

## **SHEKHINAH by Rabbi Leah Novick**

To our desert ancestors, she was the Divine Presence  
who they carried in the Sacred Ark  
the clouds of glory that guided them  
and the Manna that nourished them

To the Talmudic sages, she was the Divine Presence  
who dwelled in the holy temple in Jerusalem  
the Spirit that surrounds us when we pursue justice  
and leaves when there is pollution and violence.

To the Medieval Pietists, she was the Divine Presence  
who sat at the celestial Throne of Glory  
receiving our prayers . and radiating back the light to all beings.

To the authors of the Zohar, she was the Divine Presence  
moving through the Tree of Life as Binah, great Ocean Mother  
Gevurah the Destroyer, Hod the Glory and Malchuth the Earth

To the S'f at Kabbalists, she was the Divine Presence  
as "Pardes" holy apple orchard and Shabbos Queen  
whose re-unification with the Divine King  
was the goal of all prayers and ritual actions

To the Hasidic Masters, she was the Divine Presence  
who shone on the faces of righteous women and men  
Mother of the soul's breath. her return to earth was the goal of their prayers

To our diaspora Foremothers, she was the Divine Presence  
as the Compassionate Source the one they called out to  
in childbirth, illness and death; and celebrated on the New Moon

An to us contemporary seekers, she is the Divine Presence  
in the voices of women, representing the Shekhinah re-awakening  
who is calling to us from the earth... save the planet, stop the nuclear  
madness, clear the air, heal the sick, respect the elders, care for the children

and to Her, we respond- we are ready to create a dwelling place for the divine here on  
earth. To Her we answer in music and meditation, in politics and poetry, in dance and drama. to  
Her we respond: "Hineynu" yes, we are here !

*First published in Gnosis magazine, this poem has been included  
in a number of modern prayer books.*

