

LEAVING MAGNETIC STRIPE PARKING GARAGE TICKET

by Rabbi Yisroel Belsky ztl

QUESTION 77:

The municipal parking meter requires that you add money to a magnetic stripe ticket for as long as you expect to stay. If I'm ready to leave, and there is still time left on my ticket, can I leave the ticket in or near the machine for the next person to add money to it, so they can use the money I have left on the ticket? Or is that stealing from the city?

RABBI BELSKY

Why should anybody think that this involves stealing from the city? In the old-fashioned parking meters, where you put in a quarter or two and you leave the store where you're shopping in half the time you expected, and there's 25 minutes left on the meter, it's free for the next person to come and park there. Why shouldn't the next person be able to use the remainder of the money? It's paid for.

QUESTIONER

I guess the idea is that you bought this ticket for yourself, for parking for yourself.

RABBI BELSKY

It's exactly the same thing as a regular meter that's out on the street, and you put in a quarter for half an hour, and twenty-five minutes is left, available for the lucky guy who comes along.

NEXT WEEK'S QUESTION 78: TAKING MONEY FOUND ON THE STREET

I understand that according to Halacha (Jewish Law), I can keep a ten-dollar bill that I find in the street. Is it a higher level to leave it where it is, since someone in a worse financial situation than I am might find it?

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