

Rabbi's Column

I think this season In America we might better understand the misperceptions that led the Israelites to the Golden Huge Male Animal Image fiasco.

I mean, Moses was later than we expected him to be, just as anyone who thinks that colored maps on election night are meaningful might be presumed to think they knew who won. What if nobody knew who won an election until the votes were actually counted, recounted if necessary and certified?

Before continuing - Alyssa Milano and Debra Messing - thank you. They called out anti-semitism in one place they found it, without being Jewish themselves (becoming one of the upstanders - somebody who stands up for others being denigrated, as opposed to just standing by [expression possibly created in Sheridan, Wyoming]).

This week's Torah portion has one rather intriguing feature. There are no paragraphs within the Torah text itself. Paragraphs in the Torah are slightly different than paragraphs in English literature. A paragraph in the Torah can be either open or closed. An open paragraph is what we are used to - blank space after the last word of the paragraph until the end of the line. A closed paragraph is one where there are some blank spaces between the last word of one section and the first word of the next section.

From the time that Jacob is on the road away from Canaan until Laban is no longer part of his life is all considered a single "paragraph" - everything dealing with Haran is considered to be "life with Laban" - the details do not really matter, as the underlying reality is less and less welcome for Jacob and family within the old country system.

The good news is that after a couple of weeks of staying home as much as possible, I think I am almost over the cold. May your next week be healthy and safe.