

WOMEN'S LEAGUE SHABBAT 2016

January 16, 2016/6Tevet 5776

Parashat Bo



Shabbat Shalom.

This year's theme – shared jointly by Women's League and Torah Fund is *Nat'ah kareem* -- *She plants a vineyard*, a theme that is particularly rich in imagery. Derived from the *Eishet Chayil* poem from the last chapter of the book of *Proverbs*, the poem describes and commends the woman of achievement. She is one of industry, commitment, creativity and foresight. She is the consummate multi-tasker, the crafter, the bookkeeper, the diplomat and the vintner.

Unfortunately, in most recent times, the *eishet chayil* has been devalued, the poem deemed cliché by many. This is unfortunate because the biblical models of accomplished women are too few – and this woman, and the values she exhibits is a worthy model for any woman to emulate.

Moreover, the particular imagery of *nat'ah kareem* focuses not only on her productivity in the present, but imagines the rewards from planting a vineyard that will be realized well into the future. So the physical achievements of the *eishet chayil* are not the only things to be celebrated. We also extol her desire to create a legacy for future generations.

This certainly will resonate with members of Women's League. For our nearly one

hundred years of existence, in our homes, sisterhoods and synagogues, our women have crafted and cooked, studied and taught, raised money and balanced books, guided and advised. We have done this to ensure the future.

The *ishet chayil* is the accomplished woman who has transcended time and venue. She is you. She is me. She is all of us.

Shabbat shalom.