

Women's League *for* Conservative Judaism



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Shabbat Shalom,

Since March 15, 2020, one of the great joys of my day, is our Women's League for Conservative Judaism daily zoom, when volunteers sing *Misheberach* and pray for our loved ones in need of healing. We study the book of Psalms, and delve into *Pirkei Avot*, Ethics of our Ancestors, and recite the Mourner's Kaddish. It is truly a holy community, and a spiritual experience, when we discover the relevance of the words of Psalms and *Pirkei Avot* to our lives today.

What lessons can we learn from our Torah reading, *Parashat Vaera*, to our observance of Women's League Shabbat? The medieval commentator Rashi notes that sometimes Moses is mentioned before Aaron, and in other places, Aaron is mentioned first. We read in Exodus chapter 6, verse 26, "It is the same Aaron and Moses... *Hoo Aaron v'Moshe.*" This teaches us that both were equally great. This is puzzling, since the Torah itself testifies that Moses was the greatest prophet who ever lived; how can it be said that Aaron was equal to him? In God's eyes, achievement is measured by whether a person fulfills her personal mission. One who has a small mission, but completes it, is just as great, as one with a big mission who completes it. Aaron achieved the absolute maximum of his potential; he fulfilled God's will perfectly just as Moses did. The difference was that Moses had more missions, which meant that he had more responsibilities. Still, since they both did as they were commanded in accordance with their abilities, they were on equal level. People can tend to get disheartened that they cannot accomplish as much as their peers. Rav Yisroel Salanter, the father of the Mussar movement, the Jewish ethical, educational and cultural movement, used to say: "I know that in many ways I have the capacity of one thousand people, but because of this, my obligation to serve God is also that of one thousand people." As long as one is maximizing her potential, she is just as great as everyone else. In Women's League for Conservative Judaism, there is a place for all sisters. Some of us may have a title, and many responsibilities that come with that title. Every woman who is a member of your Sisterhood, is therefore also a member of our international Women's League for Conservative Judaism, and is an important and a vital member of our entire organization. Each of us has the potential to be a leader, for each of us has a talent, and a blessing to our entire community. Today on Women's League Shabbat, it is so gratifying to see women take part in Services. For as Aristotle said that, "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts." In other words, when individual parts are connected together, *B'yachad*, to form one entity, they are worth more than if the parts were in silos. In good health and joy, let us all use our maximum

potential, bringing together our individual parts, to do the ultimate good in the world, in our synagogue, and in our Sisterhood.

Shabbat Shalom!

Rabbi Ellen S. Wolintz-Fields
Executive Director, WLCJ