

The Shul

at the Lubavitch Center

6701 Old Pimlico Road
Baltimore, MD 21209

www.chabadshul.org



August 14, 2021

Shoftim

6 Elul, 5781

The Human Traffic Sign

I saw him this past spring as I was walking to the synagogue on a hot Shabbat morning in Los Angeles. He was standing at the entrance of a strip mall that I was passing, his front and back covered by identical, cumbersome cardboard signs advertising an absolutely fantabulous sale by one of the stores in the mall. He was still there a few hours later when I returned from the synagogue, several empty water bottles lying at his feet.

It got me thinking. Even if this person was being paid only minimum wage, it would almost certainly be more economical for the store owner to go to Staples and order a standard print sign. Why the need for the human advertisement?

Motorists were slowing to get a look; one even turned on his blinker and entered the mall's next entrance. Then again, when was the last time that a conventional sign really caught my attention? And as I looked at the busy thoroughfare, it was clear that many motorists were slowing to get a look; one even quickly turned on his blinker and entered the mall's next entrance.

Apparently, living, breathing signs are worth the extra cost. I'm pretty sure that entrepreneurs wouldn't be throwing out their hard-earned money on an unproven advertising gimmick.

In no less than four places, the Torah discusses the law of the "Cities of Refuge" (Exodus 21, Numbers 35, Deuteronomy 4 and 19), the safe havens established for those who were guilty of manslaughter, where they could escape the wrath of a vengeful next of kin.

Perhaps the reason why the Torah chooses to repeat this law several times is due to one of the powerful and eternal lessons this mitzvah teaches.

We are all haunted and pursued by past indiscretions, as well as unhealthy and unspiritual tendencies. But there is a "safe haven" to which we can escape and find serenity. As our sages tell us (Talmud, Makkot 10a), "The words of Torah are a refuge." Through thoroughly immersing ourselves—"exiling" ourselves—within the teachings of the Torah, we are granted the wherewithal to successfully fend off all the impulses that hound us.

In Deuteronomy 19:3, the Torah instructs us to "prepare the roads" that leads to the cities of refuge. The Talmud (ibid.) explains that it is imperative upon the community to ensure that the roads leading to the cities remain maintained and unobstructed, and furthermore, that every crossroads must have a prominent sign directing the person to the closest miklat (refuge).

We need to be signs. For our chance acquaintances, for our friends, for our children . . . The Rebbe explained the contemporary lesson that this detail of the law offers. It is our duty, the Rebbe says, to stand at life's crossroads with a large arrow sign, and loudly proclaim to all: "This is the way to refuge. Here's the Torah. Here's how you live it. Here's how you find peace and tranquility."

We need to be signs. For our chance acquaintances, for our friends, for our children.

We can go to Staples and print up posters. We can buy books for our children that teach them the proper path; we can use wonderful words and homilies to persuade them of the beauty of Torah.

Or we can be living signs.

Yes, it requires a deeper commitment. It could mean standing in the heat for hours.

But living signs cause heads to turn like no other means of advertisement can.

By Naftali Silberberg, Chabad.org

Yarzeits

Yehudah Buchwalter for mother Florette Buchwalter (Faiga Leba bas Chaim Hacohen)

Saturday, 8/14 Elul 6



Mazel Tou to Laurie and Aaron Margolies on the birth of a granddaughter to their children Rach Margolies and Motti Hoffnung, of Burlington, VT. She is the sister of Isaac Asher (Zac). Mazel Tou to the other grandparents, Shelly and Jerry Hoffnung, of Monsey, NY.

DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE

Rabbi Kaplan is holding a weekly Thursday evening (after Ma'ariv) online shiur on the topic "Igeret HaTeshuva." This online shiur is open to anyone who would like to attend and can be joined at: <https://cutt.ly/join-shiur>. In addition to being online, this shiur will also be available "in person."

Friday, August 13

Shacharit 7 AM
Mincha 7 PM

Shabbos, August 14

Shacharit 9 AM
Sof Z'man Kriat Shema 9:44 AM
Mincha 7:35 PM
Maariv 8:45 PM

Sunday, August 15

Shacharit 8 AM
Mincha-Maariv 7:45 PM

Monday, August 16

Shacharit 6:50 AM
Mincha-Maariv 7:45 PM

Tuesday, August 17

Shacharit 7 AM
Mincha-Maariv 7:45 PM

Wednesday, August 18

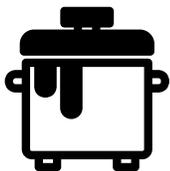
Shacharit 7 AM
Mincha-Maariv 7:45 PM

Thursday, August 19

Shacharit 6:50 AM
Mincha-Maariv 7:45 PM

Friday, August 20

Shacharit 7 AM
Mincha 7 PM
Candles 7:37 PM



Yehudah and Bracha Buchwalter sponsor kiddush on Shabbos in memory of Yehudah's mother, Florette Buchwalter- Faiga Leeba bas Chaim HaKohen, whose yahrtzeit is on 6 Elul.

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