



# Et Custosi Tutelae™

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## The Divine Presence of the Feminine in the Qabalah

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The term 'Qabalah,' translated from the Holy Hebrew, means tradition' or 'the reception.' It is derived directly from the root Q B L 'to receive.' The body of knowledge which we have come to know as Jewish Mysticism is thus spoken of as the feminine, that receptivity which contains and structures into a tradition, a form or framework of reference. This word Qabalah has a complementary term 'Masorah (M S R) which means to transmit, surrender or give over. It is representative of the masculine, unbridled penetrative force. These two, Qabalah and Masorah, can be seen as the polar tools or functionaries in manifesting, the physicalising of the Divine.

### The Holy Spirit

The Divine Energy which is beyond the physical and becomes solidified or structured into the temporal world of the senses is often referred to by Qabalists as Ruach ha-Qodesh [The Holy Spirit]. Ruach ha-Qodesh physicalises through the equal, complementary function of Qabalah and Masorah; and it is the Divine Presence in or of these poles which ensures the continuation of the something of creation we experience.

In the qabalistic tradition, the Divine Presence of the Feminine has, since the early centuries of the common era, has been referred to as 'The Shekinah.' The root of the word Shekinah, Sh K N, means to dwell, to inhabit. Shekinah is the dwelling-place, the habitation of the Holy Spirit.

### Titles of the Shekinah

At least one school of qabalistic thought has extended the idea of the Shekinah to that of the Community of Israel, Israel here meaning those who pursue Divinity. Further titles have been ascribed to the Shekinah, such as 'the Daughter of Light, the Queen, the Queen Mother, the Matron, the Bride, the Woman dressed in Black and the Weeping Rachel.' The latter two of these titles refer to a condition 'Eve found herself in after the so-called 'Fall' with Adam.

Qabalists ascribe her to the last sefirah (sphere) on the Tree of Life schema, called Malkuth, the Sefirah which longs to be restored to its original place. She is also referred to as being 'the Tree of Knowledge of Life and Death' itself, and also Binah, the Mother of Understanding.

### The Great Mother

The restored Shekinah then is the Great Mother, Gaia, in all the aspects applicable to womanhood. As the three archetypes, Enchantress, Mother and crone, She is the door through which one arrives in the world and also the place of rest at death, facilitating the return to our spiritual sources.

To recognise Her is 'to know.' As it is written, 'Adam knew Eve, his wife.' That knowledge is a knowing of the union and connectedness of all things . . . All is One.

There is an interesting gematrical [numerical] coincidence contained within the word Shekinah. Its root Sh K N has the same value, 370, as another well-known root, Sh L M, the source of the Hebrew word Shalom, with its multitude of meanings, including peace, tranquillity, hello, goodbye, wholeness, perfection. Shalom also includes the idea of Justice or balance.

The Shekinah is a relatively eternal Archetype. She is often personified in the physical through a symbol other than the Earth itself. She is Levanah-Yareah the Moon. Ritual magicians invoke the idea of eternal woman as the Moon deity because of the Moon's reflective and cyclic nature our Moon is barren, this is not so of all moons; and when Levanah is contacted, all moons are represented. One could say that our Moon is in its Crone phase.

### **The Many and the One**

As an energy the Shekinah can be seen to represent 'the Many' - the many cycles of the Moon, the many grains of sand which form the Earth. That there are thirteen Moons per solar year is gematrically very significant. The one solar year, thirteen moons, contains the Hebrew word for One [A Ch D] which is  $1 + 8 + 4 = 13$ . The Thirteen are One; the One is Thirteen.

### **Shekinah in the Taroc deck**

If you are familiar with the Visconti-Sforza Taroc [Tarot] deck, you will notice that the Shekinah 'is well-represented there. Enchantress [Moon]; Mother [Empress]; and Crone [High Priestess]. The Star, Justice, Temperance, and the Charioteer cards all depict women specifically, adding further dimensions to 'the three.' The Star can be seen to represent a mystical quality of Shekinah, while Justice, Temperance and the Charioteer each contain the notion of duality.

I personally have always seen the Star card as representative of the Age of Enlightenment which we, as a planet are entering. The woman depicted is of a pioneering nature, perceiving the unknown, thus making it known and accessible to the Many. It is the Lovers card of the Visconti deck which well displays the union of Qabalah and Masorah as the Holy Spirit. Although one could equally say that the Holy Spirit is genderless or male, it is as the Shekinah that those who have adopted Jewish Mysticism will experience the Divine Presence of the Feminine.