

Teachings of the Maharal

THE LOVINGKINDNESS OF AVRAHAM

Netiv Gemilut Chasadim 1:147 - Kind acts characterize Avraham, who was called AV RAM [exalted father] for this attribute, and one who has GEMILUT CHASADIM, provides for others and is exalted. Torah lifts one still further and Avraham had both of these traits - Torah and kindness, as it is written, "Because Avraham hearkened to My voice and observed My safeguards, My commandments, My decrees and My teachings" [B'reishit 26:5], and "For I have loved him, because he command his children and his household after him that they keep the ways of Hashem, doing charity and justice" [18:19]. Through these two traits he was raised and exalted over the world. On account of Avraham's virtue of kindness, the Midrash says on the verse, "This is the history of heaven and earth when they were created - B'HIBAR-AM" [2:4], transposing the letters of the latter word, the world was created on behalf of Avraham and his kindness [B'reishit Rabba 82]. Hashem is intrinsically good, therefore goodness is closest to Him, and when He created the universe, it was created for the sake of the thing closest to Him. Thus, the whole of Creation was for the sake of Avraham, whose character trait was lovingkindness.

MDK - Our rabbis of blessed memory have attributed several reasons for Creation in addition to Avraham, the first to bring acts of kindness to the world. Torah, Israel, Moshe, challa, tithe and first fruits will be discussed as reasons for Hashem to create the world.

- Column prepared by Dr. Moshe Kuhr