

ה

**Het**

“Hover”

**Invocation Verse:**

חַנּוּן וְרַחֲמוֹם יְהוָה אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם וְגָדֹל-חַסֵּד

*Hanun v'rakhum Adonai, erekh apayim ugedal hased!*

*Gracious and compassionate is the Divine,*

*Slow to anger and abundant in loving kindness!*

(Psalm 145:8)

**Meaning and Mystical Associations:**

Het is related to “life” (Hayot) and “fear” (Hatat Elokim, Fear of G-d). In the *Sefer Yetzirah*, het is one of the twelve “simple letters,” and represents the activity of sight, the astrological sign of Cancer, the right hand in the human body, and the month of *Tamuz* in time.

**Text:**

*Through the mizvah of tzitzit, may my life force, spirit, soul and prayer be rescued from the external forces. May the tallit spread its wings over them and rescue them  
“like and eagle rousing its nest, hovering over its eaglets.”*

כְּנִשֵּׂר יַעִיר קִנּוּ עַל-גּוֹזְלָיו

(Deut. 32:11)

וְהָאָרֶץ הָיְתָה תְהוֹמוֹת וְרֵיחַ אֱלֹהִים מְרַחֶפֶת עַל-פְּנֵי הַמַּיִם

*And the earth was chaotic and empty,*

*and the Divine spirit was hovering over the face of the waters...*

(Genesis 1:2)

**Kabbalah Commentary**

**(Based partially on The Aleph Bet by Rabbi Yitzhak Ginsburgh)**

Het represents life – hayim, from Het – Yod – Heh. Hassidut teaches that there are two levels of life: “Essential Life” and “Life to Enliven.” In our present experience, we can know these two levels as the awareness behind all experience (Essential Life), and the awareness that takes the form of things we perceive (Life to Enliven). Distinguishing between these two levels is this particular Presence Portal.

To do this, let your awareness “hover” over your experience, and know that whatever you perceive – physicality, feeling, and thought – are all coming and going. They are “enlivened” by your awareness of them, and when they disappear, the essential awareness remains. This is the image is represented by the Torah image of the eagle hovering over its eaglets. If it were to land, it would crush them, and if it were to fly away completely, the eaglets would starve. Similarly, we can “crush” the world by imposing on it, and we can also cause the world to vanish by withdrawing from it. We “crush” the world by not respecting how things are as a first step in any relationship. We cause it to vanish from our consciousness by turning away. Both approaches are a missed opportunity to see the Divine, the “Life to Enliven,” within the space of your consciousness, the “Essential Life.”

The middle ground is the process of “hovering.” This process is represented by the shape of the letter: *Het* is constructed of a *vav* and a *zayin*, with the thin line connecting them and pointing upward. The eagle, representing “hovering,” is the lining pointing up. The *vav* is including everything, the intimacy of coming close to whatever appears, while the *zayin* is the sword, staying hovered above, not attached to controlling anything. This aspect of non-attachment hints at the other meaning of *Het*, which is fear. In order to have the motivation to fully “cut the cord” so to speak, it’s helpful to have a bit of fear, in a sense, of the suffering that clinging produces.

## **Practice**

### **Het Meditation**

Let your awareness “hover” over whatever is arising in your experience. As you chant the first part of the verse, open your heart fully to whatever you are experiencing, visualizing the *vav* if you can: *Hanun v'rakhum Adonai*

As you chant the second part of the verse, imagine the *zayin* cutting your attachment to your experience: *Erekh apayim ugedal hased*