאן הכונה היא מלשון עלייה, כלומר, דוד הקים עליתה של תשובה. והענין הוא, שאדם הראשון לאחר שחטא, קיים בעצמו סדר נורא של ק"ל שנה בתשובה. ומכל מקום לא הוחזר לגן עדן, ובני ישראל לאחר תשובתם על חטא העגל לא קיבלו שוב את הלוחות

הראשונות. שאול, גם אחרי אמרו חטאתי נקרעה ממנו המלכות, ללא חזור אליו עוד. ואילו דוד, לאחר תשובתו, חזרה אליו המלכות, כמו שהיתה מקודם. והיינו מה שהקים עולה של תשובה, דהיינו שהקים עלייתה של תשובה. תשובה למקומה הראשון, בלי שום הורדה.

ד. בכדי לדלות את משמעותה של מרגניתא זו נקדים את החק שחז"ל השרישו בנו, כי יש אדם שגבוה מעונותיו, ויש אדם שעונותיו גבוהים ממנו. חז"ל הורו לנו ענין זה במאמרם על הפסוק "אשרי נשוי פשע". פסוק זה נדרש הוא אצל חז"ל ש"נשוי" פשע הוא מלשון התנשאות, כגון אדם הנושא משא על ראשו שהמשא מרומם ומתנשא עליו. ובלשונם ז"ל אמרו "אשרי אדם שגבוה מעונותיו". מה הוא, איפוא, תוכן מעלתו של אדם המתנשא ומתרומם על גבי עונותיו? משום שנקודת-התמצית של הענין היא עדינה מאוד, לכן כדאי להשתמש בכאן במשל פשוט דוקא. הנה בחצר המלך, בין משרתיו, נמצאים הם בודאי כמה וכמה חילוקי מדרגות. ישנם כאלה שנתמנו על תפקיד קל בעל ערך פחות, וישנם כאלה שנתמנו על תפקיד מסובך שכל מעמדו של המלך תלוי בו. ישנם חסרונות וישנם יתרונות מכל אחד מסוגי המשרתים הללו. גם לשר היותר גדול יש לו בחינות לטוב שלו וברע שלו, וכמו כן ישנן בחינות כאלו לעבד היותר שפל. אבל הבדל הערך העיקרי שיש בין השר ובין העבד, הוא במקום הנגיעה של פעולתם. שפעולתו של השר, בין בחסרונו ובין ביתרונו גם הטוב שלו וגם הרע שלו נוגעים בעיקרי הנהגת המלכות, בעוד שהעבד, גם חסרונו וגם יתרונו נוגעים הם בפרט קטן של קרן זווית בחצר המלכות. ונמצא, שמלבד החילוק אם נידון בטוב או ברע לפי מעשיו, יש עוד חילוק, באיזו נקודה נוגעת היא גם טובתו וגם רעתו, גם יתרונו וגם חסרונו. ה. והוא הדין והיא המדה גם בעולם הנשמות. אין לנו שום מושג ושום ידיעה במטמניות הללו. אבל ברור לנו, שישנן נשמות, שמעשי בעליהן בין לטוב ובין לרע נוגעות במקום יותר עליון ויותר עיקרי מאשר נשמות זולתם. מלבד הבחינה של כל אחד אם מעשיו טובים או רעים, ישנה עוד בחינה של מקום הנגיעה של מעשיו, ובעוד שטמונים הם ממנו השינויים בין איש ובין רעהו, הנה עוד יותר נעלם ממנו החילוק בין סוגי החטאים, איזו חטאים נוגעים הם רק במשקל טוב ורע שע"י כל אחד, ואיזו חטאים נוגעים הם גם במשקל נקודת מקום הנגיעה של כל אחד להרמה או להורדה. וכל החשבונות והשינויים הללו נכללים הם בהדי כבשי דרחמנא והוא הוא מדרגתו של האדם העומד למעלה מעונותיו. דהיינו שלמרות חומר הרע הנמצא בחטאו, במשקל טוב ורע שלו, מכל מקום עונותיו לא גרמו לו הורדה ממקום נגיעתו. והדברים נוקבים עד כדי כך, עד שחכמים המציאו מקום לומר "אשרי" אפילו בשאול תחתית. שהלא יתכן שאדם נענש על חטאו בעונש של שאול תחתית, מכל מקום כל זה הוא בתחום משקלו של טוב ורע, אבל מכיון שעל ידי עונש זה מקום-נגיעתו לא הורד, הרי הוא גבוה מעונותיו. וחכמים אומרים על אדם זה הנמצא במעמקי-שאול "אשרי". אשרי נשוי פשע, אשרי אדם שגבוה מעונותיו.

