

29 Texts on Tikkun Olam

Rabbi David Seidenberg

Intro to Judaism 4/2/20, R. Jonathan Seidel

Tikkun olam, in the earliest texts, means establishing order and balance whether in Nature or Creation, as God does when balancing the forces of compassion and judgment, or in society, as the rabbis do when they amend the laws of the Torah. The social meaning of tikkun olam, which became primary, refers to acts that establish and repair or improve society (that is, the present world) in the course of our normal lives and institutions. An emergent meaning that has roots in the combining of these themes is that humanity is responsible for repairing the natural world that we have despoiled (see especially the text from Ecclesiastes Rabbah and the second quote from Rav Kook).

None of the earlier midrashim, nor the Mishnah, nor the two Talmuds, know the meaning of tikkun olam as something for which one strives in order to bring redemption, nor do they know the meaning of tikkun olam as the end of idolatry. These two motifs derive from the **Aleinu prayer**, which, though written in the 3rd century or earlier, probably did not use the term l'takein until around the end of the first millennium. However, once this word-change became accepted in the liturgy of almost every Jewish community, the concept of tikkun olam transformed to include those meanings as well.

Tikkun olam includes the many actions people take to help each other and to create a society. In the earliest texts of Jewish philosophical thought (also starting around the turn of the first millennium), tikkun olam explicitly includes concepts of justice and loving one's neighbor. A messianic conception of social justice naturally flows out of the convergence of eschatological motifs derived from the Aleinu and ideas about sustaining and improving society found in the Mishnah and midrash.

The influence of humanism brought the integration of these concepts to its fullest fruition. A fairly complete expression of the idea that tikkun olam includes what we think of as social justice can already be found as early as 1797 in Pinchas Hurwitz's Sefer Habrit. Full-throated expressions of messianic social justice appear in Zionist writing at least by 1859 (Natan Friedland, Kos Yeshu'ot), and this becomes a central motif in Palestine in the thought of Rav Avraham Yitzhak Kook and Rav Yehuda Ashlag. Youthful socialist pioneers in Palestine even aspired to be "m'taknei olam," world-shapers and reformers.¹

Perhaps surprisingly, the idea that everyday ritual acts specifically bring about tikkun ha'olam is also somewhat newer, being developed furthest by Kabbalists like Moshe Chaim Luzzato (also 18th century), though this idea has roots in the Zohar's interpretation of the sacrifices.² The claim that the association of tikkun olam with the observance of traditional ritual mitzvot is ancient, while social justice tikkun olam is recent, is not supportable.

Historically the texts below go as far as pre-state Palestine. What happened in America after these texts is fairly straightforward: Mordecai Kaplan's student—educator Alexander Dushkin—made tikkun olam (as activist world-repair) a central pillar in his design for Jewish educational programs in America in the 1940s, and the same principle was popularized by Shlomo Bardin through his Brandeis Camp Institute in the 1950s. Both Dushkin and Bardin were deeply involved in developing the Israeli educational system, so it was natural for them to bring this meaning from Zionist culture to America. The Reform movement ran with this idea to create what people call "tikkun olam" Judaism, inspired (at its best) by prophetic principles of justice. However, Mordecai Kaplan himself already pointed out in 1934 the dangers of separating tikkun olam from national identity and from other mitzvot like Shabbat or Torah study.

While it is clear that tikkun olam was **connected to social justice** long before its advent in North America, it also includes much more than social justice. Furthermore, tikkun olam does not equate with liberalism or any other single political ideology. In fact, a few of the actions designated as tikkun olam in the past are distinctly contrary to a liberal agenda (see the second quote from Rambam). Moreover, the enormous significance of tikkun olam in liberal Judaism blossomed after World War II and the Shoah, and the historical relation of this phenomenon as a response to the cataclysmic destruction of European Jewry has not been fully explored. (Tikkun olam's theological relation to the Shoah, however, has been deeply explored in the work of authors such as Emil Fackenheim and Yitz Greenberg.)

Following these texts, I give a list of the many meanings and translations of tikkun and tikkun olam, and terms that are parallel to tikkun olam (I). I also discuss how the texts were selected and outline some other uses of the term tikkun that are not necessarily connected with tikkun ha'olam (II), and give a brief bibliography (III). It is important to acknowledge that because we are only looking at texts written before World War II (and the subsequent viral explosion of tikkun olam in America), none of the authors are women.

We live in a time where it is no longer possible to imagine the tikkun of the people of Israel apart from tikkun of the human species, or the tikkun of the human species apart from tikkun of the more-than-human world we call Nature. How this will affect the evolution of tikkun olam from this point on is something each reader of these texts can help decide. May this evolution bring us ever closer to true tikkun olam. Though the task is great, Rebbe Nachman urges us to persist, saying, "If you believe it is possible to ruin, believe it is possible to repair (l'takein)."

Mishnah Gitin 4:5, ~ 2nd cent.

ה'ד' גיטין משנה

אֶת תִּקְנָתָם, שְׁמַאי בֵּית לֵהֵם אָמְרוּ. הַלֵּל בֵּית דְּבָרִי, אֶחָד יוֹם עֲצָמוֹ וְאֶת אֶחָד יוֹם רַבּוֹ אֶת עוֹבֵד, חוֹרִין בֶּן וְחֻצִּיו עֶבֶד שְׁחָצִיו מִי וְהָלֵא, יִבְטֹל. עֶבֶד חֻצִּיו שֶׁבָּבֶר, אֶפְשָׁר אִי חוֹרִין בֵּת. חוֹרִין בֶּן חֻצִּיו שֶׁבָּבֶר, אֶפְשָׁר אִי שֶׁפָּחָה לִשָּׂא. תִּקְנָתָם לֹא עֲצָמוֹ וְאֶת, רַבּוֹ אֶת כּוֹפִין, הָעוֹלָם תִּקּוֹן מִפְּנֵי אֵלָּא. יִצְרָה לְשִׁבְתָּ, בְּרָאָה תְהוּ לֹא (מֵה יִשְׁעִיה) שְׁנֵאֲמֵר, וְלִרְבִּיהָ לִפְרִיהָ אֵלָּא הָעוֹלָם נִבְרָא לֹא שְׁמַאי בֵּית דְּבָרִי לְהוֹרוֹת הַלֵּל בֵּית וְחֻצִּיו. דְּמִי חֻצִּי עַל שֶׁטֶר וְכוּתֵּב, חוֹרִין בֶּן אוֹתוֹ וְעוֹשֶׂה רַבּוֹ

One who is half slave and half a free person, he serves his master one day and then himself one day — the words of Beit Hillel. Beit Shammai said to them: You set it right (tikantem) for his master, for himself you didn't set it right. To marry a maidservant isn't possible because half of him is free. [To marry] a free woman isn't possible because half of him is still slave. —So [would you] cancel [his obligation to reproduce]! But isn't it true that the world wasn't created except for bearing fruit and reproducing — as it says, (Isaiah 45:18) "Not to be waste did God create her (the Earth); to be settled upon did God form her"! Rather, because of setting right³ the world (mip'nei tikkun ha-olam), they force his master, who [must] make him a free person and write a contract for [him to redeem the remaining] half of his value. And Beit Hillel turned to teach according to the words of Beit Shammai.

