

Oak Grove Church of Christ

(502) 749-9209

Sunday

Bible Class: 9:30 AM
Morning Worship: 10:30 AM
Evening Worship: 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Class: 7:30 PM

Evangelist: Bruce J. Dehut

*Home Bible Studies Available
Upon Request*

Oak Grove church of Christ
9203 Thixton Lane
Louisville, KY 40291



OAK GROVE ENCOURAGER

**“And let us consider one another in order to
stir up love and good works” Hebrews 10:24**

FEBRUARY 26, 2006

Animals in heaven?

The other day I happen to be bouncing from station to station on the radio and paused on a talk program that was attempting to answer call-in questions in regards to the Bible. I did not hear the religious affiliation of the on-air personalities but one was a “pastor” and the other held a PhD in something religious.

A man phoned in and inquired from the hosts, quite genuinely, if animals that died would be found in heaven. The assumed younger of the men acquiesced to the “doctor” and invited him to offer his insight on this matter.

The doctor proceeded to explain that animals do indeed exist in heaven because we read of horses in the book of Revelation. The pastor than interjected that cats must also exist due to harps being mentioned in the same book (alluding to the fact that harp strings are made from cat gut).

This was the supposed “biblical answer” offered by these two enlightened individuals. The caller added to the conversation declaring the scriptures mention that God has given the spirit of life to both man and beast. In my opinion the caller seemed to offer a more well thought out argument but he needs to search a little deeper in God’s word to reach a clearer understanding.

FIGURATIVE LANGAUGE

Up front I want to address the line of reasoning by the “doctor” on the radio and his usage of the book of Revelation to prop up his response. What he and many other people fail to apply is that the Revelation is filled with symbols and unfortunately many pick and choose what is literal and what is figurative to their own partiality.

The book of Revelation is a book of signs, not descriptions of literal creatures and events. The word “like” is used over fifty times in the New King James translation of Revelation. Some of these symbols are:

- The 144,000—7:4

- Gigantic unearthly locusts—9:3
- The two witnesses—11:3
- A woman clothed with planets—12:1
- The dragon—12:3
- Beasts from the sea and earth—13
- The mark of “666”—13:18
- Stream of blood 200 miles long—14:20
- Harps of God—15:2
- Armageddon—16:16

“All the scriptural imagery (harps, crowns, gold, etc.) is, of course, a merely symbolical attempt to express the inexpressible. Musical instruments are mentioned because for many people (not all) music is the things known in present life which most strongly suggests ecstasy and infinity. Crowns are mentioned to suggest the fact that those who are united with God in eternity share His splendor and power and joy. Gold is mentioned to suggest the timelessness of heaven (gold does not rust) and the preciousness of it. People who take these symbols literally might as well think that when Christ told us to be like doves, He meant that we were to lay eggs.” [C. S. Lewis]

So for us to make an assumption that horses exist in heaven based solely upon the fact that they are

referred to Revelation is a poor way to reason the scriptures.

THE IMAGE OF GOD

One of the core differences between man and beast is that man, male and female, were formed in the image of the Creator.

Genesis 1:26a Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness;

To no other created entity of God did He bestow this honor of similarity to Himself. The likeness did not touch on the mere mortal part of man, his flesh, but man's soul and mind are the elements fashioned after the nature and perfections of his God.

Psalms 32:9a Do not be like the horse or like the mule, Which have no understanding,

DOMINION OVER ANIMALS

From the onset man was given authority over the other creatures of God.

Genesis 1:26b ...let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

Being granted dominion does not

give humans the right to mistreat the beasts of the earth but they are to be regarded as God has instructed.

Proverbs 12:10 A righteous man regards the life of his animal, But the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.

ANIMALS GIVEN AS FOOD

Another distinction of that of man and animal is after the flood God gave allowance for humans to consume the flesh of the beast.

Genesis 9:2-3 "And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move on the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand. 3 "Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs.

THE CONCLUSION

Lastly, the primary differentiation of man and brute is the occasion of the separation of the spirit from the flesh.

Ecclesiastes 3:21 Who knows the spirit of the sons of men, which goes upward, and the spirit of the animal, which goes down to the earth?

- Bruce J. Dehut

INFERIOR MISGIVINGS ABOUT JESUS

"Sir, Thou hast nothing to draw with." John 4:11

"I am impressed with the wonder of what God says, but He cannot expect me really to live it out in the details of my life!" When it comes to facing Jesus Christ on His own merits, our attitude is one of pious superiority - Your ideals are high and they impress us, but in touch with actual things, it cannot be done. Each of us thinks about Jesus in this way in some particular. These misgivings about Jesus start from the amused questions put to us when we talk of our transactions with God - Where are you going to get your money from? How are you going to be looked after? Or they start from ourselves when we tell Jesus that our case is a bit too hard for Him. It is all very well to say "Trust in the Lord," but a man must live, and Jesus has nothing to draw with - nothing whereby to give us these things. Beware of the pious fraud in you which says - I have no misgivings about Jesus, only about myself. None of us ever had misgivings about ourselves; we know exactly what we cannot do, but we do have misgivings about Jesus. We are rather hurt at the idea that He can do what we cannot.

My misgivings arise from the fact that I ransack my own person to find out how He will be able to do it. My questions spring from the depths of my own inferiority. If I detect these misgivings in myself, let me bring them to the light and confess them - "Lord, I have had misgivings about Thee, I have not believed in Thy wits apart from my own; I have not believed in Thine almighty power apart from my finite understanding of it."

Taken from "My Utmost for His Highest" by Oswald Chambers

THE LORD'S DAY PRIVILEGE LIST

Sunday Morning Service

Announcements: **Mike Shepherd**

Song Leader: **J.O. Smith**

Opening Prayer: **Brian Shepherd**

Lord's Table: **Arvil Young
Larry Runner
Robert Hood
Chris Runner**

Scripture Reading: **Steve Smith**

Sermon: **Bruce Dehut**

Closing Prayer: **Jim Covington**

Sunday Evening Service

Announcements: **Mike Shepherd**

Song Leader: **J.O. Smith**

Opening Prayer: **Kenny Case**

Sermon: **Bruce Dehut**

Lord's Table: **Arvil Young**

Closing Prayer: **Jim Phelps**