

Tikkunei Soferim, an Analysis of a Masoretic Phenomenon

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Tikkun Soferim

The Mishnah in *Pirkei Avot* 3:13 states in the name of Rabbi Akiva מסורת סייג לתורה, *masoret* is a fence to the Torah. The commentaries to this Mishnah (Rashbam, Maḥzor Vitry, and R. Obadiah Bertinoro) explain that *masoret* refers to the Masorah, the whole corpus of *male*, *haser*, *kere u-ktiv*, i.e., all the notations and rubrics that come along with almost every line in Tanakh. One of these Masoretic concepts is the notation of *Tikkun Soferim*.

As the objective translation of the words *Tikkunei Soferim*¹ implies, it refers to the eighteen places² in Tanakh where it states that

¹ The literature on this subject is vast and extensive, yet the best work remains Carmel McCarhy, *Tiqqune Sopherim* (Freiburg, 1981). For a more recent reevaluation of the subject see Moshe A. Zipor, *Tradition and Transmission, Studies in Ancient Biblical Translation and Interpretation* (Heb.), (Israel, 2001). See also his earlier article: *The Eighteen Tikkunei Sopherim, Vetus Testamentum*, vol. 44, 1994, pp. 77–102. Indispensable still are the footnotes of Hayyim Zalman Dimitrovsky, *Teshuvot ha-Rashba*, vol. 1, Mossad Ha-Rav Kook (Jerusalem, 1990) pp. 177–184. Still important is Prof. S. Lieberman's *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine* (new edition with introduction by Dov Zlotnick, New York and Jerusalem, 1994) pp. 28–37, and the encyclopedic work of R. Menachem Kasher, *Torah Shelema, Parashat Mishpatim* (Jerusalem, 1992 new edition) vol. 5, book 19, pp. 374-375.

² For a typical list see footnote 4. While the masoretic lists enumerate eighteen instances, if one takes into account all the sources, the number is closer to thirty. See McCarthy p. 57 and the much-improved list of Zipor (Heb.) pp. 114-115. One should add to it from *Meor ha-Afeilah*,

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the *soferim* emended, fixed or corrected the text. The *soferim* were, as it is traditionally understood, the *Ansbei Knesset ha-Gedolah* who were responsible for copying and maintaining the Tanakh after the Jews returned from the Babylonian exile.

The notion of תיקון סופרים appears in a variety of sources: The masoretic tradition of the Masorah³ makes mention of it. In Biblical manuscripts one will see the notation א' מ'יה תיקוני סופרים alongside the text of Tanakh. Independent masoretic codices make note of it.⁴ If one still has a Tanakh with the Masorah printed alongside the text, one will see this masoretic rubric. It also appears in midrashim like *Bereshit Rabbah*, *Shemot Rabbah* and *Midrash Tanhuma*. Tanakh exegetes like Rashi, Ibn Ezra and Radak deal with the concept of *Tikkun Soferim* as did the Rashba. The great Talmudic lexicographer R. Nathan B. Yehiel of Rome (also known as the Arukh) cites the principle. Karaite and Christian scholars are aware of it. The masoretic commentary of מנחת שי authored by R. Yedidiah Shlomo Raphael Norzi analyzes some of the cases of *Tikkun Soferim*.⁵

Yosef Kapaḥ Edition (Jerusalem, 1957), *Shemot* 1:10 (p.185) and *Bamidbar* 16:14 (p. 421), which Zipor claims is found only in Kirkisani (Karaite scholar), not in any Rabbinic work, while here it is in an early Rabbinic source.

³ For a recent excellent article on the *Masorah*, see Malky Mendel, *Jerusalem Crown, Hakirah*, vol. 2, pp. 167–184. In particular see p. 181 where one can view the text of Tanakh (Aleppo Codex) with the Masorah. For the novice the best introductory work to the Masorah is *Introduction to the Tiberian Masorah*, Israel Yeivin, translated and edited by E.J. Revel, *Masoretic Studies* 5, SBL, 1980.