Aleinu prayer, originally from Rosh Hashanah Musaf, ~ 3rd cent.4

מלכויות, השנה ראש ומחזור סדור, עלינו

מלכי מלך לפני משתחוים ואנחנו... וריק להבל משתחוים שהם... הארצות בגו' עשנו שלא... הכל לאדון לשבח עליו להעביר, עדך בתפארת מהרה לראות אלהינו יי לך נקוה כן על ארץ ויסד שמים נוטה שהוא, הוא ברוך הקדוש המלכים ארץ רשעי כל אליה להפנות, בשמך יקראו בשר בני וכל. שדי במלכות עולם לתקן, יכרתו כרות והאלילים הארץ מן גלולים

It is on us to praise [the One]...for You didn't make us like the nations of the Earth...for they pray to what is empty breath and emptiness... and we bow before the Sovereign of sovereigns, the Holy One, blessed be, who spread out heavens and founded an earth...therefore we hope for You, YHVH our God, to see quickly the manifest glory of Your strength, to cause the idols to pass away from the Earth and the unbreathing gods to be cut off, to establish a world under the reign of the Almighty/All-nourishing (I'takein olam b'malkhut Shaddai), and all people of flesh will call on Your name, to cause all the wicked of the Earth to turn toward you.

Genesis Rabbah 4:6, ~ 4th cent.

ו:ד רבה בראשית

טביומי רבי אמר. למים מים בין מבדיל ויהי: שנאמר, מחלוקת נבראת שבו: אומר חנינא רבי? טוב כי בשני כתיב אין למה וכמה כמה אחת על לערבובו שהיא מחלוקת, טוב כי בה אין ולישובו עולם של לתקונו שהיא מחלוקת אם

Why is it not written about the second day [of Creation], "for it is good"? Rav Chanina says: Because on [that day] division/argument was created, as it is said (Gen. 1:6): "Let there be a separation between waters (above) and waters (below)." Said **Rav Tavyomo** (Rabbi "Good Day"): If a division that was created for the sake of ordering the world and settling it (I'tikuno shel olam ul'yishuvo) doesn't have an "it is good" in it, any division to disturb [the world], all the more so.

Ecclesiastes Rabbah 7:13, ~ 5th cent.

יג:ז רבה קהלת

הראשון אדם את הוא ברוך הקדוש שברא בשעה — (יג:ז קילת) עותו אשר את לתקן יוכל מי כי האלהים מעשה את ראה, דעתך תן, בראתי בשבילך שבראתי מה וכל, הן ומשבחין נאים כמה מעשי ראה, לו ואמר, עדן גן אילני כל על והחזירו נטלו אחריך שיתקן מי אין קלקלת שאם, עולמי את ותחריב תקלקל שלא

"See the work of God—who can fix what he twisted?" (Eccl. 7:13) —In the time that the Holy One created the first human, He took him and brought him around all the trees of Gan Eden, and said to him: See My works, how lovely and praiseworthy they are, and all I created, for your sake I created [it]. Put your mind [to this], that you **don't ruin or destroy my world (olami), for if you bring ruin, there is no one who will set [the world] right (y'takein) after you.**

R' Bachya ibn Pakuda (1050-1120, Spain), Chovot Hal'vavot (Duties of the Heart) 8:3

ג:ח הלבבות חובות, פקודה אבן בחיה ר'

עם חשבונם, ועשרים והשנים... פנים שלשים מהם אבאר... ית' לאלקים חייב שהוא במה נפשו עם לחשוב המאמין ועל אדם בני קצת בהם שנעזרים והענינים וממכר ומקח וקצירה מחרישה העולם בתקנת אדם בני עם התערבו על נפשו וידחה עליהם ויחמול מהם לנפשו שישנא מה להם וישנא מהם לנפשו שיאהב מה להם שיאהב העולם ישוב על בקצתם... כמוך לרעך ואהבת (יט ויקרא) שכתוב כמו שיזיקם מה יכלתו כפי מהם

[C]oncerning the one who believes in taking account with himself⁶ concerning what he is obligated [to do] for God blessed be...I will explain thirty ways [to do this]... And the twenty-second is: his account

with himself concerning [how he] was involved with people in establishing the world (takanat ha'olam), from plowing and harvest [to] buying and selling and [such] matters through which some people are helped by some [others] in [the process of] settling the world (yishuv ha'olam) — [namely,] that he should love for them [to receive] what he would love for himself from them, and that he should hate for them what he would hate for himself from them, and should have compassion for them, and according to his ability [he should] push away from them whatever would harm them, as it's written (Lev. 19:18), "And you will love your neighbor like yourself."

Rambam (Maimonides, 1135-1204, Spain, Egypt), Mishneh Torah, Hilkhhot Sanhedrin 23:9

ט:כג סנהדרין הלכות, תורה משנה, רמב"ם

שֶׁנֶאֱמַר בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁתִּשְׁמְרָה לְשִׁכְיָנָהּ וְגוֹרֵם כָּל אֶת תִּקּוֹן כָּאֵלּוּ אַחַת שְׁעָה אֶפְלוּ לְאַמְתּוֹ אֶמֶת דִּין שָׁדוּן דִּין וְכָל אֵל בְּעֵדוּת נֹצֵב אֱלֵקִים (א:פב תהילים)

Every judge who judges truth unto its [deepest] truth, even for one hour, it's as if he fixed the whole world entirely (tikein et kol ha'olam kulo) and caused the Shekhinah to rest upon Israel, as it is said (Ps. 82:1), "God stands in the council of the divine."

Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Hilkhhot M'lakhim 3:10

[יא] יג מלכים הלכות, תורה משנה, רמב"ם

שהשעה כפי העולם ולתקן להרגו רשות למלך יש...אחד בעד אפילו התראה בלי או ברורה בראיה שלא נפשות הורגי כל צריכה

Any who kill people without being clearly seen or without [being given] warning even with one witness...[since there isn't enough evidence for them to be found guilty by a court,] the king has authority to execute them and to [thereby] **fix the world** (l'takein ha'olam), according to what the hour needs.

