

## The Magnificent Physician

<sup>3</sup>He heals the brokenhearted  
and binds up their wounds.

<sup>4</sup>He determines the number of the stars  
and calls them each by name. – Psalm 147:3, 4

What a remarkable pairing of concepts! Can you think of anything that gives a man a more profound sense of the creative might of God than staring up into the night sky? God has a name for and an intimate awareness of every celestial body even though, from our perspective, they are beyond numbering. Perhaps, this awareness of the divine majesty is what makes the preceding words so remarkable: that this same Star-Maker also heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

On October 20, 2003, two astronomers from Princeton University announced their discovery of The Great Sloan Wall, a giant wall of eleven galaxies of stars that is presently regarded to be the largest known structure in the universe. It measures 1.37 billion light years in length and is located about one billion light years from the earth. It makes up about 1/60 of the diameter of the observable universe (conceding that there is simply no way to measure the universe that exists beyond the confines of what scientists can observe).

Now, if I remember my high school science correctly, one light year is the distance light travels in a year. I guess I'll trust the experts on the precise measurements of the Great Sloan Wall since I lack the capacity to do better. I suspect that we can all follow the explanation of this celestial phenomenon at least well enough to conclude that it is really big, really far away and contains a number of individual stars that staggers our collective imaginations.

**And, the Creator has a name for each of them!**

One doesn't have to have access to a world-class observatory to appreciate the vastness of the heavens. There was a time when men believed that the 10,000 or so stars observable by the naked eye might be all there were, but even that would be enough to appreciate the observations of the psalmist. This same God who created the stars and names them one by one cares for people who hurt, and that means you and me. Jesus put it as follows:

... <sup>29</sup>Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. <sup>30</sup>And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. <sup>31</sup>So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. – Matthew 10:29-31

In an 1855 message on this same text, Charles Spurgeon challenges us:

“The next time you rise to some idea of God, by viewing the starry floor of his magnificent temple above, strive to compel your contemplation to this thought, that the same mighty hand which rolls the stars along, puts liniments around the wounded heart; that the same being who spoke worlds into existence, and now impels those ponderous globes through their orbits, does in his mercy cheer the wounded, and heal the broken in heart.”