

## My Ten Favorite Quotes

1. "The world stands on three principals: Torah Study, work of God, and acts of kindness." (Avot, 1:2) על שלשה דברים העולם עומד, על התורה ועל העבודה ועל גמילות חסדים:
2. "The October War shall be the last war." (Anwar El Saddat, president of Egypt, 1978)
3. "The Land of Israel was the birthplace of the Jewish people." בארץ ישראל קם העם (David Ben Gurion, first prime minister of Israel, 1948)
4. "With malice toward none, with charity for all..." (Abraham Lincoln, 1865)
5. "Honor Thy Father and Mother." (Exodus, 20:12) "כבד את אביך ואת אמך"
6. "If I am not for myself who will be for me?" (Avot, 1:14) "אם אין אני לי, מי לי"
7. "The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing." (Albert Einstein)
8. "Those who live, live, and those who die, die." (Moshe Dayan, 1957) "החיים, חיים והמתים, מתים"
9. "If you will it, it is no legend." (Theodor Herzl, 1896) "אם תרצו אין זו אגדה"
10. "Emancipate yourself from mental slavery." (Bob Marley, 1975)

## Commentary and Thoughts on These Quotes

1. As a teacher, this is one of favorite Mishnahs to teach. Students at the age of 12 are still in a concrete mode. It is sometimes hard to explain that the world does not really stand on anything concrete, like columns or pillars. I try to convey the moral pillars that make human beings superior to all other beings in the world. And thus, we have an obligation to create a fair community.
2. I was 15 years old when Egyptian president Anwar Sadat came to Israel. For more than a week the whole country was glued to the TV. Israel's only channel broadcast every move by the Egyptian president. His famous quote became the opening slogan of the "Voice of Peace" radio station that broadcast from a ship outside of Israel's territorial waters.
3. As a young student, I had to memorize the Declaration of Independence. I really learned and knew the first line.
4. Lincoln reminds me of Moshe Rabenu. He was a tragic hero who did not see the Promised Land.
5. When I was a child, I went to a very religious school. Talmud and Torah studies took place in the first two periods of the day. The thing I learned the most was to develop the ability to memorize Talmudic and Biblical sayings. Honoring your elders was so ingrained in us. We had such respect for our parents and teachers.
6. Personal responsibility is the most important lesson I learned from this Mishnaic saying. It is simple, short and to the point.

7. Asking the right questions is sometimes more important than knowing the answers.
8. Like today, Israel was battling terrorist attacks coming out of the Gaza Strip. On many occasions, Israel would send troops over enemy lines to retaliate. Ariel Sharon once came back from such a mission that did not go so well. Our troops suffered many casualties. As he came out, he tried to explain the many losses to Moshe Dayan. Dayan stopped him and said, "Those who live, live and those who die, die." Meaning, the Land of Israel was bought with blood, and those who survive do so at the price paid by those who died. I am not sure that Israel is so willing to pay such a price today for the living.
9. Hertzl was a modern prophet who also did not live to see the Promised Land. Without his vision, who knows where the State of Israel would be today?
10. Bob Marley was my favorite singer growing up. He always talked about equality for the black people. As a Sephardic Jew growing up in Israel, many of us identify with him.