

FIXING A LIBRARY BOOK

by Rabbi Yisroel Belsky ztl

QUESTION 56:

If my child tears a few pages in a book that I've taken out from the library, can I scotch tape the pages back myself, or must I tell them first to see if that's OK with them? Once I showed them such a book and they said "Oh, that can't be fixed", and I paid for it, but I feel that I could easily have fixed it.

RABBI BELSKY

You definitely could fix it, and you should fix it. You don't have to pay for the entire book, even though that may be the policy of the library. The other way of paying for damage would be to pay for the reduction in value, as explained in a previous question (<http://torah.org/learning/honesty/class28.html>). A book with a page that's ripped, as opposed to a used book before the page was ripped, would probably be reduced by about half a dollar or so.

NEXT WEEK'S QUESTION 57: TRUTHFULNESS WITH A SHADCHAN

How truthful must one be when talking to a shadchan (match-maker) - or anyone helping to find a shidduch (match) - about the age of a person? Is there a distinction here between what men and women can say? For example, if a woman says she's 33, won't people automatically assume she's a bit older, so isn't 'being honest' really giving the wrong information? If understating is allowed at times, at what point should the person being dated be told the truth? How about regarding information regarding yichus (family), or medical history?

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