



## **Sicha Summary**

Chelek 15 | Breishis | Sichah 3

### **The Midrash:**

When Adam was created, the angels asked G-d what was so unique about a human. G-d said, “His wisdom is greater than yours.” To demonstrate this, G-d asked the angels to give names to all the animals, beasts, and birds, but they could not do it. G-d then asked Adam, and he named all the creatures. (*Bereishis Rabbah* 17:4)

The *Shelah* explains that the Hebrew name of an entity alludes to its spiritual origin and identity. Adam’s wisdom was expressed in his ability to reveal the spiritual source and role of each created being.

### **The Question:**

Certain angels are the spiritual source of the animal kingdom. How could the angels not know the Hebrew names of the animals, when they themselves provide the spiritual vitality for the animals?

### **The Explanation:**

In Hebrew, the word “to call” also means “to draw down, to reveal.” This world is defined by its concealment of G-d. The spiritual identity and purpose of created beings as they exist in this world is vague and unclear. Adam’s genius was in “calling the animals by their name” — revealing their spiritual origin within their physical existence in a world disconnected from its source. The angels — inhabitants of purely spiritual realms — could not discern the spiritual within the mask of the material.

### **The Giving of the Torah:**

Adam giving names was only the first step in reconciling the spiritual with the material. He linked the physical creation with its divine source, but the

spiritual energy that is the source of the physical is tailored to the physical world. Created beings did not come into contact with the dimension of G-d that transcends creation.

At the Giving of the Torah, however, G-d abolished the boundary between heaven and earth, and the transcendental Essence of G-d was able to penetrate the consciousness of material reality.

**An Example:**

The fifth Chabad Rebbe, the Rebbe Maharash, demonstrated this by revealing how the spiritual identity of animals is reflected in their name. In Hebrew, the word *beheima* can refer generally to all animals. *Beheima* (בהמה) can be read as *bah ma* (בה-מה), meaning “in it, is *mah*.” *Mah* means “what,” alluding to the quality of humility (being able to ask “what,” or questioning one’s own existence). Animals, the Rebbe Maharash explained, derive from the world of *Tohu*/chaos, which is exemplified by a powerful sense of identification with the Essence of G-d, leading to a pervasive humility.

This is why animals exhibit the ability to be easily trained to follow human instruction.

However, in their natural state as it appears to us in this world of concealment, animals are essentially egoistic. The Maharash “called them by their name” and revealed that they possess the potential for deep humility that derives from their spiritual source in the world of *Tohu*.