Sefer Hachinukh (13th cent., Spain), §232 (240)

ר"מ (מ) רל"ב, החינוך ספר

העולם תיקון כי, ידוע המצוה שורש... (ידי:ט ויקרא) מְכַשֵּׁל תִּתֵּן לֹא עוֹר "וְלִפְנֵי: שְׁנֵאמַר...בדרך תם להכשיל שלא: רל"ב (ב, טו זרה עבודה) לברכה זכרונם שאמרו מה וכן...טובה עצה מעשיהם בכל להם ולתת אדם בני להדריך הוא וישובו למוכרו אסור וכן, עלן דמגנו היכי כי מוכרן כן אם אלא, לגוים לרבים נזק בו שיש דבר וכל מלחמה כלי כל למכור שאסור עור ולפני משום הכל ואסור, ליסטים לישראל וכן, לגוי המוכר לישראל.

Commandment #232: To not cause a naive/unaware person to stumble on the road — as it is said (Lev. 19:14), "And before a blind person don't place a stumbling block"... The root of the mitzvah is known, for [the way of] **setting right the world and settling it** (tikkun ha'olam v'yishuvo) is to guide people and to give them in all their actions good advice... and so did [the sages] say (Talmud Avodah Zarah 15b), that it is forbidden to sell weapons (instruments of war) or anything that has in it [the capacity to] harm many to non-Jews, except if it is to sell them so that they can defend us, and so too is it forbidden to sell them to a Jew who sells to non-Jews, or to Jewish criminals, and all of it is forbidden because of the command "before a blind person [don't place a stumbling block]."

Rabbenu Yonah Gerondi (1200-1263, Spain), commentary on Pirkei Avot 5:10

י:ה אבות פרקי על פירוש, גרונדי יונה רבינו

האהבה מתרבה בזה כי וליתן ליקח שרוצה הארץ עם נקרא העולם בתיקון רוצה שזה מפני. הארץ עם שלי ושליך שלך שלי ליקח ושלא ליתן הטובה והמדה יחיה מתנות שונא כי זאת היא מחכמה לא העולם לתיקון טובה מדה שהיא ואף. ביניהם

“[There are four types of people... The one who says,] ‘What’s mine is yours and what’s yours is mine’ [is] a ‘people of the land’ / am ha’aretz (= an ignorant peasant)” (Pirkei Avot 5:10) — Because this one wants the betterment of the world (tikkun ha’olam), he is called an am ha’aretz (= one who cares about the people), for he wants [people] to take and to give, because through this the love among them increases. And even though this is a good quality for organizing the world (tikkun ha’olam), it does not come from wisdom, for the one who hates gifts [and doesn’t accept them] is the one who will [truly] thrive, and the best type is [one who wants] to give and not to take.

Sefer HaZohar⁷ (13th cent., Spain), 1:38a

לח:א הזוהר ספר

דעלמא (וחכמתא) אומנותא ואוליפו, ואולידו אתפשטו לבתר. וחסידי צדיקי כלהו, משת דאשתכללו דרין כל, יצחק רבי אמר זרעין הוו לא בקדמיתא דהא, ארעא ולא תקנא למפלח, דעלמא תקונא לון ואתקין נח דאתא עד, וסייפין ברומחין לשצאה, עלמא לתקנא קב”ה זמין, אמר אלעזר רבי. (בב:ח בר’) וגו’ הארץ ימי כל עוד דכתיב, להאי אצטריכו לבתר, וחצדין וגו’ עמי ימי העץ כימי כי (בב:סה ישעיה) דיכתיב הוא הדא — לעלמין יומין דיורכון בגין נשא בבני רוחא ולא תקנא

Said Rabbi Yitzhak: All the generations that developed from Seth (the third son of Adam and Eve), all of them were righteous and pious. Afterward they spread out and bore children, and they learned crafts and wisdom of the world, [how] to finish off [each other] with spears and knives, until Noah came and made for them a reparation of the world (itkin lun tikuna d’alma /= tikkun ha’olam), to farm and to prepare the earth (l’atkanah ar’ah), for in early times there was no sowing and reaping, [but] after they needed this, as it’s written (Gen. 8:22), “Unto all the days of the Earth [sowing and reaping and summer and winter...won’t stop].”⁸ Rabbi Elazar said: The Holy One prepares for fixing the world (l’takna alma), and repairing the spirit (l’atkana rucha) of humanity, so that they may extend [their] days forever—that is what’s written (Isaiah 65:22): “For as the days of the tree are the days of my people...”

Sefer HaZohar, 1:242a

רמד:א הזוהר ספר

כלהו דעלמין וברכאן, דעלמא תקונא דקרבנא אתערותא

[T]he awakening [caused by] sacrifices is restitution for the world (tikuna d’alma) and blessing for all the worlds.

R’ Menachem ben Moshe Habavli (d.1571, Hevron, Eretz Yisrael), Sefer Ta’amei Mitzvot (Book of the Reasons for the Commandments)

מצות טעמי ספר, הבבלי משה בן מנחם ר’

(יח שם) משום, זו מצוה טעם. מבשול תתן לא עור ולפני (יד:יט ויקרא) שנאמר, הגונה שאינה בעצה תם להכשיל שלא. ויישובו עולם תיקון והוא, (לא שבת) כו’ לחברך לך דסאני מאי, כמוך לרעך ואהבת.

One shouldn’t cause a naive person to falter through advice that isn’t sensible, as it says (Lev. 19:14), “before a blind person don’t put a stumbling block”. The reason for this mitzvah is “And you will love your neighbor like yourself” — what is hateful to you don’t do to your friend (Talmud Shabbat 31a), and this [brings about] repair of the world and its settlement (tikkun olam viy’shuvo).

R' Menachem Azariah DeFano (1548-1620, Italy), Asarah Ma'amarot (Ten Utterances), 3:34

לדג, מאמרות עשרה, מפאנו עזריה מנחם ר'

תקון שבסוף ללמד אלה תיבות בסופי רשם שמו שכן (יג:צו תהלים) יפרח כתמר צדיק פסוק קרח על דרש זצ"ל והאר"י יתקן הוא גם עולם

[T]he Ari (Isaac Luria) expounded the verse "A righteous person will flourish like a date palm, tzadik katamar yifrach" (Ps. 96:13) to be about Korach. For so is Korach's name impressed in [the letters at] the end of these words (ק, ר, ח), to teach that at the end of world rectification (tikkun olam), even he will be fixed (y'takein).

