

Strategic Heir Command

Excerpted and adapted from a *shiur* by Dayan Yehoshua Grunwald

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https://baishavaad.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/BER82_012_Vayechi_Smooth_Sailing_Cruises_in_Halacha.mp3

The time approached for Yisrael to die, so he called for his son, for Yosef, and said to him, "Please—if I have found favor in your eyes, please place your hand under my thigh and do kindness and truth with me—please do not bury me in Mitzrayim."

Bereishis 47:29

The Maharil Diskin asks why Yaakov made a request rather than a command, which would have bound Yosef due to the mitzvah of *kibud av*. A possible answer is that the Gemara explains *kibud av va'eim* to mean providing for a parent's essential needs like food and clothing, and the Rashba writes that other requests are not included; burial in Eretz Yisrael may not be an essential need. But the Gra suggests, based upon the Rashba, that providing nonessential needs is still required, though at a lower level of obligation. And R' Nissim Karelitz writes that anything parents ask in order to allay their fears for the child is included in the mitzvah, so Yaakov's fear of his own suffering (see Rashi 47:29) would certainly qualify. Another possible answer is that the mitzvah does not apply to the same extent after the parent's death. But R' Akiva Eiger writes that anything related to the parent's honor still applies, so Yaakov's concerns would qualify.