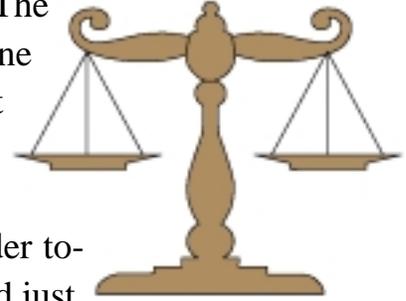


צְדָקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט

“Righteousness and Justice”

The Eleventh Blessing of the *Shemonei Esrei* (The Eighteen Benedictions) is the blessing of G-d as the One Who “loves righteousness and justice.” Sometimes it is difficult to remember that the Almighty is infinitely loving while at the same time infinitely just and righteous. This means that while G-d is merciful and tender toward His children, He is at the same time righteous and just.



“Righteous” means that everything G-d does is correct (He never makes a mistake) and that every decision He makes is fair. (Fair is another word for “just.”) And, since this is the very nature of G-d, He desires this to be the case in our lives as well. Here is how the blessing goes:

Restore our judges as before
and our counselors as at first.
Remove from us sorrow and sighing,
and reign over us,
You, Adonai, alone
with kindness and compassion;
and makes us righteous with justice.
Blessed are You, Adonai,
King, Lover of righteousness and justice.

During the days between Rosh HaShannah and Yom Kippur we change the wording of the last line of this blessing to read: “Blessed are You, Adonai, the King of Justice” since during these “ten days of awe” we emphasize the kingship of G-d along with His attribute of justice.

Notice that “kindness and compassion” are bound together with G-d’s justice in this blessing. When G-d’s Torah is written on the heart by the Ruach, then we truly desire to please our King, and He makes us to live righteously because He loves us and has compassion for us. He knows we are weak, so He supplies us the strength to do His will. Then, as His children, we grow to love and appreciate justice. We long for righteous counselors and judges so that G-d’s ways will be established. In this longing, we await the return of Yeshua Who will rule with perfect righteousness and judgment, and Who is the Wonderful Counselor

The counsel of
Adonai stands
forever, The
plans of His
heart from
generation to
generation.



Psalm 33:11