

WL Shabbat Remarks
Rabbi Ellen S. Wolintz-Fields, Executive Director, WLCJ
***Parashat Beshalach* 5782 - January 15, 2022**

Shabbat Shalom !

This week's Torah and Haftarah readings are great examples of how important it is for women to use their voices to help their community. In *Parashat Beshalach*, after Moses sings the Song of the Sea, after the Children of Israel have seen the miracle of the Sea of Reeds splitting, Miriam the prophetess took a timbrel in her hand, and sang to the children of Israel as well. Her singing showed the impact of music and song on the community. Miriam's music and voice brought much needed encouragement, as well as rejoicing to the children of Israel. The Haftarah for *Parashat Beshalach* is from the Book of Judges and is called Deborah's song, or *Shirat Devorah*. Once again, we read the powerful words of a woman, the prophetess Deborah. Deborah was truly a leader and role model for both men and women. Together, *B'yachad*, the song that comprises the Torah reading and the song that we read of Deborah in the Haftarah, give this Shabbat its name, *Shabbat Shirah*, the Shabbat of Song. Today's Torah and prophetic readings truly highlight the importance and power of women's voices in the Bible.

It is so appropriate that Women's League Shabbat is today, when we read *Parashat Beshalach* and *Shirat Devorah*, the Song of Deborah in the Haftarah, for today is a Shabbat to raise the voices of women. Let me share a story with you about voices. Often when I travel to Israel, or other places with metal detectors, I am often asked - do you have a weapon? And each time I am asked, the thought comes to my mind - Yes - My Voice !

This week, *Parashat Beshalach*, *Shabbat Shira*, let us follow the example of *Miriam HaNeviah*, Miriam the prophetess, and her brother Moses, and also Deborah the Prophetess, who raised their voices, and led the children of Israel in song, after what must have been an exhilarating, but nerve-racking experience of crossing the Sea of Reeds. Like Miriam - let us raise our voices, in song or in speech - for the betterment of all ! We each have a voice! And Women's Voices are most important ! Since 1918, Women's League for Conservative Judaism, has been providing knowledge to women, to enhance, empower, and enrich women's lives, so we can use our voices with strength and confidence ! *Yasher Kochechen* to all our wonderful women who have been participating in Women's League Shabbat !

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