

Tani Talks Life (TTL), Brought to you by The Tani Talks Podcasts-This is the Shiur Where We Talk A Topic Per Session With Some Practical Lessons

Tonight's Topic: "**Signs Along The Way**"

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Do you ever feel like you wish you had signs to lead you along in life? Ever with that you could be pointed in a certain path in order to know where to go forward? Sometimes in life we can feel that we are not sure where we are supposed to go. At times we may feel like we have to look for outposts, light posts, and signs along the way.

Hashem is always in the shadows, behind the scenes, sending us signs and symbols throughout our life.

We have to look for the signs in the life of our lives and those around us. If we look for Hashem, we will be able to see him and find him. Often times he sends us signs, sort of a “wink” to us in our lives.

At times, there are signs in our life that point us where we need to go, at the behest of Hashem sending us small hints, gestures, or symbols.

Other Times when we are down or lost, Hashem sends us a “wink” or a “lamppost” along the way to show us that we are not alone, nor are we ever truly by ourselves.

Often times we can feel Hashem sending us the sign himself. When a person looks for a house, and the house wasn't on the market yet, but somehow they found it, that's a special sign. When you look for a car deal, and somehow you stumble along to the one store has that one car you want left in the color you like, that's a sign. When you can't find the stove you want, and that one last store came through for you, it's another sign, and signpost from Hashem.

Hashem is always around and puts signs all around us, we just have to look for them and see them.

What are some signs and symbols in Judaism?

Dr. Miller points out on aish.com

Is there a universal Jewish symbol? Around the world people associate a plethora of signs with Jews and Judaism, from the Star of David to the menorah to other ones as well.

The [Star of David](#), the *Magen David*, is one of the most recognizable Jewish symbols. It appears on many Jewish tombstones and is the central symbol on the Israeli flag. Surprisingly, given its widespread popularity, the Star of David is fairly recent and has only been associated with Jews for a few hundred years.

While the six-pointed Star of David might be more recent, the term *Magen David* is old. The Talmud mentions *Magen David* – literally, the Shield of King David – protecting King David and his descendent, the Messiah (Pesachim 117b). This beautiful image is also found in Jewish liturgy: each Shabbat after we hear the Haftarah read in synagogue, the reader refers to the Divine as *Magen David*, the protector of David and the Jewish people.

There is a legend that King David indeed did carry a six pointed star with him, in the form of his shield and the shields his soldiers carried. These were said to comprise two triangles, one pointing up and one pointing down, joined in the middle, forming a six pointed star. This construction is said to have made King David's shield more sturdy than his opponents.

Some symbolic explanations for the six-pointed star being identified with Judaism include Kabbalistic explanations of it representing two arrows, one pointing up to heaven and one down to earth. The Star of David also has twelve individual sides, corresponding to the twelve Tribes of Israel. It also can be seen as a correlation to Shabbat, with a central core (corresponding to Shabbat) surrounded by six points, corresponding to the six other days of the week.

The Menora is the official emblem of the State of Israel, the Menorah is a key Jewish emblem. The Torah relates how God Himself gave Moses instructions for building this holy seven-branched candelabra on Mount Sinai: “You shall make a menorah of pure gold...” (Exodus 25: 31-40)

The golden menorah was placed in the *Mishkan*, the very first Jewish house of worship. When Jews conquered Jerusalem and built the ancient Temple there, they moved the menorah to the Temple, where it was kept lit all the time. The holiday of [Hanukkah](#) commemorates re-lighting this precious candelabra after it was desecrated by occupying Greek soldiers and Jewish soldiers recaptured and restored the Temple in the year 139 BCE.

When the State of Israel was declared in 1948, the new country asked artists to submit ideas for a national symbol. Maxim and Gabriel Shamir were celebrated graphic designers. Born in Latvia, they each studied art in Germany before moving to the Land of Israel in the 1920s and establishing a popular graphic design studio in Tel Aviv. They suggested the emblem that is familiar to millions of Israelis today for the national seal: a modern rendering of the ancient menorah.

“After we decided to use the menorah,” Gabriel Shamir later recalled, “we looked for another element and concluded that olive branches are the most beautiful expression of the Jewish people’s love of peace.” They flanked the menorah in their design with olive leaves, reminding the world of the Jewish people’s ancient heritage in the Land of Israel.

The symbol of Israel’s Ministry of Tourism is a stylized depiction of two men carrying a bunch of grapes that is so large they have to use a pole with one man holding up each end to transport it.

