

Today's Wisdom

TODAY'S WISDOM

What is lofty may be said in any language, and what is mean should be said in no language.

- Maimonides, *Commentary to Mishna: Abot*

TODAY'S WISDOM

While praying, listen to the words very carefully. When your heart is attentive, your entire being enters your prayer without your having to force it.

- Rebbe Nachman of Breslov

-Ovid

TODAY'S WISDOM

Whoever lives a godly life may become, not alone his own redeemer, but also in some degree the redeemer of the world.

- Hyman Enelow, *Selected Works, 1935*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Wise men think out their thoughts; fools proclaim them.

TODAY'S WISDOM

Ease destroys bravery, trouble...creates strength.

- Maimonides, *"Guide for the Perplexed"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Even if you be otherwise perfect, you fail without humility.

- Talmud: *Kalla Rabbati*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Fire ascends and goes out; water descends and is not lost.

- Berekia Ha Nakdan, *Mishle Shualim*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Giving must culminate in service and action in character. But in order to *be*, enough doing must precede.

- Montefiore, *"Liberal Judaism"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

False ideals cannot be shattered by criticism. Right ideals must take up the battle against them.

- Franz Werfel, *"Between Heaven and Earth"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A man's faith is not perfected till his mind is perfected.

- Ibn Gabirol, *Mibhar HaPeninim*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A miracle cannot prove what is impossible; it is useful only to confirm what is possible.

- Maimonides, *Guide for the Perplexed*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Trees were created for man's companionship.
- *Genesis Rabah*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Charity is equal in importance to all the other commandments combined.
- *Babylonian Talmud, "Bava Bathra"*

As cited in "Jewish Wisdom" by Rabbi Joseph Telushkin.

TODAY'S WISDOM

Before you can find God, you must lose yourself.
- *Baal Shem Tov*

TODAY'S WISDOM

As a man must perfect himself as a man, so must a Jew strive to reach perfection as a Jew.
- *Zevi Katznellenbogen, letter to his son Gerson, 1845*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Reason is a spark kindled by the beating of our heart.
- *Apocrypha: Wisdom of Solomon 2:2*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The deepest truth blooms only from the deepest love.
- *Heine, English Fragments, 1828*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The height of the intellect is distinguishing between the real and the impossible, and submission to what is beyond one's power.
- *Ibn Gabirol, "Mibhar Hal'eninim"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The path to sound credence is through the thick forest of skepticism.
- *G.J. Nathan, "Matria Critica"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

It is as bad to listen to bad language as to use it.
- *Maimonides, "Guide for the Perplexed"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Woe to authority, which buries its possessor, for there is not a single prophet who did not outlive four kings.
- *Babylonian Talmud, "Pesachim 87b"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A man who acts intuitively is dearer in the sight of God than a sinner whom calculating caution returned to good.

- *M. Ibn Ezra, "Shirat Yisrael"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Your son is at five your master, at ten your servant, at fifteen your double, and after that, your friend or foe, depending on his bringing up.

- *Hasdai ibn Crescas*

TODAY'S WISDOM

All is mystery; but he is a slave who will not struggle to penetrate the dark veil.

- *Benjamin Disraeli, "Contarini Fleming"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

An individual is a person, when and because he knows himself as such; a group is a people, when and because it knows itself as such.

- *Mordechai Kaplan, "Future of the American Jew," 1948*

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TODAY'S WISDOM

Forego not the sublimely spiritual for the lowly physical.

- *Shem Tob Falaquera, Spanish philosopher, Sefer HaMaalot*

TODAY'S WISDOM

God is all reality, but not all reality is God.

- *Rabbi Moshe Cordovero, "Elima Rabbati"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

God is totally distinct from both the upper and lower worlds and can in no way be compared to the soul of man.

- *Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, founder of Chabad Chassidism, "Iggeret HaKodesh"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

He who can work in the realm of the real and live in that of the ideal, has attained the highest.

- *Ludwig Boerne, German-Jewish political writer and satirist*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A human being must either climb up or climb down.

- *Talmud: Erubin, 21a*

TODAY'S WISDOM

All that is valuable in human society depends upon the opportunity for development accorded to the individual.

- *Albert Einstein*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Be not like a bird that sees the grain but not the trap.

- *Ibn Tibbon, Jewish philosopher and doctor, 1190*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A life of seclusion, devoted only to meditation and prayer, is not Judaism.

- *Samson Raphael Hirsch, 19th century rabbi, "Nineteen Letters"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Beware of a pious fool, and of a wise sinner.
- *Ibn Gabirol, "Mibhar HaPeninim"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

God is glorified by a good deed the wicked happens to do.
- *Zohar, Exodus 11a*

TODAY'S WISDOM

God will pardon: that's His business.
- *Heinrich Heine, on his death-bed, 1856*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Build your home in such a way that a stranger may feel happy in your midst.
- *Theodor Herzl, diary*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Criticism has few terrors for a man with a great purpose.
- *Benjamin Disraeli, "Life of Lord George Bentinck"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Each penitent thought is a voice of God.
- *Baal Shem Tov*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Gloom obstructs our comprehension of the divine mysteries.
- *Moses Hasid, Iggeret HaMusar*

TODAY'S WISDOM

I always give much away, and so gather happiness instead of pleasure.
- *Rahel Levin Varnhagen, letter to Ludwig Robert, 1827*

TODAY'S WISDOM

I am a Jew, and it always seemed to me not only shameful but downright senseless to deny it.
- *Freud, quoted by Puner, "Freud"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

I cannot give you the formula for success, but I can give you the formula for failure--which is: Try to please everybody.

- *Herbert Swope, address, Dec. 20, 1950*

TODAY'S WISDOM

God will one day reestablish the world and strengthen the spirit of men so that they may prolong their days for ever.

- *Zohar, Genesis 38b*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Happiness and life are two different things; and it's no wonder that men came to ascribe bliss to the dead alone.

- *Franz Rosenzweig, letter to his mother, 1918*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Man is a little world and the world is a large man.
- Philo, "Who Is the Heir of Divine Things"

TODAY'S WISDOM

No limit to trials, but the wise learns thereby.
- Ibn Gabirol, "Mibhar HaPeninim"

TODAY'S WISDOM

Pleasures are manifestations of God's love.
- The Baal Shem Tov

TODAY'S WISDOM

The beginning of all participation in good things is hope.
- Philo, "Abraham"

TODAY'S WISDOM

Power buries those who wield it.
- Talmud: Yoma

TODAY'S WISDOM

Do not try to identify the Tree of Knowledge. Heaven forbend that we cast suspicion on any tree!
- Joshua b. Levi,

TODAY'S WISDOM

Each night, before retiring, forgive whomever offended you.
- Asher b. Yehiel, "Hanhaga"

TODAY'S WISDOM

I learned much from my teachers, more from my books, and most from my troubles.
- Kaminer, Baraitot de Rabbi Yitzhak

TODAY'S WISDOM

In the winter the earth is pregnant. It bears within itself a great secret. In the summer, the secret is disclosed.

- Rabbi Nachman of Breslov

TODAY'S WISDOM

Lose with truth and right rather than gain with falsehood and wrong.
- Maimonides, "Tzavaah"

TODAY'S WISDOM

Man's good deeds are single acts in the long drama of redemption.
- Abraham Joshua Heschel, "The Earth Is the Lord's"

TODAY'S WISDOM

My friend is he who will tell me my fault in private.
- Ibn Gabirol, Mibhar HaPeninim

TODAY'S WISDOM

Spend your money on good books, and you'll find its equivalent in gold of intelligence.
- Immanuel, "Mahberot," c.1300

TODAY'S WISDOM

The man who regards life...as meaningless is not merely unfortunate but almost disqualified for life.

- Albert Einstein, *"The World As I See It"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The Torah you heard from the mouth of a sage, esteem it as though you had heard it from Mount Sinai.

- Rabbi Helbo, *Ecclesiastes Rabbah*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Suffering is precious; it is a divine covenant.