⁴ For example *Okblah v-Okblah*, Frensdorf Ed. (Hanover, 1864) p. 113 # 168 writes י"ה מלין תקן עזרא and it lists the following passages: *Bereshit* 18:22, *Be-Midbar* 11:15, 12:12 אמו-אמנו, 12:12 בשר-בשרנו, 1 *Shmuel* 3:13, 2 *Shmuel* 16:12, 1 *Melakhim* 12:16, 2 *Divrei ha-Yamim* 10:16, *Yermiyahu* 2:11, *Yehezkel* 8:17, *Hosea* 4:7, *Habakkuk* 1:11, *Zachariah* 2:12, *Malachi* 1:13, *Tehillim* 106:20, *Job* 7:20, 32:3, *Eikha* 3:19. These become more or less the classical eighteen *Tikkunei Soferim*.

⁵ *Minhat Shai* comments on nearly all of the classical 18 *Tikkunei Soferim*. See footnote 4. His full analysis can be found at *Zechariah* 2:12. On his influence on the text of Tanakh see my article, *Jedidiah Solomon Norzi and The Stabilization of the Textus Receptus*, *Masoretic Studies* 6, SBL (Chicago,1996) pp. 37–47. For the latest scholarship on *Minhat Shai*, see

In other words, *Tikkun Soferim* is well rooted, attested and documented.

However, the concept appears with a different name in the halakhic midrashim of the *Sifrei* and the *Mehilta*. There it is referred to as כנה הכתוב.

It is also interesting that the Talmudim, both Bavli⁶ and *Yerushalmi*,⁷ as well as two of the famous Tanakh manuscripts, The Aleppo Codex and The Leningrad 19b, do not mention it in either of its forms (כנה הכתוב or תיקון סופרים).

It is the intent of this paper to analyze whether the two terms כנה הכתוב and תיקון סופרים are two different ideas or the same idea using different terminologies. Does *Tikkun Soferim* indicate that the original text was emended while כנה הכתוב connotes that it was originally written this way to avoid a problem? Or is *Tikkun Soferim* just another way of saying כנה הכתוב, that it is found this way in the original text? *Soferim*, in this context, would refer to the original authors of the *Sefer* rather than, as traditionally understood, the *Anshei Knesset ha-Gedolah*. Are there differences of opinion among *Hazal* explaining the total silence of *Bavli* and *Yerushalmi* regarding *Tikkun Soferim*?

***Tikkun Soferim* in Midrashic Sources**

The first mention of *Tikkun Soferim* occurs in *Beresbit Rabbah*⁸ וילכו סדמה ואברהם עודנו עומד לפני ה (בראשית יח:כב) אמר ר' סימון תיקון סופרים זה שכינה ממתנת לאברהם. Since it was really *Hashem* who was waiting for Avraham, the text should have read (or did read) ה' עודנו עומד לפני אברהם. *Tikkun Soferim* implies that since it would not be proper to

Minbat Shai al Hamishab Humshei Torah, Tzvi Betzer (z"l), (Jerusalem, 2005).

⁶ The place in Bavli where one would expect a mention of *Tikkun Soferim* is *Nedarim* 37b, where *Hazal* discuss many masoretic concepts, including *kere/u-ktiv*, *ittur soferim*, the *taamim*, etc.

⁷ See footnote 12.

⁸ *Beresbit Rabbah* 49:7 p. 101 (in the Vilna-Jerusalem edition with the standard commentaries). In the critical edition of Theodor-Albeck (Jerusalem, 1965) it appears in vol. 2, p. 505. Rabbi Simon is otherwise known as R. Shimon ben Pazzi.

state that Hashem waited for Avraham, the text was emended to 'אברהם עודנו עומד לפני ה'. This particular statement of Rabbi Simon appears in *Shemot Rabbah*, *Va-Yikra' Rabbah*, *Midrash Tehillim* and *Midrash Tanhuma*.⁹ In this context *Tikkun Soferim* seems to indicate that indeed the Soferim corrected the text.

In Zachariah 2:12 it is written: *כי הנגע בכם נגע בבבת עינו*. The translation is: “for whoever touches you (*am Yisrael*) touches the apple of his eye.” In *Shemot Rabbah*¹⁰ where this particular *pasuk* is quoted in a *derash* it states: *רבי יהושע בן לוי אומר תיקון סופרים הוא, ביו"ד עיני כתוב*. The implication seems to be that the original *pasuk* read *עיני* (with a *yod*) but the *soferim* (for *kevod Hashem* or to avoid anthropomorphic connotations) emended the text and changed the *yod* to a *vav*=*עינו*. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levy was the teacher (*rebbe*) of the same Rabbi Simon who, as mentioned earlier, also mentions *Tikkun Soferim*.¹¹