This picture depicts the famous Biblical story of The Ten Spies. After God brought the Jewish people out of Egypt He led them to the borders of the Land of Israel, the Jews asked for permission to scout out the country. Twelve men slipped into Israel and were amazed at what they saw: pomegranates, figs, grapes and other delicious fruit grew throughout the area. They brought back an enormous cluster of grapes to show their brethren. Ten of the spies in the end brought back an evil report, showing the grapes as proof of giants living in the land, whereas and Joshua and Caleb, the other two spies, brought back a positive report.

The official crest of the city of [Jerusalem](#) is a lion pictured against a background of the stones of the Western Wall, surrounded by stylized olive leaves, representing peace. It refers to the tribe of Judah, one of the twelve ancient Jewish tribes.

When our Biblical patriarch Jacob was about to die, he bestowed one final blessing on each of his twelve sons who founded the twelve tribes of the nation of Israel. When Jacob blessed Judah, he compared him to a lion and said that one day his descendants would be among the most prominent Jews: “A lion cub is Judah; from the prey, my son, you elevated yourself. He crouches, lies down like a lion, and like an awesome lion, who dares rouse him? The scepter shall not depart from Judah nor a scholar from among his descendants” (Genesis 49:8-10).

After the reign of [King Solomon](#) in the 10th Century BCE, the ten northern tribes split off from the nation of Israel and were eventually lost. Only the tribes of Judah and Benjamin remained and were known in later antiquity as the kingdom of Judea. The area of the tribe of Judah encompassed Jerusalem, which was its capital, making the image of the Lion of Judah a particularly fitting emblem for the city of Jerusalem today.

Chai means “life” in Hebrew. This uplifting word is often found in Jewish jewelry and other Judaica objects, affirming one of the most important values in the Jewish religion: preserving and celebrating life. A common toast on Jewish occasions is *L’Chaim*, meaning “to life!”

Spelled with the Hebrew letters *chet* and *yud*, the word *chai* has the numerical value of 18 (*Chet*=8, *yud*=10). Because of this it’s common for Jews to give gifts or donate to charity in amounts that are multiples of 18.

The Torah and its commandments are compared with a “Tree of Life”. King Solomon wrote “It is a tree of life to those who grasp it, and its supporters are praiseworthy” (Proverbs 3:18). The term is first used in Genesis when God tells Adam and Eve that they can eat from any fruits in the Garden of Eden, with two exceptions: the Tree of Life, and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Seduced by the evil snake, Adam and Eve broke this command and ate fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. (The Tree of Life remained untouched.)

In later works, the Tree of Life is used as a metaphor for the Torah. The famous 16th Century book *Etz Chaim* by Israeli Rabbi Chaim ben Joseph Vital is a classic work of Jewish mysticism and expounds on the relationship between the spiritual and material worlds.

After the maul, the flood, Noah sends out a bird a few times. One of those times, a dove comes back holding an olive branch in its beak. The image of a dove holding an olive branch in its beak recalls this moment of profound hope and joy, when Noah realized his many long months of living in a dark cramped ark were behind him and life could begin again.

There of course are the religious elements as well-the mezuzah, the tzitzis, the Tallis, the tefillin, the shabbat candles, Chanukah candles, gelt, and so on....Judaism is filled with religious signs and symbols...

So we see there are many different symbols and signs in Judaism itself representing different elements and aspects of life. What signs and symbols do you see in your own life that can lead you along the way?

From aish.com daily lift

Every person in the world waits for signs of recognition and affection.

Students wait for signs of friendliness from their teacher; teachers await signs of respect from students. Children want signs of empathy from their parents; parents hunger for affection from their children. A customer wants his needs to be understood; a salesperson needs to feel that his merchandise is appreciated.

So give people what they want!

Source: (Alai Shur, vol.1, p.191; Rabbi Pliskin's Gateway to Happiness, p.138)

Signs can be inward or outward, pointing to you along the way or helping those around you. Make sure to give different signs in life and to those around you.

