

## Avram took his wife Sarai and Lot, his brother's son... And the souls they made in Charan. (12:5)

*Rashi* comments that these "souls" refers to the people who Avraham and Sarah converted to faith in Hashem. Avraham would teach and later convert the men, while Sarah would do the same with the women. *Rabbeinu Yona* posits that Avraham reached out to the pagans as a purely altruistic gesture. Avraham loved people, his heart overflowed with a desire to help as many as he could. Regardless of their origin, Avraham loved them and attempted to reach out to them even when they were not receptive to his overtures. *Rabbeinu Yona* teaches us a novel idea. Avraham *Avinu* reached out to the world because of his deep love for people. Is this true? One would think that Avraham's attitude was motivated by his overwhelming love of the Almighty who gave the *Torah* and its way of life. Because of this great love, Avraham reached out to the pagan masses, so that they could also share in this wonderful way of life. His inspiration, however, originated from his relationship with Hashem.

*Rabbeinu Yona* seems to be the only one who attributes Avraham's endeavor to his love for people. Everyone else posits that Avraham was devoted to his students as a result of his love for Hashem. **Horav A.H. Leibowitz, Shlita**, illuminates *Rabbeinu Yona's* words by distinguishing between *mitzvos*. He posits that one cannot compare the *mitzvah* of *harbotzas Torah*, dissemination of *Torah*, to that of any other *mitzvah*. The *mitzvah* of *Tefillin* or *Lulav* does not demand that one love the actual *Tefillin* or *Lulav*. It is sufficient that one perform the *mitzvah* with the correct intentions. At the same time, he must love Hashem who has done so much for him.

The *mitzvah* of *harbotzas Torah*, however, is different. In order to succeed in being *mekarev*, bringing the unaffiliated closer, one must possess a genuine love for them. If it is apparent that no love is lost between the *rebbe* and his *talmid*, he is probably wasting his time; his success will be either short-lived or defective. The *Torah* that flows from teacher to student must be unimpeded. There must be a bond of love and mutual respect between the two. This harmony is achieved only when each one respects the other and is appreciative of the invaluable *Torah* which he is receiving. A student, especially a young child, senses when a teacher has no real interest in his teaching. This is especially true if the teacher is antagonistic, regardless of the reason. Avraham *Avinu's* love for Hashem was unparalleled. In order to succeed in his quest to teach monotheism to the masses, it was essential for him to demonstrate a deep love for humanity, a desire to impart his knowledge to those who were not as fortunate as he. Indeed, the ingredient for achieving success as an educator is the ability to teach because one cares and wishes to transmit his knowledge to students. Without this sensitivity, the chances are that success will be elusive.