- Jonathan, *Mekilta, to Exodus*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The branches' length depends on the trees' roots, and right speech on the man's sense.

- Ibn Gabirol, *"Poems"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Happiness is a perfume which you cannot pour on others without getting a few drops on yourself.

- Louis Mann, *"In Quest of the Bluebird"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

In other portions of Scripture God speaks to us, but in the Psalms men speak to God and to their own hearts.

- Matthew Henry, *quoted in "Legacy of Israel"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Lead me to a rock that is too high for me.

- Psalm 61:3

TODAY'S WISDOM

Man never acts in a manner more resembling God than when he bestows benefits.

- Philo, *Special Laws*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Organize yourselves into classes for the study of Torah, since it can best be acquired in association with others.

- Talmud: *Berkot 63b*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The general object of the Law is the well-being of the soul and of the body.

- Maimonides, *"Guide for the Perplexed"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The Messiah will come only when he is no longer necessary; he will come only on the day after his arrival.

- Franz Kafka, *"Parables"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The love of people is at the same time a love for God. For when we love one, we necessarily love one's handiwork.

- *Judah Low*

TODAY'S WISDOM

In love is found the secret of divine unity.

- *Zohar, Exodus*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Man was created so that he might lift up the heavens.

- *Mendel of Kotzk*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The Divine Presence is everywhere.

- *Hoshaia Rabba. Talmud: Baba Bathra*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The good die young that they may not degenerate; the wicked live on that they may have a chance to repent, or to produce a virtuous progeny.

- *Zohar, Genesis, 56b*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The poor does for the host more than the host for the poor.

- *Joshua b. Hanania, Leviticus Rabbah*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The road through life is like the edge of a blade, with the netherworld on either side.

- *Moshe Leib of Sasov*

TODAY'S WISDOM

It is improper to consider personal danger when the public welfare is at stake.

- *Maimonides, "Iggeret Teman"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

If you must, sin privately, but profane not the Name publicly.

- *Hanina b. Hama, Talmud: Kiddushin*

TODAY'S WISDOM

If you fulfilled My commands joyfully, My divine attendants will come out to meet you, and I Myself will bid you welcome!

- *Talmud: Derek Eretz*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Disaster comes only because of ignorance.

- *Judah HaNasi, Talmud: Baba Bathra*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A truth does not become greater by frequent repetition.

- *Maimonides, Tehiyat HaMethim*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Passover, with its message of hope, tells us that like the Egyptian slaves, we can escape from our straits.

- *Lesli Koppelman Ross, "Celebrate! The Complete Jewish Holiday Handbook"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

He who promotes his own honor at the expense of his neighbor's has no portion in the world to come.

- *Judah b. Hanina*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Each of us is enslaved inwardly in some way or another, and Passover helps us break out of our personal slavery and become free.

- *Matisyahu, Hasidic reggae singer*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Jews who have long drifted from the faith of their fathers...are stirred in their inmost parts when the old, familiar Passover sounds chance to fall upon their ears.

- *Heinrich Heine, "Rabbi von Bacharach"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

In each generation, every person is obliged to feel as though he or she personally came out of Egypt.

- *Mishna Pesachim*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Ever since Rabbi Akiba used the Passover seder to plan a revolutionary struggle against the Roman occupiers, the Jews have used the seder to begin concrete work on *tikkun* (healing and transformation).

- *Rabbi Michael*

TODAY'S WISDOM

We didn't have the money for a Passover seder when I was a kid, so our family would show up at relatives' homes unannounced. We were seder crashers.

- *Jerry Stiller, actor/comedian*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Passover affirms the great truth that liberty is the inalienable right of every human being.

- *Morris Joseph, "Judaism as Creed and Life"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

While the first night of Passover commemorates the redemption from exile in Egypt, the final day celebrates the future Redemption, which G-d will bring about through *Moshiach* [the Messiah].

TODAY'S WISDOM

God does not predetermine whether a man shall be righteous or wicked; that He leaves to man himself.

- *Tanhuma, Pikkude*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Happy is he who grew up with a good name, and departed this world with a good name.

- *Rabbi Johanan (b. Nappaha), Talmud: Berakot*

TODAY'S WISDOM

If you gather not in youth, how will you find in old age?
- *Apocrypha: Ben Sira 25:3*

TODAY'S WISDOM

It is integrity that invests man with immortality, and bestows upon him the privilege of direct communion with God.

- *Bahya b. Asher, Kad HaKemah*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Judaism enjoins 613 duties, but knows no dogmas.

- *S.R. Hirsch, Nineteen Letters*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Man was made mortal, because the Holy One foresaw that some...would proclaim themselves gods.

- *Hama b. Hanina, Genesis Rabbah*

TODAY'S WISDOM

To smile at your neighbor is more important than to treat him to a drink.

- *Johanah b. Nappaha, Talmud: Ketubot*

TODAY'S WISDOM

What is trust? Tranquility of soul in the one who trusts.

- *Bahya, Hobot HaLebabot*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Weep before God--laugh before people.

- *Yiddish proverb*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Very minor sins have led to great catastrophes, and for very minor good deeds, some met with enormous rewards.

- *Seder Eliyahu Rabbah*

TODAY'S WISDOM

What is yours is not yours, then how can you regard what is not yours as yours?

- *Talmud: Derek Eretz*

TODAY'S WISDOM

When you see handsome people or fine trees, pronounce the benediction: Praised be He who created beautiful things.

- *Tosefta: Berakot*

TODAY'S WISDOM

When you pray, remove from your heart all worldly concerns.

- *Nahmanides, letter to his son Nahman, 1268*

TODAY'S WISDOM

As soon as father Abraham conceives of Judaism, the process of "Go forth" begins.

- *Mendele, "Di Alte Maase"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Knowledge is not enough, unless it leads you to understanding, and, in turn, to wisdom.
- Sarnoff, *"Youth in a Changing World," 1954*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Sugar in the mouth won't help if you're bitter at heart.
- *Yiddish proverb*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The fault with charity--too little; with speech--too much.
- *Judah Al-Harizi, "Tahkemoni"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The Jews are like other people, only more so.
- *Chaim Weizmann's dictum, quoted by Arthur Koestler*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The errors of sages are regarded as willful sins; the sins of the ignorant are accounted as unwitting errors.

- *Judah b. Ilai, Talmud: Baba Metzi*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The essence and aim of the whole Torah is love for God and devotion to Him.
- *Katz, Toldot Jacob Joseph*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Bricks are fallen, but we will build with hewn stones; sycamores are cut down, but cedars will we put in their place.

- *Isaiah 9:9*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Discontent is the source of trouble, but also of progress.
- *Berthold Auerbach, "On the Heights," 1865*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Good will is mightier than the strongest weapons and guarantees the greatest security.
- *Apocrypha: Aristeas, 230*

TODAY'S WISDOM

He who renders true judgment is a co-worker with God.
- *Mekilta, to Exodus*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Independence is never given to a people, it has to be earned; and having been earned, it has to be defended.

