



Women's League for Conservative Judaism Women's League Shabbat 2020/5780

D'var Torah

Shabbat Shalom. The year 5780 is the year of *Chesed* for Women's League for Conservative Judaism. "Our theme emphasizes loving kindness, conveying the deep love that stimulates Jewish acts of kindness, done without thought of reward."
(Rabbi Lilly Kaufman)

"Rabbi Simla'i sermonized:

The Torah begins and ends with acts of lovingkindness -

It begins with an act of lovingkindness, as it says,

'The Lord made clothing of skins for Adam and his wife, and God clothed them.'

(Genesis 3:20)

It ends with an act of lovingkindness, as it says,

'And God buried Moses there in the valley.' (Deuteronomy 34:6)"

Babylonian Talmud, Sotah 14a

Between these two acts of *chesed*, lovingkindness, clothing Adam and Eve as we care for newborns, and burying Moses, we have many examples for us to follow of *gemilut chasadim*, acts of lovingkindness. Let's take a look at the women who saved the life of the newborn Moses.

Yocheved gave birth to a baby boy and was able to hide him for three months. She created a waterproof basket for him and placed him in his basket in the reeds along the Nile, the place where the Pharaoh's daughter, Batya, went to bathe. Yocheved stationed the baby boy's sister, Miriam, nearby to watch what would happen. As expected, Pharaoh's daughter saw the basket and took pity on the child. Miriam then asked if she should go to get a Hebrew nurse to care for the child. Pharaoh's daughter, Batya, answered, "yes." The girl called the child's mother and Pharaoh's daughter instructed her to nurse the baby for her and she would pay her wages. When the child grew up, his mother brought him back to Pharaoh's daughter who made him her son.

Imagine how difficult it would be to entrust your child to the daughter of the man who wanted to kill him. Yet, Yocheved, in an act of *chesed*, lovingkindness did just that - trusted another woman to save her baby. Miriam served as an intermediary between her mother and Pharaoh's daughter, making sure that her brother was

returned to his mother to be nursed and cared for until he was older. Pharaoh's daughter raised the baby she found, the baby she knew was supposed to be killed. We know that she regarded herself as his mother as we're told in the Torah "She named him Moses, explaining, 'I drew him out of the water.'"

We have many examples of *gemilut chasadim*, acts of lovingkindness, to follow in our texts, in our history, in our families, our communities and in our congregation. During this year of chesed, let us undertake to be role models of *chesed*, kindness, for our generation.

Shabbat Shalom

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