R' Shlomo Marini (d. 1670, Italy), Sefer Tikkun Olam (Repair of the World), on Isaiah 60:18

יח:ס ישעיה על, עולם תקון ספר, מריני שלמה ר'

הצדק וירדפו האנשים תכונות יתוקנו: תהלה ושעריך חומתיהן ישועה וקראת בגבוליהן ושבר שד בארצן חמס עוד ישמע לא העולם ותיקון ה' שישועת באופן ושבר משוד בטוחים יהיו לה מחוצה וגם אלו עם אלו העיר אנשי כל והיושר

"No more will violence be heard in your land, destruction and shattering in your borders, and you will call salvation your walls, and your gates, praise." (Isa. 60:18) The character of humanity will be repaired and all the people of the city will pursue justice and uprightness, these with those, and even [when they are] outside the city they will be secure from destruction and cataclysm, in the manner of God's salvation and the world's restoration (tikkun ha'olam).

R' Moshe Chaim Luzzatto (1707-1746, Italy), Derekh Hashem (God's Way) 2, "Israel and the Nations"

העולם ואומות ישראל, ח"ב, ה' דרך, לוצאטו חיים משה ר'

או ולהשפיע להאיר לפעלם הנהגתו את בביכול ושעבד...ועילויה הבריאה כל תיקון ב"ה האדון תלה ישראל של במעשיהם מעשיהם פי על ח"ו ולהתעלם ליסתר

Upon the actions of Israel did the Lord blessed be hang the restoration of all Creation (tikkun kol hab'riyah) and its elevation...and made God's behavior consequent upon their work to shine and to make [blessing] flow, or to close off and to be hidden, God forbid, according to their actions.

R' Moshe Chaim Luzzatto, Da'at T'vunot (Knowing Understanding) 225

רכ"ה תבונות דעת, לוצאטו חיים משה ר'

מצווה שאינו כן שאינו מה, בבריאה המצטרפים התיקונים במעשיו שיתקן, ית' ממנו מסור, בידו כח יש המצווה האדם מיתה וחייב, חילל שעבד וזר, העולם כל מתקן העובד שהכהן, הכהונה לדבר וראיה

The person who is commanded (by Torah/God) has power in his hand, given from the One who is blessed, that he may repair with his actions the repairs needed by Creation, which is not the case for one who is not commanded. And the proof of the matter is the priesthood, for the priest (kohen) doing service is repairing the whole world (m'takein kol ha'olam), and (yet) the stranger who does service profanes, and is subject to death.

R' Nachman of Breslov (1772-1810, Ukraine), Likutei Moharan (Collected Teachings of Rebbe Nachman), 1:5

ה:א מוהר"ן ליקוטי, מברסלב נחמן ר'

בעבורם ולהתפלל העולם חסרון ולמלאות העולם בתיקון עת בכל וליעין לראות אני צריך, בשבילי נברא כשהעולם, נמצא

One finds, since the world is created for my sake, I need to see and look in every moment into repairing the world (b'tikkun ha'olam), and to replenish what the world lacks, and to pray on their behalf.

R' Pinchas Hurwitz (1765-1821, Lithuania, Holland), Sefer Habrit⁹ (The Book of the Covenant, 1797), "On Loving Neighbors", ch. 1

א פ' רעים אהבת מאמר, הברית ספר, הורוויץ פנחס ר'

אדם בעבור שיהיה לשון מאיזה ויהיה שיהיה עם מאיזה יהיה האנושי מין כל אוהב האדם שיהיה הוא רעים אהבת מהות חושב או מלאכה בעל איזה או מוכר או סוחר או זורע או חורש או בונה או עולם של בישובו ועוסק כמוהו ובצלמו בדמותו וחקר ואזן בחכמתו תבל מכין והוא הבריות מצרכי דבר ידח לבלתי מחשבות וחושב העולם לצרכי יקנה ותחבולות בחכמות כל ונמצאים בשלמותו ומתקיים כתקונו עומד העולם הדברים אלה ידי על כי עמל שהוא לבו ברעיון נפלאים כלים ותקן אדם לכל מאד טוב והנה...עשה ואשר לעשות א"להים ברא אשר הדברים

The essence of loving neighbors is that a person would love all members of the human species, from whatever people they are from and from whatever language they speak, for each is a person in [God's] image and in [God's] likeness like him/herself, and engaged in settling the world or building or plowing or sowing or distributing or selling or whatever kind of craftsman, or one who figures out how to attain the needs of the world with wise designs and inventions...for by means of these things the world is established according to its proper arrangement (ha'olam omeid k'tikuno) and is sustained in its wholeness (umitkayeim bishleimuto), and all things [come to] exist "which God created to do" (Gen. 2:3), and which he has done, and "behold it is very good" (Gen. 1:31) for all humanity.

R' Pinchas Hurwitz, Sefer Habrit, "On Loving Neighbors", ch. 19

י"ט פ' רעים אהבת מאמר, הברית ספר, הורוויץ פנחס ר'

יותר המין שזה בעבור לא ואמנם...שבכיס מהנדבות משובח ויותר מפואר יותר שבגוף הנדבות האמיתי העיון שאחר נאמר ואדם א"להים בעיני טוב ויותר. האנושי מין של הקהלת לתקנת נצרך יותר הב' המין באמת כי, הב' המין איש יעזב מפואר לרעב לחמו, הפדוים כסף את יחוש ולא נפשם פדיון ונתון אסורים להתיר, מממונו דלים להונן ביתו מברכת לאביון להעניק שניהם כי אף הזה השני במין הוא רעים אהבת חובת תשלום ועקר. לזה וכדומה עני את ילוה כסף בגד יכסה וערום יתן האדם מין התחברות ולתועלת העולם לתקנת טובים כאחד

It is said after deep inspection [that] the way of giving through [using one's] body is more glorious and praiseworthy than giving through the pocketbook... However, just because this type [of giving] is more glorious, a person should not abandon the second type [of giving], for truly the second type is more needed for repairing the community of humanity (l'takanat kahalat min ha'enoshi). And it's better in the eyes of God and humanity to furnish the poor from the blessings of one's house, to supply the poor from one's own money and to free the captives and give ransom for their lives and not feel [the loss of] the ransom money, to give one's bread to the hungry and to cover the naked with clothing, to loan money to the poor, and things like this. And the essence of fulfilling the obligation of loving one's neighbor is of this second type, even though "both of them as one are good" (Eccl. 11:6) for the fixing of the world (l'takanat ha-olam), and for the value of joining together the human species...