Even though we stated earlier that the *Yerushalmi* does not mention the concept of *Tikkun Soferim*, one statement in the

⁹ *Shemot Rabbah* 41, *Va-Yikra' Rabbah* 11, *Midrash Tehillim* (Schochar Tov) 22, *Midrash Tanhuma* (Buber Ed.) *parashat Bereshit* 4, p. 4 (wrongly footnoted in Zipor (Heb.) p. 93). The idea of *Tikkun Soferim* appears in the regular edition of *Midrash Tanhuma* without the attribution to Rabbi Simon in *parashat Be-Shallah* p. 89 (Heb-Eng. pagination). For a full treatment of the different lists of *Tikkunei Soferim* in the various *Tanhuma* manuscripts, see Zipor (Heb) pp. 97–101 and the chart on page 114–115. In *Hakirah* vol. 3 Menachem Epstein answers the question of “Has *Tekhelet* been found?” pp. 165–180. While his conclusion is correct, the author wonders about an enigmatic statement in *Midrash Tanhuma* based on the assumption that the *Tanhuma* was completed about 750 CE. The manuscripts of the *Tanhuma* were never “canonized,” and as in our *Tanhuma* many late additions occur. (For example, in the standard edition of *Tanhuma*, *Va-Yikra'* p. 25, it quotes Rav Sherira Gaon, and *Parashat Haazinu*, p. 124 it quotes R. Moshe Ha-Darshan, and many more.) Therefore the statement in the *Tanhuma* does not pose a question to the basic conclusion about *tekhelet*; just the opposite, it proves the point.

¹⁰ 13:1, Avigdor Shinan ed. (Israel, 1984) p. 256.

¹¹ For all relevant quotations in *Hazal* see Chanoch Albeck, *Mevo La-Talmudim* (Israel, 1969) pp. 258–261.

*Yerushalmi*¹² can be better understood based on the concept of *Tikkun Soferim* and the words of Rabbi Simon. The *Yerushalmi* states in the name of Rabbi Simon that *Hashem* said He was the first to stand up for a *zaken*. Since the *Yerushalmi* does not offer a source for this statement, it makes sense to say that Rabbi Simon is hinting to his own *derash* mentioned earlier that *Hashem* was standing (*omed*) while waiting for Avraham.

On the other hand the halakhic midrashim (*Mekhilta D' R' Yishmael*,¹³ *D' Rashbi*,¹⁴ and *Sifrei*¹⁵) enumerate some of the same *pasukim* listed in the Masorah and those found in masoretic lists. Yet when these halakhic midrashim mention them, they are not identified as *Tikkunei Soferim* but as *כנה הכתוב*. For example, after the *Sifrei* mentions the verse in Zachariah 2:12, it states: *בבת עין לא נאמר אלא בבת עינו, של מקום, כביכל כלפי מעלה, אלא שכינה הכתוב*. The clear intention of *כנה הכתוב* is that the *pasuk* itself (not the *soferim*) spoke in a euphemistic literary manner and no emendation occurred.

We seem to have two distinct traditions: one of an actual *Tikkun Soferim* where emendations were made to the text, and a second tradition that the text itself spoke in a euphemistic style. Are these really two different traditions, or are they using two different terminologies to state the same concept?

Tikkunei Soferim in the Rishonim

Let us now examine the opinion of the *rishonim*. Rashi comments on eight¹⁶ of the eighteen *Tikkunei Soferim*. Yet, Rashi's opinion is still open to debate. For example, in *Beresbit* 18:22, quoted earlier, Rashi

¹² *Yerushalmi Bikkurim* 3:3, *editio princeps* 65c, *Yerushalmi Rosh Ha-Shanah* 1:3, *editio princeps* 57b. See Lieberman p. 28 footnote 5 and Zipor p. 94.

¹³ *Shemot* 15:7, Horowitz-Rabin ed., 2nd ed., (Breslau-Frankfort 1930), reissued Jerusalem 1970, pp. 134-135.

¹⁴ Menachem Kahana, *Alei Sefer*, vol. 15, (Bar Ilan, 1989) pp. 5–20 from a fragment of the Cairo *Geniza*. See Zipor pp. 80-81.

¹⁵ *Be-Midbar* 10:35, Horowitz ed. (Leipzig, 1927) reissued Jerusalem 1966, pp. 81-82.