From aish.com with Dina Coopersmith

And Yaakov loved Rachel... and said to Lavan: "I will work for you for seven years for your younger daughter, Rachel." (Genesis 29:18)

Yaakov asked Rachel: "Will you marry me?" Rachel said: "Yes, but my father is a trickster and will try to switch Leah in my place. So Yaakov gave her signs... When the night of the wedding arrived, Lavan brought Leah to the chuppah. Rachel said to herself, "Now, my sister will be humiliated," and she gave over the signs to Leah. (Talmud – Megillah 13b)

Yaakov and Rachel anticipated this trick of Lavan and prepared for it. Yaakov gave Rachel a code or password, which she was to give over to him at the wedding to confirm that she was the real bride. In a bizarre twist, Rachel, seeing the ruse about to be carried out, cannot allow her sister to be humiliated. It's as if she is so overwhelmed by compassion at the pain of another, that she has no choice but to give over the password. Rachel absolutely cannot stand by and witness another person's suffering, even if it were at the expense of her love, her future, her destiny! The only calculation that seemed to enter her mind was: I cannot allow my sister to be humiliated. That's it.

Sometimes signs can be a key to a relationship builder or killer. Make sure to use the signs wisely and properly.

From the Aish Rabbi on aish.com

The Jewish belief is that astrology is a real force. It is one of the means God placed in the world of channeling spiritual forces to the physical world. (Needless to say, in the Jewish view, it is not a force independent of God. No forces are.) People are influenced by such factors as the day of the week they were born on and the ruling constellation at the time of their birth (see especially [Talmud Shabbat 156a](#)). i.e. someone born on Thursday will be very giving—The Zodiac also to some degree directs the forces which flow to the earth at any given time and can be used to (very roughly) predict future events.

Although the science behind this has all but been forgotten today, the ancients were much more familiar with it.

Even though such forces do exist, the Torah forbids both the study of astrology and the inquiring about the future from soothsayers.

Be careful not to be fully swayed by the cultures obsession with signs, symbols, zodiacs, and astrology. Don't get sucked in and watch out for its effects.

From Malka Touger on chabad.org

In Parshas Chayei Sara, which we read recently, Isaac married Rebecca. Sarah had passed away, and Isaac was still mourning the death of his great mother. But soon after he married Rebecca, he was comforted, because he saw how special she was.

How did Isaac know?

There were three signs. When Rebecca entered Isaac's tent, a cloud of glory hovered above. Isaac said, "While my mother was alive, a cloud of glory always rested upon her tent. But it disappeared when she died." Isaac watched for other signs. They came very soon.

As Rebecca baked the challah for Shabbat, she modestly told Isaac: "There seems to have been a special blessing in the dough, it rose so well."

Isaac was overjoyed. He recalled that his mother's dough had the same blessing.

By the end of the week the third sign was clear. Rebecca's Shabbat candles burned all week long, just as Sarah's had. During the entire week, Isaac and Rebecca felt the holiness which came from the light of the Shabbat candles.

Every mitzvah which we perform brings light into the world. But we don't always see or feel this light. The Shabbat candles are special, because we can actually see their light, the light of the mitzvah, shining in our homes. When we watch the peaceful flickering of the Shabbat candles, we understand and feel the special holiness that comes with this mitzvah.

Sometimes we can see or feel the signs, bring those into your life.

So signs can have a special power to show us that someone is right for us in our life, as our spouse, as a friend, or a coworker or partner. We just have to see the signs and recognize them, internalizing them into our own life.

From the Lubavitcher rebbe, as explained on chabad.org

A haven is of little use if it is inaccessible or its location is unknown. As is the case with the physical cities of refuge, it is the community's responsibility to "straighten the roads . . . to repair them and broaden them . . . remove all impediments and obstacles" and post signs at all crossroads.

This imperative has special meaning to us today, when the roads of life are teeming with spiritual refugees. It is our sacred duty to station ourselves at all the crossroads and serve as living signposts, calling out "Refuge! Refuge!" and pointing the way to the haven of Torah.⁶

Signs are not just physical in nature, on the road or block warning us of traffic or cliffs or speed, but also ones in spiritual nature. We have to be the signs and light posts for those lost around us, those not seeing the blatant fallacies and pitfalls of society around us.

Rabbi Sacks on aish.com

The Torah contains musical notes to read, to lean on shabbat. There is one special note called the shalsheles, that comes up four times in the Torah, with four fascinating accounts of such moments. What links them is not words but music. From quite early on in Jewish history, the Torah was sung, not just read. Moses at the end of his life calls the Torah a song. Different traditions grew up in Israel and Babylon, and from around the tenth century onward the chant began to be systematized in the form of the musical notations known as *taamei ha-mikra*, “TROP”—cantillation signs, devised by the Tiberian Masoretes (guardians of Judaism's sacred texts). One very rare note, known as a *shalsholet* ("chain"), appears in the Torah four times only. Each time it is a sign of existential crisis. Three instances are in Bereishit. The fourth is in Tzav, about leadership. In a broad sense, the other three are as well.