- *Chaim Weizmann, modern founder of Zionism*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Neglect not to visit and treat the poor; there is no nobler work.
- *Israeli, Manhig HaRofim*

TODAY'S WISDOM

There is exalted greatness in everything small.
- Kook, "Orot HaKodesh," 1938

TODAY'S WISDOM

There is no sharp distinction in religious status between the rabbi and the layman.
- Louis Finkelstein, "Religions of Democracy"

TODAY'S WISDOM

There is a palace of light that opens only to him who occupies himself with the light of the Torah.
- Tikkune Zohar

TODAY'S WISDOM

When you are annoyed by something you could not avoid, don't aggravate it by useless worry.
- Mendel Lefin, Heshbon HaNefesh

TODAY'S WISDOM

Who did not earn merits in life will not benefit by what's done for him after death.
- Sefer Hasidim, 13C

TODAY'S WISDOM

Repose is good when it is rest, when we have chosen it...it is not good when it is our sole occupation.
- Ludwig Boerne, "From My Diary"

TODAY'S WISDOM

Three keys have been entrusted to no messenger: of childbirth, resurrection, and rain.
- Zohar, Genesis

TODAY'S WISDOM

Hope is like peace. It is not a gift from God. It is a gift only we can give one another.
- Elie Wiesel

TODAY'S WISDOM

The wise man should be generous in imparting his knowledge to others, for knowledge is not lessened in the giving.
- Solomon Ibn Gabirol

TODAY'S WISDOM

To work out ends of righteousness and love are you called; not merely to enjoy or suffer.
- S.R. Hirsch, "Nineteen Letters," 1836

TODAY'S WISDOM

Who trusts God fears no man.
- Bahya, Hobot HaLebabot

TODAY'S WISDOM

Shaming another in public is like shedding blood.
- Talmud: Bab Metzia

TODAY'S WISDOM

Show respect for an old man who has forgotten his learning through no fault of his own, for we have learned that the fragments of the old tablets were kept alongside the new tablets in the Ark of the Covenant.

- *Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 8b*

TODAY'S WISDOM

You will find no Torah in one who, because of some knowledge, exalts himself to the sky.

- *Raba, Talmud: Erubin, 55a*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The Sabbath is a mirror of the world to come.

- *Zohar, Genesis, 48a*

TODAY'S WISDOM

You shall not hate your kinsfolk in your heart. Reprove your kinsman but incur no guilt because of him. You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against your countrymen. Love your fellow as yourself: I am the Lord.

- *Leviticus 19:17-18*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Words which come from the heart enter the heart.

- *Moses Ibn Ezra, "Shirat Yisrael"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Theology: that madness gone systematic which tries to crowd God's fullness into a formula and a system!

- *Rabbi Joel Blau, "My Uncertain God," Menorah Journal, 1924*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Truth is the "light" by which to find your way out of darkness. Turn it on.

- *Rabbi Nachman of Breslov*

TODAY'S WISDOM

If a drop of ink fell at the same time on your book and on your coat, clean first the book and then the garment.

- *Sefer Hasidim, 13C*

TODAY'S WISDOM

If an account were kept of what we owe the Creator, no man would ever receive reward in the world to come. He will receive it only by divine grace.

- *Bahya, "Hobot HaLebabot"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

In the din and tumult of the age, the still small voice of Jerusalem remains our only music.

- *Israel Zangwill, 1921*

TODAY'S WISDOM

If only truth and justice were the rule, there would be no need for mercy.

- *Mendele, "Di Kliatshe"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Only then is a man's service of God sincere when he wants no publicity for it.

- *Rabbi Nahman of Breslov*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Praying only for oneself is like...refusing to assist fellow citizens in the repair of their walls...In a congregation, one makes up for the defects of the other.

- *Judah Halevi, "Cuzari," 1135*

TODAY'S WISDOM

As long as there is life, there is hope.

- *Johanan.*

Talmud J: Berakot, 9.1

TODAY'S WISDOM

To be able to live in strict conformity with nature is what the men of old defined as the end of happiness.

- *Philo, Hellenized Jewish philosopher (20 BCE- 50 CE)*

TODAY'S WISDOM

To follow the straight path, choose a good colleague; to avoid the evil path, avoid a wicked colleague.

- *Joshua b. Hanania, Mishna: Abot*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Who honors Torah is honored; who dishonors it is dishonored.

- *Jose b. Halfta, Mishna: Abot*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Who ignores the time walks in darkness, and who explores it is illumined by a great light.

- *Moses Ibn Ezra, "Shirat Yisrael"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Be not like those who honor their gods in prosperity and curse them in adversity. In pleasure or pain, give thanks!

- *Mekhilta on Exodus 20.20*

TODAY'S WISDOM

But how can you say, 'It was only talk, so no harm was done?' Were this true, then your prayers, and your words of kindness, would be a waste of breath.

- *Rabbi Nachman of Breslov*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Do not be wise in words - be wise in deeds.

- *Jewish proverb*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Good fortune--remember it's fickle; misfortune--remember it'll pass.

- *Solomon Ibn Gabirol, "Mibhar HaPeninim"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

He who created the day has also provided for it.
- *Eliezer b. Hyrcanus, Mekilta, to Exodus 16:4*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Him who pelts you with stones, you pelt with bread.
- *Yiddish proverb*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Is not the soul a guest in our body, deserving of our kind hospitality? Today it is here, tomorrow it is gone.

- *Rabbi Hillel, Leviticus Rabbah*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A father's love is for his children; the children's love is for their children.
- *Jewish proverb*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A person should be more concerned with spiritual than with material matters, but another person's material welfare is his own spiritual concern.

- *Rabbi Israel Salanter*

TODAY'S WISDOM

All who mourn over (the destruction of) Jerusalem merit to see her in her joy.
- *Ta'anit 30b*

TODAY'S WISDOM

As long as there is life, there is hope.
- *Johanan.*

Talmud J: Berakot, 9.1

TODAY'S WISDOM

"Know thyself" means: devote time each day to studying yourself....ferreting out your weakness, working at self-improvement, purifying your immortal soul.

- *Rabbi Yisrael Lipkin, quoted in J. Meisl, "Haskalah"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Desires must be purified and idealized, not exterminated.
- *Rav Eliyahu of Vilna (The Vilna Gaon)*

TODAY'S WISDOM

"Know thyself" means: devote time each day to studying yourself....ferreting out your weakness, working at self-improvement, purifying your immortal soul.

- *Rabbi Yisrael Lipkin, quoted in J. Meisl, "Haskalah"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A free man thinks of death least of all things; and his wisdom is a meditation not of death but of life.

- *Baruch Spinoza,
"Ethics"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A heavenly voice proves nothing. The law of Sinai commands us to "decide according to the majority."

- *Joshua b. Nanania, Talmud: Bab Metzia 59b*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A heart without affection is like a purse without money.

- *Benjamin Mandelstamm, Russian Jewish writer and Hebraist*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A human being must either climb up or climb down.

- *Talmud: Erubin, 21a*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A hundred times a day I remind myself
that my inner and outer life depend
on the labors of other men,
living and dead,
and that I must exert myself in order
to give in the measure as I have received
and am still receiving.

- *Albert Einstein*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A Jew can be Jewish with God, against God, but not without God.

- *Elie Wiesel.*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A Jewish ecology...[is] not based on the assumption that we are no different from other living creatures. It [begins] with the opposite idea: We have a special responsibility precisely because we are different, because we know what we are doing.

- *Rabbi Harold Kushner, "To Life!"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A little light will dispel much darkness.

- *Isaachar Eilenburg, Tzeda LaDerek*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A man cannot say to the Angel of Death, "Wait till I make up my accounts."

- *Ecclesiastes Rabbah 8*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A man is led the way he wishes to follow.

- *Huna, Talmud: Makkot, 10b*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A man is only as good as what he loves.

- *Saul Bellow, "Seize the Day"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A man is what he is, not what he used to be.
- Yiddish proverb

TODAY'S WISDOM

A man should always occupy himself with Torah and the commandments, even if not for their own sake, for even if he does them with an ulterior motive, he will eventually come to do them for their own sake.

- *Babylonian Talmud, Pesachim 50b*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A man should not act as a judge either for someone he loves or for someone he hates. For no man can see the guilt of someone he loves or the good qualities in someone he hates.

- *Babylonian Talmud, tractate Ketubbot*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A man who acts intuitively is dearer in the sight of God than a sinner whom calculating caution returned to good.

- *M. Ibn Ezra, "Shirat Yisrael"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A man without comrades is like the left without the right.

- *Solomon Ibn Gabirol, "Mibhar HaPeninim"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A miracle cannot prove what is impossible; it is useful only to confirm what is possible.

- *Maimonides, "Guide for the Perplexed"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A person is always liable for his actions, whether awake or asleep.