3... This pillar [of the nature of repentance] was [also] revealed to us through the teaching of the GRA. Behold, Scripture says of King David that he is the man "raised by the yoke." And the Sages interpreted this [to mean] that he raised the yoke of repentance. And the GRA wrote that the meaning of the yoke of repentance here refers

to [the derivation of *ol*, “yoke”] from [a root] denoting “elevation” (עלייה), that is, David raised the elevation of repentance. The matter is [as follows]: Adam after he sinned arranged for himself a terrible regimen of 130 years of repentance. And nevertheless, he was not returned to the Garden of Eden; likewise, the Israelites, after they repented of the sin of the Golden Calf, did not receive back the original Tablets [of the Ten Commandments]. [Again,] Saul, [even] after he admitted “I sinned”—the kingship was still torn from him, with no return. However, as to David, after his repentance, the kingship was restored to him, as it was before. And that is the meaning that he raised the yoke of repentance, that is, that he raised the importance of repentance, repentance [in the sense of return] to its original place, without diminution.

4. In order to draw out the meaning of this pearl we must preface it with the law that our Sages implanted in us, that there is a man who is greater (lit., “higher”) than his sins, and there is a man whose sins are greater than he. Our Sages taught us this in their statement regarding the verse “Happy is he who is forgiven (where the Hebrew means, literally, “raised from sin”). This verse is expounded by our Sages that [the phrase] נשוי פשע is derived from the root of “elevation,” as a man carries a burden on his head where the burden is higher and more elevated than he, and, as though they said, may their memory be blessed, “Happy is the man who is greater than his sins.” What then, is the nature (lit., “content”) of the degree of this man who is elevated above his sins? Since the essential point of this is subtle indeed, it is fitting to employ a metaphor that is particularly simple. Thus, in a king’s court, his many servants are divided by degree: some have been appointed to fulfill a simple task of a minor nature, and some have been appointed to fulfill a complicated task upon which the very standing of the king depends. Each one of these classes of the king’s servants has abilities and deficiencies. Even the greatest minister has pluses and minuses, and so too those who are of the lowest order. But the essential difference between a minister and a servant is to be found in the nature of their task (lit., “the place of their attachment to their activities [for the king]”). For the function of the minister, whether by his abilities or deficiencies, for his good or bad qualities, touches upon the essential governance of the state, while the function of the servant, whether by his disability or ability, touches only upon a small corner of the [king’s] court. The upshot is that, aside from the difference in the standards of judgment of the minister or the servant, the consequences, for good or evil, depend on the minister or servant’s authority and function.

5. And this applies likewise to the world of souls. We have no knowledge or concept of these hidden matters. But it is [nevertheless] clear to us, that there are souls whose owners' deeds, whether for good or ill, touch upon a place that is higher and more essential than the souls of others. [Thus,] aside from the aspect [of judgment] as to whether an individual's deeds are good or bad, there is another aspect that derives from the point of contact of his deeds. And though the differences between a person and his fellow are hidden from us, the difference between the various categories of sin are even more hidden from us, which sins touch on the weighing of good and bad that applies to everyone, and which sins touch upon the point of contact of each individual in regard to elevation [of status] or diminution [thereof]. And all these calculations and differences are in the keeping of the Merciful One—and this is the status of one who stands higher than his sins. That is, despite the heinousness of the evil that is to be found in his sin, in the weighing of good and evil, nevertheless his sins have not caused a diminution in his point of contact. These matters are so penetrating that our Sages provided a place for [this status] so as to say “Happy [is he]” who may be [consigned] to the lowest point of Sheol. For it is possible that a person may be consigned to the lowest point of Sheol as punishment for his sin, nevertheless, this is from the aspect of the weighing of good and evil, but inasmuch as this punishment does not touch upon point of contact [in regard to his function], which is not diminished, he remains above his sins. And [thus] the Sages say of this person consigned to the lowest point of Sheol, “happy”—happy is he who is *nasui pesha'*, happy is a man who is above his sins.

