

ASK THE ANIMALS & THEY WILL TEACH YOU:
The Good Shepherd's Way to Treat One Another

Sid Galloway BS, M.DIV. Just an OLD sheepdog

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“Ask the animals, and they will teach you,
.... Which of all these does not know
that the hand of the LORD has done this?
In his hand is the life [Hebrew = nephesh = soul]
of every creature ...”
Job 12:7-10



DEDICATION – For Them Because of Him. To all the animals whose love and friendship saved my life. To my wife, because it's “not [best] to be alone” (Genesis 2:18), and for her invaluable visual memory, editing skills. To my litter of six kids who've helped care for countless little animal souls in need. To my parents who modeled thoughtful compassion for animals. To my students and counselees who embraced all my animal helpers. Above all, to our *mutual* Good Shepherd who rescued me, even when I tried to run away.

INTRODUCTION: Why it matters.

PART 1: ANIMAL SOULS IN SCRIPTURE

Chapter 1 TRADITION or TRUTH: A Need for Reexamination and Reformation

Chapter 2 HYPOCRITES: His “Followers: The False, The Faithful, The Future

Chapter 3 PAW PRINTS: All Over His-Story from Genesis to the Revelation

PART 2: ANIMAL SOULS IN SCIENCE

Chapter 4 HISTORY of HORRORS: Science Sins of the Past and Present

Chapter 5 HEART of REPENTANCE: Science Sees the Light

Chapter 6 SEARCH for MORALITY: Science Seeks Redemption

PART 3: ANIMAL SOULS IN LIFE

Chapter 7 MY STORY: Saved from Suicide

Chapter 8 THEIR STORY: God's Pets Not Ours

Chapter 9 YOUR STORY: His Personal Pet, Thank God

Chapter 10 HIS-STORY: YHWH, Yeshua, the I AM Transcending Time

PART 4: ATTITUDES AFFECT ACTIONS

Chapter 11 CHANGE: New Testament Metamorphosis

- *Compassionate consumers (carnivore, vegetarian, vegan?)*

- *Humane hunting, zoos, circuses, laboratory experiments*

Chapter 12 COMMUNICATE: Speaking Truth in Love

- *Encourage those who know and want to change*

- *Inform those who need to know more*

- *Confront those who know but ignore*

- *Good Shepherd Soul Care to rescue and restore the suffering*

INTRODUCTION:

“Like a **shepherd**
He will tend His flock,
In His arm,
He will gather the **lambs**
And **carry** them in His
bosom;
He will **gently lead** the
nursing ewes.”
Isaiah 40:11 NASB

The dreaded moment had come. For an hour, Mandy, a beautiful, soft, hand raised clouded-leopard had smelled the zoo veterinarian working his way down the hall. He'd already vaccinated the lions and tigers, so Mandy knew she was next in line for the painful injection.

But her turn would be different. She wouldn't have to endure the painful pole-syringe or the dangerous dart-gun. Before the vet got to her indoor den, I opened the door and climbed in with her. As always, she rubbed her head all over my legs and then climbed up into my arms for a face to face hug.

As the vet came around the corner, I carried her over to wire mesh right next to him. She looked at the vet, looked at me, pressed her face against my neck, closed her eyes, and hugged me as tight as she could. We stood there in an embrace of love and trust, while the vet gently administered an injection by hand.

By the way, my clouded-leopard Mandy was as much a rescuer for me as I was for her.

Back then and for most of my youth, I was depressed and often considered suicide. But Mandy, along with other wonderful animal friends throughout that time, kept me from putting those thoughts into action. I'll share more about it and more animal stories later in the book.



Wild raccoon, Rory, found and rescued after being shot in the back and left to die. He'd been stranded in a field for days & was dying of thirst. In only a few minutes of me dripping kitten formula on his mouth, he changed from vicious to tame, and took the bottle in his hands. Within a day, he let me feed him by hand & enjoyed having his head rubbed. Sadly, he continued to deteriorate and had to be euthanized days later.

No longer do I see animals as just “animals”. *Not* after decades rescuing and caring for them as a boy in my youth; then taking care of elephants, lions, tigers, bears, leopards, and wolves at the Audubon Zoo in New Orleans; later working to save the lives of dogs and cats as a veterinary emergency assistant; then injured and orphaned raccoons, opossums, squirrels, etc. for the department of

wildlife, and finally both people and animals as a biology teacher and animal-assisted family counselor. I can't help but remember personal names and the character of their souls - my friends - with amazing capacities for feeling, thinking, and intimate relationships.

