



Chesed and Emet

The Radak offers an inspiring and insightful perspective into a verse we recite in Hallel: כִּי גָבַר עָלֵינוּ חֶסֶדוֹ וְאֱמֶת ה' לְעוֹלָם הַלְלוּ יְיָ. *For His kindness has overwhelmed us and the truth of the L-rd is eternal* (Tehillim 117:2). This verse, describing the Final Redemption, calls it a חֶסֶד, *kindness* and an אֱמֶת, *truth*. Seemingly these two descriptions are mutually exclusive, for one is not entitled to a חֶסֶד, *kindness*, yet one is entitled to an אֱמֶת, *truth*. Resolving this problem, the Radak (Tehillim 117:2) explains that due to the profound pain the exile has caused us, it is easy to become skeptical or doubtful. Because of this uncertainty, we perceive the redemption as a חֶסֶד, *kindness* as if it were not coming. Yet, once the redemption has arrived, looking back, it will be clear that it is, in fact, an אֱמֶת, *truth*. After all, G-d promised it in the Torah (Vayikra 26:46).

The Radak lays out the theological outlook for modern Religious Zionism. It requires patience and perspective. In any process, there are ups and downs, moments of idealism and setbacks. These are the normal and anticipated emotions in the long and

critical spiritual process called Jewish history. Yom HaAtzmaut celebrates the highs. It reminds us that something mundane, like the declaration of the State, is a monumental חֶסֶד, *kindness*, which fulfills a promise, an אֱמֶת, *truth*.

Rav Soloveitchik astutely summarizes, “Our history is a strange one: it consists of Divine promises but at a slow pace. G-d promised Avraham the Land; it was not given to him. Hundreds of years passed but eventually, it was indeed fulfilled” (Festivals of Freedom 137).

Rav Dessler (*Michtav MiEliyahu*) notes that we should not go through the holidays but allow them to go through us. We should leave every holiday religiously advanced and elevated. This Yom HaAtzmaut should inspire us to continue hopefully looking forward, knowing that the ultimate promise will be fulfilled.

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