

PROLOGUE □ PART 2

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

"A Discourse on The Redemption" itself is divided into four parts which we'll synopsise now.

The first part provides us with an explanation of the nature and consequences of the exile ("Galut") we're now in. Four tragic things characterize the exile, in short: The facts that the spiritual light that the great Supernal Luminaries emit is hidden away and the powers of impurity are thus emboldened; that other nations rule over us with a vengeance; that the Shechina (G-d's indwelling presence here on earth) sits in the dust, if you will; and the fact that we continue to suffer all sorts of trials and tribulations.

The second part is a discussion of the first of two stages of the redemption process, known as P'kidah. The Hebrew term "p'kidah" itself implies a visitation or a special dispensation of Divine favor. At this stage the earliest damage done by the exile -- the hiding of the spiritual light and the subsequent emboldening of the powers of impurity -- will be repaired to a great degree, though not entirely. And the Shechina will emerge out of the dust. But those things will only come about on a subliminal, *soul* level and only for a short time at that. The spirit of the two Messiahs will start to be aroused by then, too, and begin to blossom (yes, there'll be two Messiahs -- Moshiach Ben Yoseph and Moshiach Ben David; one will appear after the other in rather quick succession, and they'll work in tandem). And finally, our people will be inspired to return to G-d's service. Then the next stage will begin.

The third part of "A Discourse on The Redemption" focuses on that next stage, Z'chirah. The term "z'chirah" implies dwelling upon something and remembering it. It's in the Z'chirah stage that outward and apparent changes will come about, and when all four forms of harm done in exile will be amended. Both Moshiach Ben Yoseph and Moshiach Ben David will appear outright then and lead the Jewish Nation to Israel, all of our troubles will cease, and the Holy Temple ("Beit Hamikdash") will be rebuilt.

And the fourth part of the work discusses the time when the "Great Gate" will be reopened and holiness will reign. We'll understand by then that the harm and wrongdoing we'd suffered as a nation all along was never meant to be permanent, and joy will fill the world. Certain recondite subjects will be explained there, like the eventual unfurling of the sort of wisdom and the supernal light that had been sequestered away since the beginning of time, our eventual eternal attachment onto G-d, and the revelation of the great and ultimate truth that G-d is indeed the Sovereign King of the universe which will bring on the goodness and peace we've always wanted as well as the

destruction of evil.

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