



# Bible Student's Notebook™

## The Herald of His Grace

Presenting *every man* perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume XVIII  
Issue 437

### All Creatures

#### The Lot of Animals in God's Ultimate Plan

by — Rick Longva

*You made the heavens, the heavens of the heavens with all their hosts, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them, you give life to all of them (Nehemiah 9:6).*

Many have come to their own conclusions when it comes to the fate of God's creatures. By creatures I specifically mean here the animal kingdom.

Many believe that they are nothing more than animals that live and die. They serve their purpose on earth as labor, food, pets, clothing or whatever is the fashion of a certain era. They have been worshipped, abused and hunted to the point of extinction; others are protected and preserved in zoos and wildlife parks for the next generations to appreciate.

As a believer in the reconciliation of all, I believe verses like, "Seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all, to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Romans 11:36), to be true, by that I mean an absolute fact. The part of that verse that resonates with me is: "for Him is all." All that God created is for Him. Not for us, but for Him. There are pieces of creation that we have been allowed to possess for a period of time, on loan so to speak, but all is for Him.

Paul tells us the same thing in Colossians 1:16,

*All is created through Him and for Him.*

Most teach, and I have to assume believe, that God will discard most of His creation. Even though Paul plainly states that *all is for Him*. The religious mind is no different than the mind of an atheist when it comes to verses like those in Romans and Colossians. They believe all of God's creatures will perish and turn to

dust. This is contrary to what the Scriptures teach.

Paul tells us in Romans 8 that not only will *all mankind* be brought into a right relationship with God, but *all creation* will be released from the bondage in which mankind's sin has held them as well.

God will reverse the damage caused to *all of creation* by the disobedience in the garden.

In Romans 5:12 Paul tells us the extent of Adam's disobedience to all humanity:

*Therefore, even as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind.*

Paul tells us later, in Romans 8:20-22, how Adam's disobedience extended to the *rest of creation*:

*For to vanity was the creation subjected, not voluntarily, but because of Him Who subjects it, in expectation that the creation itself, also, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God. For we are aware that the entire creation is groaning and travailing together until now.*

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## **Bible Student's Notebook™**

*Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal*

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This free weekly electronic publication (52 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the church, the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Romans 11:13);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:
  - total freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);
  - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6);
  - adult sonship position (Galatians 4).

This publication is a joint effort of a few members of the body of Christ. It is a product of our individual lives and ministries together. We do not claim infallibility for its contents. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

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CREATURES (continued from front page)

The reason for creation being affected by man's disobedience is that man was given dominion over it:

*Let him hold sway over the fish of the sea and over the flyer of the heavens, over the domestic beasts, over every land animal and over every creeper that is creeping on the earth (Genesis 1:26).*

The earth and all on it is under man's authority. Man was (is) accountable for its care. Adam's disobedience caused a change in the way animals survived on the planet. In Genesis 1:30, we are told what animals ate before Adam's disobedience:

*And to every animal of the earth, to every flyer of the heavens, and to every creeper on the earth in which there is a living soul, I have given all green herbage for food.*

Animals ate the herbage from the earth, the same as humans did (Genesis 1:29). After Adam's transgression this changed. Now most animals are carnivores, or omnivores, the same as most humans. They all now live in fear of each other and predators, when once they lived in harmony with each other.

In the beginning Adam was given the responsibility (at that time) to name the animals (Genesis 2:20).

What we see now is not what Adam saw in the beginning when God first created the then world and all in it:

*And God saw all that He made: and behold, it was very good.*

We now see a world that has been and is corrupted.

### ALL SOULS

*In Whose hand is the soul of every living creature (Job 12:10).*

God's hand is on all of His creation. We are not the only living part of creation for which God cares.

I recently had a conversation with a fellow who told me, animals can't be redeemed because they have no soul. "They are soul-less. Only humans have a soul." This man believes that, in order to be redeemed, you have to repent and say the sinner's prayer. His rea-

soning is that animals don't have the ability to repent, and they can't speak, so no sinner's prayer. Also, only beings with a soul can speak.

