



Yod

“Nothing Extra”

Invocation Verse:

יְדוּכָה אֲדוֹנָי כֹּל מַעֲשֵׂיךָ וְיִבְרַכְךָ יְבִרְכְּךָ

Yodukha Adonai Kol Ma'asekha, V'Hasidekha Yivarkhukha

All Your creations will thank you, and Your devout ones will bless You!

(Psalm 145:10)

Meaning and Mystical Associations:

Yod is related to simplicity. In the *Sefer Yetzirah*, *yod* is one of the twelve “simple letters,” and represents action, the astrological sign of Virgo, the left hand in the human body, and the month of *Elul* in time.

Text – Pirkei Avot 1:17

שָׁמַעוֹן בֶּן־אֶמְרַן, כָּל יְמֵי גִדְלֹתַי בֵּין הַחֲכָמִים, וְלֹא מִצָּאֵתִי לְגוֹף טוֹב אֶלָּא שְׂתִיקָה. וְלֹא הַמְדַרְשׁ הוּא הָעֵקֶר, אֶלָּא הַמַּעֲשֵׂה. וְכָל הַמְרַבֶּה דְבָרִים, מְבִיא חֲטָא

Shimon, his son, says, “All my days I grew up among the Sages, and I did not find anything good for the body except silence. Thinking and studying are not the main thing, but rather, doing; And whoever increases words invites destructive error.”

Kabbalah Commentary

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

Yod represents simplicity, hinted at by its simple shape which is part of all the other letters. Its shape is also like a seed, hinting that the simplicity of Presence is the fertile ground from which all creativity springs. *Yod* is also the number ten, which is a number of completion: Ten Commandments, Ten Plagues, Ten Utterances of Creation, Ten Sefirot, and so on. So, the paradox is that on one hand *Yod* is a simple, dimensionless point, and on the other hand, it contains totality. The practical side of this truth is that when we relate with this moment in a simple and direct way, limiting our thinking only to what is necessary, we are set free from the feelings of constriction that are created by mental elaboration. In simplicity, infinite potential is open to us.

Another dimension of the simplicity of *Yod* is recognition of the supreme gift of being. This is a kind of gratitude that isn't dependent on any particular thing other than that we exist. This is the most important thing, yet the default is to completely take it for granted. But, when we become simple in our connection the present and let go of all excess thinking, gratitude for being can become obvious and easy to evoke.

Since *Yod* is the number ten, it also relates with the *sefirah* of *Malkhut*, which represents the world in time. The *middah* of *Malkhut* is trust in the way things are unfolding. Trust unfolds naturally when the mind ceases its narratives of worry. Both trust and the ceasing of thought are enhanced by connecting with the senses, which is the connection with the world as *Malkhut* – the kingdom of the Divine.

Practice

Yod Meditation and Chant

Bring to mind a time when you know you could have not survived, and yet you did. Feel what it is like to be here, knowing that your life could have ended. Keeping this *kavanah* in mind, anchor this basic gratitude through the chant: *Yodukha Adonai Kol Ma'asekha, V'Hasidekha Yivarkhukha.*

Daily Practice

1. Chant the *Yod* Invocation Verse with the meditation.
2. Open meditation with the Ten Sefirot, adding *Aleph*, *Bet*, *Gimel*, *Dalet*, *Hei*, *Vav* *Zayin* *Het* and *Tet* verses and visualizations. Visualize the *Aleph* above, the *Bet* below, the *Gimel* at your right, the *Dalet* at your left, *Hei* in your chest, *Vav* as your spine extending into your belly, *Zayin* as your right leg, *Het* as your left leg, *Tet* as your reproductive organs and *yod* as your head, but also as the open space around you, as you chant each of the ten *sefirot*. Then continue with the *Sh'ma*.
3. Spend some time in silent meditation. 20 minutes is wonderful, 2 minutes is infinitely better than nothing!