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Digital Edition 11/22/2001
 By Holiness Data Ministry

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THE ANIMALS WILL ALSO BE DELIVERED IN GOD'S ARK

By Duane V. Maxey

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"O LORD, THOU PRESERVEST MAN AND BEAST" (Psalms 36:6).

"And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female... Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the earth, there went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah" (Gen. 6:19, 7:8-9).

"Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom 8:21).

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This is what I consider to be a non-essential -- something about which none need to agree in order to enter heaven -- but still, to me it is a very interesting subject of which I hold the views expressed in this article. I do not send it forth with any desire to debate the matter, but rather to express what appears to me as the eternally blissful prospect of all of God's animal creatures.

According to 1 Timothy 4:4, "every creature of God is good" and in the New Testament era the flesh of no creature needs "to be refused" as food for mankind if it is "received with thanksgiving." Today, I briefly heard a female advocate on a radio program who decried the merciless slaying of turkeys for Thanksgiving, and who advocated a vegetarian diet -- all because in her unBiblical, and misguided notions it was wrong to kill animals for meat! It is true that God limited the types of animals that man could eat in the O. T. era, and this after the Fall, but in the

New Testament era, the only clear limitation God now places upon the eating of animal-meat for food is that this food be received with thanksgiving.

Still, as I see it, God DOES have something more in mind for the Thanksgiving Turkeys, and for all others of His creatures, besides being food for our stomachs -- their lives being suddenly ended on a chopping-block or by some other instrument, and their existence snuffed out forever. In a word, as I interpret the Scriptures, literally ALL -- A-DOUBLE-L of God's earthly creatures are good, and none of them are to be "refused" a blissful existence in eternity.

Prior to Man's Fall, it seems to me that none of God's earthly creatures had the slightest bit of ferocity in their natures -- not having been created with that warp in their make-up. When the Creator "brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them," (Gen. 2:19), Adam had no fear any of them, and there is no mention of God needing to miraculously "shut the mouths of the lions lest they eat Adam" while he was naming them. Daniel's encounter with that species involved such a Divine restraint, but there is no evidence in the Bible that the animals, as originally created by God, had any killer instincts or a ravenous nature.

What made the animals ferocious? I maintain that it was the Fall of Man that brought about this dramatic change in their nature. We read in Romans 8:20 that "the creature was made subject to vanity, **not willingly**, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope." In this verse, the NIV brings out my point a bit more clearly by translating the words "not willingly" as "**not by its own choice.**"

My point here is: By his own choice, Man (through Adam) fell, and inherited the carnal nature; whereas, through no choice of their own, the animals also came under God's curse at the Fall, and thereby many of them inherited a ferocious, predatory nature.

Likewise, prior to the Fall of Man -- death had not passed upon Man, Beast, or the Material Universe, but with that Fall, Mankind, Animals, and the Material Universe became subject to death -- i. e., decay and the dissolution of their present form of existence. With the Fall of Man, came the murderous nature into Mankind, the ferocious, killer instinct into animals, the universal discordance in God's Material Creation, and the sentence of dissolution upon them all.

The glorious deliverance from all such has come through Christ, Who is the First of "the firstfruits of His creatures" (James 1:18). As I see it, Christ's deliverance is not only **FROM ALL** of the consequences of the Fall, but it is also **FOR ALL** OF HIS CREATION (including the animals and the elements), the only creatures who shall not share in the glorified, eternal bliss of the New Heavens and New Earth being those accountable men and angels who by their own choice rejected that deliverance.

This glorious deliverance from "the bondage of corruption" shall be brought to all Redeemed men, to all of the Animals, and to the entire Material Universe at the return of Christ. When Christ's glory is revealed in Heaven, and when the effulgence of His unspeakable glory is also manifested in His raptured saints, even then shall the animals and elements also share in the transformation and entrance into eternal bliss. I believe that ALL OF THE PRECEDING IS BORNE OUT BY THE FOLLOWING PASSAGE:

"For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Romans 8:19-21).

On the Day of Christ, "the children of God" shall receive glorified bodies, never to wither or die again, and likewise God's animals, who did not, could not, sin shall also inherit glorified bodies and live forever -- in the New Earth, which, along with the New Heavens, shall not have the slightest discord in its elements! -- "world without end"! (Do I hear someone shouting HALLELUJAH!?)

But now, "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain," waiting for that glorious "manifestation of the sons of God" which shall occur at the Return of Christ. Now, men groan and travail amidst all that is out-of-kilter in human hearts and in earthly societies -- suffering from war, murder, thuggery, terrorism, and what have you. Now also, animals prey upon one another, fight with a ferocity that can frighten the bravest man, or flee in terror of being slain. Now too, the entire Universe is beginning to suffer the throes of its coming death -- asteroids, comets, and wandering stars flying "out of orbit" on collision courses with other heavenly bodies. As a part of the Universe, the material make-up of our own planet is also groaning because of all the discordant forces working upon it and within it.