Plants don't have a soul, but according to God, animals do.

Genesis 1:24 says:

*And Elohim said: Let the earth bring forth the living soul, each according to its kind: domestic beast, creeper and land animal, each according to its kind.*

Animals have a soul, and they have the breath of God in them, just like we have. In fact, animals are more in tune to what God is about to do than most humans are.

Paul tells us what the creation is waiting to see unfold.

*The whole creation is on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of the sons of God coming into their own (Romans 8:19, Phillips Translation).*

What else can this mean but the animal creation?

The unbelievers (humans) aren't waiting for the sons of God to come into their own.

A.E Knoch, in his commentary of the New Testament, wrote concerning Romans 8:19,

The creation has been involved in the treadmill of corruption through the sin of man. We are associated with the creation on the physical side. When our bodies are delivered from their present slavery and death at our Lord's descent from heaven, He will transfigure them to conform them to His body glorious (Philippians 3:21). Later, when we are unveiled, the creation will be set at liberty from the bondage which now entralls it. How it ought to comfort us to know that the patient, suffering creatures, who had no hand in their own degradation, will yet find a real release from the pain and sorrow from which they have no escape now! Its physical aspect waits until our Lord's return.

Hosea speaks of a covenant that God will make for the animals after our unveiling:

*And in that day will I make a covenant for them ►*

with the beasts of the field, and with fowls of the heavens, and with the creeping things on the ground (Hosea 2:18).

every animal of the field, and every flyer of the heavens (Genesis 2:19).

Isaiah gives us a glimpse into what this covenant will be like:

Animals have the same *breath of life* in them as man does:

*And the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little boy will lead them. Also the cow and the bear will graze, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den. They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. The wolf and the lamb will graze together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox; and dust will be the serpent's food. They will do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain," says the LORD.*

*And they (the animals) went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh wherein is the breath of life (Genesis 7:15).*

Animals have a *soul* the same as man does:

*Let the earth bring forth the living soul, each according to its kind: domestic beast, creeper and land animal, each according to its kind.*

Animals do, however, have one thing most of humankind seems to have lost: they are waiting for the unveiling of the sons of God so that they, too, will be freed from the slavery and corruption under which we also live, and to be brought also into the glorious freedom that the children of God will experience (Romans 8:19).

Creation did not volunteer to be subjected to travail and groan through its existence. When man disobeyed, creation – all of it – became as cursed as man.

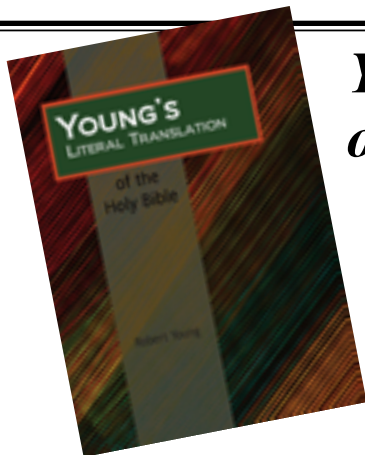
At that time this verse in Psalms will be fulfilled:

*Let everything that has breath praise the Lord (Psalm 150:6)*

Animals were formed out of the same *soil* man was:

All creation will. ■

*And out of the ground the Lord God formed*



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# The Purpose of Faith's Refining Fire

by — Travis Penner

I am convinced that if there is any trans-administrational truth, it is this; faith is made perfect in trial.

For most of us in the Body, the first day that we grasped the faith that Father had given to us was a mountain top experience. There is no greater high than to realize that our Father *is* a loving God and also just in all of His ways. It seems as though we can see from horizon to horizon, clearly. For the first time in our lives we are no longer confounded by the mystic mists of religious confabulation, where every contradiction is somehow proof of a transcendent God Whom we cannot fathom.

When Father gives us His faith, we finally see that His paths are straight, and His ways can be understood for those with whom He shares His secrets.

Inevitably, all who discover the mountain top must eventually make their way into the valley where this newly given faith must now be tested.