ואלו זו על זו טובות מעלות שלשה יש מאלה אחת שבכל ונאמר. ההטבה מיני אלה בשלש יש מעלות כמה נחקורה ועתה שמטיב (ג')...באר להם חפר בכחו והוא...מים אמת בעיר היה שלא כגון לרבים כזאת שעושה (ב')...ליחיד שעוזר (א') הן או, מפה ואלה מפה הארץ מקצות שמה עוברים רבים אשר הדרך על גשר וכחו בגופו שעושה כגון העולם אנשי לכל

בנח העולם לכל הטוב חדש בלי איזה המציא שכלו שברוב או, מכיסו ושילם הגשר לעשות הפועלים את השובר היה שהוא וטובו העולם תיקון המשלימים כלים שאר וכדומה בעולם המחרשה בלי שהמציא

And now let us explore how many levels there are in these three kinds of doing good [through ideas, through one's body, and through property], and they are: 1) that one should help a single person... 2) that one should do this for many, for example if there were a town without a source of water... and one dug with one's strength a well for them... 3) that one does good for all the people in the world, for example, one used one's body and one's strength to make a bridge for a road that many pass through...or that one would hire workers to make the bridge and pay them from one's pocket, or through the power of one's intellect invent some new tool that is good for the whole world, like Noah invented plowing tools in the world, and similarly any tools that complete the establishment of the world (hamashlimim tikkun ha'olam)and its well-being...

לכל רעים אהבת דבר על משכיל לכל ראוי טוב ספר או לעול' הטוב חדש בלי שהמציא כגון העולם אנשי לכל שהטיב ומי יתאמצו לב חכמי כל שאר וכן, בעולם טובים כלים עוד להמציא עי"ז לבבו את האיש ויאמץ שירויח כדי אותו שיקנה הפחות ולהשלמתו העולם לתקנת נצרכים וכלים טובים דברים להמציא ג"כ וישתדלו.

And one who does good for the people of the world, such as one who invents a new tool that is good for the world, or a good book, it is appropriate for someone who is enlightened on the subject of loving neighbors that at the least he would buy it in order that [the inventor or author] would expand and strengthen his heart by means of this to invent more good tools for the world, and so for the rest of all those who are wise of heart, that they should strengthen themselves and strive also to invent good things and necessary tools for the improvement of the world and its completion (l'takanat ha'olam ul'hashlamato).

R' Pinchas ben David Soshis (1770-1841), Pardes Hamelekh (The King's Orchard), 107b

קז, המלך פרדס, דוד בן פנחס ר'

ברוך הקדוש) ה"בה מצד אינו והעונש והשכר. ועונש שכר לו להיות בחירי להיות האדם בעבור היה הבריאה תכלית... העולם מתקנים הצדיקים כי ויישובו העולם תיקון מצד הוא אלא ...אדם במעשה והידיק תועלת ח"ו לו בהיות (הוא השפע ולמעט ובוהו לתוהו להחזירו אותו מאבדים והרשעים במעשיהם.

The purpose of Creation was for the sake of the human being to have free choice in order for him to be punished or rewarded. And the reward and the punishment is not from the perspective of the Holy One, God forbid, that there would be some benefit or harm to God from the actions of a person ... rather it is from the perspective of fixing the world and settling it (tikkun ha'olam viy'shuvo), for the righteous are restoring the world (m'taknim ha'olam) through their actions, and the wicked are destroying it and turning it back into chaos and void, and limiting the divine flow [of abundance].

R' Natan Friedland¹⁰ (1808-1883, Breslau), Kos Yeshu'ot (The Cup of Salvation, Amsterdam 1859), 13a

יג, י"ד הדין דרוש, ישועות כוס, פרידלאנד יוסף בן נתן ר'

היתה האלה הימים כי, (ט:ח זכ') אהבו והשלום והאמת...ולשמחה לששון יהודא לבית יהי'...צום צבאות ה' אמר כה כל ...אהבו" והשלום "והאמת זאת תעשו אשר אם אך ושמחה לששון הימים ויהפך הכל ויתוקן. והגלות להצרות התחלה בעולם אדם כל עם ושלום באמת שיתנהגו החיוב מן כי בישראל אשר והשלום האמת תגרום זה

"Thus said YHWH of hosts, the [fast days] will become for the house of Judah joy and gladness...and you, love Truth and Peace" (Zech. 8:19)—for these days were the beginning for the troubles and the exile. And all will be fixed (y'tukan)and the days will be turned into joy and gladness, only if you will do this,

“love truth and peace”... All this will Truth and Peace bring about in Israel, because of [Israel fulfilling] the obligation that they conduct themselves in truth and peace with every person in the world...

לו ומדד תמרים כור ארבעה לגוי שמכר, אחד יהודי לאיש הנביא אליהו שאמר (ט"ז פ') אליהו דבי בתנא מפורש נמצא וכן כריעך הוא הרי ואחריך כאחריך הוא הרי רעך רעך את תעשוק לא כתיב, בני: אליהו לו ואמר, לו ונתן המחצה רק אפל בבית...

And so one finds explained in Tana De'Vei Eliyahu (ch.15), that Eliyahu the prophet said [this] to one Jewish man, who sold four kor of dates (= 6 bushels) to a non-Jew and measured out for him in a dark place only half and gave it to him, and Eliyahu said to him, My son, it's written, "Don't oppress your neighbor." Behold your neighbor (non-Jew) is like your brother (Jew), and your brother is like your neighbor...

וישרי־לב אוהב־אדם בכלל שיהיה רק—שיהיה מי יהיה, האנושיות ובמדות הדעת בקריבות אחר המתחבר נקרא וריע נוהג אתה שגם, כמון רעך והוא אהבתו על התורה מן מוזהר אתה לזה עולם של בישובה ועוסקים לעשוקים משפט עושים הללו המעולות במדות

And neighbor is what the [person] who joins himself [with you] is called, your brother in nearness of spirit/consciousness and in humanistic values, who will be whomever he will be (from whatever race or tribe or country or religion)—[the] only [qualification is] that he should be in the category of lovers of humanity and the upright of heart, doing justice for the oppressed and engaging in the settling of the world (yishuvah shel olam). For this you were warned by the Torah concerning loving him, and he is your neighbor like yourself, and you also [must] conduct [yourself] with these exalted qualities.

שכם לעבדו בכללה העולם ויתוקן, לבסוף האמת על ויעמדו, האמת את יביא השלום כי, האמת את העולם כל ישיגו ועי"ז לאומים וכל ארץ מלכי וכו' הארץ מן ה' את הללו (קמ"ח תהלים) המשורר שאמר מה יקוים ואז האמת א"ל ה' ד' את אחד אחרים שם ולא לבדו שמו נשגב כי ה' שם את יהללו וכו' ארץ שופטי וכל שרים.

And by means of this all the world will reach the truth, for peace brings truth, and they will stand upon truth in the end, and the world will be prepared in its entirety (y'tukan ha'olam bikh'lalah) to serve [as with] a single shoulder YHVH the God of truth, and thus will be established what the singer said (Ps. 148:7-13): "Praise YHVH from the earth... kings of the earth and all the nations, nobles and all earth's judges... Praise the name of YHVH, for the name alone is exalted", and not the name of others.

