

Handout A: Jewish Texts Relating to Synagogue Membership Fees

“Money. Why does it provoke in us such anxiety and fear, such extremes of wishful fantasy and nightmares of disaster, such envy, shame and secrecy? How can we deal with money in a more life-giving way?”

These questions – emotional and spiritual as they are – lie beneath the practical and intellectual questions we usually ask about money, especially in public. Perhaps for the very reason that they are emotional and spiritual, they are questions we may especially want to keep in mind as we seek in the Jewish past some wisdom to draw on for our own lives.”

(Arthur Waskow: Down to Earth Judaism: Food, Money, Sex and the Rest of Life, p.147.)

“Charity is equal in importance to all the other commandments combined.”

(Babylonian Talmud, Bava Bathra 9b)

“Tell the Israelite people to bring Me gifts; you shall accept gifts for Me from every person whose heart is so moved.”

(Exodus 25:2)

All Jews are responsible for one another.”

(Babylonian Talmud, Shevuot 39a)

When the community is in trouble, a person should not say, ‘I will go to my house and I will eat and drink and be at peace with myself.’”

(Babylonian Talmud, Ta’anit 11a)