

## Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and cling to his wife. (2:24)

Is this really the way it is supposed to be? For what purpose do parents spend their lives raising children, enduring hardship, frustration, and at times, pain? When their son grows up, should he reject them in order to cling to his wife? This cannot be the *Torah's* intention. *Radak* says that the *pasuk* only implies a physical separation. His attachment to his wife requires him to move out of his home of origin in order to establish a new home with her. This writer once heard an explanation for this *pasuk* that sets the tone for marriage. While one is in his parents' home, he is a *mekabel*, a taker. His parents support and sustain him. He has no specific responsibility towards others. When he takes a mate, he "leaves" his parents' home. He now assumes the role of "*nosein*," giver. He must now take the initiative to play a more aggressive role in his new relationship. The submissiveness of the past, the "taking" to which he had become accustomed, is no longer appropriate. He is responsible for the care of his wife, playing a pivotal role in their relationship. Indeed, he leaves his parents' home, but only in the sense of the lifestyle to which he had become accustomed.

Alternatively, we may suggest another interpretation. The *Torah* says, "*Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother.*" The *Torah* does not say that a son shall leave his parents. This would lead us to infer that the "son" never leaves his parents' home. "*Ish*", man, is a term which denotes submissiveness and compliance. That characteristic of the individual is now transferred to his wife. In order for a relationship to retain its harmony and unity, it is critical that each partner devoid himself of his self-importance. Nothing can be more anathema to a marriage than a mate who is obsessed with his or her own ego. The young man is to take the deferential nature he had assumed in association with his parents and integrate it into his relationship with his wife.