העולם מן מוסר יקבלו השופטים הכוונה – (י:ב תה') ארץ שופטי הוסרו השכילו מלכים ועתה דוד אמר העת אותו ועל ומזה ושלום ריעות אהבת בתחלה היינו העולם תיקון אל הנאות הסדר וזהו בגוים ומשפט בעמם צדק לעשות איך וישכילו המשפטים יהיו ככה העולם ולפי מתוקן עולם ימצאו השופטים כי צדק משפט אל יבוא ומזה האמת אל יבוא.

And concerning that same time David said, "And now kings will become enlightened and judges of the earth be instructed" (Ps. 2:10)—the intent is that the judges will receive moral instruction (musar) from the world and they will become enlightened [as to] how to do righteousness for their people and justice for the nations. And this is the proper/pleasing order for [reaching] the redemption of the world (tikkun ha'olam), which is this: in the beginning, love of neighbor and peace, and from this one will come unto the truth, and from this one will come unto righteous justice, for the judges will find a world mended (olam m'tukan), and according to [the nature of] the world, so will be the laws.

R' Chaim Yudah Leib Litvin (1840-1903, Ukraine, Lubavitcher), Sha'arei Dei'ah (Lemberg, 1878), §57, 27a

טז, נז ס' דעה שערי, ליטווין לייב יודה חיים ר'

לא על עובר גוונא בכהאי דבעלמא גב על אף...גמור צדיק זה הרי בני שיחיה מנת על לצדקה זו סלע צדקה לענין וכדאשכחן אדם שבין מצות בכל נמי והכי...בזה הכונה על התורה הקפידה לא עניים תקנות דמשום...ד' את תנסין דלא תעשה כלל בהכונה לן אכפת לא לבריותיו בזה להטיב יתברך ורצה העולם תקנות מפני שעיקרן לחבירו

We find in the matter of charity/tzedakah [that if one says,] “This sela coin is for tzedakah on the condition that my son will live,” behold this [person can still be considered] a completely righteous person (tzadik gamor)— ...even though in general, [acting] in this manner would transgress a prohibition, that you shouldn’t test YHWH... because [in order to strengthen] enactments (takanot) [on behalf] of the poor, the Torah is not meticulous about the intention with [respect to tzedakah], and this is also [true] for all the commandments between a person and their fellow human being, for their essence is because of setting aright the world (mipnei takanot ha’olam). And [since] the Blessed One wants through this to benefit His creatures, we are not concerned with intention at all...

R’ Ben Zion Eisenstadt (1873-1951, New York), Or Lifnei Hadorshin (Light before Seekers, 1916), 10

י', הדורשין לפני אור, אייזענשטאדט בן-ציון ר'

וממציא חופר יצחק: (יח:כו בר') פלשתים ויסתמום (אביו אברהם בימי חפרו אשר) המים את-בארות ויחפר יצחק ישב ובהפסדו העולם של בחרבנו משתדלים, הבארות את סותמים והפלשתים, בקיומו משתדל, עולם מתקן

“Isaac returned and dug the wells of water...and the Philistines had stopped them up” (Gen. 26:18): Isaac digs and brings forth (invents/develops), improves the world (m’takein olam), and the Philistines stop up the wells, strive for the destruction of the world and its depletion.

R’ Avraham Yitzhak Hakohen Kook¹¹ (1865-1935, Jerusalem), Orot Hakodesh, (Lights of Holiness), v.3, 180

קפ עמ', ג חלק, הקודש אורות, קוק הכהן יצחק אברהם ר'

נשמות בתיקון ומתפארת, לבדה רוחני באוויר ופורחת המדינות וסדרי העולם תיקון את מפקרת שהיא מחשבה כל רגלים לו שאין בשקר מיוסדת היא הרי, והצלחתן

Any idea that abandons restoration of the world and the ordering of States / tikkun ha’olam v’sidrei ham’dinot, and floats in the spiritual air alone, and takes glory in [the power of] fixing souls and their success [only], is founded upon a lie that has no legs [to stand on].

R’ Avraham Yitzhak Hakohen Kook, Orot Hatechayah, (Lights of Resurrection), ch.28, 77

שכו-שכו ב' קבצים שמונה וגם) עז עמ', כח פ' התחיה אורות, אורות, קוק ר'

לטבע בנגוד קדושה להעמיד הכשרון הוא ישראל עם בגלות שירדה והשכינה, ישראל ארץ קדושת היא שבטבע הקדושה העליונה בקדושה העליונה בתמציתה בלועה להיות היא צריכה, שלמה קדושה אינה הטבע נגד הלוחמת הקדושה אבל אז...הארץ קודש אל יחובר שבגולה והקודש, הגמור וביסוסו כולו עולם תקון יסוד שהוא, עצמה שבטבע הקדושה שהיא חסד כלפי נוטה והכל, מתבסמת הדין מדת, לגמרי חודלת המלחמה

The holiness that is in Nature is the holiness of the Land of Israel, [while] the Shekhinah that descended into exile with [the people] Israel [has] the capability of preserving holiness [even] in opposition to what is natural. But holiness battling against Nature is not holiness [that is] whole — it needs to be absorbed into its highest essence, in supernal holiness, which is the very holiness of Nature herself, which is the foundation of repairing the world in its entirety (tikkun olam kulo) and its complete rapture, and [then] the Holy in the exile will be joined to the Holy of the Land... Then war will stop completely, the attribute of judgment will be enraptured, and all will incline toward lovingkindness.

רצ, ט ברכות על איה בעין נמצא וגם) שפו עמ', א' חלק, ראייה עולת, קוק ר')

השכל חן שהוא הכללי הטוב בשביל אם כי, עצמה בשביל לא לעצמה בתקוה מצוינת... ישראל של הלאומית התכלית אחד לכל, העמים כל אמנם...שדי במלכות עולם תיקון ידי על אם כי שיבנה אפשר-שאי, האמיתי והיושר המוסר, הטוב, ישראל בחכמת המיוחד הדבר אמנם... העולם לתיקון הנצרך מיוחד מקצע בתור המצטרפת ותעודה מטרה יש מהם דרכים ולישר, ד' לדעת אחד למקום מתכנסת החכמה בשדי כולם העמים עבודת כל איך להשכיל הוא, התורה חכמת בעולם שלום להביא שגורמים, כלליים צדק במעגלי

The national purpose of Israel...is distinguished by its hope for itself not being for the sake of itself—rather, it's for the sake of the general enlightened good, which is the goodness of morality and true uprightness, which is impossible to build except through establishment of a world under the reign of the Almighty/All-nourishing (tikkun olam b'malkhut Shaddai)... However, all the nations, for each one of them there is a purpose and aim that joins itself [to this purpose] as a unique expertise that is needed for repair of the world (l'tikkun ha'olam)...However, the unique thing about the wisdom of Israel, the wisdom of the Torah, is that it brings enlightenment [about] how all the work of the peoples in the fields of wisdom converges to one place, to knowing God, and to making straight paths through the general tracks of righteousness, which will cause peace to come into the world...

