

Go for yourself from your land, from your relatives, and from your father's house... and I will make you a great nation. (12:1,2)

The Torah begins its introduction to the life of Avraham *Avinu* with Hashem's command to him to leave his land, his birthplace and his father's home. No other introduction describes the Patriarch, his qualities, ethical and spiritual character and achievements up until this time. Conversely, concerning Noach, the Torah writes about his righteousness and perfection, his family and the spiritual and moral bankruptcy of the society in which he lived. It is almost as if Avraham *Avinu's* spiritual persona and his moral compass were of no consequence concerning his role in the formation of our beliefs and his rise to becoming our founding Patriarch. Avraham converted thousands of people whose lives he had elevated. The Torah mentions almost nothing about them and their relationship with Avraham. One would think that if a person had achieved so much, had so many thousands of students, the Torah should have recorded more regarding his past and present ascent to the helm of leadership. It almost appears as if Noach's past bears greater significance than that of Avraham *Avinu*. Furthermore, the Torah writes that Noach found favor in the eyes of Hashem. Does this imply that Avraham did not? Clearly, he did. Why does the Torah not mention it?

Horav Eliyahu Schlesinger, Shlita (V'Zos HaTorah), explains that the Torah is alluding to a vital truth, a principle of which we should all be aware and which we should underscore. The fact that Hashem chose us as His People, His nation, is not the direct result of the unique qualities and character of Avraham *Avinu*. Rather, Hashem's decision to select us from among the nations of the world is beyond the parameters of our cognition and wisdom. In other words, we have no confirmed rationale as to why Hashem chose the Jewish People over any other nation. We just know that He did – and that is really all that matters. *Atah Hu Hashem Elokim asher Bacharta b'Avram*, "It is You, Hashem the G-d, Who selected Avram, brought him out of Uhr Kasdim, and made his name Avraham; You found his heart faithful before You." This is an astonishing testimony to our Patriarch and the nation that he founded – but it does not give a reason (or explanation) for his selection.

Had the Torah recorded Avraham's piety and righteous character prior to stating that Hashem selected him as our Patriarch, it would give rise to the belief that Hashem chose Avraham due to his goodness. Thus, if someone else of his calibre, who had also acted in a like manner had existed, he, too, could have been the chosen one. This is categorically false! With Avraham as our Patriarch, we (*Klal Yisrael*) are Hashem's children. As such, just as a father accepts his son unconditionally, regardless of his qualities – or lack thereof – simply because he is his child; likewise, Hashem's bond with us transcends the character qualities of acumen, spiritual ascendancy and moral demeanor. It is a relationship that transmits through generations, to eternity. As Hashem's chosen children, He will never exchange us for another nation.