¹⁶ *Beresbit* 18:22; *Be-Midbar* 11:15, 12:12; 1 *Shmuel* 3:13; *Habakkuk* 1:12; *Malachi* 1:13; and twice in *Job*, 7:20 and 32:3.

(in some editions and some manuscripts¹⁷) reads אלא תיקון סופרים הוא זה (שהפכוהו רבתינו ז"ל לכתוב כן).

The super commentaries to Rashi debate whether the words אלא תיקון סופרים are Rashi's original words,¹⁸ or whether they are a clarifying addition by later scribes. They thus question what Rashi meant. Yet Rashi himself in Job 32:3 writes: זה אחד מן המקומות שתקנו סופרים את לשון הכתוב, שתקנו, he seems to be saying that there was an earlier version that was subsequently emended.

Furthermore, Rashi many times conflates תיקון סופרים with כנה הכתוב¹⁹ which leads to a lack of clarity about his final opinion. Even though this point seems to be an issue, Yeshaya Maori²⁰ has proven quite conclusively that Rashi indeed subscribed to the understanding of an actual *tikkun*, and that the words of Rashi, which some thought to be a later insertion into the text of Rashi²¹ (at *Bereshit* 18:22), are indeed original.

¹⁷ See later on about the opinion of Maori.

¹⁸ See the comments of *Mizrahi*, *Sefer Haḥikaron*, *Gur Aryeh* etc. The latest list of all super commentaries to Rashi exceeds three hundred. See *Parshan-data: Supercommentaries on Rashi's Commentary on the Pentateuch*, Pinchus Krieger (Monsey, NY, 2005). The ArtScroll Series *Rashi al Ha-Torah*, while it is a good scholarly work well aware of different manuscripts and editions, tends to gloss over the issue of *Tikkunei Soferim*. In all three places in the Torah where Rashi comments on *Tikkun Soferim*, as well as here at *Bereshit* 18:22, they leave out these particular words of Rashi (which seem to be original; see later on the opinion of Maori). They seem to take the כנה הכתוב approach even when the original source of Rashi (here *Bereshit Rabbah*) clearly mentions a *Tikkun Soferim*. See end of footnote 21.

¹⁹ See above footnote 18.

²⁰ In "Netivot Ledavid," Jubilee Volume for David Weiss Halivni, תיקון "סופרים" ו"כנה הכתוב" בפירוש רש"י למקרא, Yaakov Elman, Ephraim Bezael Halivni, Zvi Arie Steinfeld, Editors, Orhot Press (Israel, 2004) pp. 99–107. So too is the opinion of H.Z. Dimitrovsky, see f. 1, Zipor p. 132 and *The Keter Mikraot Gedolot*. See the following footnote.

²¹ A word about our text of Rashi: It is well known that there are many additions in our text of Rashi. Rabbeinu Shemayah, Rashi's famous student, was appointed by Rashi not only to safeguard the text but also to emend and add to it, often with Rashi's consent. For example, in

The *Arukh* of Rabbi Nathan b. Yechiel of Rome,²² when it discusses *Tikkun Soferim*, speaks of הראשונים הספרים, which were corrected by the Soferim to the current reading. He refers to the *pasuk* from Zachariah 2:12 that the *Sifrei* addressed as we saw earlier. The *Arukh* clearly understood *Tikkun Soferim* literally, that an earlier text was emended.²³

Bereshit 28:5, on רבקה אם יעקב ועשו, it states in Rashi: "איני יודע מה מלמדנו." These are not the words of Rashi; they are the words of R. Shemayah. See Abraham Berliner, *Selected Writings*, vol. 2, pp. 197–202, 224–226. For the latest see Avraham Grossman, "הגהות רבינו שמעיה ונוסח פירוש רש"י, לתורה, *Tarbiz*, vol. 60, 1991, pp. 67–98. See *ibid.* p. 70 where Grossman speaks of 180 additions of R. Shemayah to the text of Rashi. The comments of Rabbi Yosef Kara, a younger contemporary and friend of Rashi, also appear in our text of Rashi. To show how confusing this becomes, see *Rashi Bereshit* 19:9 on the words גש הלאה. Credit should be given to the Keter edition of *Mikraot Gedolot* (Bar-Ilan Press) under the editorship of Menachem Cohen for the best edition of *Rashi* to date. In this edition, the additions into *Rashi* are so marked (from the manuscripts) and are easily seen. Compare the above Rashi in the two editions, and one can see what happened. See the ArtScroll Edition *Bereshit* p. 196, footnote 5, where they should have done Rashi and R. Yosef Kara justice and corrected it. The information was known.

