

Avram took his wife Sarai and Lot, his brother's son... and they left to go to the land of Canaan. (12:5)

Torah commentary is divided into four approaches. Each one delves progressively deeper into the esoteric background of a given situation, thereby lending the reader an unparalleled insight into the behind-the-scenes workings of occurrences which initially seem to mystify us. The fact that Avraham *Avinu* took his nephew, Lot, with him when he left for Canaan is one of those instances which baffle the reader. Lot was far from being a saint, which was evidenced later, when he chose to live in the plains of Sodom, despite the evil and corrupt nature of its inhabitants. Later on, when Lot separated from Avraham, he also severed his relationship with the G-d of Avraham. His moral compass is further witnessed later when he fathered two sons from his own daughters. True, he might have been drunk, but even insobriety has its limits. Our query becomes more pronounced when we see Avraham risking his life to save Lot from captivity. Apparently, everything for which Avraham extended himself must have had Hashem's approval, because we see that Lot merited experiencing miracles so that he be saved from death. How are we to understand the enigma that was Lot, and the enduring lesson which may be derived from his life?

With the assistance of *Horav Pinchas Friedman, Shlita*, we are guided through this maze by delving into the *Kabbalistic* expositions of what otherwise appears to be a profound mystery. The **Zohar Hakadosh** asks the question: "What did Avraham see in Lot that he was determined to remain with him?" The *Zohar* replies: *D'tzafa b'Ruach Hakodesh d'zamin l'mei pak minei David*, "Through the medium of *Ruach Hakodesh*, Divine Inspiration, Avraham saw that Lot was destined to have the saintly David *Hamelech*, progenitor of the Davidic dynasty and *Moshiach Tzidkeinu*." (Loose translation). Avraham saw a hidden spark that would precipitate the future of *malchus Yisrael*, Jewish monarchy, which, of course, would eventually lead to our future redemption through *Moshiach*, a scion of David *Hamelech*. That is certainly an undisputable reason for tolerating Lot.

This idea is supported in the *Midrash (Bereishis Rabbah 41:4)*. The Torah teaches (*Bereishis 13:5*), "And also to Lot, who traveled with Avram, there were sheep, cattle and tents." *Chazal* teach that these two "tents" are a reference to Rus *HaMoaviah* and Naamah *HaAmonis*. Rus married Boaz, and together, they were the progenitors of David *Hamelech*. Naamah married Rechavam *ben Shlomo Hamelech*. Thus, we see that, despite the fact that these women descended from two such contemptible nations as Moav and Ammon, nations whose male converts may not be accepted into the Jewish fold-they were holy and virtuous, suitably fit to be the Matriarchs of the Davidic dynasty.

It is interesting that David *Hamelech*, who was the paradigm of *chesed*, descended from Lot, who fathered Ammon and Moav, two nations not known for their proclivity to act kindly to anyone, especially Jews, and who made his home in Sodom, the country that rewrote the primer on human kindness. It all goes to show that we, as human beings, know absolutely nothing of the ways of Hashem. There is a Divine Plan which transcends us. In *Kabbalistic* literature, much is written concerning the *nitzotzos*, holy sparks, which are to be found all over the world. They are imbedded

in people, and they are waiting to be discovered and eventually repaired, so that they can find their rightful place among the Jewish People. Therefore, when we find ourselves in a certain place and we cannot rationally understand why we are there, we must be cognizant that there is a Divine Plan. **Horav Mordechai Pogremanksy, zl**, was wont to say, "A Jew is never lost." If he finds himself in a strange place, it is because he is supposed to be there for a reason.