

## Terumah by Cantor Carol Garrett 2/26/2024

Our Parsha this week is titled Terumah. It is timely, in that It is the first fundraising campaign in Jewish History, and WE just had our first fundraising meeting for the year, for our temple, last week.

The Torah says: Vayit Kuli Terumah- “And they shall take from me a contribution”. Why use the word “take” instead of “give” a contribution? The mitzvah of tzedakah, or charity/ generosity is explained that in the giving, we, actually, receive. That sense of purpose, that we feel from giving to others, from sharing what we have with someone else, is very rewarding. And, so in the giving, we receive.

So, I ask you to help us in FUN raising, FUN. Show up and have fun, which you do, tell your friends about us, support rational Judaism, bring a friend, get involved and help us build. Come to our programs and have fun.

In the Torah, the Jews wanted to keep giving, to repay G-d for all that they had received in being granted their freedom. They gave until Moses finally had to tell them that there was enough, and they could stop giving.

Our lives, our families, our workplaces, and our world becomes much more a part of us, when we get involved. When we invest our time, our treasure, or our talent, we become aware of our value, our worth, our goodness and we gain a sense of fulfillment and usefulness. The more we invest, the more we gain.

Further on, in the building of the tabernacle, we come across the Hebrew word for acacia- SHITAH- which means bending. The acacia tree is the “bending tree”, as it always grows to the side, rather than straight up. Another Hebrew word SHETUT, derived from Shitah (bending) means “foolishness”. Since the act of foolishness is an act of bending, we can either bend in a holy manner or an unholy one. Illogical thinking

## Terumah by Cantor Carol Garrett 2/26/2024

leads us to unholy foolishness, or bending. Thinking that every story in the Torah is verbatim by G-d, and a complete and accurate history of those times, is Holy foolish.

We realize here, at L'Dor Va-Dor, that many of the stories in Torah are examples of what our miraculous universe is capable of, they were acts of nature; The power unleashed by a storm, a power of a flood , power a tornado , or even the tide and the destruction they caused, have been attributed to G-d. Do you think that a miraculous and loving G-d would punish and kill millions? Do you remember when there was a conversation about why Haiti was hit so badly by a hurricane? That's foolishness.

Holy Foolishness, on the other hand, is using the power of our happiness, our ability to laugh and have fun, the power of sharing with our fellow man our good fortune: like using the twisted planks, and placing them vertically, turning a foolish character trait into a positive force in our lives. Like using our gold and silk and silver and building the tabernacle, creating a holy place for all to worship.

A story in the Talmud describes a man at the end of his life who fears he will be judged by God for not living as Moses did. When he meets with the "cantor", he is told that he will be judged for not being HIMSELF. You were given many gifts and It is you who has the power to use those gifts to make the world a better place.

So please join us in our FUN-raising, have fun, join in on our services, (which you do, thank you for being here), be yourself, bring a friend, support our mission and hopefully, you will receive much more than you give. Thank you.