- *Babylonian Talmud, "Bava Kamma 3b"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A person is prohibited to eat until he first feeds his animals.

- *Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 40a*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A person should make ladders for himself by which he can sometimes go up to heaven.

- *Rabbi Kalonymus Kalman Shapiro*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A person should be more concerned with spiritual than with material matters, but another person's material welfare is his own spiritual concern.

- *Rabbi Israel Salanter*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A religious man is a person who holds God and man in one thought at one time, at all times, who suffers harm done to others, whose greatest passion is compassion, whose greatest strength is

love and defiance of despair.
- *Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A Religion is as much a progressive unlearning of false ideas concerning God as it is the learning of the true ideas concerning God.

- *Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A poor man's prayer breaks through all barriers and storms its way into the presence of the Almighty.

- *Zohar, Genesis*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A person's nature can be recognized through three things: his cup, his purse, and his anger.

- *Babylonian Talmud, Eruvin 65b*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A small act done modestly is a thousand-fold more acceptable to God than a big act done in pride.

- *Orhot Tzaddikim, 15C*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A truly generous man is he that always gives, whether it be much or little, before he is asked.

- *Orhot Tsadiqim*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A truth does not become greater by frequent repetition.

- *Maimonides, Tehiyat HaMethim*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A wise man will carefully avoid excess, lest he give the impression of haughtiness.

- *Maimonides*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Action may not always bring happiness; but there is no happiness without action.

- *Benjamin Disraeli*

TODAY'S WISDOM

All beginnings require that you unlock a new door.

- *Rebbe Nachman of Breslov*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Aid an enemy before you aid a friend, to subdue hatred.

- *Tosefta: Baba Metzia*

TODAY'S WISDOM

All education starts with forbidding.

- *Leo Baeck, "Essence of Judaism"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

All human beings, endowed with the spirit of holiness, are of the category of *tzaddik*.
- *Zohar, Genesis 33a*

TODAY'S WISDOM

All journeys have secret destinations of which the traveler is unaware.
- *Martin Buber*

TODAY'S WISDOM

All my days I have been raised among the Sages, and I found nothing better for oneself than silence; not study, but practice is the main thing; and one who talks excessively brings on sin.
- *Shimon ben Rabban Gamliel, Ethics of the Fathers 1:17*

TODAY'S WISDOM

All that is valuable in human society depends upon the opportunity for development accorded to the individual.
- *Albert Einstein*

TODAY'S WISDOM

All souls stood at Sinai, each accepting its share in Torah.
- *Rabbi Moses ben Hayyim Alshekh*

TODAY'S WISDOM

All that the righteous have accomplished, they have accomplished through the Holy Spirit.
- *Tanhuma, VaYehi*

TODAY'S WISDOM

All who mourn over (the destruction of) Jerusalem merit to see her in her joy.
- *Ta'anit 30b*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Always think of the end, and you will never do amiss.
- *Apocrypha: Ben Sira 7:36*

TODAY'S WISDOM

An individual is a person, when and because he knows himself as such; a group is a people, when and because it knows itself as such.
- *Mordechai Kaplan, "Future of the American Jew," 1948*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Words are the shell, meditation the kernel. Words are the body of the prayer, and meditation its spirit.
- *Bahya, Hobot HaLebabot, 1040*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Anger deprives a sage of his wisdom, a prophet of his vision.
- *Rabbi Simeon b. Lakish, Talmud: Pesahim, 66b*

TODAY'S WISDOM

A man must always be exceedingly careful to show honor to his wife.

- *Babylonian Talmud, Bava Mezia, 59a*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Anyone who repudiates idolatry is a Jew.

- *Rabbi Johanan bar Nappaha, Talmud: Megilla, 13a*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Any plan formulated in a hurry is foolish.

- *Rashi, Commentary on Job*

TODAY'S WISDOM

As long as the soul is within me, I will give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, my God and God of my fathers.

- *Talmud: Berakot 60b*

TODAY'S WISDOM

As a man must perfect himself as a man, so must a Jew strive to reach perfection as a Jew.

- *Zevi Katznellenbogen, letter to his son Gerson, 1845*

TODAY'S WISDOM

As the eye needs light to see, so the soul needs labor to comprehend.

- *Philo, "Sacrifices of Abel and Cain"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

As long as there is life, there is hope.

- *Johanan.*

Talmud J: Berakot, 9.1

TODAY'S WISDOM

Better prayer without synagogue than synagogue without prayer.

- *Abraham Heschel*

TODAY'S WISDOM

As soon as father Abraham conceives of Judaism, the process of "Go forth" begins.

- *Mendele, "Di Alte Maase"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Before you can find God, you must lose yourself.

- *Baal Shem Tov*

TODAY'S WISDOM

At a time when the community is in need, one should not say, "I will go home and peace be to you," but rather one should participate in the alleviating the community's trouble.

- *Pisikei Zutari, B'Shalach 17*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Ask your father and he will tell you, your elders and they will instruct you.
- *Deuteronomy 32:7*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Be not like those who honor their gods in prosperity and curse them in adversity. In pleasure or pain, give thanks!
- *Mekhilta on Exodus 20.20*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Before he died, Rabbi Zusya said: "In the world to come they will not ask me, 'Why were you not Moses?'"

"They will ask me, 'Why were you not Zusya?'"
- *Legend about Hasidic Rabbi Zusya of Hanipoli*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Better to lease one garden and cultivate it than to lease many and neglect them. As the proverb goes: who leases a garden eats birds; who leases gardens is eaten by birds.
- *Ecclesiastes Rabbah*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Charity is equal in importance to all the other commandments combined.
- *Babylonian Talmud, "Bava Bathra"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Circumstances are beyond the control of man; but his conduct is in his own power.
- *Benjamin Disraeli, English statesman and novelist (1804-81)*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Common sense is strengthened by joy.
- *Rabbi Nahman of Breslov*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Concentrate on three things and you will not fall into the grip of sin. Know from where you came, where you are going, and before Whom you will have to give account and reckoning.
- *Pirkei Avot 3:1*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Delight not in excessive luxury, for double is its poverty.
- *Apocrypha: The Wisdom of Ben Sira, 18.32*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Death was decreed for all, so that men may not be righteous just for the sake of life.
- *Jonathan ben Eleazar, Jewish scholar of the third century, Palestine*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Days are scrolls: write on them what you want to be remembered.
- *Bahya, "Hovot HaLevavot"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Criticism has few terrors for a man with a great purpose.
- *Benjamin Disraeli, "Life of Lord George Bentinck"*

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TODAY'S WISDOM

Death is experienced only once, but he who fears it dies each minute.

- *Solomon Rubin, Sefer HaMiddot*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Depression does tremendous damage. Use every ploy you can think of to bring yourself to joy.

- *Rabbi Nachman of Breslov*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Desires must be purified and idealized, not exterminated.

- *Rav Eliyahu of Vilna (The Vilna Gaon)*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Disaster comes only because of ignorance.

- *Judah HaNasi, Talmud: Baba Bathra*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Discontent is the source of trouble, but also of progress.

- *Berthold Auerbach, "On the Heights," 1865*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Do not be wise in words - be wise in deeds.

- *Jewish proverb*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Do not despise any person, and do not consider anything impossible, for there is no person who does not have an hour and no thing that does not have its place.

- *Ethics of the Fathers (Pirkei Avot) 4:3*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Do not say, "When I have leisure, I will study." Perhaps you will have no leisure.

- *Pirkei Avot 2:4 (Ethics of the Fathers)*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Do not try to identify the Tree of Knowledge. Heaven forfend that we cast suspicion on any tree!

- *Joshua b. Levi, Talmud: Yoma*

TODAY'S WISDOM

3

The world is new to us every morning--this is the Holy One's gift and every person should believe they are reborn each day.

- *Baal Shem Tov*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Prayer does half, repentance does all.