Even how we view the Torah can be seen from musical symbols and signs, to direct us along the way to how the verses should unfold.

Bluma gordon points out on aish.com

In life, you need to go along the way, following the signs. Determine your ultimate destination. Decide on the very best route to take. Be sure to study each and every step carefully; it is the traversing of each individual highway and exit that makes up the ultimate destination.

Layout your long term goals. Then determine the how you will best reach your goal by mapping out a practical path and setting up short term, more attainable goals. Remember, it is what we make of the hours, days, and weeks of our lives which will determine our destiny.

Don't choose a completely unmarked path; you're likely to get lost. Make sure that the route you are taking has proper road markers and signs that guide you and give you direction all along the way.

Seek out guidance and direction along the course of life's odyssey. Find a role model and seek out wisdom and teachers of wisdom to stand as guides for you even on the blackest of roadways.

Make sure the path you take is a good one, with proper signs along the path to get you there.

Nesanel Safran points out on aish.com

Dave was so familiar with the boring routine of his daily walk to school, he figured he could do it in his sleep. That was a good thing too, since at 7:00 in the morning he really was often still half asleep.

But today something different greeted him on his way. The vacant lot he'd usually cut through had been fenced in with shiny aluminum panels and big "DANGER CONSTRUCTION -- KEEP OUT" signs seemed to be hanging everywhere.

Of course, Dave, being a curious kind of kid who liked to see interesting things, immediately stopped in his tracks to try to get a peek between the panels. He saw big bulldozers, tall cranes and men scurrying around in bright yellow hardhats.

Looks kinda cool. Why not get a closer look? he thought as he pushed himself further and further through the small space between the panels. He had just gotten his whole body through when he felt a heavy hand clap down on his shoulder.

"Hey kid, can't you read the signs?" a big, tall man with a handlebar mustache and a hardhat glared at him. "No one's allowed here but us workers. It's dangerous. Now get going!" He said, pointing his finger toward the gap in the fence that Dave had just squeezed through.

Not having much of a choice, the boy sheepishly did what the man said and went on his way.

Dave's school day went by more or less like all the others - boring. He was walking home when the fenced-in construction site again caught his eye.

He peeked in again, curious to see if there was anything new. Nope - same bulldozers, same cranes ... but where were all the workers? *Hey they must be on lunch break or something ... hey, now I can really go see what's going on in there!* Dave thought. Like a flash, Dave slipped back in between the panels. He felt like an explorer climbing over huge rolls of cables, hills of sand and stacks of metal beams.

He heard some voices coming from around the corner. *Oh well, lunch break must be over,* he figured, and decided to duck behind some beams so no one would see him and make him leave. Suddenly Dave heard the low rumble of an engine. Looking up he saw the big, heavy claw of the crane dangling high, right above his head and then start coming down, right at him. He tried to jump out of the way, but his foot was stuck between the beams! *Oh, no!!!*

"Hey, help, I'm back here!" he screamed, but his voice was nothing but a tiny squeak compared to the noisy engine. The huge claw kept coming closer and Dave didn't know what to do...

Suddenly it got very quiet. The engine noise had stopped. Dave looked up and gasped. The claw, which was almost as big as a car, had stopped coming down and was now dangling just a couple of feet over his head!

"You again!!" a big voice boomed. It was the same construction worker with the mustache he had seen before. "Do you know how close you just came to getting killed? Why, if I hadn't seen you at the last minute and stopped my machine ... tell me, just tell me, why did you come back here after I already told you how dangerous it was?" The man stared at him, waiting for an answer.

"I was ... um, curious." Even as Dave said it, he realized how dumb it sounded and how wrong he was to have almost made the biggest mistake of his life - just because he was curious.

Sometimes, we ignore the signs in our way and flagrantly defy what we should be avoiding, totally bypassing safety and security for danger, thrill, and curiosity. Don't be like the cat. Don't be like the boy in the story. Don't go looking for trouble, stay safe, and follow the signs.

Here's another story from Nesanel You Safran at aish.com

KEEP OUT! NO PESTS ALLOWED! was the sign on Wendy's door, and it didn't take a genius to figure out whom the sign was meant to keep away. As far as Wendy Abramson was concerned, her younger sister Paula was nothing but a nuisance and she wanted to have as little to do with her as possible. The kid was always trying to follow her around, but Wendy made it very clear she wasn't interested. She made it a point to sit on opposite sides of the school bus from her sister, eat at different tables and do whatever else she could to put herself wherever Paula wasn't.