ו. וממשיכים אנו את הקו הלאה לתוך עולמה של תשובה, ואנו אומרים: כל ההבטחות על פעולת התשובה המוחקת והכובשת את הרע ואת החטא לא ניתנו אלא בגבול המשקל של טוב ורע. כלומר, שמעשיו הרעים לא יחשבו ויתכפרו, ואפילו הזדונות יתהפכו לזכיות, ואפילו יזכה להארת פנים, ושיהא מרוצה לפני המקום. וכל זה כתוצאה מתשובתו—מכל מקום אין זה מכריח כלל וכלל, שגם במשקל הבחינה של מקום הנגיעה שלו פעלה התשובה. ואין כאן שום ברירות, שיוחזר לו מקום הנגיעה שהיתה לו מקודם. את החטא בודאי שהתשובה עוקרת למפרע, אבל אותו מקום הנגיעה שהיה חלקו לפני החטא, זה כבר חלף ועבר לבלי שוב.

6. And we [now] extend the line further into the world of repentance, and we say: All the promises regarding the effect of repentance, which wipes out and crushes the evil and the sin, apply only within the bounds of the weighing of good and evil. That is to say, his evil deeds will not be considered and will be atoned for, and even the intentional sins will be accounted as merits, and even [if] he merits the shining of the Face, that he will be in a state of approval before

the Omnipresent, and all this as a result of his repentance—nevertheless, all this does not inevitably require that repentance will be effective in regard to the aspect of his point of contact that he had had before. That sin repentance certainly uproots in advance, but that point of contact that was his portion before the sin—that has already passed from him, never to return.

Nevertheless,

ט. ונכונים אנו עכשיו לחזור לדברי מהר"ל, שהורה לנו שיש יחוד בסליחות יום-כיפור לגבי הסליחות שתשובה פועלת בשאר ימות השנה. ויחוד זה הוא מפני שתשובת יום-כיפור היא בדרך גאולה כדחזינו ביום כיפור של יובל. ועמדנו בצמאון להבהרת הבדל בין התוכן של שני סוגי תשובה הללו. ואמנם לאחר שנקלט בנו שפע האור של המאמר הזה, הצמאון נהפך לרויה. כי הלא כל ההבדל הזה נובע הוא מיום-כיפור של יובל. ומכיון דעיקר הבלטיה בענינו של יום-כיפור דיובל הוא החזרה והשיבה למקום הראשון אשר ממנו יצאו, עבדים נפטרים לבתיהם, ושדות ונחלות חוזרות לבעליהן, וזה הוא הגאולה הניתנת לארץ, הרי בודאי שהסליחה והכפרה של יום כיפור זה באות הן על דרך השיבה והחזרה למקום הראשון, הרי שבתשובה זו של יום-כיפור הפועלת סליחה, הרי היא מחזירה גם את נקודת-נגיעה הקודמת. שאין לך שיבה למשפחתו ולנחלתו גדולה מזו. והלא כבר למדנו שמה שנעשה ביום-כיפור של יובל בכלל, הוא הוא שנעשה בכל יום-כיפור בפרט. וכאן הוא המקום שבו צירף המהר"ל תשובה לגאולה. וגילה לנו כי סליחה דיום-כיפור היא סליחה בדרך גאולה. ישמע חכם ויוסף לקח, ומלבו יוציא מלים, להכניס את האור הזה לתוך חדרי-לבבו.