- *Joshua b. Levi, Leviticus Rabbah*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Each penitent thought is a voice of God.
- *Baal Shem Tov*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Repentance means that the sinner forsake his sins, cast them out of his mind, and resolve in his heart to sin no more.

- *Maimonides, "Yad: Teshuba," 1180*

TODAY'S WISDOM

3

Israel can be restored on the Day of Atonement, even as a nut may be picked up from the dirt, washed and made fit again.

- *Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah, Canticles Rabbah*

TODAY'S WISDOM

God will pardon: that's His business.

- *Heinrich Heine, on his death-bed, 1856*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Each night, before retiring, forgive whomever offended you.

- *Asher b. Yehiel, "Hanhaga"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The one who returns from a distance is greater than the one who was always close. What matters is not so much where you stand, but with what force you are moving in which direction.

- *Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Even the poorest heart has some jewel on which it hangs.

- *Karl Emil Franzos, 'Die Juden von Barnow'*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Even if you be otherwise perfect, you fail without humility.

- *Talmud: Kalla Rabbati*

TODAY'S WISDOM

All journeys have secret destinations of which the traveler is unaware.

- *Martin Buber*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Do not separate yourself from the community.

- *Hillel. Mishna: Avot 2.4*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The sukkah is designed to warn us that a man is not to put his trust in the size or strength or beauty of his house, though it is filled with all precious things...

- *Rabbi Isaac Aboab de Fonseca (1605-1693)*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The rejoicing that a person experiences in performing a commandment and in loving G-d as He commanded is of great importance in worshipping the Lord, and whoever holds himself back from

this rejoicing deserves retribution.
- *Maimonides, Hilkhot Shofar Sukkah ve-Lulav 8.14-15*

TODAY'S WISDOM

One should transfer the finest furniture and beds to the sukkah, eat and drink in the sukkah, and study in the sukkah.

- *Babylonian Talmud, Sukkot 28b*

TODAY'S WISDOM

When we invite the mythic *ushpizin*, or guests, into our sukkot, Jewish mystical tradition calls upon us not only to invite them in name, but to provide food for poor people in their stead.

- *Rabbi Sara Paasche-Orlow*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The booth is designed to teach us not to put our trust in the size or strength or improvements of a house, nor in the help of any man, even the lord of the land, but in the Creator, for He alone is mighty, His promises alone are sure.

- *Isaac Aboab, Menorah HaMaor*

TODAY'S WISDOM

When people sit in a sukkah, the "shade of faithfulness"-the shekhinah [the feminine divine manifestation]-spreads Her wings over them.

- *The Zohar Emor 103b*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Sukkot corresponds to Redemption--a time in which we live under the sheltering embrace of God's Presence and enjoy the full bounty of God's blessings.

- *Rabbi Lauren Eichler Berkun*

TODAY'S WISDOM

For the sake of one true penitent, the whole world is pardoned.
Rabbi Meir, Babylonian Talmud, Yoma 86b

TODAY'S WISDOM

To atone is to be *at one* with God, to sink self into the not-self, to achieve a mystic unity with the source of being, wiping out all error and finding peace in self-submergence.

- *Isaac Goldberg, "The Wonder of Words"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Each sin is recorded the same day in heaven.

- *Apocrypha: Enoch 98.7*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The booth is designed to teach us not to put our trust in the size or strength or improvements of a house, nor in the help of any man, even the lord of the land, but in the Creator, for He alone is mighty, His promises alone are sure.

- Isaac Aboab, *Menorah HaMaor*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Don't let your brain interfere with your heart.

- Albert Einstein

TODAY'S WISDOM

Each night, before retiring, forgive whomever offended you.

- Asher b. Yehiel, "*Hanhaga*"

TODAY'S WISDOM

Even if you be otherwise perfect, you fail without humility.

- *Talmud: Kalla Rabbati*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Every blade of grass has an angel that bends over it and whispers, "Grow! Grow!"

- *The Talmud*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Every dispute that is for a heavenly cause will ultimately endure.

- *Ethics of the Fathers 5:17*

Every house a temple, every heart an altar, every human being a priest.

- Moritz Lazarus, *German-Jewish philosopher and psychologist (1824-1903)*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Experience is what we call the accumulation of our mistakes.

- *Yiddish proverb*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Everything should be made as simple as possible--but not simpler.

- Albert Einstein

TODAY'S WISDOM

Every thought of God is prayer. Holy, true and honest purposes are prayer. Earnest thought, search without vanity is prayer.

- *Rahel Levin Varnhagen, letter to Count Custine, 1817*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Expecting the world to treat you fairly because you are a good person is like expecting the bull not to charge you because you are a vegetarian.

- *Rabbi Harold Kushner, "When All You've Ever Wanted Isn't Enough," paraphrasing Rabbi Mordechai Kaplan*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Experience is what we call the accumulation of our mistakes.

- *Yiddish proverb*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Faith is the foundation of all spiritual quest...the root of all teaching and practice...the channel for every benefit and blessing.

- *Rebbe Nachman of Breslov*

TODAY'S WISDOM

First improve yourself, then improve others.

- *Babylonian Talmud*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Fit yourself to learn Torah; it does not come by inheritance.

- *Jose HaCohen, Mishna: Abot*

TODAY'S WISDOM

For I desire kindness, not sacrifice.

- *Hosea 6:6, speaking in the name of God*

As cited in "Jewish Wisdom" by Rabbi Joseph Telushkin.

TODAY'S WISDOM

For the sake of one true penitent, the whole world is pardoned.

- *Rabbi Meir, Babylonian Talmud, Yoma 86b*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Fortune has rarely condescended to be the companion of genius.

- *Isaac D'Israeli (father of the British prime minister, Benjamin Disraeli)*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Friendship is like a treasury: you cannot take from it more than you put into it.

- *Benjamin Mandelstamm, Russian Hebraist and author*

TODAY'S WISDOM

From poverty our own power can save us, from riches only divine grace.

- *Ludwig Börne (1786-1837), "Der Narr im Weissen Schwan"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Get into the habit of dancing. It will displace depression and dispel hardship.

- *Rabbi Nahman of Breslov*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Get one by trade, rather than a thousand as gifts.

- *Rabbi Samuel HaNagid, Spanish poet (993-1056 CE)*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Getting angry is like worshipping idols.
- *Midrash LeOlam*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Gloom obstructs our comprehension of the divine mysteries.
- *Moses Hasid, Iggeret HaMusar*

TODAY'S WISDOM

God could not be everywhere and therefore he made mothers.
- *Jewish proverb*

TODAY'S WISDOM

God is of no importance unless He is of supreme importance.
- *Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, "Man is Not Alone"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

God longs for the prayer of the righteous.
- *Rabbi Isaac, Talmud: Yebamot, 64a*

TODAY'S WISDOM

God will one day reestablish the world and strengthen the spirit of men so that they may prolong their days for ever.
- *Zohar, Genesis 38b*

TODAY'S WISDOM

God revealed Himself in a bush, to teach us that the loftiest may be found in the lowliest.
- *Eleazar ben Arak, "Mekilta de Simeon b. Yohai"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

God will pardon: that's His business.
- *Heinrich Heine, on his death-bed, 1856*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Great moments are always outside of time.
- *S. Zweig, "World of Yesterday"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Greet every person with a pleasant face...Receive every person in a cheerful manner.
- *Ethics of the Fathers 1:15; 3:16*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Great is the art of writing music or literature...But greater still is the art of bringing about one's regeneration.

