

Tefillah Focus Of The Week:

# הללוי-ה כי טוב זמרה

## Wisdom Vast and Deep

**MEANING:** The simple translation of the prayer

He is the healer of the broken hearted, and the One Who binds up their sorrows. He counts the number of the stars, **to all of them He assigns names.** Great is our L-rd and abundant in strength, **His understanding is beyond calculation.**

הרופא לשבורי לב, ומחבש לעצבותם. מונה מספר לכוכבים, לכלם שמות יקרא. גדול אדונינו ורב כח, לתבונתו אין מספר.

**WORD TO THE WISE:** Meaning within the word



Everything in this world has a name. Humans, animals, even objects. But what's in a name? According to Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch, the word "שם" is related to the Hebrew word "שם," there. "שם" designates the location of an item and "שם" designates the (spiritual) location of that item. Regarding people, "שם" his name, defines what a person is spiritually and what he is supposed to become. The ability of a name to

convey the essence of its subject is so clear, says the Gemara (Yoma 83b), that Rabbi Meir would not stay at an inn until he had analyzed the innkeeper's name, from which he determined if the environment would be proper.

Even nations bear names that express their essence, as illustrated by the name "Mitzraim" (Egypt), which contains the root word "meitzar," straits, as the Jewish people were restricted by the straits of Egypt both physically and spiritually (Michtav MeEliyahu, Vol. 2, p. 17).

**THEME:**

An essential concept of the prayer

### Naming the Essence

Hashem's ability to name each of the billions of stars signifies His ability to identify the essence of each individual entity in His vast creation, and thus speaks of His incalculable understanding.

**INSIGHT:**

Deeper meanings of the theme

### The Deepest Understanding

How does the fact that Hashem calls all the stars by their names show that His understanding is beyond calculation? Moreover, isn't Hashem's greatness seen in all of creation? The Torah (Bereishis 2:20) tells us that Adam was given the task of naming all the cattle, birds and beasts that surrounded him in the new world Hashem had created.

Each of these names reflected the essence of the entity upon whom the name was bestowed. For example, the lion is named "Aryeh." The last two letters of this name, "י-ה" which are part of the name of the King of kings, represent the lion's role as king of the jungle. The ordinary donkey "Chamor," is related to "chomer" - simple elementary matter which is also a measure of volume (see Hoshea 3:2). This is suggestive of the load which the donkey perpetually carries on its back. *Rabbeinu Bachya* (on Bereishis 2:19) remarks that with Adam's superior intellect, every name that he chose, together with the

combination of its letters, revealed his great wisdom and defined the nature and character of that creature.

Moshe Rabbeinu asked G-d at the burning bush (Shemos 3:13), "When I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The G-d of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they will then say to me, 'What is His Name?' what shall I answer?" Ramban comments that Moshe requested a Divine Name that would speak of His power and protection so that the Jews would feel secure in His ability to redeem them.

The number of stars in the universe are estimated at anywhere from 3 septillion (3 x 10<sup>24</sup>) to 300 sextillion stars (multiply 3 trillion by 100 billion). The fact that **לכלם שמות יקרא, to all of the stars Hashem assigns names** attests to the fact that **לתבונתו אין מספר, "His understanding is beyond calculation"**. (See Sfas Emes, Vayakheil, 5626)

**VISUALIZE:**

Images that bring the prayer to life

### Sight and Insight

A young man is going through a difficult time in his life. He has lost his livelihood, his marriage is suffering and he feels that he has nowhere to turn. A friend suggests that he make a trip to a nearby city to obtain a beracha from a great Tzaddik who lives there. The young man takes the advice and soon



finds himself in the outer office of the Tzaddik's study. After a brief wait, he is ushered inside. The Tzaddik greets the young man with a smile, but his eyes are so sharp, so focused and intense that the young man must force himself not to turn

away. "He sees right through me," the young man thinks. "He understands what I'm about."

Indeed, there are people whose wisdom and spiritual acuity are so keen that they do, indeed, "see through" a person's façade and into his very essence. This is but a tiny spark of the vast, penetrating wisdom of Hashem, Who calls each of the stars by name.

**Try This!**

► The next time there is a clear night, look up at the sky. Focus your eyes and notice how more and more of the smaller, fainter stars seem to emerge from the dark. Grasp the vastness, the distance, the massive oceans of empty space between each of these stars, and then imagine being as deeply familiar with the heavens as you are with your own family members. Let this sense of awe penetrate your heart, and think of it when you say: לתבונתו אין מספר.

**Did You Know**

► **Saying It Later**

HaRav Elyashiv rules that if one skipped parts of Pesukei D'Zimrah, he should recite them after he finishes davening. This rule does not apply to Boruch She'amar, Ashrei, and Yishtabach, as these may be said only before the Shemoneh Esrei (Chayei Adam, Klal 19:5). However, with regard to HaRav Elyashiv's ruling to recite omitted parts of Pesukei D'Zimrah after davening, see Aruch HaShulchan 52:5. (Ashrei Ha'Ish, Chapter 8, Page 54.)