



# Bet Horaah

בית הוראה

# Shaare Ezra

שערי עזרא

**Parshat Vayechi**

**Zmanim for New York:**

**Candle Lighting: 4:25pm**

**Shabbat ends: 5:30pm**

**R"Y: 5:57pm**

Shaare Ezra is a one of a kind, multi-faceted organization that's there for the community. Under the leadership of HaRav Shay Tahan שליט"א. Shaare Ezra feels that proper Halachic guidance should be accessible to everyone, therefore we offer the community the opportunity to call, text, WhatsApp, or e-mail any halachic questions they may have, through the Bet Horaah, where qualified, trained and ordained Rabbis are available to answer your questions in English, Hebrew and Russian. Shaare Ezra is from the community—for the community.

**Call/Text:**

**347-918-4088**

**WhatsApp:**

**347-666-3467**

**Email: askhalacha1@gmail.com**

**Website:**

**www.askhalacha.com**

**Rabbishaytahan.com**

**Blessings to our generous donor for allowing the continuation of our newsletter to be available around the NY tristate area, Monsey, Miami, and more. May he and his wife merit to see much Nachat from their children and see them grow to be big Talmidei Chachamim!**

**DEFINITION OF A JEW: "BARGAIN WITH SOMEONE IN A MISERLY OR PETTY WAY".**

**RABBI SHAY TAHAN**

**\*SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEW EMAIL NOW\* PARASHADELIGHT@SHIURENJOYMENT.COM**

**SUBJECT RABBI SHAY TAHAN**

Last Tuesday outrage erupted as the top result on Google search showed that the definition for the word- "Jew" is: "to bargain with someone in a miserly or petty way". The definition belonged to a partner of Google, Oxford Languages, which calls itself "the world's leading dictionary publisher" with over 150 years of experience.

Oxford Languages did label its definition as "offensive," yet provided it as the most common use of the word Jew. It even included different tenses, including the words "jewed" and "jewing" as further "examples" of unethical financial behavior.

Of course such offensive terms which, for generations, was the anti-Semitic stigma for the Jewish nation and as one of the most prominent and persistent stereotypes about Jews—that they are greedy, hoping to make themselves rich by any means—were flagged by many.

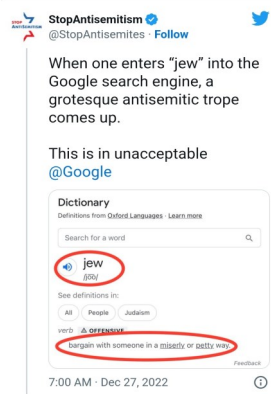
But after all is said and done, let's analyze if the above definition is only a myth or perhaps, actually true. To learn if the stigma is correct we must turn to our guid, the Torah, to see how a Jew should conduct himself with money. Does the Torah instruct us to be stingy or spend money?

In Parshat Vayishlach after Yaakov Avinu passes the river stream he realizes that he forgot some small earthenware pitchers, so he returns to collect them (בראשית לז, כה). Rashi explains that the reason is because the possessions of the righteous are more valuable to them than their own body.

That was despite what Chazal tell (ילקוט שמעוני) us that Yaakov Avinu was the wealthiest person of his time.

Since we are commanded to learn from our forefathers as its says: (תנא דבי אליהו ב"ה)

"חייב אדם לומר מתי יגיעו מעשי למעשה אבותי אברהם יצחק ויעקב", we would probably conclude that one should be very stingy and greedy with his possessions.



But there is another incident with Yaakov Avinu which shows the opposite is true, that he was very generous. When Yaakov wanted to buy his share in the burial cave, he collected and piled all his money in front of Esav and told him it's all given for his share. How can we understand that in one place Yaakov was very stingy, while in the other he was very generous with his money?

Sefer Orchoh Tsadikim explains that we learn from Yaakov to be selective regarding when to be careful with our money and when to be more giving.

When it comes to spending without reason one needs to be more conservative; but when we need something—especially if it's a Mitzvah—one should spend more and be very generous.

Therefore, when Yaakov left the earthenware pitchers he went back to collect them since leaving them would be meaningless and a waste. But when he needed to buy a burial place he was willing to give away all his money for it.

Thus the Sefarim teach us that when we pay Yeshiva tuition or when we buy Mitzvot, we should spend generously.

The Zohar (ריש פרשת תרומה) encourages spending money on buying Mitzvot and says

**DEFINITION OF A JEW: "BARGAIN WITH SOMEONE IN A MISERLY OR PETTY WAY".**

that the light of the Mitzvah shines only after one paid the full price for buying that Mitzvah. When the Arizal went to buy Mitzvot items, such as a Lulav, he handed his wallet to the seller and told him to take as much as he wanted.