R' Yehuda Ashlag¹² (1885-1954, Jerusalem), "Building the Future Society"

העתידיית החברה בנין, אשלג יהודה ר')

הכלכלי התיקון את לעולם שמבטיחים מטרם הדת בעיני העולם את לתקן אין

It is not possible to repair the world (l'takein et ha'olam) in religious matters before securing for the world economic reparation (hatikkun hakalkali).

R' Yehuda Ashlag, "Peace in the World"

בעולם השלום, אשלג יהודה ר')

מן כליל ולבער להשחיתו ואסור, קיום זכות לו יש, שבעולם ומזיק רע היותר ואפילו, רע והן טוב הן, במציאות שישנו דבר כל למוטב ולהביאו, לתקנו רק עלינו שמוטל אלא — העולם

Everything there is in reality, whether good or bad, and even the most evil and harmful in the world, has a right/merit of existing, and it's forbidden to destroy and eradicate it from the world completely. Rather, what is laid upon us is only to mend it (l'takno) and bring it to [the side of] goodness...

פועלת שאינה מכונה בדמות האדם את ראו הם כי. בדורותיהם שקמו עולם מתקני של החולשה להבנת המפתח ומכאן של מגמתם כל כן כי. מתוקנים באחרים ולהחליפם, המקולקלים החלקים את ממנה להסיר, דהיינו. תיקון וצריכה, כראוי כבר שהיו ודאי, לנגדם עמד ית' הבורא שלולא היא ואמת — האדם שבמין מזיק וכל רע כל לבער הללו עולם מתקני הפרטים כל על שומר ית' שהבורא מתוך, אלא. בלבד ומועיל טוב רק בו ולהותיר, בבכברה האדם את לנפות מזמן מספיקים למוטב ולהפכו להחזירו רק אלא — שברשותו דבר שום להשחית למישהו מרשה אינו... יתרה בהקפדה שלו שבבריאה בלבד

And this is the key to an understanding of the incapacity of [so-called] world-reformers (m'taknei olam) that arose through the generations. For they saw a human being in the image of a machine that is not working properly and needs repair (tikkun). This means, to remove the corrupted parts and replace them with others that are fixed (m'tukanim). And that is the whole tendency of these world-reformers — to eradicate anything bad and harmful in the human species — and the truth is were it not that the

Creator was standing against them, they would certainly have already had enough time to sift humanity like a sieve, and to leave only [what is] good and useful. But because the Creator watches over all the elements in [the divine] Creation with such great care... no allowance is made for anyone to destroy a single thing in [God's] Domain—but only to turn it and transform it to be good...

R' Yehuda Ashlag, "Peace in the World" (cont'd)

בעולם השלום, אשלג יהודה ר'

אלא אינו כה עד והאמור...הציבור טובת כלפי רק נערכים, רעים ומעשים טובים מעשים, רעות ומדות טובות שמדות הרי ובזה הוא אחד הציבור וטובת שטובתו יבין יחיד שכל והוא, תיקונו את התובע המקום, בלומר, התורפה נקודת את להראות המלא תיקונו על העולם יבוא

Indeed, good attributes and bad attributes, good deeds and bad deeds, are valued only according to the good of the community... And what has been spoken about up to here is only to show the point of weakness, that is, the place requiring correction (tikuno), and [the correction] is that each individual would understand that his own good and the good of the community are one, and through this the world will come to its full correction (yavo ha'olam al tikuno hamalei).

—

Appendices

I.

There are many meanings and possible translations for tikkun olam and for the term tikkun in its own. Here is a listing of many of those meanings and translations, as well as synonyms.

Tikkun/l'takein | לְתַקֵּן | לְתַקֵּן can be translated as: to arrange, establish, fix, mend, repair, reinforce, restore, prepare, perfect, set up, set right, order, ordain, invent, make, rectify, improve, reform, organize, accomplish, complete, make whole, straighten, dress, adorn, dress up; embodiment, structure, infrastructure, preparation, unification, establishment, remedy, reparation, correction, betterment, restitution, restoration, rectification. (And this list is not exhaustive!) While I usually translate concordantly (using the same root in English for the same root in Hebrew), I have taken the opportunity herein to demonstrate tikkun's breadth of meaning by using an array of these terms.

Tikkun/l'takein is associated with t'shuvah (repentance), yichudim (unifications), tovah and hatavah (goodness or benefit), sh'leymut (wholeness), l'hashlim (to make whole), l'heitiv (to do good for), l'takein | לְתַקֵּן | with a kaf (to establish, to balance), and with activities such as plowing, pruning, circumcision, adornment, cooking, praying, mending, performing a mitzvah (commandment), making tools and vessels (keilim).

Tikkun/l'takein can mean the opposite of: evil, disorder, chaos, crookedness; to ruin, distort, twist.

Tikkun ha'olam, tikuno shel olam v'yishuvo, takanat ha'olam, and tikkun olam are all interchangeable terminologies. Other terms that function as synonyms for tikkun ha'olam include: yishuv ha'olam, kiyum ha'olam, and hashlamat ha'olam.

Terminology using the word tikkun that is closely related to or synonymous with the understanding of tikkun ha'olam as final redemption or as the completion of the natural

world/Creation includes: tikkun k'lali, tikkun haklal, g'mar hatikun, hatikkun hashalem, hashlamat hatikun, takhlit hatikun, tikkun hateva, tikkun hab'riyah, and tikkun ma'aseh v'reishit.

Terminology using the word tikkun that is closely related to or synonymous with the understanding of tikkun olam as the repair of society or the proper ordering of society includes: tikkun m'dini, tikkun ham'dinah, tikkun hakibutz ham'dini, tikkun seder ham'dinah, tikkun hachevrah, tikkun chevrat, tikkun ha'adam, tikkun min (מין) ha'adam.

II.

