

Rabbi Yaron Reuven Slams the Cash Advance Business and Predatory Lending

The terrible, evil, wicked business of cash advance which unfortunately has trapped some of our brethren, our Jewish brethren that are in that business. Some of them are even founders of evil companies that are lending money with high interest mainly to non-Jews. This is a forbidden business, a forsaken business, and unfortunately it's a business that has destroyed many eternities. But aside from myself I haven't heard a single speaker speak against that forsaken business. In fact there are some rabbis that promote it and tell their congregants that are donating lot of money that, 'Yasher koach' [may it be for strength]. Why? 'You're allowed to lend a Gentile money with interest. And there is no definition of how much interest.' That just simply means they are amei ha-aratzot [ignoramuses]. And they are allowing themselves to be amei ha-aratzot because of their greed. Because anyone that would actually study the halacha will see there is no such thing as charging interest at 400% to Gentiles being allowed; according to anybody. But anyway, we have spoken strongly against this sinful business, a business that literally is predatory lending. And of course several people that were in the crowd, that were watching online, that heard me speak, asked me questions, and baruch Hashem, many of them left that business; did teshuvah. But some fought tooth and nail [saying], 'No, you don't know what you are talking about...How could you say that publically, you are creating antisemitism.'...We did a response video...we said baruch Hashem antisemites are learning Torah from us. Good they are learning my videos where I'm saying that these are wicked Jews that are in that business whether they have a beard and claim to be religious or not. Any Jew that's in this business is a wicked Jew. Why? It's not a business according to the Torah. And at least the antisemites will see the difference...HaKadosh Baruch Hu gave us a gift, here you go, the biggest gift that you can ever get in the world: kiddush Hashem in public. You can all see it. In the lecture called Mikveh Night [see pinned comment there]...This person makes a public comment...he writes as follows... "I've been an antisemite for as long as I remember so when I watched a video where someone cut two minutes of your usury video, I thought you were bragging about it, but today I found a longer version with your name in it and had to find you and apologize personally for thinking you were evil, you're actually great and I'll subscribe and spread your videos around!" Yishtabach Shemo la'ad [God be praised forever]. A person that has been an antisemite, a hater of Jews his whole life,

saw the very same video that the reshaim [wicked/evil people] said is creating antisemitism, and says this video led me to the truth.¹

The illegality of the merchant cash advance business. A corrupt, horrific business. That is a predatory business, that preys on its own customers. So much so that we have a history that has documented...according to all opinions there is no permission whatsoever to be involved in cash advance. But yet whenever I mention the issues of cash advance being not allowed, surely there are some people who say, "No but my rabbi said it is allowed...[Sarcastic portrayal]: You can make a living, an honest living destroying people's lives by charging them 40%, 80%, 100%, and 400% interest rates. That's an honest living." So of course people are going to lie to themselves that this is an honest living. But the truth be told that every single person that baruch Hashem we had the siyata DeShmaya [help of Heaven] to really talk truth to, that we were able to succeed in getting them out of that business, told me at some point or another they always knew that the business was corrupt but the money was too good in order to see straight. So now that answers the question of why the people that are in the cash advance business are having a hard time accepting the truth that it's a corrupt business. Even though they don't need to see my shiurim [lectures] to know it is a corrupt business, everybody knows it...A person does not see a deficiency in themselves. Many times a person is involved in a certain particular situation or has a certain particular character trait, a certain particular issue that's relevant to him. And he can see that flaw in everybody else except in himself. And many times when it comes to Din Torah, the laws of the Torah itself, a person can easily see that someone else is desecrating the Torah, is going against the Torah, is violating the Torah, whichever way you want to put it...While he himself is violating it but he doesn't realise it. Why? Because it is easier to see it in everybody else...The people that are involved in lending money from Jew to Jew have a very serious problem and it is not just the lender and it's not just the borrower. It's also the secretary that's providing the paperwork. It's the guy that's collecting the money. So on and so forth. All of those people are in very, very serious trouble.²

Now of course, the cash advance business, charging interest, high interest, is not just a Jewish thing, there are plenty of non-Jews in the business. But the fact that there is a single Jew, needless to say a religious Jew in the business is already one too many. The fact that there [are] many religious Jews in the cash advance business and similar types of operations, with rabbis

¹ Rabbi Yaron Reuven, 'One Difference Between Sinner and Heretic - Jewish HaShkafa (115)', (YouTube, 8/8/2023, 1:38:23) <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OipfMg4ciz0&t=3425s>>.

