

ANA BEKOACH

The prayer *Ana Bekoach* was written about 2000 years ago by the Holy Kabbalist Rabbi Nechunia ben Hakanah. The prayer has profound mystical meaning.

The first letters of the 42 words of this prayer are the 42 letter holy name of God. Kabbalah discusses extensively this divine name.

The Torah describes 42 encampments in the desert on the way to Israel. This is a secret of 42 stages of spiritual awakening.

Also corresponding to this divine name are: 42 words in the first section of the prayer *Shema*, 42 words in the first section of the prayer *Amida*, 42 times the four letter name of God is in *tefillin*, 42 lines in each column of a Torah scroll.

The Tree of Life is the divine map of spiritual consciousness discussed in Kabbalah. These ten aspects of our inner self and levels of divine experience are called *Sefirot*. The seven verses of *Ana Bekoach* correspond to seven *Sefirot*. These seven *Sefirot* and one of many ways of describing them:

<i>Chesed</i>	Loving Kindness
<i>Gevurah</i>	Humility
<i>Tiferet</i>	Harmony
<i>Netzach</i>	Eternity
<i>Hod</i>	Thankfulness
<i>Yesod</i>	Unity
<i>Malchut</i>	Central Point in the Heart

The 42 Hebrew letters of the divine name correspond with wings of angels. Angels in Kabbalah are aspects of inner spiritual consciousness. The wings of angels are Love and Awe.

Kabbalah has many meditations on *Ana Bekoach* and the 42 letter holy name.

Ana Bekoach is included in the traditional daily prayers in the *siddur* (prayer book).

One possible translation is:

Please answer us with the great power of Your loving kindness! Free the bound!

Accept the songful prayer of Your people! Raise us up! Purify us! Awesome One!

Please! Great One! Protect like the pupil of Your eye those who seek Your oneness!

Bless them! Purify them! Have mercy on them! Bestow your righteousness on them always!

All powerful Holy One! Guide Your community in Your abundant goodness!

One and Only! Exalted One! Enlighten Your people who remember your holiness!

Accept our prayer! Hear our cry! Knower of secrets!

[Blessed is the name and God's glorious majesty forever and ever]

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