

## **Rabbi Aharon Ziegler - Parshas Lech Lecha-5782 -2021**

The Parsha begins “And Hashem spoke to Avram, “Lech Lecha” go out from your land, your birthplace, and your father’s house to the land that I will show you.” The Medrash says that Avraham didn’t want to leave, because he would be leaving his father behind, and he was worried about Kibbud Av. Also, he was worried about what the world would say about him - that he abandoned his elderly father. So, Hashem told him I am exempting you from the Mitzvah of Kibbud Av V’eim...not only that, but, I will also put the death of your father before your leaving. That is why last week’s Parsha ends with the death of Terach, and this week begins with Lech Lecha, to go out and travel away from your parent’s house.

Why did Avraham hesitate to listen to Hashem over here? We don’t find this anywhere else, in fact, just the opposite, we find that Avraham listened to Hashem right away without any question. So, why did Avraham question Hashem over here by the command to leave Charan?

Chazal explains that Terach began to do Teshuvah, he got rid of his idolatrous ways and started to believe in Hashem. As the Passuk states, in last week’s Parsha, “And Terach took Avram his son and they left Ur Kasdim”, Chazal tell us that he left his idolatrous ways behind and left to start fresh in the path of Hashem. The Zera Shimshon says that Avraham was afraid that if he left, then his father Terach would slip and go back to his old ways and worship idols again. So, Avraham questioned Hashem, and Hashem answered, you are right, other people in your situation should stay with their father to help them along in the path of Hashem. However, things are different with you, and your father will not slip back to his old ways.

I would like to suggest, Chazal say Ma’asei Avos Siman L’banim, that whatever the Avos did is a sign and a teaching for future generations and has a significant impact on all their future generations. Avraham was teaching us the importance of the Mitzvah of Kibbud Av V’eim. Furthermore, Rav Shteinman in his sefer writes, based on Chazal, that there is still 1 complaint against Klal Yisroel, and that is from Eisav. Eisav is saying that his Kibbud Av was so much better and greater than anyone else’s. Eisav is using this complaint to hold Mashiach back from coming. Rav Shteinman continues, that is why in this generation before Mashiach so many people are living longer, so that their children and grandchildren will take care of them and tend to their every need, and this will be a Tikkun to remove the last complaint against Klal Yisroel so that Mashiach can come. Perhaps Avraham knew that this will happen, and he wanted to preempt the problem by going above and beyond for his father. Also, perhaps, he wanted to show us how far a person has to go in order to properly fulfill the Mitzvah of Kibbud Av V’eim in the fullest and best way possible.

Rabbi Yitzchak Vorker was at a wedding, when his mother asked one of the Chassidim to tell the Rebbe that his mother wants to speak with him. The Chassid made his way across the room to the Rebbe and relayed the message. The Rebbe got up and walked to the other end of the hall to hear what his mother had to say. His mother asked him for a cup of water to drink. The Rebbe got the cup of water, gave it to his mother and then returned to his place in the front of the hall. The Chassidim asked his mother, why she wanted the cup of water specifically from her son the Rebbe, any of the Chassidim would have gladly gotten a cup of water for the Rebbe’s mother? She responded that I love my son very much, and I know that if he would get me the cup of water he will get a Mitzvah of Kibbud Av V’eim and he will live a long and healthy life.

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Have A Wonderful Shabbat! Rabbi Aharon Ziegler, from Yerushalaym