

PARKING FOR A MINUTE BY A BANK

by Rabbi Yisroel Belsky ztl

QUESTION 31: PARKING FOR A MINUTE BY A BANK

The parking space in front on the bank says 'No standing'. Can I wait in my car for a minute while my wife runs in quickly to take out some cash?

RABBI BELSKY'S ANSWER

The reason these parking spaces say "no standing" is probably because of traffic patterns, because it ties up traffic. Not all of these "no parking" signs have to be honored at all times. Sometimes you go in front of a shul late at night, where half the streets in Boro Park say "no parking at any time". The section of the street in front of a shul has that special privilege. If the shul is closed, and no one is there, I don't think a person has to be too concerned about that "no parking" sign. The sign is there for a specific purpose, and it doesn't serve the purpose at that time. The "no standing" in general means that if somebody in a car stands there it will slow traffic. I think if it's the middle of the night and there is no traffic, then you can be flexible.

QUESTION

But is there a problem of a chilul Hashem, because other people may say, "Jews, they think they can do anything they want." The non-Jews may take it seriously.

RABBI BELSKY

If it's in a place where there are non-Jews, and it's not in a Jewish section, it could cause chilul Hashem, and of course you shouldn't do it.

QUESTION

So you're saying in Boro Park one doesn't have to worry about the chilul Hashem, because everybody knows that this is something that is OK.

RABBI BELSKY

You have to be extremely careful, because there's hardly any time when there's no traffic. When the banks are open, the streets are all glutted with cars and people. You will inevitably cause some back-up in traffic, because the sign is probably put there strategically, and is needed to keep the streets open.

QUESTION

But you said that sometimes at 3 in the morning, though, in front of a shul, if it says "no parking" you don't have to worry about chillul Hashem there. And because it's a Jewish neighborhood?

RABBI BELSKY

Yes.

NEXT WEEK'S QUESTION 32: SCRAPING A CAR THAT'S TAKING TWO SPACES

My friend's wife went to a doctor's office, and the parking lot was full. Someone had parked a car right in the middle of two spaces, making it impossible for someone to park on either side of their parked car. My friend's wife tried to park in the narrow space next to this car anyway, and scratched the parked car slightly. Should she leave a note with her phone number, or did the person "bring it on himself" for being selfish in the way he parked, making it unnecessary to leave a note?

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