- *Eli Almi, "Our Unfinished World"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Happiness is a perfume which you cannot pour on others without getting a few drops on yourself.
- *Louis Mann, "In Quest of the Bluebird"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Happy is he who grew up with a good name, and departed this world with a good name.
- Rabbi Johanan (b. Nappaha), Talmud: Berakot

TODAY'S WISDOM

Happy is he who controls his inclination.
- Joshua b. Levi, Talmud: Aboda Zara

TODAY'S WISDOM

A people's memory is history; and as a man without a memory, so a people without a history cannot grow wiser, better.
- Isaac Leib Peretz

TODAY'S WISDOM

Hatred makes the straight crooked.
- Hebrew proverb

TODAY'S WISDOM

He is great who is not ashamed to admit he does not know.
- Judah HaNasi, Talmud Jerushalmi: Hagiga

TODAY'S WISDOM

He who created the day has also provided for it.
- Eliezer b. Hyrcanus, Mekilta, to Exodus 16:4

TODAY'S WISDOM

He who loves brings God and the World together.
- Martin Buber, "At the Turning"

TODAY'S WISDOM

He who renders true judgment is a co-worker with God.
- Mekilta, to Exodus

TODAY'S WISDOM

He who possesses both learning and piety is like an artist with his tools ready to hand.
- Rabbi Johanan b. Zakkai

TODAY'S WISDOM

He who saves a single life saves the entire world.
- The Talmud

TODAY'S WISDOM

He who, for the sake of learning, lowers himself by exposing his ignorance, will ultimately be elevated.
- Ben Azzai, Talmud: Berakot, 63b

TODAY'S WISDOM

Holiness is the essence of all moral perfection.
- Kaufmann Kohler, "Jewish Theology"

TODAY'S WISDOM

Hope is like peace. It is not a gift from God. It is a gift only we can give one another.
- Elie Wiesel

TODAY'S WISDOM

Humble yourself here, and you won't be humbled hereafter.
- Ben Zoma

TODAY'S WISDOM

A hundred times a day I remind myself that my inner and outer life depend on the labors of other men, living and dead, and that I must exert myself in order to give in the measure as I have received and am still receiving.
- Albert Einstein

TODAY'S WISDOM

I always give much away, and so gather happiness instead of pleasure.
- Rahel Levin Varnhagen, letter to Ludwig Robert, 1827

TODAY'S WISDOM

I cannot give you the formula for success, but I can give you the formula for failure--which is: Try to please everybody.
- Herbert Swope, address, Dec. 20, 1950

TODAY'S WISDOM

I am a Jew, and it always seemed to me not only shameful but downright senseless to deny it.
- Sigmund Freud, quoted by Helen Walker Puner, "Freud"

TODAY'S WISDOM

I must uphold my ideals, for perhaps the time will come when I shall be able to carry them out.
- Anne Frank

TODAY'S WISDOM

If a commandment comes your way, don't delay.
- Mekhilta, Bo

TODAY'S WISDOM

I pray because God, the Shekhinah, is an outcast. I pray because God is in exile, because we all conspire to blur all signs of His presence in the present or in the past. I pray because I refuse to despair.

- Abraham Joshua Heschel

TODAY'S WISDOM

If a Jew breaks a leg, he thanks God he did not break both legs; if he breaks both, he thanks God he did not break his neck.
- Yiddish proverb

TODAY'S WISDOM

If a person closes his eyes to avoid giving [any] charity, it is as if he committed idolatry.

- *Babylonian Talmud, Ketubot 68a*

TODAY'S WISDOM

If a man has beheld evil, he may know that it was shown to him in order that he learn his own guilt and repent; for what is shown to him is also within him.

- *Baal Shem Tov*

TODAY'S WISDOM

If an account were kept of what we owe the Creator, no man would ever receive reward in the world to come. He will receive it only by divine grace.

- *Bahya, "Hobot HaLebabot"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

If I am not for myself, who will be for me?

And if I am only for myself, what am I?

And if not now, when?

- *Rabbi Hillel*

TODAY'S WISDOM

We call [the holiday] the Festival of Lights, giving this name to it, I think, from the fact that the right to worship appeared to us [like a flash of light] at a time when we hardly dared hope for it.

- *Josephus, Jewish Antiquities*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Rock of Ages, let our song
Praise Your saving power;
Thou, amidst the raging foes,
Was our sheltering tower.

- *"Rock of Ages," a traditional Hanukkah song written by a poet named Mordechai. (13th century C.E.)*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The lasting achievement of the Maccabees was not that they won a war but that they rekindled the light of hope in Jewish hearts and saved the faith of monotheism from defeat.

- *Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, Chief Rabbi of Great Britain, 1997*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The answer to the simple question *Mai Hanukkah?*--What is Hanukkah?--has continued to be like the flickering flame of the menorah. The flame never looks the same from one instant to the next, but at its core it remains unchanged.

- *Rabbi Michael Strassfeld*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Hanukkah has always been a celebration of Judaism in the midst of pressure to let go of Jewish uniqueness.

- *Cantor Ari Priven*

TODAY'S WISDOM

On Hanukkah the freeing of the Jewish soul is represented with eight days of candle lighting.
- *Rabbi Goldie Milgram*

TODAY'S WISDOM

When our sense of hope and change darkens, we think ourselves helpless; but then as we light the candles we remember the Maccabees and the Rabbis, who faced a power much greater than their own.

- *Rabbi Shefa Gold*

TODAY'S WISDOM

With blessings of light, of hope, of peace, of spirit--we bring not might, not power, but the Breath of Life.

- *Rabbi Arthur Waskow*

TODAY'S WISDOM

If I try to be like him, who will be like me?

- *Yiddish proverb*

TODAY'S WISDOM

If any man was wronged by another and he neither rebukes, nor hates, nor bears a grudge against him, but forgives him with his whole heart, this is a saintly virtue...

- *Code of Jewish Law*

TODAY'S WISDOM

If one is honest in his business dealings and people esteem him, it is accounted to him as though he had fulfilled the whole Torah.

- *Mekhilta, Vayessa, Chapter 1*

TODAY'S WISDOM

If one says, I'll sin again and repent again, he'll have no opportunity to repent.

- *Mishna: Yoma*

TODAY'S WISDOM

If you add to the truth, you subtract from it.

- *The Talmud*

TODAY'S WISDOM

If you do not let your son grow up as a Jew, you deprive him of those sources of energy which cannot be replaced by anything else. He will have to struggle as a Jew...Do not deprive him of that advantage.

- *Sigmund Freud*

TODAY'S WISDOM

If you must, sin privately, but profane not the Name publicly.

- *Hanina b. Hama, Talmud: Kiddushin*

TODAY'S WISDOM

If you must hate, if hatred is the leaven of your life, which alone can give flavor, then hate what should be hated: falsehood, violence, selfishness.

- *Ludwig Börne, German-Jewish writer, 1786-1837*

TODAY'S WISDOM

If you sanctify yourself a little, you are sanctified much.
- *Talmud: Yoma, 39a*

TODAY'S WISDOM

If you see a person distributing his money to charity, know that his assets will increase, as it is said in Proverbs: "here are people who scatter and yet increase".

- *Rabbi Avahu*

TODAY'S WISDOM

If you want to help pull a friend out of the mire, don't hesitate to get a little dirty.
- *Rabbi Israel ben Eliezer (the Baal Shem Tov)*

TODAY'S WISDOM

In a war of self-defense [literally, an obligatory war] all go out to do battle, even a groom from his room, and the bride from under the wedding canopy.

- *Mishna, Sotah 8:7*

TODAY'S WISDOM

In each generation every man must regard himself as though he personally had gone forth from Egypt.

- *Mishna: Pesachim 10:5*

TODAY'S WISDOM

In finances, be strict with yourself, generous with others.

- *Maimonides, "Yad: Deot"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

In love is found the secret of divine unity.

- *Zohar, Exodus*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Ingratitude to man is ingratitude to God.

- *Samuel HaNagid, "Ben Mishle"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Is not the soul a guest in our body, deserving of our kind hospitality? Today it is here, tomorrow it is gone.

- *Rabbi Hillel, Leviticus Rabbah*

TODAY'S WISDOM

It is better to have less if it is with peace of mind than to have abundant wealth but with a tormented spirit.

- *Ecclesiastes*

TODAY'S WISDOM

It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man. It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in princes.

