



THE HEART OF ISRAEL: TIKKUN OLAM

WHAT IS TIKKUN OLAM?

The phrase literally means to repair the world, but what does that mean in the modern context and how does it relate to Israel?

The Talmud, a central text of Rabbinical Judaism, says "If you save one life, it is as if you have saved the world." Tikkun Olam is a concept in Judaism to behave and act constructively and beneficially. In the modern era, it is the idea that Jews bear responsibility not only for their own moral, spiritual, and material welfare, but also for the welfare of society at large. Contemporary Rabbis view the term as meaning "the establishment of Godly qualities throughout the world"

"Whoever destroys a single life is considered by Scripture to have destroyed the whole world, and whoever saves a single life is considered by Scripture to have saved the whole world."
- Talmud

TIKKUN OLAM IN PRACTICE

Let's look at Tikkun Olam in the context of world health. Israel was ranked as the 9th healthiest country in the world in the 2017 Bloomberg's Global Health Index. Israel was the only Middle-Eastern country to appear in the top 10, and the United States, Germany, Canada, the Netherlands, and U.K., were all ranked lower than Israel. But Israel never keeps the amazing medical breakthroughs that her citizens come up with to herself. Because of Tikkun Olam, Israel's spirit of innovation helps people overcome challenges all over the world. Here are some examples:

- Israel is always among the first on the scene at international disaster sites. The IDF medical and rescue teams have responded to earthquakes in all corners of the globe including Mexico, Armenia, Turkey, El Salvador, India, and Nepal



- In 1994 during the Rwandan genocide, Israel initiated Operation Interns for Hope that established a field hospital in Zaire to bring medical aid to the refugees.

- In 2013 when Typhoon Haiyan devastated the Philippines, Israel sent humanitarian and medical aid.

- When hurricanes Irma and Harvey ravaged Florida and Texas alike, Israel was one of the first responders on the ground. •Israel developed Babysense - a breathing monitor that has helped protect over 600,000 infants from sudden infant death syndrome.



- Israel developed the PillCam, a disposable miniature video camera that patients can swallow and doctors in more than 60 countries worldwide now use.

- Israeli researchers have discovered a way to use skin cells to regenerate heart tissue! And Israeli scientists created a DNA Nano computer that detects cancer and releases drugs to treat it.



THE HEART OF ISRAEL: TIKKUN OLAM

TIKKUN OLAM IN PRACTICE

- Israeli company OrCam developed eyeglasses that help the visually impaired see. The device has a camera and “reads” aloud what it sees to the user.

- Israel’s Emergency Bandage has been used American soldiers in Iraq and has saved countless amounts of lives by preventing hemorrhaging.

- Israeli doctors travel to countries throughout the developing world to treat preventable blindness and ocular disease, using high-tech treatments that are otherwise unavailable.

- Save A Child’s Heart is an Israeli non-profit organization that performs heart surgeries for free to children from developing countries. As part of the process, Save a Child’s Heart also brings in medical personnel from the patients’ countries and trains them in lifesaving pediatric cardiac care. This organization is also training up the first pediatric heart surgeons from these developing countries so that they can go back home and perform surgeries on their own people.



“We’re creating cures for cancer, we’re trying of feed the world, we’re trying to solve the dependance on oil, it really goes to the heart of what it means to be an Israeli.”
-Jonathan Medved

Bottom Line: THIS is the heart of Israel. For such a small country, Israel does a lot of good in the world. From being one of the first responders whenever a natural disaster strikes across the globe, to giving asylum to refugees, to sharing life-saving medical technologies with communities all over the world, the Judeo Principle of Tikkun Olam has instilled in Israel a heart for life that no other country in the Middle East comes close to emulating.