That's why she got so upset the day her mom dropped the bombshell over the breakfast table. "Wendy, I have to go away on business for a week starting tomorrow, and since your father is very busy and will be away at work most of the day I need you to help me."

"Sure mom. What can I do?"

"Well, *you're* big enough to take care of yourself, but Paula *isn't*. So I need you to look after her, you know, get her off to school, make her lunch, that kind of stuff."

Wendy almost choked on her Cheerios. "MOM PLEASE NO! *Anything* but that. I'll scrub the floors, I'll paint the whole house twice, just don't make me spend a whole week taking care of that little pest!"

Wendy's mom nodded. "I know it isn't an easy thing to ask of you, and I'm sorry, Wendy, but there just isn't any other choice. And who knows..." she added with a cryptic smile, "spending more time together might just help you to grow closer."

Wendy was floored. Growing closer was the last thing on her mind. Here she had been doing everything to avoid the little pest and now she had to spend a whole week taking care of her. Despite Wendy's best pouts, mournful tears and door-slams, her mom wouldn't change her mind, and the next morning Wendy braced herself for a miserable week.

"Come on, get up and get dressed. If you don't hurry you're going to miss the bus, and if you think I'm going to wait around and walk you to school, forget it!" Wendy said with all the charm of a drill sergeant, as she quickly set out her sister's clothing and went into the kitchen to fix her breakfast. *'Why am I stuck having to do this?'* she kept asking herself as she roughly smeared a wad of peanut butter across the smallest piece of bread she could find and stuffed it into her sister's lunchbox.

Wendy and Paula rushed out the door and barely caught the honking school bus. She sat Paula down and as usual went to sit down on the opposite end of the bus. Then she thought, *'Gee, if I'm kind of responsible for her, maybe I should at least be able to see her;'* and grudgingly sat down not actually near her sister, but not that far away either.

After school Wendy ran straight to her room like she always did, and was about to close and lock the door as usual, but then decided to leave the door open a tiny crack - just in case of an emergency.

That night after finally getting her sister into bed, Wendy plopped down on the living room couch. It had been a tough day, and she wanted to relax. Soon she heard some noise coming from Paula's bedroom. She went to check it out, and found her sister was crying.

"Hey what's the matter with you?" she asked.

"I miss mommy and I'm scared to be alone," Paula sniffed.

Seeing it was no emergency, Wendy was about to tell her to be quiet and walk back out. Then she looked again at Paula, who looked so small all curled up in bed. *'Poor kid,'* she thought. *'If I were her age, I'd be scared too.'*

"It's okay Paula. Here, let me read you a nice story and I'm sure you'll feel better." Paula smiled and a few minutes later she was fast asleep.

From that night on, something strange started to happen. Taking care of Paula wasn't turning out to be nearly as horrible as Wendy expected. She herself didn't even know why, but having to help her sister out so much just somehow made her like her better and care about her more.

Each day she found herself waking Paula up more gently, making her nicer lunches, and leaving her door open just a bit more. In fact, though she'd never say it to the kid's face, her sister was actually starting to grow on her and even seemed kind of cute - for a kid sister.

The week passed and Wendy's mom was due home that afternoon. Was she crazy or was she going to actually miss taking care of Paula? After giving her a nice warm bowl of oatmeal, Wendy walked Paula out to the bus. They had a nice chat along the way, and when Wendy sat Paula down on her usual seat and then took the seat right next to her, the other kids, and even the bus driver, did a double take.

That afternoon their mom came home. She opened the door and was relieved to see that the house was still in one piece. But the nicest surprise was seeing her two daughters laughing and playing a game together in Wendy's room. The usual KEEP OUT! sign on her door had been replaced by one saying WELCOME HOME MOM!, and signed by both of them.

"Wendy, I see you really came through for me. I hope it didn't take too much out of you."

Wendy smiled. "Mom, it was fine. Thanks for giving me the chance to give and get closer to someone really nice."

Sometimes our signs in our life are put up as barriers for no reason, keeping out others who could be valuable and input so much into our lives. All we have to do is take down the signs, remove the blocks in our way, and we can really brighten up the day.

Listen to this story from chabad.org during the height of the pandemic from Aharon Loschack:

Quarantined at home for months, health-care systems were under untold pressure and economic challenges were only mounting, and people around the country had been looking for any positive message of hope and encouragement they could get.

