

SUIT FOR DRY CLEANER

by Rabbi Yisroel Belsky ztl

QUESTION 51:

A few months ago I gave my dry cleaner dark blue pants and a black jacket, and he said he would charge me for \$3 for each item, rather than \$5 for a suit. Last week I brought in black pants and a black jacket that weren't from the same suit, but looked as if they were. If the dry cleaner charges me the \$5 price for a suit, should I tell him they are not from one suit, since I know that he is strict in this regard, or can I just put the items on the counter and not say anything, and let him make his own determination?

RABBI BELSKY

The truth is that a black jacket and black pants can be considered a suit if they look alike and can be used as a suit.

QUESTIONER

But perhaps that's not called a suit. He charges separately for different slacks and jacket. That's \$6. A suit is \$5 because it's all one thing. And he's very strict about it.

RABBI BELSKY

What do you think is his reason for it?

QUESTIONER

It's a package deal, I guess.

RABBI BELSKY

Then why should our case not be considered a package deal? If the two pieces match, and they can be used together, and it looks like a suit, so it's a suit. What does a suit mean? If a child rips the pants of his Shabbos suit, his parents may get him another pair of pants to match the jacket. Then that becomes his Shabbos suit until he grows another couple of inches. Wouldn't that be called a suit?

QUESTIONER

It depends on how strictly you want to define the word 'suit'.

RABBI BELSKY

What's the difference? Does it depend on the intention of the manufacturer? It becomes a suit

because it is used as a suit. The two items fit together, so they're called a suit. The history of how it became a suit is of no relevance here. If you try to explain to the cleaner that your boy's suit wasn't originally a suit, but you only put it together because the pants on the original suit ripped, he will laugh, because of course he'll understand it's one suit - the boy wears it as his Shabbos suit.

NEXT WEEK'S QUESTION 52: MUSIC STORE WITH KIDS

The Barnes and Noble bookstore has a music section where you can listen to CD's with earphones. Can I take the family there (including little kids) to listen, if I have no intention of buying anything, and if I'm not sure I can control the kids from making a ruckus and pulling down CD's from the shelves. Is there a problem of chillul Hashem (profaning G-d's name), and of gezela (theft)?

Participate in the [Honesty Forum](#), and discuss the issues we confront in this class!

Subscribe to *Honesty* and receive this class via e- mail.

[Honesty Archives](#)

Honesty, Copyright © 2002 by Rabbi Yisroel Belsky Shli"ta and Torah.org.