

A Prayer to the Shekhinah

Alicia Ostriker (1994)

**Come be our mother we are your young ones
Come be our bride we are your lover
Come be our dwelling we are your inhabitants
Come be our game we are your players
Come be our punishment we are your sinners
Come be our ocean we are your swimmers
Come be our victory we are your army
Come be our laughter we are your story
Come be our Shekhinah we are your glory
We believe that you live
though you delay we believe you will certainly come....
When the transformation happens as it must
When we remember
When she wakes from her long repose in us
When she wipes the nightmare
of history from her eyes
When she returns from exile
When she utters her voice in the streets
In the opening of the gates
How long, you simple ones, will you
Love simplicity, and the scorners delight
In their scorning, and fools hate knowledge
When she enters the modern world
When she crosses the land
Shaking her breasts and hips
With timbrels and with dances
magnified and sanctified
Exalted and honored
Blessed and glorified
When she causes tyranny
To vanish
When she and he meet
When they behold each other face to face
when they become naked and not ashamed
On that day will our God be One
and their name One
Shekhinah bless us and keep us
Shekhinah shine your face on us
Shekhinah turn your countenance
To us and give us peace**