Such thoughts were whirring through Rabbi Moshe Teldon's mind as he drove around Chicago neighborhood of Wilmette, where he serves as program director at the local Chabad center. He noticed a number of different signs on many front lawns around town, invariably posting a word of thanks to health-care workers and the like.

"I thought to myself: What can I contribute to elevate this conversation? As a rabbi in the community, what unique angle can I bring to lift people's spirits and not just cower down in reactionary mode, but proactively better the situation?" explained Teldon [to Chabad.org](http://Chabad.org).

"I got home that day and started toying with different wording. After discussing it with my father-in-law, Rabbi Dovid Flinkenstein, director of Chabad of Wilmette, we hit on the idea: We would bring a message of contagion. Not a contagious virus, G-d forbid, but contagious positivity."

Teldon reached out to a good friend across town, Rabbi Mendy Weg of Chabad of Northwestern University, who helped him with designing the new lawn sign. Their collaboration bore fruit, and a new sign with the words, "Kindness, patience, and hope are also highly contagious. Don't wait to catch it ... be a carrier" with accompanying graphics was born.

Teldon printed up several hundred signs and along with his wife, Esther Leah, spread the word that signs were available for pick up on his front porch. "Spreading good vibes. We're giving

away hundreds of these to bring smiles everywhere. Let's blanket Wilmette with positivity!" they blasted across social media.

Things took off from there, and pretty soon, hundreds of the signs sprung up all across town.

Ruth Alexander, a member of the Chabad community in Wilmette, said she was grateful for the signs. "Given how divisive the climate we live in right now is, I felt it would be beneficial to have a sign that represented collaboration and unity. I cycle several miles around the neighborhood, and I'm gratified to see the signs popping up all over the place," she told Chabad.org.

Many took to social media to display the words beyond the limits of their front lawn. "On our front lawn now. Thanks for spreading kindness," posted Victoria Shoemaker to Facebook. "What a wonderful idea! Thank you for sharing a sign with me! I know it raised my spirits! *Kol hakavod!*" echoed Rena Klaber Rozen. "Great message shining on a rainy day!" Vitaliy Kuznetsov posted, along with a picture of the sign prominently displayed on his front lawn.

Not satisfied with keeping the positive energy in Wilmette alone, and after a number of requests, Teldon and Weg worked to make the material available to other communities as well. "We made the design customizable, and currently, we have personalized and delivered signs to over 25 communities around the country," said Weg.

How refreshing and yet such a brilliant, simple idea. Literally putting a sign on your front lawn to spread positivity and good will among the neighbors and the communities. Chessed can be Catchy. Generosity and goodwill can be catchy. Use signs in your life to spread good to those around you, especially your immediate family in you house. People catch on to good moods and vice versa gd forbid.

From Naftali Zilberberg on aish.com

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?

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).

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.

We in our lives need to be living signs and lampposts for others. We need to follow the right signs on our path of life. We need to spread goodness and happiness to the world around us, and people should see our signs of our lives to make a sanctification of G-d's name. IF we could have everyone follow the right signs, the whole would be much better off.

Let's see some other sources.

Genesis 24:14

let the maiden to whom I say, 'Please, lower your jar that I may drink,' and who replies, 'Drink, and I will also water your camels'—let her be the one whom You have decreed for Your servant Isaac. Thereby shall I know that You have dealt graciously with my master.”

Sukkah 29a

The Sages taught in another baraita: When the sun is eclipsed, it is a bad omen for the other nations. When the moon is eclipsed, it is a bad omen for the enemies of the Jewish people. This is due to the fact that the Jewish people calculate their calendar primarily based on the moon, and the other nations calculate based on the sun. When the sun is eclipsed in the east, it is a bad omen for the residents of the lands of the east...

Avot D'Rabbenu Nassan 25

Ben Azzai would say: When someone's mind is calm as a result of the wisdom they have acquired, that is a good sign. When someone's mind is not calm as a result of the wisdom they have acquired, that is a bad sign. When someone's mind is calm in the face of his desire, that is a good sign. When someone's mind is not calm in the face of his desire, that is a bad sign. When the sages look kindly upon someone (at the time of his death), that is a good sign. When the sages do not look kindly upon someone, that is a bad sign...

Mishneh Torah, Robbery and Lost Property 13:5

We may rely and base a legal decision upon definite marks of identification under all circumstances, according to biblical law. Size, weight, number, or the place where the object was lost are considered sure marks of identification.

