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**Yesterday, one of my Jewish friends (Pāli: kalyāṇa-mitta; Sanskrit: kalyāṇa-mitra) rang and refreshed my memory concerning Anochi (אָנֹכִי) a word that some Hebrew scholars consider a 'name' of God. The word is purportedly of Egyptian origin and this fact sits ill with some Jews. It is an intensive and specific form of the first pronoun singular 'I'. My friend had raised the topic during Sukkot (Feast of the Tabernacles) at the Bondi Yeshiva.**

This morning, I continued a Google search for the meaning of Anochi, and like most Google searches conducted in the past, I encountered the usual mixed bag, including a plethora of well-meaning but infantile (*child-like?*) speculations characteristic of those possibly honest (but all too often, *simple*) ‘souls’ willing to express an opinion.

My scholarly bias (intellectual snobbery?) was rewarded when I found Rabbi Michael Leo Samuel’s [Is God’s real name ‘Anochi?’](https://www.sdjewishworld.com/2012/11/20/is-gods-real-name-anochi-author-and-reviewer-disagree/) Author and reviewer disagree. This is a review of Rabbi Wayne Dosick’s [The Real Name of God: Embracing the Full Essence of the Divine](https://play.google.com/store/books/details?pcampaignid=books_read_action&id=LlwoDwAAQBAJ). Samuel’s review appears in the San Diego Jewish World (posted 20th November 2012).

Samuel summarizes Rabbi Wayne Dosick’s thesis:

“He advances a truly novel theory: God’s real name is not YHWH, or Elohim, or El, but happens to be Anochi—I am, which he defines as the 'I-Source,' which includes two aspects of God—immanence and the transcendence. Dosick emphasizes that 'We are of God, but we are not God.' This idea, serves to unite objective and subjective experience of God.”

As Samuel points out:

“To begin with, in Biblical Hebrew, Anochi (אָנֹ כִי) is not a name of God, it is a 1st person singular pronoun. Pronouns are not the same as Names.”

As the accompanying footnote makes clear:

“Nouns are words that name persons, places, things, actions, and ideas. Pronouns are words that stand for nouns and can take the place of nouns in sentences; they serve to replace a noun phrase that has already been or is about to be mentioned in the sentence or context, which is also known as an antecedent.”

Samuel notes that:

“There is a strange paradox in Dosick’s God-wrestling that I am not sure whether the author himself was aware of in his writing. The pure and ethical conception Dosick associates with Anochi still suffers from some of the negative associations that exist in the YHWH-ist perspective he eschews.”

**Samuel’s choice of the expression ‘God-wrestling’ (יִשְׂרָאֵל Yisraʾel) reveals the mental-associations that result from a familiarity with Torah (תּוֹרָה) and is particularly apropos as a metaphor for those of us who, at one time or another, find themselves struggling in an attempt to account for the ineffable. Being human, it’s well nigh impossible to forego such attempts at accountancy. But, as all nominally ‘spiritual’ traditions remind us, the ‘flavour’ of ultimate experience is best ‘savoured' in silence.**