

RETURNING APPLES

by Rabbi Yisroel Belsky ztl

QUESTION 47

My wife said that she bought 5 apples at a local market, and that they tasted spoiled. I returned the apples, and they gave me \$1.50 back. When I got home, my wife admitted that she wasn't absolutely sure she had gotten the apples from that store. Am I obligated to return the money?

RABBI BELSKY

If it may have been from a different store, you just got \$1.50 that may be not coming to you. How could you be clear about whether that money belongs to you? You got it under false pretenses, and must give it back.

QUESTIONER

So there's the question of percentages again. If I asked her, "What percentage are you sure that you went to this store, as opposed to another store?" Let's say there are only four stores where she shops, at the very least it's a 25% chance that this was the store where she bought the bad apples.

RABBI BELSKY

In this case, as well, I don't see how you can keep the money.

NEXT WEEK'S QUESTION 48: BUS DRIVERS

There are many bus drivers who work for a certain bus company, and some are more aggressive in traffic than others. In the morning, when people looking in can see us in tallis etc, I've sometimes wondered if more aggressive driving could lead to a chillul Hashem. How concerned should the bus driver, the passengers, and the bus company be about this? If a bus driver does something overly aggressive, is it the passenger's responsibility, halachically (according to Jewish Law), to say something to him or talk to the bus company? Should the bus company have a clearly written policy about guidelines concerning this? If a bus driver wants to avoid the possibility of chillul Hashem entirely, and be extra polite in his driving, and as a result gets his 40 passengers home 15 minutes later, is it still his obligation, or right, to do so?

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