PTC. Signs are ever present in our lives in so many ways, make sure to follow them and use them for good

Bava Metzia 25

And the Gemara raises a contradiction from another baraita: If one found an item on which there is no distinguishing mark alongside an item on which there is a distinguishing mark, he is

obligated to proclaim that he found both. If the owner of the item with the distinguishing mark came and took his item but did not claim ownership of the other item, the other person, who found the items, acquires the item on which there is no distinguishing mark...

Pesachim 53a

The Gemara continues: It was taught in a baraita that Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says: A good sign for mountains is that gallnut oaks, used in the preparation of ink, grow there. A good sign for valleys is palm trees. A good sign for streams is reeds. A good sign for the plain is a sycamore tree. And although there is no proof for these indicators, there is an allusion to the matter in the verse, as it is stated: "And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem like stones..."

Bava Kamma 55a

Rabbi Yehoshua says: If one sees the letter tet in his dream, it is a good sign for him. The Gemara asks: What is the reason? If we say that it is because the word good [tov] is written in the Torah and begins with the letter tet,

Berachot 3a

And signs of the transition between each of these watches in the upper world can be sensed in this world: In the first watch, the donkey brays; in the second, dogs bark; and in the third people begin to rise...

Bava Batra 147a

It is taught in a baraita: Abba Shaul says: If the festival of Shavuot is a clear day, this is a good sign for the entire year. Rav Zevid said: With regard to this first day of Rosh HaShana, if it is warm, the entire year will be warm, but if it is cold, the entire year will be cold.

PTC. How do you interpret the signs in your life? Do you look for positivity and optimism or do you immediately see negative? Look for good in everything and every sign around you

Mechilta d rabbi Ishmael 19

(Exodus 19:19) "And the voice of the shofar": This is a propitious sign in Scripture. Wherever "shofar" is mentioned, this is propitious for Israel, viz. (Psalms 47:6) "G d has risen with teruah (the shofar blast); the L rd, with the sound of the shofar", (Isaiah 27:13) "And it shall be on that day, it shall be sounded by a great shofar, etc.".

Sotah 34a

While they were still in the Jordan, Joshua said to them: "Pick up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel" (Joshua 4:5). And it is written: "That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask in time to come,

saying: What do you mean by these stones?" (Joshua 4:6). This will be a sign for the children that their ancestors crossed the Jordan.

Nedarim 20a

It is taught in a baraita: "That His fear may be upon your faces" (Exodus 20:17); this is referring to shame, as shame causes one to blush. "That you not sin" (Exodus 20:17) teaches that shame leads to fear of sin. From here the Sages said: It is a good sign in a person that he is one who experiences shame. Others say: Any person who experiences shame will not quickly sin, and conversely, one who does not have the capacity to be shamefaced, it is known that his forefathers did not stand at Mount Sinai.

Eruvin 54b

The Gemara continues its discussion with regard to methods of Torah study: Rav Hisda said: The Torah can be acquired only with mnemonic signs that aid the memory, as it is stated: "Put it in their mouths." Do not read the phrase as: Put it [simah], but rather as: Its sign [simanah], thus indicating that mnemonic signs aid in memorizing the material.

—>Sometimes we need to use signs, symbols, and hints for us to study and remember things
—lhavdil Exactly what I did for studying for summer school for grad school and for in gad school—big on signs pneumatic etc.

Berachot 57a

One who sees himself don phylacteries in a dream should anticipate greatness, as it is stated: "And all the peoples of the earth shall see that the name of the Lord is called upon you; and they shall be afraid of you" (Deuteronomy 28:10). And it was taught in a baraita that Rabbi Eliezer the Great says: That the Name of the Lord is called upon you, refers to phylacteries of the head, as they represent God's name upon man. One who sees himself pray in a dream, it is an auspicious omen...

Yevamot 79a

David said: There are three distinguishing marks of this nation, the Jewish people. They are merciful, they are shamefaced, and they perform acts of kindness.

They are merciful, as it is written: "And He will give you mercy, and have mercy upon you and multiply you" (Deuteronomy 13:18); not only will God have mercy upon you, but He will bestow the attribute of mercy upon you.

They are shamefaced, as it is written: "And that His fear shall be upon your faces" (Exodus 20:17), and the fear that is on one's face is his shame.

They perform acts of kindness, as it is written: “For I have known him, to the end that he may command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of the Lord, to practice righteousness and justice” (Genesis 18:19), i.e., to perform acts of kindness.

Whoever has these three distinguishing marks is fit to cleave to this nation. Those who lack these qualities, however, are unfit to be part of the Jewish people. When David saw the cruelty of the Gibeonites, he decreed that they may never enter into the congregation of Israel.