- *Psalm 118:8*

TODAY'S WISDOM

It is good to give charity before praying.
- *Shulkhan Arukh, Orakh Chayim*

TODAY'S WISDOM

It is good to make a habit of inspiring yourself with a melody...For the loftiness of melody is beyond all measure.

- *Rebbe Nachman of Bratslav*

TODAY'S WISDOM

It is improper to consider personal danger when the public welfare is at stake.

- *Maimonides, "Iggeret Teman"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

It is not a virtue to refrain from hurting others, but it is a virtue to bear a hurt patiently.

- *Solomon Ibn Gabirol, Mibhar HaPeninim*

TODAY'S WISDOM

It is not in our power to explain either the prosperity of the wicked or the sufferings of the righteous.

- *Ethics of the Fathers 4:15*

TODAY'S WISDOM

You shall live by them, but you shall not die because of them.

- *Babylonian Talmud, Yoma 85b*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Words which come from the heart enter the heart.

- *Moses Ibn Ezra, "Shirat Yisrael"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Words are the shell, meditation the kernel. Words are the body of the prayer, and meditation its spirit.

- *Bahya, Hobot HaLebabot, 1040*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Woe to him who is alone and falls with no companion to raise him.

- *Ecclesiastes 4:10*

TODAY'S WISDOM

With faith, there are no questions; without faith there are no answers.

- *The Chofetz Chaim*

TODAY'S WISDOM

With blessings of light, of hope, of peace, of spirit--we bring not might, not power, but the Breath of Life.

- *Rabbi Arthur Waskow*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Wisdom, properly used, is a remedy for every ill; but when misdirected, becomes an incurable disease.

- *Bahya, Hobot HaLebabot*
TODAY'S WISDOM

Wisdom is the ability to do good and to abandon sin.

- *Gerondi, "Shaare Teshuba"*
TODAY'S WISDOM

Whoever repudiates idolatry is called a Jew.

- *Babylonian Talmud, Megillah 13a*
TODAY'S WISDOM

Who rise from prayer better persons, their prayer is answered.

- *"Gates of Prayer," the Reform prayer book*
TODAY'S WISDOM

Who honors Torah is honored; who dishonors it is dishonored.

- *Jose b. Halfta, Mishan: Abot*
TODAY'S WISDOM

Who accepts affliction cheerfully brings salvation to the world.

- *Joshua ben Levi, Talmud: Taanit, 8a*
TODAY'S WISDOM

Who fills his mind with Torah clears it of fear and folly.

- *Rabbi Chanina Sgan HaKohanim*
TODAY'S WISDOM

Who are the ministering angels? The rabbis.

- *Talmud: Nedarim, 20b*
TODAY'S WISDOM

Who did not earn merits in life will not benefit by what's done for him after death.

- *Sefer Hasidim, 13C*
TODAY'S WISDOM

While praying, listen to the words very carefully. When your heart is attentive, your entire being enters your prayer without your having to force it.

- *Rebbe Nachman of Breslov*
TODAY'S WISDOM

While Judaism in its entirety is for the Jew, its creed and its ethics are for mankind.

- *Morris Joseph, "Judaism as Creed and Life"*
TODAY'S WISDOM

Whether a man really loves God can be determined by the love he bears toward his fellow men.

- Levi Yitzhok, quoted in Buber, "Tales of the Hasidim"

TODAY'S WISDOM

When you see handsome people or fine trees, pronounce the benediction: Praised be He who created beautiful things.

- Tosefta: Berakot

TODAY'S WISDOM

When you pray, remove from your heart all worldly concerns.

- Nahmanides, letter to his son Nahman, 1268

TODAY'S WISDOM

When you are annoyed by something you could not avoid, don't aggravate it by useless worry.

- Mendel Lefin, Heshbon HaNefesh

TODAY'S WISDOM

When the Temple was destroyed, an iron wall was removed from between Israel and their Father in heaven.

- Eleazar ben Pedat, Talmud: Berakot

TODAY'S WISDOM

When the rabbis speak of paradise and hell...these are only metaphors for the agony of sin and the happiness of virtue.

- Kaufmann Kohler, "Jewish Theology"

TODAY'S WISDOM

the soul is subdued.

When is prayer heard? When

- Yehuda Al-Harizi, Sefer Tahkemoni

TODAY'S WISDOM

When I was young I admired clever people. Now that I am old, I admire kind people.

- Abraham Joshua Heschel

TODAY'S WISDOM

When an opportunity presents itself to do a good deed, do it at once.

- Rabbi Josiah, Mekilta to Exodus

TODAY'S WISDOM

Whoever destroys a single life is as guilty as though he had destroyed the entire world; and whoever rescues a single life earns as much merit as though he had rescued the entire world.

- The Talmud, Mishna. Sanhedrin 37a

TODAY'S WISDOM

What soap is to the body, laughter is to the soul.

- *Yiddish proverb*

Wealth is affliction disguised as a good.

- *Bahya ben Joseph ibn Pakuda*

TODAY'S WISDOM

We should study; Judaism has always insisted that knowledge has the power not only to make people smart but to make them good...

- *Rabbi Harold Kushner*

TODAY'S WISDOM

We cannot achieve self-respect if we are afraid of self-knowledge.

- *M.R. Cohen, "A Dreamer's Journey"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Vision looks inward and becomes duty. Vision looks outward and becomes aspiration. Vision looks upward and becomes faith.

- *Rabbi Stephen S. Wise*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Truth is the "light" by which to find your way out of darkness. Turn it on.

- *Rabbi Nachman of Breslov*

TODAY'S WISDOM

To work on oneself, to make clear that which confuses and depresses us, even if it entails the greatest pain--that is what is meant by being good.

- *Rahel Levin Varnhagen, "Briefe," 1877*

TODAY'S WISDOM

To smile at your neighbor is more important than to treat him to a drink.

- *Johanan b. Nappaha, Talmud: Ketubot*

TODAY'S WISDOM

To rely on our faith would be idol-worship. We have only the right to rely on God.

- *Abraham Joshua Heschel, "Man Is Not Alone"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

In love is found the secret of divine unity.

- *Zohar, Exodus*

TODAY'S WISDOM

To be honest in business is to fulfill the whole Torah.

- *Mekilta, to Exodus, 15:26*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Three things restore a person's good spirits: beautiful sounds, sights, and smells.

- *Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 57b*

TODAY'S WISDOM

To be a person of truth, be swayed neither by approval nor disapproval.

Work at not needing approval from anyone and you will be free to be who you really are.

- *Rabbi Nachman of Breslov*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Thou hast created me not from necessity but from grace.

- *Solomon Ibn Gabirol, Spanish-Jewish philosopher and poet c.1021-1058*

TODAY'S WISDOM

To be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human soul.

- *Simone Weil, "The Need for Roots"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

This is what the Holy One said to Israel: My children, what do I seek from you? I seek no more than that you love one another and honor one another.

- *Tanna d'Bai Eliyahu, medieval rabbinic work*

TODAY'S WISDOM

There is no true justice unless mercy is part of it.

- *The Zohar*

TODAY'S WISDOM

To be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human soul.

- *Simone Weil, "The Need for Roots"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

There is no hope unmingled with fear, and no fear unmingled with hope.

- *Baruch Spinoza, "Ethics"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

There is something higher than modernity, and that is eternity.

- *Solomon Schechter, in "Menorah Journal," 1924*

TODAY'S WISDOM

There is exalted greatness in everything small.

- *Kook, "Orot HaKodesh," 1938*

TODAY'S WISDOM

To confess one's sins is to honor the Holy One.

- *Rabbi Joshua ben Levi, Talmud: Sanhedrin, 43b*

TODAY'S WISDOM

To follow the straight path, choose a good colleague; to avoid the evil path, avoid a wicked colleague.

- *Joshua b. Hanania, Mishna: Abot*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The world is new to us every morning--this is the Holy One's gift and every person should believe he is reborn each day.