*All joy deem it, my brethren, whenever you should be falling into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith is producing endurance. Now let endurance have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and unimpaired, lacking in nothing (James 1:2-4).*

It is difficult to comprehend joy when trials afflict us. Be it the loss of a loved one, or even their betrayal, the loss of a job, the death of a child, the violence of life, and on it goes. There is no end to trial in this dark eon. It is in these trials that our faith receives its deepest testing. Are we willing to trust in a loving God to the point that each of these valleys through which we travel are intended to refine our faith; that they are trials that are to teach us even deeper truths about Him, to bring glory to Him?

Just as gold must be refined in the fires of a crucible, it is necessary for our faith to be so refined in the crucible of life's testing. Every time that gold is put in the fire for refining, the impurities, called "dross," rise to the surface. This dross must be scooped off. Every time this process is done, the gold becomes purer and more costly. ▶



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*In which you are exulting; briefly at present, if it must be, being sorrowed by various trials, that the testing of your faith, much more precious than gold which is perishing, yet, being tested by fire, may be found for applause and glory and honor at the unveiling of Jesus Christ (I Peter 1:6-7),*

It is for this that we rejoice. If we are not tested, then we cannot know our faith. Where, then, is our confidence? How shall we know its worth unless it's tested? It is for our benefit that we receive these trials. If your faith has not been tested, how do you know it's real?

*Now faith is an assumption of what is being expected, a conviction concerning matters which are not being observed (Hebrews 11:1).*

One thing is certain: the world questions our faith. To be as blunt as possible, we have no proof that whatever we believe is real. The Bible is our only anchor and lighthouse in this dark eon. Yet, besides that, there is no apparent reason for us to believe that it can be sensed by the five human senses. We are convicted that what God has spoken is true, and this is our expectation.

Our conviction becomes even more sure: as trials assault us, our faith assures us to stay the course and continue to embrace and put forth the gospel which Paul revealed to us.

It is this confidence that buoys us far beyond others of this present age, both religious and unbelieving, that *all* is of God (II Corinthians 5:18). Whether we think trials fall on us because of our own foolishness, or are inflicted on us by the world's caprice, we are steadfast that God is supremely in control and is the absolute originator of each trial. Strangely, this gives us solace as we realize that He has not lost control.

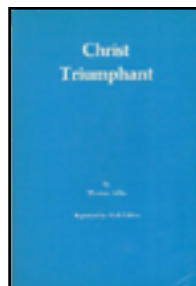
Let us be comforted by these words of Paul who reminded us that our Savior Himself also was tested in His faith when He was on this earth.

*Surely, in consequence, then, we also, having so vast a cloud of witnesses encompassing us, putting off every impediment and the popular sin, may be racing with endurance the contest lying before us, looking off to the Inaugurator and Perfecter of faith, Jesus, Who, for the joy lying before Him, endures a cross, despising the shame, besides is seated at the right hand of the throne of God (Hebrews 12:1-2).*

Thus, while in these trials, let us comfort and remind each

other that the glories which are to come vastly outweigh the suffering we endure today. In fact, as Paul wrote, they are not even *worthy* to be compared to the Eons to come.

*We ought to be thanking God always concerning you, brethren, according as it is meet; seeing that your faith is flourishing and the love of each one of you all for one another is increasing, so that we ourselves glory in you in the ecclesias of God, for your endurance and faith in all your persecutions and the afflictions with which you are bearing – a display of the just judging of God, to deem you worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering also if so be that it is just of God to repay affliction to those afflicting you, and to you who are being afflicted, ease, with us, at the unveiling of the Lord Jesus from heaven with His powerful messengers, in flaming fire, dealing out vengeance to those who are not acquainted with God and those who are not obeying the evangel of our Lord Jesus Christ – Who shall incur the justice of eonian extermination from the face of the Lord, and from the glory of His strength – whenever He may be coming to be glorified in His saints and to be marvelled at in all who believe (seeing that our testimony to you was believed) in that day. For which we are always praying also concerning you, that our God should be counting you worthy of the calling, and should be fulfilling every delight of goodness and work of faith in power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in Him, in accord with the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ (II Thessalonians 1:3-12).* ■



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