

Reflections from Rabbi . . .

I share with you the invocation I gave at a recent Plano City Council meeting:

“Mr. Mayor, members of the Plano City Council, and guests: It is an honor to share a few words with you again this evening.

The college football season will formally come to a close with the playoff game between Georgia and Alabama this evening, beginning right now.... There will be life after football, even in Texas!

This past weekend one of our country’s finest journalists, Bob Greene, wrote a wonderful article about the victory earned by the University of Alabama—before the opening kick-off ensued. He described the honor accorded to a particular woman—Autherine Lucy—who was denied entrance to the University of Alabama in 1956 because of her race. She was an African American young woman who wanted to advance her study of education — she already had graduated from Miles College, an historically black college.



Following years of violence, expulsion, and a barrage of threats, (even defended by a young attorney named Thurgood Marshall) the University of Alabama honored Autherine Lucy Foster. Now 88 years old, a statue was dedicated to her this past September, a very short distance from Tuscaloosa’s Bryant-Denny Stadium. At the dedication, the president of the university stated, “Quite frankly, without your courage and bravery, we would not enjoy the great university as we have it today. We stand in awe.”

This week, we Jewish people begin to re-read the story of Moses as told in the book of Exodus. Jews the world-over are reading the very same words to describe one of the greatest challengers to authority known to mankind. An inspiration to people throughout history—on every continent defining this world—Moses reminds every one of us that prejudice, slavery--of all types, bias, and, immoral behavior can all be overcome. We only need courage, bravery, passion, and will. Our world is in such need of clear thinking, brave yet compassionate leaders to remind us all of the blessing and responsibility to govern each other with respect.

May each of you, as representatives of the people you govern, continue to guide our precious city of Plano with dignity, wisdom, and an unbridled sense of justice and respect for each and every human being.”