9. We are now prepared to return to the Maharal, who taught us about the special quality of the forgiveness of Yom Kippur, in contrast to the forgiveness that repentance achieves during the rest of the year. This special quality is because the repentance of Yom Kippur is by means of redemption, as we see regarding the Yom Kippur of the Jubilee year. And we stood, thirstily, to [hear] the clarification of the difference between these two types of repentance. However, since the abundance of light of this *ma'amar* has been absorbed into us, the thirst has turned to overabundance. For [we have seen that], indeed, this entire difference flows from the [unique quality] of the Yom Kippur of the Jubilee year. And since the entire significance of the Yom Kippur of the Jubilee year inheres in the return to one's origins, slaves return to their houses, and fields and inheritance return to their owners, and this is the redemption that is given to the land, then certainly the forgiveness and atonement of this Yom Kippur come by means of return to the origin, then indeed the repentance of this Yom Kippur, which provides forgiveness, must then return [the repentant] to his previous contact-point, for there is no greater return to one's family and estate. We have already learned that what is accomplished on the Jubilee Yom Kippur in general is

what is accomplished on each Yom Kippur. And here is the place in which the Maharal combined repentance and redemption. He thus revealed to us that the forgiveness of Yom Kippur is a forgiveness accomplished by means of redemption. Let the wise hear and add [additional] lessons [to it], and from his heart will come forth words, in order to allow this light to enter the chambers of his heart.

In an enlightening comparison between the conceptions of repentance in the works of Rav Y. B. Soloveitchik and Rav Hutner in his dissertation, Shlomo Kasirer observes that:

In the view of Rav Hutner, as in the view of Rav Y.B. Soloveitchik..., *haratah* (regret) aids in the accomplishment of the psychic separation between the past and the present. However, while for Rav Soloveitchik the emphasis is on the separation from the past, for Rav Hutner the emphasis is on the turn to the future....

And in this context he quotes *Pabad Yitzhak* Yom Kippur 19.7:

ז... ה'להבא' הוזה היא דפיקת הנפש המכה על האדם ואומרת לו 'גזור'. נפרד הוא היום מן האתמול. שוב אינני אותו האיש שהייתי. ה'להבא' הוזה היא פעולת ניתוח בנפש. ה'להבא' הוזה הוא מקום החתך בנפשו של המתהפך מדרך לדרך. מקום חתך זה הוא המקפל בתוכו את דעת השינוי ואת דעת ההתחדשות (י"כ יט, ז).

The [Rambam's stress on acceptance of a new lifestyle in the future]—'*lehaba*' ("to come") is the soul's knocking [on the door] of the person's psyche] and saying to him: Cut [yourself off from your past]. Today is separate from yesterday. "I am no longer the person I was yesterday." This "to come" is the action in the soul of cutting off. This "to come" is precisely the place of the cutting off in the soul of the one who turns from one path to another. The placement of this cut is where he combines within himself the intention of change and the intention of renewal.

And in a footnote he refers to a similar statement in *Pabad Yitzhak* Rosh Hashanah 29.6:

תכנו הנפשי של הקבלה להבא הוא ההכרה הפנימית הברורה כי על ידי הפרישה מן החטא אני מעמידים חתך בחיינו, ואנו מפלגים את חיינו לחצאים. חלק אחד של חיינו הוא לפני התשובה, ומן התשובה ואילך מתחיל החלק השני בחיינו.

The psychic content of acceptance for the future is the clear inner recognition that by this separation from the sin we are establishing a division in our lives, and we are dividing our lives into two. One part

of our lives is [that] before repentance, and from that repentance onward begins the second part of our lives.<sup>38</sup>

We have thus examined a number of *motifs* that find their place in the system that unfolds in the pages of *Pabad Yitzhak*, whose underlying theme stems from Slobodka: *gadlut ha-adam*, the greatness of man, his intellect and human creativity, which is also an index of human individuality and the self-fashioning that accompanies repentance. Along with these, there is also the theme of renewal, in which a person recreates himself through the process of repentance. All these *motifs* coalesce to form the essential elements of an optimistic, humanistic message, one that provides a strong underpinning for the maintenance of Jewish tradition in an increasingly hostile world. ❧

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<sup>38</sup> Kasirer, p. 161.