



Selected Quotes from **Sefer Or HaRa'ayon,** **The Jewish Idea** (In English, in Two Volumes)

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Volume One -

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Volume Two -

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In all his ways, a Jew must be "G-d's." He must cling to G-d . . .

Or HaRa'ayon, Chapter 25, page 761 (vol. 2)

The Or HaChaim wrote (Deut. 26:18), "the mitzvot are only a safeguard against spiritual abomination and filth." They are the means by which G-d affects the enormous difference between Israel and the nations.

Or HaRa'ayon, Chapter 23, page 682 (vol. 2)

Separation serves to protect holiness

Or HaRa'ayon, Chapter 25, page 760 (vol. 2)

The Jew who undertakes to hallow himself, suppressing his passions and acquiring the fear of Heaven, and who thereby abstains by sheer will power and self-affliction from lust and desire, will slowly cease to feel any desire for sin whatsoever, and the ways of holiness will come naturally to him. "For this let every saintly person pray at a time when You may be found." (Psalm 32:6). Raising one's spiritual level requires making war against one's passion, against Satan, against the Angel of Death, generation by generation, day by day, hour by hour. It is a war in which holiness, purity and goodness win out over selfishness, loathsomeness, impurity and evil.

Or HaRa'ayon, Chapter 24, page 734 (vol. 2)



Zealotry and vengefulness are crucial attributes, but only if exercised for the sake of Heaven, as done by Pinhas, Eliyahu and others like them. If vengeful acts are motivated by sinful anger, however, that anger must be condemned. There is greatness in the very urge to zealotry and revenge, yet this must be tempered so as always to be for the sake of Heaven. . . .

Only a person with an exalted soul, who is full of love of G-d, and of G-d's righteousness, full of hatred of the wicked and of wickedness is capable of reaching such heights.

Or HaRa'ayon, Chapter 12, page 288 and 289 (Vol. 1)

Certainly, revenge against one's fellow Jew is a negative thing, since one's animosity is just personal and our Sages preached indulgence in such cases. "Regarding those who bear insult without returning it, who hear themselves libeled without responding, who act out of love for G-d and suffer happily, Scripture (Judges 5:31) states, "those who love Him are like the sun when it goes forth in all its might." (Yoma 23a). They also said, "Whoever pushes aside his anger will have all his sins pushed aside." It follows that if one Jew hates another because he has wronged him personally, it is surely a mitzvah for him to put aside his revenge, suppressing the impulse to respond.

Or HaRa'ayon, Chapter 12, page 277 (vol. 1)

The law regarding the ger toshav, the resident alien who has undertaken the seven Noahide laws is different, however. We are commanded to sustain him just like the Jew . . .

Or HaRa'ayon, Chapter 25, page 757-758 (vol. 2)

It is impossible for Israel not to be influenced by the foreign culture and gentile values of the non-Jewish majority in the non-Jewish lands where they live. It is impossible to hold on to G-d's Torah in completeness and purity, when Israel live as a minority among a non-Jewish majority with its own culture. Under such conditions, the holy will surely be contaminated; truth will surely be rendered unfit by alien values. Neither the Torah nor Israel are complete as long as they live among bearers of the false, alien culture.

Or HaRa'ayon, Chapter 25, page 768 (vol. 2)