

# The Story of the Birthday of the World

Contributed by [Shalom Bond](#)

**Source:** Rachel Naomi Remen, On Being with Krista Tippett,  
<https://onbeing.org/programs/rachel-naomi-remen-listening-generously/>

*Rachel Naomi Remen, physician and author, shared this story as she heard it from her grandfather, an Orthodox rabbi.*

In the beginning there was only the holy darkness, the Ein Sof (No End), the source of life. And then, in the course of history, at a moment in time, this world, the world of a thousand thousand things, emerged from the heart of the holy darkness as a great ray of light. And then, perhaps because this is a Jewish story, there was an accident, and the vessels containing the light of the world, the wholeness of the world, broke. And the wholeness of the world, the light of the world was scattered into a thousand thousand fragments of light, and they fell into all events and all people, where they remain deeply hidden until this very day.

Now, according to my grandfather, the whole human race is a response to this accident. We are here because we are born with the capacity to find the hidden light in all events and all people, to lift it up and make it visible once again and thereby to restore the innate wholeness of the world. It's a very important story for our times. And this task is called tikkun olam in Hebrew. It's the restoration of the world.

And this is, of course, a collective task. It involves all people who have ever been born, all people presently alive, all people yet to be born. We are all healers of the world. And that story opens a sense of possibility. It's not about healing the world by making a huge difference. It's about healing the world that touches you.