How were the texts selected? Most of these texts were selected from a collection of several hundred that I gathered to see how far back one could trace the idea that tikkun olam signifies social justice. I also supplemented those texts here with a handful of other texts that represent different streams in the evolution of tikkun ha'olam. Where a stream of meaning is quite well-known, or where the understanding is relatively static, fewer examples are given. For example, I only included one case from the larger set of rabbinic rulings that are explained as being "mip'nei tikkun ha'olam / because of tikkun ha'olam." Those rulings include laws related to gittin (divorce), pidyon shvuyim (freeing captives), freeing the half-slave (the case included), fair pricing, prozbul (a mechanism for allowing loans to outlast the sabbatical year cycle), returning a lost object, et cetera. There are also many thousands of examples in the halakhic literature where the phrase mip'nei tikkun ha'olam is cited as part of the discussion of these laws, but only rarely do these texts tell us anything about the meaning of the term tikkun olam or its evolution. What is left out? In general, if olam or ha'olam does not modify tikkun, then that use of tikkun should not be counted as related to tikkun olam (unless it influences later authors writing about tikkun olam, or is a term used as a synonym for tikkun olam by that author, like takanat ha'olam). One of the confusions in many studies on the history of tikkun olam has been that texts about other types of tikkun were incorporated as evidence. Here are some examples of the many other uses and valences of tikkun that do not refer to the world as a whole: tikkun hanefesh (repairing the soul), tikkun hamidot (character improvement), the tikkun of tefilah (prayer) or of a particular prayer service (which means the institution of a prayer or liturgical recitation), of korbanot (sacrifices), avodah (labor), t'shuvah (repentance), et cetera. In particular, there is a multitude of kabbalistic uses for the term tikkun. One may find authors who draw connections between these activities or goals and tikkun olam, but they are not equated with each other. A few examples of this are found in the texts above. Despite the fact that tikkun is such a central concept in Lurianic Kabbalah, only a very small number of texts in Lurianic works deal with tikkun ha'olam or the tikkun of Creation as a whole. Lurianic Kabbalah is therefore not very influential in the evolution of the idea of tikkun olam until later authors like Moshe Chaim Luzzatto use the term tikkun olam in the messianic sense of redemption for this world. More often, Kabbalah talks about the tikkun of one particular world among the many worlds and levels that are believed to exist (for example, tikkun olam ha'atzilut, repairing the first world of Emanation; or tikkun haShekhinah, restoring the divine presence). Other unrelated uses of tikkun in Kabbalah also include discussion of tikunim (ritual or liturgical practices; also, material from the book Tikunei Zohar), or olam hatikkun (the repaired/redeemed world, which is contrasted in Lurianic Kabbalah with olam hatohu, this world of chaos).

III.

Here is a brief bibliography drawn from literally dozens of articles and works on tikkun olam and its evolution and meaning—the vast majority of other articles are referenced in one or more of these resources. Whichever articles you read, you will notice that there are texts included above that

contradict one or more of their conclusions. Adena Berkowitz, “Tikkun Olam as Text and Context,” in *Tikkun Olam: Judaism, Humanism & Transcendence*, edited by David Birnbaum and Martin Cohen (Mesorah Matrix, 2014), 453–474. This whole book is online at www.mesorahmatrix.com/tikkun-olam/. Lawrence Fine, “Tikkun: A Lurianic Motif in Contemporary Jewish Thought,” in *From Ancient Israel to Modern Judaism IV* (1989) 35–53. Fine’s work was the first effort to identify some of the sources of tikkun olam in America, and the first to focus on the question of Lurianic influence on the contemporary concept of tikkun olam. Mitchell First, “Aleinu: Obligation to Fix the World or the Text?” in *Hakirah* 11 (2011) 187–197, online at www.hakirah.org/vol%2011%20first.pdf. First marshalled evidence that לתקן may have appeared in the Aleinu prayer only after the classical period of rabbinic literature. Jill Jacobs, “A History of Tikkun Olam,” in *Zeek* (June 2007), online at www.zeek.net/706tohu. Jacobs’ work starts from the periodization of four completely different meanings of tikkun olam accepted by most scholars (Mishnah, Aleinu, Luria, liberal Judaism), and suggests a way to integrate them. Jonathan Krasner, “The Place of Tikkun Olam in American Jewish Life,” (Jewish Center for Public Affairs, Nov. 1, 2014), online at <http://jcpa.org/article/place-tikkun-olam-american-jewish-life1/>. Krasner is one of the few to identify Rav Kook and Zionist thought as an important source for tikkun olam. (See also Aubrey Glazer in *Tikkun Olam: Judaism, Humanism & Transcendence*.) Jonathan Sacks, *To Heal a Fractured World: The Ethics of Responsibility* (Random House, 2005). Sacks was the chief rabbi of Great Britain from 1991 to 2013.

1. Interestingly, there were those who critiqued the idea of being a m’taknei olam since the late 1800s both in Europe and Palestine—some because it was used by socialists who did not root their ideology in Torah, and some because it was not focused enough on the political practicalities of building a state. (See Yehuda Ashlag, second quote.)
2. In earlier texts, mitzvot are done for the tikkun of divine worlds, tzorekh gavoha. See, for example, terms like tikkun hakavod or hatikkun ha’elyon (unifying/rectifying the divine presence/upper realm) in Meir ibn Gabbai, *Avodat Hakodesh* 18.
3. The word tikkun has been translated in different ways throughout – see note (2).
4. Tradition attributes Aleinu to Joshua, while most scholars consider Rav (3rd cent. Babylon) as its author or compiler. Note: the original wording of Aleinu might have been שד' במלכות עולם לתקן – if so, the standard wording of עולם לתקן might date as late as 1000 CE or later. If so, then its chronological place as a tikkun olam text would be after the midrash texts that follow.
5. In the verse “He” refers to God, but the midrash interprets it as referring to Adam, who is “the work of God”.
6. At the request of Protocols, pronouns referring to every human that are in the masculine are kept so in the translation.
7. Whether the Zohar arises out of more ancient sources was once hotly debated among scholars, and tradition associates the Zohar with the 2nd century sage Shimon bar Yochai. Generally, scholars presume the Zohar to be authored by Moshe deLeon or those of his circle. Regardless of its author or authors, its historical impact on Jewish thought begins in the 13th cent.
8. The idea that Noah invented the tools of agriculture is found in Midrash Tanchuma (B’reishit 11).
9. *Sefer Habrit* was one of the most important and widely read books ever published in the modern period among religious Jews.
10. Friedland was a co-founder of Hibat Zion, one of the earliest religious Zionist organizations.
11. Rav Kook was the Ashkenazi chief rabbi of Palestine from 1921-1935.
12. Rav Ashlag is known as Ba’al Hasulam, after the title of his complete translation and commentary on the Zohar.

Rabbi David Seidenberg is the creator of neohasid.org and the author of *Kabbalah and Ecology: God's Image in the More-Than-Human World*. For a Shavuot tikkun preparation of these texts and much more (including a source sheet related to tikkun olam, which includes every verse in Tanakh about neighbor and stranger), go to neohasid.org.

<https://prtcls.com/article/tikkun-olam-source-sheet/>