² Rabbi Yaron Reuven, 'Can You Really See The Truth - Jewish HaShkafa (76)', (YouTube, 31/5/2023, 6:26) <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GWNwCpZXh9c>>.

supporting it here in America and in other places shows literally how close we are to another Holocaust...

Rav Ovadia writes...Jews should stay away from lending money with interest even outside of Israel due to the many negative decrees that were declared against us over the generations. He says that this is true even in countries which call themselves democracies because more than once we have seen they have passed laws against the Jews under various strange and twisted justifications (may Hashem have mercy). In these circumstances there is certainly no room for permission to lend money with interest for Jews to non-Jews, to anybody.

The gaon, Rabbi Yechezkel Landau...warned about this danger of Jewish people lending money with interest. And he wrote as follows: It's forbidden to lend with interest to those nations who we live in their shadow and treat us favourably...Anyone who takes interest from the nations in our times more than the norm in the markets of that country is committing two evils. One, the very fact of taking interest payments itself is evil. Furthermore, he is in the category of a rodef who is among those who put the Jewish people in danger by giving us a bad image in the eyes of the nations. It is appropriate for us to follow the attributes of the Holy One, blessed be He, who desires kindness. But as a result of our many sins, the wicked people act the opposite of this instruction. As Shlomo Hamelech says in Proverbs 12:10, the mercy of the wicked is cruelty. We can clearly see that those people who lend money with interest initially seem to be an act of compassion in lending. Lending money to the poor in his time of distress. However, in the end we see that this is an evil and cruel dispensation. This lender increases the interest and makes things tougher on the borrowers, with biting interest. Eventually the poor man simply cannot bear it and the lender comes to take away all the poor man's property as part of his interest obligations.³

Even if you have the permission from the government, even if you have the permission from your local rabbi, in Shamayim, you do not have permission. Why? It's immoral, it's not right, it's a bad product, and you would not want to buy it. So the first thing that you should know is rule of thumb, if you wouldn't be a customer, don't sell it...Two, if the commissions are really high, usually that's a problem. Why? Nobody likes to pay high commissions for good products; good products sell themselves. If the commissions are very high, there's usually something wrong. Three, if you see a specific group of people focus and all of a sudden, there's new businesses selling the same product popping up like mushrooms everywhere, all of a sudden, everybody's in the cash advance

³ Rabbi Yaron Reuven, 'From Europe To America To MaShiach - Tisha B'Av Prep', (YouTube, 26/7/2023, 2:01:29) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ze_of0mXzJE&t=7804s>.

business, all of a sudden, everybody's in the insurance business insuring washing machines...there's a scam.

You see, if you look at the history of all of those people that had these finagling type of things, eventually they ended up losing everything.

Straight, honest, legit, you end up being the biggest success. That's the thing, all of the people – I'm telling you right now, I've said this already in the last couple of years since I've talked about. There's a lot of people that have gone into the cash advance business and people are making a fortune out of it, millions and millions of dollars out of it. I guarantee you that within a matter of years, every single one of those people is not only going to lose all of their money, many of them are going to lose their lives, many are going to lose their freedom. They're going to go to jail...

And usually those people that are in those corrupt businesses that are taking advantage of some type of industry loophole, either there's no compliance in the industry, there's no regulation in the industry, there's no watchdog in the industry, there's just a lot of stupid people in the industry and all types of things. Usually HaKadosh Baruch Hu says, 'Oh, they may not be watching but I'm watching.'

