

HEAVEN

Lesson 9 w/Answers

Animals in Heaven

With this lesson, we will conclude our study of heaven by looking at the presence of animals in heaven. This topic is also addressed in Section 11 of Randy Alcorn's book, "Heaven". We will be examining two basic questions about animals: Will animals inherit the earth? And if so, will the animals of today and times past be resurrected to live again, including our pets, or will everything about the animals be new?

I hope that as we have moved through this study, you have begun to realize that there is a lot more to our eternal home than just sitting on a cloud and strumming a harp. In this lesson we will add even more dimension to our understanding of heaven by looking at what the Bible says about animals and what, if any, presence they will have in heaven, living on the new earth with us.

Let's research together what the Bible tells us regarding the subject of animals in heaven.

1. Considering our first fundamental question, i.e., whether animals be present in heaven, specifically in the new earth and new heaven which will be our eternal home; there are several key passages that speak to this. Write down what each of the below passages reveal to us:
 - a. Isaiah 11:6-9
 - i. ANSWER: ⁶The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. ⁷The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. ⁹The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. [NIV]
 - b. Isaiah 65:17-25 and Isaiah 66:22
 - i. ANSWER 1: ¹⁷"Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. ¹⁸But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. ¹⁹I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more. ²⁰Never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years; he who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth; he who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed. ²¹They will build houses and dwell in them; they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit. ²²No longer will they build houses and others live in them, or plant and others eat. For as the days of a tree, so will be the days of my people; my chosen ones will long enjoy the works of their hands. ²³They will not toil in vain or bear children doomed to misfortune; for they will be a people blessed by the LORD, they and their descendants with them. ²⁴Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear. ²⁵The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, but dust will be the serpent's food. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain," says the LORD. [NIV]
 - ii. ANSWER 2: "As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me," declares the LORD, "so will your name and descendants endure." [NIV]
2. Given that Isaiah 65:25 specifically addresses the New Earth, we can safely assume that these verses do not just refer to Christ's millennial kingdom. We can infer this by looking closely at Isaiah 65:25 and comparing it to Revelation 21:4. Take a few minutes to do this now. From this comparison, how can we be certain that the scriptures about the animals refer to the New Earth, rather than the millennial kingdom?
 - a. ANSWER: The passage in Revelation refers to there being "no more harm on the earth". Since we know that this will only be true after the Millennial reign and judgment, we can then conclude that the animal references must be speaking of the New Earth, when no more harm will occur on the earth.

3. What does Romans 8:18-21 tell us about creation and its inclusion in the New Earth?

- a. ANSWER: This passage tells us that all of God's creation is awaiting resurrection. Specifically, ¹⁸*I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.* ¹⁹*The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.* ²⁰*For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope* ²¹*that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. [NIV]*

4. Can animals praise God? Note what the Bible has to say about this in the verses below.

a. Psalm 148:1-14

- i. ANSWER: ¹*Praise the LORD. Praise the LORD from the heavens, praise him in the heights above.* ²*Praise him, all his angels, praise him, all his heavenly hosts.* ³*Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars.* ⁴*Praise him, you highest heavens and you waters above the skies.* ⁵*Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he commanded and they were created.* ⁶*He set them in place forever and ever; he gave a decree that will never pass away.* ⁷*Praise the LORD from the earth, you great sea creatures and all ocean depths,* ⁸*lightning and hail, snow and clouds, stormy winds that do his bidding,* ⁹*you mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars,* ¹⁰*wild animals and all cattle, small creatures and flying birds,* ¹¹*kings of the earth and all nations, you princes and all rulers on earth,* ¹²*young men and maidens, old men and children.* ¹³*Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his splendor is above the earth and the heavens.* ¹⁴*He has raised up for his people a horn, the praise of all his saints, of Israel, the people close to his heart. Praise the LORD. [NIV]*

b. Psalm 150:6

- i. ANSWER: *Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD. [NIV]*

c. Revelation 5:13

- i. ANSWER: *Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!" [NIV]*

5. Romans 8:18-21 seems to indicate that not only will we be resurrected, but so will creation, including animals.

Since God intends to raise us up to populate the New Earth (rather than create all new humans), could we reasonably conclude that it would be the same for the animals on the New Earth? Could we also assume this would mean the resurrection of our pets?

- a. ANSWER: While the Bible is not clear regarding the specifics, what is clear is that Creation itself will be redeemed; and that in the new heaven and new earth we will see God and His creation as it was meant to be, and as we were meant to see and be with God. While man's role has been, and will be, to have dominion over creation; it is equally evident that a key part of God's creation has been, and will be, animals. He created them before he created woman to be a help to man. There is no indication in scripture that their roles will change. It is equally reasonable to assume that God will resurrect the animals, rather than to create new ones. And if He does this, surely our pets will join us, living and working with us on the New Earth.

In conclusion, although God's word is silent on the resurrection of our family pets, it is not silent on the role of animals within His creation, and the inclusion of them in the new heaven and earth. Heaven and earth united with God at the center. What a beautiful day that will be! And, it is even more exciting that we who have accepted the sacrifice of God's only Son Christ as our salvation will be there to experience it!

So, hopefully, we conclude our study of heaven with a deeper knowledge of the coming new heaven and new earth, which is our eternal home. With this hope of heaven in our hearts, let's continue the work that God has set before us; so that all who have a home waiting in heaven will come to recognize Christ as their savior.

Have a great week everyone and thanks for studying with us.

In Christ,

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