But when buying things which are not Mitzvot, such as items for one's own pleasure or entertainment, such as going to dine in a restaurant or travel on vacation, one should spend his money cautiously, making sure to pay for only things that are needed.

There is another approach to the above dilemma whether one should be spending freely or be more conservative with his spending from a Midrash (אסתר רבה פרשה ב') which brings a story of few Rabbis who went to collect Tzedakah from a wealthy person. When they came to his door they overheard him send his servant to the marketplace to buy vegetables, he also instructed him to buy the vegetables that weren't very fresh because they were cheaper. Immediately the rabbis left the premises since they felt this miser person wouldn't give them any charity. Later that day they met each other and he asked them why they left without receiving Tzedakah. When he heard their response of what happened, he explained that he is only stingy on himself but not on others.

Accordingly, we learn that one should not spend on himself mindlessly but on others he should be more generous.

Now when we come to the stereotype of a Jew which is bar-

gaining with someone in a miserly or petty way, one should understand why it's viewed that way by the Gentiles.

There is a fundamental difference between the way a Jew and a Gentile live their life and view the world. A Jew lives his life with a goal to serve Hashem and therefore everything he does revolves around that goal. When a Jew spends money for his entertainment, such as going on vacation, he uses the worldly pleasures as a tool to be able to rejuvenate to be able to do Mitzvot better and learn Torah more efficiently. While spending money for his pleasures is viewed by him as wasting money, the money he spends for Mitzvot he does eagerly and more generously. (Although some people sometimes get confused and become stingy when buying Mitzvot as well)

On the other hand a Goy sees his life's goal as the world's pleasures and therefore he spends money more freely on pleasures and nonsense.

When a Goy looks at a Jew thinking twice before going on a cruise or on a Luna park ride it appears to him as miserly and stingy, because he doesn't understand why a Jew wouldn't spend his money more freely on what's most important—worldly entertainment.

Now we can understand why Google and Oxford see Jews as stingy. In their perspectives of what is really important, Jews are indeed stingy, hence they bargain in a miserly or petty way.

**GOOD EYE**

In this week's Parsha, Parshat Vayechi, Yaakov Avinu gives each of the twelve Shevatim a Beracha. Some of the Shevatim receive very long brachot over multiple pesukim, whereas the shortest Beracha is given to Naftali.

Yaakov blesses Naftali: נַפְתָּלִי כַּיָּמֵי אֵילָה נָשְׁלַח הַנְּתָן אִמְרֵי-שִׁפְרָה: Naftali is like a swift deer, who utters beautiful words. This seems to be a little strange: what does being speedy have to do with beautiful words?

The Sefer Imrei Noam from the Baalei Tosafot explains this difficulty as the secret to Naftali's success: That he would run as quickly as a deer to give everyone 'אִמְרֵי-שִׁפְרָה', compliments and pleasant words. Naftali's practice was to greet everyone he met with a big smile and welcoming words. Because of this, everyone was charmed by him, and would allow him to go promptly on his way. This meant that nothing would delay him when he went somewhere, and he would always arrive very swiftly.

As we all know from personal experience, sometimes things that are pressing may get hindered. For example, sometimes we need to go to a government office to take care of paperwork. This can be extremely difficult, and the tellers may cause all sorts of unnecessary delays because they are in a bad mood or various other reasons. A smile and a compliment can sometimes be all that is needed to make the whole process go

quickly and smoothly!

When Moshe gives the Shevatim brachot in Parshat Vezot Habracha, he blesses Naftali saying: נַפְתָּלִי שָׂבַע רֶצוֹן וְיִמְלֵא בְרַכַּת ה'. Naftali is happy and content, and full of Hashem's Berachot. This seems out of place, as many of the other Shvatim's Berachot were regarding wealth. For example, Asher receives a Beracha that he will amass wealth from an abundance of oil. Zevulun is blessed with a profusion of riches from the ocean. However, Naftali's Beracha is that he is satisfied with what he has.



What about wealth and riches? Rashi explains that Naftali's portion of land was by the Kineret, which is full of clay. Naftali was then able to earn a living by using this to catch fish and hunt animals. However, this was not enough to amass riches! Pirkei Avot declares: אֵיזְדוּהוּ אִיזְדוּהוּ—עֲשִׂירִי? הַשְּׂמֵחַ בְּהַלְקוֹ what he has! Naftali's beracha was to be happy with his lot, which made him the richest of all.

There is a pasuk, טוֹב עֵינָי הוּא יְבָרֵךְ. Chazal explain that this means that a person who has a good eye and sees the good in others, he is the one who is picked to bless others. The most important Middah is to see the good in others: This is what Naftali received as a Beracha, and this is what we must strive for in our lives.

