

ה

Hei

“Decide and Surrender”

Invocation Verse:

הִדַּר כְּבוֹד הוֹדָה וְדִבְרֵי נִפְלְאוֹתַי אֲשִׁיחָה
Hadar K'vod Hodekha V'divrei Niflotekha Asikha
The splendrous glory of Your power
and Your wonderous deeds I shall discuss!
(Psalm 145:4)

Meaning and Mystical Associations:

Hei can mean “the” and sometimes “behold,” both words pointing at something, drawing attention. In the *Sefer Yetzirah*, *Hei* is one of the twelve “simple letters,” and represents the activity speech, the astrological sign of Aries, the right foot in the human body, and the month of Nissan in time.

Text:

לֹא עָלֶיךָ הַמְּלָאכָה לְגַמֵּר, וְלֹא אַתָּה בֶּן חוֹרִין לְבָטֹל מִמֶּנָּה.
It is not upon you to complete the task,
but you are not free to withdraw from it either!
-*Pirkei Avot, 2:21*

Kabbalah Commentary

(Very slightly based on [Aleph Bet](#) by R. Yitzhak Ginsburgh)

The form of *Hei* has two parts that are connected, and one part that is disconnected. I am seeing the upper horizontal line as representing consciousness itself. It is horizontal to represent equanimity, as taught in the *Aleph* lesson. From the horizontal line of consciousness emanates the left vertical line, which I'm seeing as self-expression – beginning with thought, then proceeding to speech and action.

The disconnected vertical line on the left represents everything that happens that is *not* within our volition. In this way, the *Hei* is a symbol of that which is under our will, and that which is not under our will; that which we can control, and that to which we need to surrender. Awareness of this

differentiation is brought out through speech, through naming these two categories, hence the association of *Hei* with speech.

These three dimensions are always part of our experience. In this moment, there is an aspect of our experience that it completely our choice, and an aspect that is completely not our choice. Of course, there is an interplay between the two; they aren't separate. For example, the quality of our actions toward others will *influence* how they behave toward us, though we can't fully *control* others, or anything else.

A common problem is when we tend to not take the full power we have to decide our actions; we blame others or situations and don't take responsibility. Or, just as commonly, we exert effort to control things that we have no control over at all.

The practice of *Hei*, then, is being fully conscious of our decisive power in this moment, so we can be fully empowered. At the same time, it's fully acknowledging the rest of reality that we can't control. To the degree we can master *Hei*, we can be free in the present – free to act as we freely decide, and free from resistance to what happens. The main way to do this is by *naming* things as *within* your power and *not within* your power.

A way into this practice is to inquire into your experience about which “leg” of *Hei* is being expressed. What are you able to decide? To what must you surrender? Note that after you've done something, once your action is in the past, it moves from volitional to non-volitional. Similarly, when a feeling or thought arises, it is non-volitional; it simply appears. But once it appears, you have a volitional decision about how to respond to the thought/feeling that arose.

Practice

Chant

The *Hei* chant/meditation is first knowing that we don't control the universe, and second knowing that our next movement is completely under our control.

Think: "Seeing What Unfolds" and chant:

הָדָר כְּבוֹד הוֹדָה – *Hadar K'vod Hodekha*

Think: "I Do as I Will" and chant:

וְדַבְרֵי נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ אֲשִׁיחָה – *V'divrei Niflotekha Asikha*

Daily Practice

1. Chant the *Hei* Invocation Verse with *kavanot*.
2. Open meditation with the Ten Sefirot, adding *Aleph*, *Bet*, *Gimel*, *Dalet*, and *Hei* verses and visualizations. Visualize the *Aleph* above, the *Bet* below, the *Gimel* at your right, the *Dalet* at your left, and the *Hei* in your chest as you chant the first five *sefirot*, then continue with the rest of the *sefirot* and the *Sh'ma*. (You can practice along with video that will be posted on *Dalet* page.)
3. Spend some time in silent meditation. 20 minutes is wonderful, 2 minutes is infinitely better than nothing!