- *Baal Shem Tov*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The worship of God, though desirable as an end itself, can somehow never be in the right spirit, unless it impels one to the service of man.

- *Rabbi Mordechai Kaplan*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The world endures because of three activities: Torah study, worship of God, and deeds of loving-kindness.

- *Ethics of the Fathers 1:2*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The Torah was given in the desert, teaching us that to merit Torah, a man must renounce himself like the desert.

- *Pesikta de-Rab Kahana*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The whole world is a very narrow bridge. And the most important thing is to not be afraid.

- *Rabbi Nachman of Breslov*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The ultimate result of your knowledge of God should be the conviction that of His real essence you are completely ignorant.

- *Bahya, "Hovot HaLevavot"*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The whole of the Torah is for promoting peace, as it is written, "Her ways are pleasant, and all her paths peaceful."

- *Babylonian Talmud, Gittin 59b*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The Torah you heard from the mouth of a sage, esteem it as though you had heard it from Mount Sinai.

- *Rabbi Helbo, Ecclesiastes Rabbah*

TODAY'S WISDOM

- *Zohar, Genesis*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The Torah is a vestment to the Shekina.

- *Ibn Gabirol*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The test of good manners: to bear patiently with bad ones.

The tongue is the heart's pen and the mind's messenger.

- *Bahya, Hobot HaLebabot*

TODAY'S WISDOM

All beginnings require that you unlock a new door.

- *Rebbi Nachman of Breslov*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The sun gives light by day, the Torah by day and night.

- *Asher b. Saul, Kol Bo*

TODAY'S WISDOM

because of justice perverted.

The sword comes into the world because of justice delayed and

- *Ethics of the Fathers 5:8*

TODAY'S WISDOM

being--one who knows all that he is capable of learning.

- *Maimonides*

TODAY'S WISDOM

of all generations receive their wisdom from Sinai.

The souls that were yet to be created were there.... So did the sages

- *Isaac, Exodus Rabbah*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The saving of life supersedes the Sabbath.

- *Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 132a*

TODAY'S WISDOM

Perhaps the Third will be rebuilt because of causeless love.

The Second Temple was destroyed because of causeless hatred.

- *Rav Abraham Isaac Kook*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The righteous, even when brought to death, has hope.

- *Proverbs 14:32*

TODAY'S WISDOM

The Sabbath is a mirror of the world to come.

- *Zohar, Genesis, 48a*

TODAY'S WISDOM

cedar of Lebanon.

The righteous shall bloom as a date palm tree and shall flourish as a

- *Isaiah 41:19*

TODAY'S WISDOM

World-to-Come.

The righteous among the nations of the world will have a share in the

- *Tosefta Sanhedrin 13:2*

The pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, an almost fanatical love of justice, and the desire for personal independence, these are the features of the Jewish tradition which make me thank my lucky stars I belong to it.

- *Albert Einstein*

The real man is within, the flesh is only a vestment.

- *Zohar*

The pure righteous people, do not complain against wickedness but add righteousness. They do not complain against disbelief but add faith. They do not complain against ignorance but add wisdom.

- *Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook*

The power of choice must involve the possibility of error--that is the essence of choosing.

- *Herbert Samuel, "Belief and Action," 1937*

The mind's highest good is the knowledge of God, and the mind's highest virtue is to know God.

- *Spinoza, "Ethics"*

The most beautiful thing man can do is to forgive.

- *Eleazar b. Judah, Rokeah, 13C*

The mind of each is different from that of the other, just as the face of each is different from that of the other.

- *Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 58a*

The meek attract the Shekina, the proud...drive it away.

- *Mekilta, based on the work of Ishmael b. Elisha*

The love of people is at the same time a love for God. For when we love one, we necessarily love one's handiwork.

- *Judah Low*

The meaning of the Sabbath is to celebrate time rather than space...on the Sabbath we try to become attuned to holiness in time....Eternity utters a day.

- *Abraham Joshua Heschel, "The Sabbath"*

The man who regards life...as meaningless is not merely unfortunate but almost disqualified for life.

- *Albert Einstein, "The World As I See It"*

A heart without affection is like a purse without money.

- *Benjamin Mandelstamm, Russian Jewish writer and Hebraist*

The goal of the redemption is the redemption of truth.

- *The Vilna Gaon*

The height of the intellect is distinguishing between the real and the impossible, and submission to what is beyond one's power.

- *Ibn Gabirol, "Mibhar Hal'eninim"*

The general object of the Law is the well-being of the soul and of the body.

- *Maimonides, "Guide for the Perplexed"*

The giving of Torah happened at one specific time, but the receiving of Torah happens all the time, in every generation.

- *Meir Alter, the Gerer Rebbe*

The fault with charity--too little; with speech--too much.

- *Judah Al-Harizi, "Tahkemoni"*

The first step toward liberty is to miss liberty; the second, to seek it; the third, to find it.

- *Leopold Zunz, German Jewish scholar*

The good will always claim victory over the beautiful.

- *Heinrich Heine, "Briefe aus Berlin"*

The errors of sages are regarded as willful sins; the sins of the ignorant are accounted as unwitting errors.

- *Judah b. Ilai, Talmud: Baba Metzia*

The divine test of a man's worth is not his theology but his life.

- *Morris Joseph, "Judaism as Creed and Life"*

The entire purpose of our existence is to overcome our negative habits.

- *Rabbi Eliyahu, the Gaon of Vilna (1720-1797)*

The Divine Presence is everywhere.

- *Hoshaia Rabba. Talmud: Baba Bathra*

Sugar in the mouth won't help if you're bitter at heart.

- *Yiddish proverb*

Trees were created for man's companionship.

- *Genesis Rabah*

Souls wait up in heaven for thousands of years, longing for their moment upon this earth to do another soul a favor.

Angels burn with jealousy each time a human being turns himself around and creates beauty in this world.

Heaven is nice, but on the best things, earth has exclusive rights.

- *Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneersohn*

Spend your money on good books, and you'll find its equivalent in gold of intelligence.

- *Immanuel, "Mahberot," c.1300*

Simhat Torah means "the Torah's joy," and implies that it is not enough for a Jew to find joy in the Torah, but the Torah should also find joy in him.

- *Jose-Ber of Brisk*

Shammai said: Receive all people cheerfully.

- *Ethics of the Fathers 1:15*

Shame is an iron fence against sin.

- *Orchot Tzaddikim*

Shaming another in public is like shedding blood.

- *Talmud: Bab Metzia*

Seek the good in everyone, and reveal it, bring it forth.

- *Rabbi Nachman of Breslov (1772-1811), "Likutey Moharan"*

Scripture likens the Torah to the desert, to fire, and to water, for like these three, it is free to all.

- *Mekilta*

Respect your disciple as you respect your colleague.

- *Eleazar b. Shammua, Mishna: Abot*

Repentance: a fierce battle with the heart.

- *Orhot Tzaddikim, 15C*

Rest is a state of peace between man and nature....Work is a symbol of conflict and discord; rest is an expression of dignity, peace, and freedom.

- *Erich Fromm,*

Rather suffer an injustice than commit one.

- *Yiddish proverb*

Rejoice in your trials here; they save you hereafter.

- *Talmud: Derek Eretz*

Rabbi Judah says: Whoever does not teach his son a trade or profession teaches him to be a thief.

- *Babylonian Talmud, Kiddushin 29a*

Action may not always bring happiness; but there is no happiness without action.

- *Benjamin Disraeli*

Prompted by love is greater than prompted by fear.

- *Rabbi Simeon ben Eleazar, Talmud*

Circumstances are beyond the control of man; but his conduct is in his own power.

- *Benjamin Disraeli,*

If you sanctify yourself a little, you are sanctified much.

- *Talmud: Yoma, 39a*

Judge not your neighbor till you've been in his place.

- *Hillel, Mishna: Abot*

Days are scrolls: write on them what you want to be remembered.

- *Bahya ibn Pakuda, "Hovot HaLevavot"*