## LOTTERY DRAWING ON SHABBAT

As the lottery Mega Millions gets higher every week, more and more people are trying their luck by buying a ticket and hoping that they will be the winners.

The drawing for those lottery tickets take place either on Tuesday night, or Friday night which is Shabbat.

If the drawing indeed takes place on Shabbat, there is a question whether one is allowed to play the Lottery, since in the case that he wins, the proceeds are made for him on Shabbat and our rabbis prohibited the money earned on Shabbat even if the money was earned in a permissible way. (שולחן ערוך סימן שו סעיף ד).

The reason for this prohibition, which is called שבר שבת, is that Chazal were concerned that maybe people will start doing business on Shabbat and even write. According to most opinions this restriction is only on the person receiving the money, but not the one giving (although the one who's paying a Jewish worker is violating מבשול עיור לא תתן, thus one may pay a Gentile for work they did on Shabbat).

One who works on Shabbat may get paid for his work if he "swallows" the earnings with some weekday work; meaning he can do some of the work on a weekday and then include the earnings for his Shabbat work together, considering the earning to be a weekday earning.

For example, a babysitter that babysits on Shabbat isn't permitted to get paid for her work. Nevertheless, she may go before Shabbat to bring some toys to the house to play with the kids or spend some time with them and consider the time she travels to the house or spent with them before Shabbat as her main work, and "swallow", include the Shabbat earnings to the weekday work. (Although some disagree with this, saying that "swallowing" must be that the weekday work should be more significant than the Shabbat (שש"כ פכ"ח) (הערה קבט).

Another example is of one who reads (leins) the Torah and must prepare the reading before Shabbat, he may get paid for his time preparing and "swallow" the Shabbat payment to that.

Another permissible way to get paid is for performing Mitzvot, such as being a Chazan on the Shabbat prayers, or giving classes on

Shabbat. The Halacha says that although one may be paid in such a case, he wouldn't see blessing from those earnings, meaning those earnings will be lost elsewhere. (משנ"ב סי' שו ס"ק ב).

When talking about the lottery we can't use the above leniencies since the gain came entirely on Shabbat and we aren't dealing with a Mitzvah. Still, there are several leniencies to allow the Lottery on Shabbat.

1. Rav Chaim Brisker (חידושי הגר"ח שבת יטא) explains that the prohibition of שבת for one's work. Payment for one's work (although in a permissible way) is prohibited, but earnings which come without any work, such as the lottery, is permitted.



Although one might ask from the Gemara (כתובות סד,ב) which speaks of a case of a husband who isn't performing his marital obligations. The Gmara says that in such an event money is added towards the Ketubah obligation, money is added only for six days a week, and not on Shabbat because it would be considered Shabbat earnings which is restricted. We see that automatic earnings are also not permitted. Rav Aurbach (ראה שש"כ פרק כה הערה קטו) answers that the Gemara used the term that adding money to the Ketubah "appears as Schar Shabbat", but it's not actually Schar Shabbat, because of the reason said above that the earnings come without any work, thus it is permitted.

2. Some permitted the earnings if the gain has no relation to Shabbat. In other words, if the earnings happen to come on Shabbat but they aren't linked to the day of Shabbat in any way, they are permitted. For example, many babysitting jobs are primarily on Shabbat because that is the time that parents wish to go to shul together. Similarly, getting paid for reading the Torah has to do with Shabbat because such reading is for the Shabbat day, but lottery drawing doesn't have anything to do with Shabbat and was picked as a random day for a drawing. Thus, it would be permitted (מחנה חיים ח"ג סי' מנהח הובא בספר אוצר תשובות עמוד תש מהר"ם בריסק ח"ב ספ"א, שו"ת באר צבי סי"א) on his opinion.

3. Some say that the earnings are for buying the lottery ticket which was done on a weekday and the drawing only reveals the winning number, hence his winning was at the time of buying the ticket. (רביד השלחן עמוד תתכג)

4. The Gemara (שבת קכא) says that getting something which is ownerless is permitted on Shabbat and doesn't have the restriction of Schar Shabbat. Harav Aaron Leib Shtienman (אילת השחר) wrote that winning the lottery is considered getting from the Hefker- ownerless and is therefore permitted.

**Mehudar Tefilin & Mezuzot  
Sell & Check**

**Rabbi Shay Tahan**  
3476663467

**Do You Have A  
HALACHA QUESTION?  
CALL OR TEXT Us  
(347) 918-4088**

**Under The Leadership Of  
Rabbi Shay Tahan**

Rabbishaytahan.com  
askhalacha.com

