



*THE HAKUK EDITION*

*ENGLISH TOPICS ON THE DAF*

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## Daf Hashovua Yevamos Daf 6

The **Gemara** on 6a says that we cannot learn to all over that aseï is docheh lo saseï from Kibud Av V'eim since the aseï of Kibud Av V'eim is a "hechsher mitzvah."

The Rishonim argue concerning the meaning of the term "hechsher mitzvah" in this context.

**Rashi** explains that in contrast to the regular connotation of this expression, here it means that kibud av can *only* be accomplished through the means of dichuy. If a parent asks their child to do the prohibition for him, that is the only form of doing the mitzvah of honoring him. Therefore, even though we may infer that the aseï would be docheh the lo saseï (if not for the derasha otherwise), we cannot apply it to other areas of Torah which do not share this uniqueness. Yibum, for example, need not override the issur, since chalitza is also an option. Rashi also learns that when the Gemara says that Kibud Av V'eim involves hecker mitzvah it is returning to its originally understanding that the potential prohibition that we are seeking to push aside is one punishable by Kares.

**Tosfos** and other Rishonim take issue with this interpretation for various reasons. They explain, instead, that “hechsher” has the same meaning as it does in other contexts, i.e., a *preparation* for the mitzvah. It refers to cases such as a father telling his son to lead an animal on Shabbos, or a Kohen to enter a cemetery; these are preliminary steps to honoring the parent. By doing these earlier prohibitions they merely enable the actual kibud av afterwards, like providing food or clothes for him.

Thus, the Gemara is saying that although Kibud Av V’eim is not docheh the Lo Sasei, we cannot apply this to other situations that Asei is not Doche Lo Sasei where the mitzvah is completed simultaneously to the lo sasei being transgressed.

**Ramban** notes that even if a parent instructed their child to do these activities, they are classified as hechsher mitzvah and not the actual mitzvah. The father does not receive honor from his son entering a cemetery! Kibud Av V’eim, by definition, refers to the benefit the son gives directly to the father.

This touches on a broader question: What are the parameters of the mitzvah of Kibud Av V’eim?

Let us begin with the ruling of **Rema** in Yoreh Deiah 240:25. Quoting the Maharik, he writes, “If a father objects to his son marrying a particular woman, the son does not have to listen to him.” This is because he is not supplying physical benefit to his father by obeying him to not marry the woman. The **Gr”a** cites our Tosfos as a source for this Rema, in addition to a Gemara describing Kibud Av V’eim as “giving him to eat, dressing him, escorting him, etc.”

The Gr”a concludes by saying to look up the Rashba’s commentary on our Gemara. The **Rashba** agrees to Tosfos’ interpretation, but uses slightly different language. “Kavod is to feed him... but if he tells him to do something which doesn’t provide any [physical] benefit, this is not the kavod about which we are commanded. This kavod *is not included in an asei of the Torah that could be docheh a lo sasei.*”

The Rashba implies that although obeying a father's wishes is not included in an actual Asei of the Torah, it would at least be considered Kibud Av to some degree. Maybe it would be M'drabonon, or Min haTorah but without a technical asei. But from the fact that the Rashba does not say "it is not kibud at all," we may assume he would dispute the psak of the Rema here.

The Rashba, then, maintains that a son must obey his father's requests even if they have no direct bearing on the father. It is not an asei, though. What it is then?

**Rav Reuven Grozovsky** (Chiddushei R' Reuven 5:2) explains Rashba's opinion with an idea from Rabbi Akiva Eiger. Even though honor without direct benefit does not fall under the mitzvah of kibud av, it is included in *moreh av* – to revere him. Examples of moreh are not contradicting him, not sitting in his seat, etc. So too, if he tells his son to do something and he disobeys, that is a transgression of moreh av. This fits with the Rashba's statement that it is not technically an asei; moreh av commands us to refrain from dishonorable actions.

**Rav Boruch Ber Lebowitz** explains the Rashba a little differently (Birchas Shmuel 3:2). There are two ways of fulfilling kibud av v'eim. The standard kind is direct benefit, like feeding and dressing him; failure to do these acts constitutes a bittel of the mitzvas asei from the Torah. The other form is kibud that does not provide the father with benefit, although it is included in the mitzvah it is not the primary form of the mitzvah in as much as one who refrains from doing so is not considered as if he was mivatel a mitzvah. This type of Mitzvah, the Rashba asserts, does not have enough potency to override a lo sasei.

What, precisely, does Rav Boruch Ber mean when he says it is not the main mitzvah but included in it? **Rav Elya Boruch Finkel** ZT"L compares it to certain mitzvos that are not mandatory but one receives reward for fulfilling them (mitzvah kiyumis, not chiyuvis). The classic example is Tzitzis – only if one is wearing a four-cornered garment must he put Tzitzis on it.

Does he have to wear a four-cornered garment? No. But if he does, and places Tzitzis on it, he certainly has fulfilled the mitzvah of Tzitzis. This aspect of Kibud Av is similar – it is not the main obligation, but obeying one's father is reckoned as the mitzvah, as well.

**Rabbi Moshe Sternbuch** Shlit"a writes along these same lines that if a father tells his son to wear warmer clothing and the son doesn't want to, he nevertheless should listen to his father and thereby gain a mitzvah. (Rav Sternbuch is inclined to require him to obey since his father supports him – see there, Teshuvos V'Hanhagos Vol. 3:275.)