

God Telleth The Stars

Written by David Wise

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“He telleth the numbers of the stars; he calleth them all by their names.” – Psalm 147:4

Stars were created by God on the fourth day of the creation week, after He had made the sun and the moon. After a detailed explanation of the creation of the sun and moon are made for all five verses of the fourth day, God’s creation of the numerous stars of the sky is presented as almost an afterthought – *“he made the stars also”* (Gen. 1:16). When we think about the vast, truly incomprehensible multitude of stars in the universe, it’s quite amazing that God not only knows the total number, but He even calls each one by its own divine name.

If we look up into the sky on a clear night, we might be able to see a few hundred stars, some small and some larger. However, when we expand our consideration of stars beyond our natural sight, the numbers become overwhelmingly large very quickly. The Milky Way (our home galaxy) alone is estimated to contain over 100 billion stars. The most current estimates by scientists conclude that there are about 2 trillion galaxies in our universe and estimate that the average stars per galaxy is 100 million stars. If those numbers are reasonably correct, then the number of stars in the known universe would be somewhere around 10 to the 19th power – or a 10 followed by 19 zeros, too much to write out here. To put it profoundly, that’s a whole bunch. It’s too large for us to really be able to comprehend or grasp.

In fact, the incomprehensible (to man) number and magnitude of all the stars is used in scripture to display the broad size of God’s eternal family. God told Abraham to count the stars in heaven if he could, and that Abraham’s seed would be as vast and innumerable as the stars (Gen. 15:5). This is not describing the natural Jewish lineage that would come from Abraham’s grandson Jacob because a total number of that lineage could be determined if accurate genealogies were maintained. However, God’s elect family is so vast that it’s a multitude that no man can number (Rev. 7:9). Man has just as much ability to number God’s children as we can

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to count the actual number of the stars or count the grains on the sand of the sea. There's no way we could actually count a correct number for either and thus we cannot comprehend the size and magnitude of God's eternal elect family.

Even though the actual number of the vast seed of Abraham is too large and overwhelming for man to count or comprehend, God knows the exact number and He knows them all intimately. This is one truly comforting thought that is presented to us in this verse. While to man the number of the stars is a subject too large to actually realistically consider, God's in control of the situation to such a degree that not only does He know the number, but He knows each star intimately – God knows each star by its own name. In like manner, while the family of God is so large that we cannot count or comprehend it, God not only knows the sum total but He also knows each one of us intimately by name. Furthermore, our names are graven in the palms of God's hands (Isaiah 49:16). Considering the family of God is probably in the billions, that tells us how big the hand of God has to actually be, to even have room to list the names of all His children individually upon His divine palm. That hand is so large and powerful that it was just God's span (distance from the thumb to the pinky finger) that was used for God to stretch out the heavens (Isaiah 40:12).

Some of the names of certain stars are presented in scripture. *"Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?"*

(Job 38:31) When God was scolding Job and showing His divine sovereignty, God rhetorically asks Job do you have the power to bind or loose these majestic stars that you see in the heavens? Answer: No you don't, but I sure do. In addition to Pleiades (Job 9:9, 38:31) and Orion (Job 9:9, 38:31, Amos 5:8), other names of stars in scriptures are Arcturus (Job 9:9, 38:32), Mazzaroth (Job 38:32), and a reference to "the seven stars" (Amos 5:8).

The innumerable nature of the stars is used to present the vast family of God, but also to teach us of God's control over such an incomprehensible subject to where He still knows each of us

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by name, just as He knows all the stars by their name as well. When we consider the vast magnitude of the universe and the stars that comprise it, we should once again be reminded just how small and insignificant we are. In light of how unimpressive and truly pitiful mankind is, how is it that God could take care of a lot like us? *“When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?”*

(Ps. 8:3-4) Only by grace, that’s the only answer.