Since last May, our own little spot on the globe has been trembling and shaking. Day and night, we are struck with muffled booms and tremors that make one feel like he is sitting in a vibrator chair. I can feel them when lying on the bed at night, and when sitting here at the computer during the day. Within a few miles of directly beneath our apartment, they suspect that there is a geological fracture, perhaps as large as 200-300 yards in length that is causing all this shaking. Another report suggests that a geological plate extending from the Pacific is grating against another such plate beneath us and thus causing "the whole lotta shakin'" that's "goin' on" beneath Spokane. Seismologists say that Spokane may suffer a quake as large as 5.0 -- and who knows? it may strike us any time.

Along with all of the other elements in our Universe, this earth is groaning and travailing in pain, and right on time with God's clock, "the Day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.. [and] all these things shall be dissolved" (2 Peter 3:10-11).

But with God, "dissolved" doesn't mean "annihilated"! The material substance of everything -- all matter, all men, and all animals -- shall be "dissolved" but they shall not be "annihilated". At the Resurrection, the wicked shall receive damnation bodies that are incapable of annihilation though eternally subject to suffering, while redeemed and glorified saints, animals, and the universe shall receive bodies made of what Hebrews 10:34 calls "a better and an enduring substance" -- a substance that will never again "groan" nor "travail in pain" but which will exist in perfect bliss and harmony in the New Heavens and the New Earth!

Shall not God, as it were, speak to redeemed Men, Animals, and Matter with one voice and say: At your dissolution, "thou sowest not that body that shall be." He could say to the Material Universe: "Once you existed in discord and decay -- rust corrupted, and your beauty was transient, but when you exist in "that body that shall be" in the New Heaven and New Earth, no discord, no decay, and no destruction of your luster and beauty shall ever come!"

God says to His presently suffering children, that when they inherit their bodies made of this "better and enduring substance," then "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 21:4).

Now, here it is, regarding the animals, that some may disagree with me:-- As I see it, the glorified state of God's animals -- the time when they received their "glorified body that shall be" -- will not come in a supposed Golden Age on this old earth. As I interpret passages relevant to this subject, the deliverance and transformation of the animals **SHALL NOT COME UNTIL CHRIST BRINGS ALL (ALL REDEEMED MEN, ANIMALS, AND MATTER) INTO THEIR ETERNAL STATE.**

The O. T. prophetic language pertaining to this is somewhat figurative, but I believe that it shall not be during a Millennium on this earth -- which still groans under the curse -- but in the New, Eternal Earth that such passages as the following shall have their fulfillment:

"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. (Isa 11:6-9)."

"The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord" (Isa 65:25).

I believe that passages such as the preceding should be interpreted in accordance with Paul's prophecies in Romans 8 -- pointing, as I see it, to at least their greatest -- if not their only -- fulfillment in the New Heavens and New Earth.

I think that the location of Christ's Kingdom during the time when the animals shall be sharing in the deliverance from the bondage of corruption is seen in the very next verse following Isaiah 65:25 above, which is Isaiah 66:1, where we read: "Thus saith the Lord, The **heaven** is my **throne**, and the **earth** is my **footstool**..."

Friends, kings do not sit upon their "footstool" to reign! I believe that during His Messianic Reign, Christ will sit upon His **THRONE** -- **HEAVEN!** -- and not upon His footstool -- earth -- and especially not on **THIS** earth.

If I be correct, the transformation of the animals, the universe, and redeemed men, shall take place, not during a passing millennium in this world, but when Christ sits upon HIS THRONE in the NEW HEAVENS. Perhaps the glorified creatures who have all been delivered out of the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God shall never inhabit "the New Heavens," for the Bible does say of the Holy City that "without are dogs" (Rev. 22:15). Whether this shall also apply literally to dogs I know not, "yet the dogs [do] eat of the crumbs which fall from their Masters' table" (Matthew 15:27), and it may be that Jesus will place His glorified animals in a lower place, their abode possibly being only upon the "New Earth".

I shall not try to iron out all of the particulars regarding this non-essential subject, but I say this: If God made Man and Matter to exist forever, I strongly suspect that He also made Animals to have an existence like that of Redeemed Men and Transformed Matter, free from "the bondage of corruption" in a blissful eternity!

"Doth God take care for oxen?" (1 Cor. 9:9). Yes, and the Bible is replete with verses revealing that He cares for every one of his creatures, and so much so, that not even one sparrow falls to the ground without His notice and allowance (Matt. 10:29). Furthermore, if God can transform an ugly sinner into a beautiful saint, He can also make the most repulsive-looking creature on this earth into a thing that is radiantly lovely when "God giveth it a body" in the New Earth! (1 Cor. 15:38).

To carry the subject just one little step further: If God could make the beast that carried the wayward Balaam preach His message on earth, could He not also enable glorified animals to praise Him in Eternity, along with "the four and twenty elders and the four beasts" spoken of in Rev. 19:4 who "fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia!"?

I conclude with this:-- When Jesus summons His saints into the ark of deliverance on the Day of the Lord, shall it not then be seen and said, "O LORD, THOU PRESERVEST MAN AND BEAST" (Psalms 36:6).

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END OF THIS ARTICLE