But Korach didn't go to Gehinnom by himself, he took 250 of the biggest rabbis in the world with him, because they went with Korach. The Gemara asks, 'How did Korach convince the biggest rabbis in the world - aside from Moshe Rabbeinu, Aharon HaCohen, Yehoshua be Nun, Kalev ben Yefuna and Betzalel and Nachshon ben Aminadav. Literally there's a handful of tzaddikim left in the world and the other 250 biggest rabbis in the world are going to Gehinnom with Korach. How did he convince all these people?' Gemara asks this question, how? Korach was rich and he gave big donations. You know what happens when you give big donations? All of a sudden you become the Mara D'atra [Master of the Locale], all of a sudden you're a Da'at Torah, all of a sudden, your opinion is what matters. Your opinion? 'Yeah, yeah Moshe Rabbeinu said what you said. Oh, yeah, you know what? What would you say? What the check say? A million dollars, yeah, you're right, you're right, Your wife does not have to be modest anymore, it's not. She's like everybody else, she doesn't have to cover her hair... Modesty is not relevant to your wife because you're rich. I mean, not because you're rich, because that's that's how everybody else is.' Now all of a sudden the rich guy...In Hebrew they say the one that owns the hundred is the one that owns the opinion. So that's what happens.

How come they are taking kids - bachurim out of yeshivot, out of kollel's and putting them in this garbage business? All of a sudden the guy that can barely speak five words of English becomes the number one salesman in the cash advance business. How could that be? How does anybody think that this is normal? These are unfortunately people that are chasing money and they're destroying the people, they're destroying society, they're destroying small businesses. The average consumer defaults on a loan, is forced to take another loan, and is in essence in a never-ending battle against paying interest, and that's why it's called a predatory loan. It's a loan that kills the person that borrows the money.

Because it is going to be very, very hard to do teshuvah from such a thing. In so many words you are practically murdering every customer. Just think of it this way, a Jew is there to better the world, not to take advantage of the world - to better the world. How is anybody bettering the world by giving them a loan that they know statistically they cannot pay? ...Habibi, I was in the business for 20 years, I know more about finance than any rabbi on planet Earth. Not because I'm a rabbi, I was on Wall Street for 20 years, that's my expertise. Don't tell me who can pay and who cannot pay. It doesn't exist. Statistically the business is a flawed business.

They said, 'Listen rabbi, I was 20 years old, I was making \$50,000 a month. Where am I going to make that kind of money?' I told them you're not going to make that money. Tell you the truth, you're not going to make that money. You're not going to make half that money. Why? You're 20 years old with zero experience about anything. You have no right to make \$50,000 a month. You making \$50,000 a month, you should have already known by that there's something wrong with it; you have zero experience, the only thing you know how to do is talk. You didn't even know what you were selling... So a lot of people they're going into it, mamash themselves as victims, but you can't cry victim forever.

Get a real psak halacha from a real posek after giving him the details, I'll give you whatever you want, I will erase all of my lectures and I will start promoting your business. Not one of them will ever do it.

I grew up in the streets, I grew up in school, I grew up educating myself, I grew up getting an MBA, I grew up on Wall Street, I was on Wall Street for 20 years, baruch Hashem I grew up doing a lot of different things. You can't play with me, I come with proofs, I come with evidence, every shiur, I come with proofs. Why? Because on Wall Street we had this policy. If you don't have evidence for what you say, you're not allowed to talk. Don't tell me this company is worth such a thing, I don't

care what you think, I need evidence that it's worth such and such, I need evidence, I need information.

When I brought the sources against the wig business or against the cash advance business and all the heretics out there, I come with sources; why? Because that is how you deal with things and they've already had the information for years. Their best defense: cursing me out...Give me psak halacha, a real chacham that's going to tell me this is allowed.

You want to do yourself a big chessed? Run away tomorrow, don't even cash the last check because you're going to have to pay all of that money in blood. Every penny you made from that business, you're going to have to pay it back. Don't even cash the last check, let them keep it, let them keep it.⁴

⁴ Rabbi Yaron Reuven, 'CASH ADVANCE SCAM: Why Even Your Rabbi Can't Kosher This Pig', (YouTube, 3/5/2022) <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KX1BesAdrDU>>.