Baba Batra 123a

Laban did in fact attempt to have Jacob marry Leah instead of marrying Rachel. When Laban’s associates were bringing Leah up to the wedding canopy to marry Jacob, Rachel thought: Now my sister will be humiliated when Jacob discovers that she is the one marrying him. Therefore, Rachel gave the signs to Leah. And this is as it is written: “And it came to pass in the morning that, behold, it was Leah” (Genesis 29:25). This verse is difficult, as by inference, should one derive that until now she was not Leah? Rather, through the signs that Jacob gave to Rachel and that she gave to Leah, he did not know it was she until that moment. This is the modesty of Rachel to which Rabbi Yonatan was referring.

PTC. Signs can be fundamental to a marriage as well as fundamental to ourselves a the jewish people—if you don’t see certain traits or signs in the jew, we worry about his jewishness, if you don’t see signs in marriage, there could be big problems gd forbid

Shabbat 103a:8

Rabbi Yosei said: One is deemed liable for writing two letters only due to marking, as they would write symbols on adjacent beams of the Tabernacle to know which beam was another beam’s counterpart.

Rabbeinu Bahya, Bamidbar 2:2:1

איש על דגלו באותות, “each man by his flag according to the insignia.” The word אותות is used here in the same sense as in Jeremiah 10,2 where it is a reference to changes in the constellations in the skies. Each flag had different symbols, such as the flag of the camp of Reuven depicting דודאים, which looked like miniature human beings. The flag of Yehudah depicted a lion cub seeing his father had compared him to that animal (in fearlessness). The flag of Ephrayim bore the picture of an ox, seeing that Yaakov had likened Joseph to an ox in Genesis 49,9. The flag of Dan bore the image of an eagle. When you combine the four images depicted on these flags they were the same as that of the chayot which were part of the vision of Ezekiel who described these creatures or angels with such heads, as supporting the throne of G’d (Ezekiel chapter 1). (These are the views of both Ibn Ezra and Nachmanides).

Shenei Luchot HaBerit, Torah Shebikhtav, Vayetzei, Torah Ohr 7

The Torah describes this as איש על דגלו לאותות, "Each man was assigned a certain task according to the symbols on the flag he belonged to."

PTC. Each shevet in the midbar as part of the twelve tribes had its own loa, g its own sign, its own symbol, as each tribe has a unique role and missions and each of us in life have our own mission with our own signs, symbols flags, and purpose. Make sure to find your unique talent and mission and use them properly in this world.

Barukh She'amar on Pesach Haggadah, Magid, Yechol Me'rosh Chodesh 1:2

The apparently extra word emphasizes the idea that the story of the Exodus must be made more real with concrete symbols that add power and meaning to the story of the Exodus.

Rabbeinu Bahya, Shemot 25:9:1

It is an accepted concept that the various components of the Tabernacle on earth were replicas or symbols of concepts which exist in higher regions.

Or HaChaim on Genesis 15:3:2

The stars were meant to be symbols. G'd wanted Abraham to know that his descendants would all be important in their own right.

Ephod Bad on Pesach Haggadah, Nirtzah, Chad Gadya 1:2

In this way, both the good and evil inclination must serve God. The two goats of Yom Kippur are symbols for the two inclinations in every human being.

PTC> Symbols and signs add more concrete ways to learning and connecting to Hashem especially with physical objects that bring us close such as refilling, the Tallis, the kipper, etc. Use the signs, symbols, and objects in your life to connect to Hashem

Tur HaArokh, Leviticus 23:39:1

The Torah here elaborates on the nature of true joy being that after a successful harvest we thank Hashem with visible symbols expressing our joy, the four species of plants being one such example.

Rabbeinu Bahya, Shemot 32:19:2

This whole matter is an illustration of the old adage of our sages that סימנא מילתא הוא, that one must not dismiss symbols as of no consequence and not related to the essence of a matter,

Peninei Halakhah, Days of Awe 3:12:2

This is the meaning of our Sages' principle, "Symbols are a real thing" .

Shenei Luchot HaBerit, Torah Shebikhtav, Yitro, Torah Ohr 55

When the Torah speaks of: "Do not make beside Me silver or golden deities," this is an allusion to the "arms" of the world חסד וגבורה; [silver and gold are symbols here...don't draw symbols like realistic sun and moon like Gemara rosh Hashanah 24 talks about

PTC. Symbols and signs have a true power and should be used in torah, mitzvot, and Chessed to bring the world to a better place than it is currently

PTC.

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