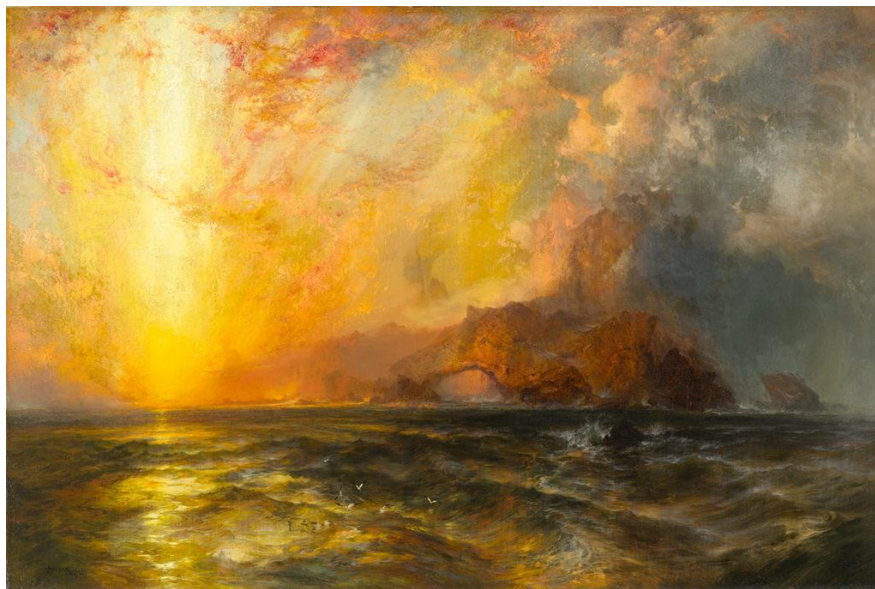


PARSHAT VAYISHLACH
GENESIS 32:4-36:43
14 KISLEV 5783/8 DECEMBER 2022



“Fiercely the red sun descending/Burned his way along the heavens”
Oil on canvass by Thomas Moran

REFUSING TO BE COMFORTED

1. Rachel began to give birth. Her labor was extremely difficult....She was dying, and as she breathed her last, she named the child Ben-oni [son of my suffering/my sorrow's son]....She was buried on the road to Ephrath, now known as Bethlehem. (Genesis 35:16-19)

Jacob tore his garments and put on sackcloth on his loins and mourned for his son many days. All his sons and all his daughters sought to comfort him. But *he refused to be comforted* and said, “No, I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning.” (Genesis 37:34-35)

Thus says Adonai, “A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping, Rachel is weeping for her children. *She refuses to be comforted* for her children, for they are no more (יִשְׂרָאֵל)”....Thus says Adonai, “Restrain your voice from weeping, your eyes from shedding tears; for your work will be rewarded. They shall return from the land of their enemy. There is hope for your future. Your children shall return to their borders. (Jeremiah 31:15-16)

2. These children haven't yet lived long enough to hurt us. They have not grown big enough to scare us....We do not know what we ought to do about an underclass....We do know that children shouldn't live in subways. (Jonathan Kozol, *Rachel and Her Children: Homeless Families in America*)