

Friday, June 1, 2018/18 Sivan 5778

Dear chevreh,

There is a Hasidic story about Rabbi Dov Ber of Lubavitch who lived with his family in the same house as his father, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liady. One night, while Rabbi Dov Ber was deeply engrossed in his studies, his youngest child fell out of his cradle. Rabbi Dov Ber heard nothing. But Rabbi Schneur Zalman, who was also immersed in study in his room, heard the infant's cries. The Rebbe came downstairs, lifted the infant from the floor, soothed his tears, replaced him in the cradle, and rocked him to sleep. Rabbi DovBer remained oblivious. Later, Rabbi Schneur Zalman admonished his son: "No matter how lofty your involvements, you must never fail to hear the cry of a child."

The cries of children being separated from their parents at the U.S. border are being heard now, brought on by a new "Zero Tolerance" policy announced by the Attorney General last week that compels the U.S. Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE) to separate parents from their children when they cross our southern border.

T'ruah, the rabbinic call for human rights has recently written: As Jews, we know too well from history the pain of parents being separated from their children as a result of violent and anti-Semitic state policies. As Americans, we know the painful history of enslaved families being torn apart, of Native American children being removed from their homes, and of too many other examples of families separated by state violence. Many of the families who arrive on our southern border are seeking asylum, and have taken the desperate risk of crossing this border in order to protect their children from violence. All have come seeking a better life for their children. The U.S. must not deepen these families' trauma by separating parents and children. [5/29/18 on the T'ruah website]

Rebecca Kirzner, Director of Campaigns at HIAS, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, has written an information piece deciphering recent threats to asylum in the United States which provides a historical context and ways to take action. Many groups rallied today protesting family separation, and there are plenty of other ways to get involved and resist these policies, if you are inclined to do so.

Here is the link to the HIAS article; <https://www.hias.org/blog/deciphering-recent-threats-asylum-america>

I am excited to see many of you this Shabbat whether at 7:00 pm for Shabbat services and a celebration of Susan Morris receiving her Hebrew name, or tomorrow at 10:00 am for Shabbat Zimra followed by a potluck. A hearty mazel tov to Jeannie Castells and Paul Cohen who will be married this Sunday!

For those who will not be around this Shabbat, I hope that you have a wonderful summer. I will look forward to seeing all of you in early August following my sabbatical which begins this week. In case of an emergency, please contact Andy Kaufman at 609-273-1999 or at andrewkaufman@comcastnet.

If you would like to find out about the Torah study group on Thursdays, would like to do additional studying or have pastoral needs, please contact rabbinic intern Janine Jankovitz Pastor at 504-944-4002 or at janinejulia@gmail.com.

I'm thrilled to announce that I signed a five-year contract this week, and I'm delighted to serve as your rabbi for many more years to come!

Wishing you all a Shabbat shalom, a gut Shabbos,

Rabbi Diana