

I remember: as a child, on the other side of oceans and mountains, the Jew in me would anticipate Rosh HaShanah with fear and trembling. He still does. On that Day of Awe, I believed then, nations and individuals, Jewish and non-Jewish, are being judged by their common creator. This is still my belief. In spite of all that happened Because of all that happened? --to be Jewish today is to recognize that every person is created in the image of God and that our purpose in living is to be a reminder of God... A Jew must be sensitive to the pain of all human beings. A Jew cannot remain indifferent to human suffering, whether in other countries or in our own cities and towns. The mission of the Jewish people has never been to make the world more Jewish, but to make it more human. Elie Weisel

בְּאֶרְצָה מִמֶּנּוּ יִהְיֶה לָכֶם הַגֵּר הַגֵּר אִתְּכֶם, וְאַהֲבַת לֹו כְמוֹךְ--כִּי-גֵרִים הָיִיתֶם, בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: אֲנִי, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם. The stranger who sojourns with you shall be as a native from among you, and you shall love that person as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord, your God. Vayikra/Leviticus 19:34

לֹא-תַעֲשֶׂק שְׂכִיר, עֲנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן, מֵאֲחִידוֹ, אוֹ מִגֵּרָה אֲשֶׁר בְּאֶרְצְךָ בְּשַׁעֲרֶיהָ. May there be peace in your walls, tranquility in your palaces. Tehillim/Psalms 122:7

There is a modern tendency to divide life into compartments and to impose different codes of morals in our various relationships. There is a business code, a political code, a family code, etc. I am all against such departmentalisation. Life is one and whole. My religion demands the same honesty, fairness, reliability, in all one's relations. Gertrude Weil "What Judaism Means to Me"

A Covenant of Care a Brit for Shalom Bayit Peace in Our Homes

WHO ARE WE? We are Jewish parents, seniors, people with disabilities, family caregivers, neighbors, members of this community. We have employed domestic workers on a full or part-time basis. We recognize that their work makes it possible for us to work, for our families to lead lives that are safer, fuller, and easier, for our children to flourish, and for our loved ones to live independently and with dignity. We want to ensure that we also enable our employees to live the full lives that we expect for ourselves. With this Shalom Bayit Brit, let our Jewish community pursue justice and live a Torah of Chesed. This is our commitment, to ourselves, to our children, to our families, to our neighbors, to our community, and to the domestic workers in our midst. We want peace of mind--and a peaceful home--when we leave our homes, and we know that a healthy, rested, and focused employee provides high-quality care for our homes and loved ones. True Shalom Bayit comes through ensuring dignity for all those who work and reside in our homes. Therefore, we are committed to providing ethical workplace standards for domestic workers. The Brooklyn Code of Care standards will establish a trusting partnership, with clear expectations for us as employers. These arrangements are similar to those we seek when we take a job ourselves.

By signing this statement, we are going public with our commitment to these standards in the hope that others--within our Jewish community and beyond--will do so as well. We support our community's embrace of norms for domestic employment that reflect the values we cherish.

We are here to make a difference, to mend the fractures of the world, a day at a time, an act at a time, for as long as it takes to make it a place of justice and compassion where the lonely are not alone, the poor not without help; where the cry

of the vulnerable is heeded and those who are wronged are heard. 'Someone else's physical needs are my spiritual obligation,' a Jewish mystic taught.

*Jonathan Sacks
"To Heal a Fractured World"*

Tikkun ha'olam is a phrase that drives legal decisions. It reflects an understanding that part of the law's purpose is to create a more just society, rather than a perfect one... Tikkun Ha'olam may be translated and understood as a recalibration of the world, a recognition that the world is out of balance and that legal remedies are needed in order to readjust the world to a better balance. The focus is not so much on the power of an individual to effect change, but rather on the power of law to correct systematic injustice.

*Jane Kanarek
"What Does Tikkun Olam Actually Mean?"*

א-תַּעֲשֶׂק שְׂכִיר, עֲנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן, מֵאֲחִידוֹ, אוֹ מִגֵּרָה אֲשֶׁר בְּאֶרְצְךָ בְּשַׁעֲרֶיהָ. You shall not withhold the wages of a poor or destitute hired worker, of your fellows or of one of the strangers who are in your land within your cities. Dvarim/Deuteronomy 24:14

The two key terms are Tzedakah (tzedek- justice) and mishpat (judgement). The word mishpat means the judgement given by the

ordinance, legal right, law. The word tzedakah may be rendered shofet (judge); hence the word can mean justice, norm, "righteousness." While legality and righteousness are not identical, they must always coincide, the second being reflected in the first.

Abraham Joshua Heschel "The Prophets"