²² See the entry for כבד. See also *Arukh ha-Shalem* vol. 4, p. 181.

²³ This concept also needs to be understood in light of the Rambam dictum in the eighth (of the thirteen) fundamental of faith: היסוד השמיני: היות התורה מן השמים. והוא שנאמין כי כל התורה הזאת המצויה עתה היא הנתונה על ידי משה רבינו ע"ה. Did the Rambam mean to say that our Torah today is letter by letter exactly as Moshe Rabbeinu wrote it? Was he not aware of the many issues directly related to this point in *Hazal* that make it difficult to accept such a principle of faith? While much has been written on this topic, the simplest answer would be the view of R. Yaakov Weinberg z"l, Rosh Ha-Yeshiva of Ner Yisroel: "Rambam knew very well that those variations existed when he defined his Principles. The words of *Ani Ma'amin* and the words of Rambam, 'the entire Torah in our possession today' must not be taken literally, implying that all the letters of our present Torah are the exact letters given to Moshe Rabbeinu. Rather it should be understood in a general sense that the Torah we learn and live by is for all intent and purpose the same Torah that was given to Moshe Rabbeinu." (Quoted by Marc Shapiro, *Fundamentals and Faith* (Southfield, Mich., 1991) p. 116 from R. Weinberg's *shiurim*.) For the best treatment of this subject see Marc B.

Yaakob Al-Kirkisani,²⁴ a Karaite scholar living in the first half of the tenth century, speaks of *Tikkun Soferim* as a point of contention between the Karaites, who rejected the concept outright, and the Rabbinites, who accepted it. My only point in discussing the view of Kirkisani is to show that, in his time and place, the concept of *Tikkunei Soferim* was understood as a *tikkun*. Had it been interpreted by the (Rabbinites) only as a euphemistic literary device, Kirkisani would not have made an issue of it.

Ibn Ezra, on the other hand, took a very different approach.²⁵ He emphatically and clearly does not subscribe to the concept of *Tikkun Soferim*. In his commentary on Tanakh²⁶ and in other works²⁷ of his, he frequently writes והאומרים כן ידעו אין צורך לתיקון סופרים and מה שנעלם ממני. The Rashba²⁸ (in a famous and very important historical responsum) answers the vehemently critical charges of a Christian theologian against the Jews. In the actual responsum his name never appears.²⁹ Most scholars have identified this cleric as the infamous Raymond Martini, author of the *Pugio Fidei*. A contemporary of the Rashba, Raymond Martini wrote against the Jews and was rather knowledgeable in Rabbinic literature. He uses his

Shapiro, *The Limits of Orthodox Theology, Maimonides' Thirteen Principles Reappraised*, Oxford, 2004, pp. 91–121.

²⁴ See earlier footnote 2; for a brief history of Kirkisani see Leon Nemoy, *Karaite Anthology*, Yale Press (New Haven, 1952) pp.42–68.

²⁵ For a groundbreaking article comparing the methodologies of Ibn Ezra and Radak and the subsequent result on *parshanut*, see Uriel Simon, “R. Abraham ibn Ezra and Radak: Two Approaches to the Question of the Reliability of the Biblical Text” (Heb.), *Bar Ilan Annual*, vol. 6, 1968, pp. 191–237. See Shapiro, *The Limits of Orthodox Theology*, p. 99 f. 53, where based on the opinion of H. Z. Dimitrovsky (end of footnote 36), he criticizes Simon for some of his conclusions.

²⁶ *Be-Midbar* 11:15, 12:12; *Job* 32:3; but see *Job* 7:20 and *Zipor* p. 131, where his opinion is not so clear but I would venture to say that there also ibn Ezra is clear.

²⁷ See the introduction to his commentary to Torah (toward the end) and in *Sefer Tz'achot ba-Dikduk* (Venice, 1543) pp. 194–195 (Heb. pagination), G.H. Lipman ed. (Feurth, 1897) p. 74 (Heb. pagination).

²⁸ See end of footnote 1.

