

THE VISITATION □ CHAPTER 1:1

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

"The Visitation" will play itself out in six stages. This chapter will focus on the first of them.

As we were told, the Supernal Luminaries were dimmed in the heavens in the course of the exile, and all sorts of Divine emanations started to peter out down here on earth accordingly (though they certainly didn't wane altogether, since that would destroy the world en toto).

That's to say, our vital connection to heaven was disconnected for the time being; and as a consequence, we were thrust from our native land, our Holy temple was destroyed, the Divine service of the ministering angels and of many eminent guardian angels was suspended, Torah and wisdom came to be lacking among us, and -- most significantly -- The Shechina (G-d's manifest presence) was cast into exile as well.

That disconnect between us and heaven is the first thing that will begin to be amended in the course of The Visitation.

But there are a couple of points to know right off: first, that the Shechina was certainly not utterly cast aside (G-d forbid); and second, that while it will indeed reappear in the course of The Visitation, that will only last for a limited period of time, and will only come to full fruition later on during The Remembrance.

(Ramchal points out elsewhere that, ironically, our being cast into exile along with the Shechina actually draws us closer to her -- and closer to G-d of course as a consequence -- than we would have been otherwise! It's much like the way people who'd experienced a tragedy together are bonded for life from then on, even if they'd only known each other slightly or not at all beforehand.)

In any event, the actual rectification of that disconnect will only come about on a very subtle, subliminal, inner, and inchoate level rather than outright and dramatically; and the rectification will only be manifest here on earth rather than throughout the cosmos.

The actual process will be as follows, and it will touch upon a couple of Kabbalistic notions which we'll explain.

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