

So Avram went...and Lot went with him; Avram was seventy-five years old when he left Charan. (12:4)

Lot was the orphaned nephew of Avraham *Avinu's* brother, Haran, who had died in the flames of Ur Kasdim, in his support. Our Patriarch felt a filial responsibility for his

nephew. Therefore, he took him along when he moved. This explains why the Torah mentions this, even though it was not part of Hashem's command. Why, however, does the Torah inform us of Avraham's age at the time of departure? Does it really matter?

Horav Zalman Sorotzkin, zl, distinguishes between *ito* and *imo* – two words which are used to imply “with” someone. There is a difference regarding the term “with” and in what manner one is going “with” someone. *Imo* means “with” in the full sense of the word – together physically and for the same purpose. *Ito*, however, means that two people travel together, but not necessarily for a similar purpose.

When the Torah writes that Lot travelled with Avraham, it says *ito*, implying that while Lot accompanied Avraham, he did not go for the same purpose. Avraham was going in response to Hashem's command. Lot had another reason for joining his uncle on this journey. He sought Avraham's wealth. After all, his uncle was seventy-five years old; he had no children, no heirs. If he played his cards right, Lot was in line to have it all. He better stick with Avraham so that, when the time comes, he will be in place to inherit his wealth.

Motive is a powerful illuminator, elucidating and defining the true character of an individual. Attendance at a spiritual experience does not determine the real standing of a person, his true feelings concerning the objective of the experience. Just being there has very little consequence. His underlying motive and purpose in being there indicate his true essence. The Torah does not want us to perceive Lot as anything other than who he really was: a money-hungry, materialistic opportunist, who was willing to join with the saintly Avraham, as long as a pot of gold was located somewhere in the equation.