²⁹ Dimitrovsky, *Rashba*, p. 176 footnote 111. Also see the fascinating article by Jeremy Cohen, *The Christian Adversary of Solomon ibn Aderet*, *JQR*, NS Vol. 71, No.1, (July, 1980) pp. 48–55.

information of *Tikkun Soferim* as a weapon to accuse the Rabbis of falsifying the Bible. It is this charge that the Rashba addresses in his responsum. As did Kirkisani, Martini understood *Tikkun Soferim* as an actual emendation and believed that to be the opinion and belief of the Rabbis of his time. The Rashba answers emphatically and very clearly that no changes occurred in the text and that all *Tikkunei Soferim* are to be understood as כנה הכתוב. Here are his words:³⁰ לא שתקנו אותן, שמחקו וכתבו אלא מה שכתב משה רבינו ע"ה בתורה ומה שכתבו הנביאים בשאר ספרים מתחלה מה שכתבהו על כנוי כתבהו, והספרים לא חסרו ולא יתרו רק ראויין להקרות בכנוי כתבן. "It [*Tikkun Soferim*] does not mean that they corrected [the text] by erasing and writing. Whatever Moshe wrote in the Torah and the other prophets in the other *Sefarim* they, a priori, wrote euphemistically. There was no addition or deletion from the books but that those things that should have been written euphemistically were written in such a way."

These words of the Rashba became the standard and most oft-quoted opinion about *Tikkun Soferim*.³¹

Similar opinions to that of the Rashba can be found in earlier masoretic lists and codices.³² While masoretic lists attribute the *tikkunim* to Ezra,³³ Nehemiah, *Anshei Knesset Ha-Gedolah*, Zechariah, Haggai and Baruch,³⁴ it is clear from the understanding of the Rashba that the definition of *soferim* refers in each case to the particular *navi* responsible for writing that Sefer, or Moshe in the case of the Torah, and not the classical meaning of *soferim*, the scribes who copied the texts.

What is important to point out though is that many *rishonim* believed that emendations occurred and they had no theological issue or problem with it.

Modern scholarship³⁵ has mostly rejected the 19th-century concept of emendation (Geiger, C.D. Ginzberg) and subscribes to

³⁰ Dimitrovsky, Rashba, p. 171 lines 22–30.

³¹ *Meforshei Rasbi, Sefer Ha-Ikkarim* of Rabbi Yosef Albo, Book 3, Chapter 22 at the end. *Minbat Shai*.

³² *Dikduki Taamim* of R. Ahron Ben Moshe ben Asher, *Introduction*. See the full list and quotations Zipor pp. 104–107.

³³ See footnote 4.

³⁴ Shapiro, *Limits*, p. 98 footnote 50.

³⁵ See footnote 1.

the notion that no emendations occurred. Some argue for maybe one or two.³⁶ M. Zipor has argued well in favor of no real emendation and has shown that **כנה הכתוב** was the earlier terminology that later developed into *Tikkun Soferim*.³⁷

It is relevant at this point to quote Josephus.³⁸ “For we have not ten thousand books among us, disagreeing with and contradicting one another, but only twenty-two books, which contain the records of all time, and are justly believed to be divine. And five of them are by Moses, and contain his laws and the traditions of the origin of mankind and the subsequent history of the Jews till his death. This time was little short of three thousand years...And how much we credit these books of ours is evident by our action. For though so many ages have already passed, no one has ventured, either to add anything to them, or to take anything from them, or to make any change in them. But it is innate in all Jews, immediately from their very birth, to esteem these books to contain divine doctrines, and to abide by them, and if necessary, gladly to die for them.” Though Josephus is surely apologetic in his words, a ring of historical truth comes through. So while much has been made of *Tikkunei Soferim*, it turns out to be more of “Much Ado about Nothing.”

Postscript

Much more can be said and much will yet be written about *Tikkunei Soferim* אבל הניחו מקום להתגדר בו *Soferim*. I therefore invite the reader to learn through the many *pasukim* and sources, *risbonim* and *aharonim*, and delve deeply into the concept of *Tikkunei Soferim* and the other masoretic topics ושכרו כפול מן השמים. What remains clear is that one very important reason the Torah has survived for so many generations as תורת ה' תמימה is in no small way due to the Masorah.³⁹ ❧

³⁶ McCarthy, *Tiqqunei*, p. 166.

³⁷ Zipor pp. 138–165.

³⁸ *Contra Apion*, book 1:8.

³⁹ I thank David Guttmann and Heshey Zelcer for reading and commenting on an earlier draft of this article.