



## JEWISH VIRTUAL LIBRARY

Division of The American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise

# Hesed, Gedullah

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### Translation

Love, Lovingkindness, Compassion, Greatness, Grace

### Description

*Hesed* represents the generous, benevolent (masculine) side of God.

There are 72 "bridges" of *Hesed*.

### Human Imagery (Primordial Man)

- Right arm.

### Biblical Figures

- Abraham

### Names of God

- El.
- Supreme God (*El 'Elyon*).

### Colour

- White.

### Other Symbols and Images

- Upper waters.
  - Lion.
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Source: [Prof. Eliezer Segal](#)

Even before we began school, we absorbed massive amounts of information and mastered several highly complex skills. We did so on our own. All healthy children instinctively express themselves—in their cribs, without parental aid or words. In time, without formal instruction, they learn to speak, to walk and to manipulate their environment.

Children are inherently creative constructionists, learning independently by building intellectual and physical structures. (Papert, 1980) Each child makes enormous developmental strides through everyday play. While parents ooh and aah as they watch their infants amuse themselves with their feet, toys or food, their babies are teaching themselves about spatial realities and learning what is and what is not their body. They are discovering new worlds: learning about themselves, about others and about what sort of restrictions, permissions, roles and perceptual patterns are appropriate in the context and reality into which they have been born. (Yamamoto, 1972) Children's play is hardly frivolous.

The child is instinctively an effortless, spontaneous player. Through imagination, using materials found at home, in their cribs or on floors, children instantly enter fictional worlds. These worlds, their own minds, are teachers. A child never questions "how" to pretend. The broom transports—a magic vehicle for conveyance; a cloud becomes a face or an elephant; bath towels are arranged into ball gowns. The five-year-old is twenty-five. Through play, nonconscious and free-associative abilities turn things that are into what they are not. In the process, children learn how to be, do and live in the drama of consensus reality that adults and culture have devised. Their recreation allows them to expand intellectually and to imagine the unimaginable—to be whatever they wish.

Some children receive richer materials and greater encouragement and have more opulent environments for their play. (Papert, 1980, p. 7) These speed and reinforce learning and enhance their construction capabilities. Adults, schooled away from their natural inclination to explore, are often crippled players, wooden and self-conscious. Their days of self-instruction are numbered. Worse, they cannot imagine themselves free of problems anymore. Perhaps one cause for this imprisonment is that adults cannot imagine and no longer play.

## THE TYRANNY OF "ADULT" LOGIC

We warn ourselves to be logical. We limit our own mind—tell it not to dwell on the impossible. Life-predicaments are believed to be insoluble. As soon as we try to move even a small hill, disbelief and doubt magnify it into a huge mountain, and we are stymied. We find it unthinkable that future generations might live in space, underwater or on other planets; impossible to think of our body as healthy, as victorious over a disease or over the sorrow of a broken heart. Almost everyone has personal knowledge of a family member who thwarted his or her life because that person could not imagine being free of a limitation, an illness or shame. These seemed hopeless burdens.

Our enrollment in the School of Impossibles starts at birth. Sometimes our teachers are those who love us most. Our first lessons quite certainly involve memorizing what and what not to do at all times and in all places and situations. Our list of don'ts becomes so dense and weighty that eventually, like a lid, it closes our minds: many refuse from then on to open their thinking again.

Soon almost all of us stop playing for fun. We teach ourselves to approach everything, even recreational pursuits, in deadly earnest. We can't enjoy ourselves or others. We deify winning, rules and overcontrol. If, for example, we fumble while playing a game, we feel ashamed or get angry at ourselves. If others are slow, clumsy, forgetful or inept—or worse, if their wins exceed ours—we grow rude, irritable or self-critical. Sports or board games intended to be relaxing, insignificant, amusing diversion—simple conversation capable of building bridges of friendship toward others—become ulcer farms.

## RELEARNING TO PLAY

Those who can still play with self-abandon, who can put their whole bodies and minds into an activity, rid themselves of tension. Time, space, and self-consciousness evaporate. Through play, whatever their ages, people expand, gain insight, skill and "see" pictures of what's possible. Imagination is still their trusted servant, a friend, as in childhood. These individuals routinely wonder and dream—are able to consider unthinkable things. What is still invisible becomes real. By freely pretending, the unimaginable becomes imaginable.