One of my favorite movies is a biography of Joseph Merrick, who was cruelly called the *Elephant Man* and abused in circuses as “freak” due to his severe deformities. Many profoundly revealing statements are made in that film that relate to people and animals in our world who are used and abused, simply because they're different from “us” and don't have the power to protect themselves from *us*.

In one emotionally moving moment of abuse, Merrick loudly cries out: “*I am not an animal I am a human being!*” In the same way, the eyes and cries of millions of

the Good Shepherd's "animals" who are used and abused for our pleasure (*food, entertainment, etc.*) are desperately pleading: *"I am not an OBJECT. I am a living soul!"*

Later in life, Merrick often signed his letters with the following quotation from a poem by the 17th century Christian scholar of logic and theology, Isaac Watts.

*If I could reach from pole to pole
or grasp the ocean with a span,
I would be measured by the soul.
The minds the measure of a man.
"False Greatness" by Isaac Watts, (1706)*

Though this profound poem is speaking of human beings, shouldn't it also apply to animals who can think and feel – like dogs, cats, elephants, tigers, chimpanzees, cows, pigs, chickens, etc.?

One of Joseph Merrick's favorite parts of the Bible was Psalm 23 that begins with

***"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.
He makes me to lie down
in green pastures. He leads me
beside the still waters.
He restores my soul"***

Like a lost sheep, Merrick was rescued by his Good Shepherd through Christians who faithfully followed Christ's compassionate command to sacrifice self for the needs of others. As shown in the movie, Merrick proclaimed near the end of his life, *"I am happy every hour of the day. My life is full, for I know that I am loved."* Shouldn't this, too, be the life experience of the Good Shepherd's little *animal* souls.

Now, as a religiously "conservative" Christian, the more I study the Bible, the

more I believe the "church" needs a reformation-return to the Good Shepherd's Way for all creatures. Back in seminary researching and writing papers for a master's degree, I sometimes had opportunities to choose my own topics. Of course, searching for what the Bible and historical scholars of Scripture said about animals was my favorite choice. Though our professors were respected experts of Hebrew, Greek, and the Bible, a common comment on those papers was something like, *"Thank you, I learned things I didn't know. I never took the time to examine these issues for myself."*

THE POOR MAN'S PET LAMB

The question of how Christians should view and treat animals is not a modern issue. The *3,000-year-old* story below was told by an old prophet to a powerful king:

There were two men in a certain town, one rich and the other poor. The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cattle, but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb he had bought. He raised it, and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food, drank from his cup and even slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him.

Now a traveler came to the rich man, but the rich man did not take one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he took the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man and prepared it for the one who had come to him.

[King] David burned with anger against the man and said to [the prophet] Nathan, "As surely as the Lord lives, the man who did this must die! He must pay for that lamb four times over, because

he did such a thing and had no compassion.”

Then [the prophet] Nathan said to [King] David, “You are the man!”
2 SAMUEL 12

THE MESSAGE:

Why did God send the prophet Nathan to confront David with this story? Because David had recently exercised his position of power to selfishly use and abuse an innocent poor husband and his wife. But why use a story where the innocent individuals were a poor man and his only female ... *lamb*?

Throughout his youth, David had been a shepherd. He raised the sheep, fed them, slept in the pastures with them, and risked his own life to protect them. He loved them just as you and I love our family dog or cat. That's why he was so angry about the rich guy killing the poor man's little lamb who was like a daughter to him.

Something many people miss about this story is that, “*The **LORD** sent Nathan to David...*” (2 Sam 12:1). It's not just a story about a couple of men and a lamb. One of the core messages of the story reveals the Creator's love for every soul, both human and animal. This good news message spans the course of all history, because it's His-story. And it's discoverable through both the study of His general *world* in science and the study of His personal *word* in Scripture, the Bible.

Sadly, the history of people who claimed they followed the God of the Bible is filled not only with examples of compassion but also of *cruelty* toward countless humans

and animals. (*More about this in Chapter 2*) The result is most people have a distorted understanding of the true biblical way of seeing and treating the countless souls God created to enjoy His life of unselfish love and peace.

So that's the purpose of this book. It's to encourage others, especially Christians, to reexamine and rediscover the full good news of our Creator's Way not only for people but also for *His* animals. They are His, not ours. The big question is not about animal-rights or even human-rights. It's about His right to tell us how to care for His creation and His creatures.

When the Bible's gradual, *progressive* revelation of history (His-story) is carefully understood in context, its profoundly practical principles speak to every major issue in the current debates about human and animal protection. The heart of its message is the nature and character of our Good Shepherd Creator, finally and fully revealed in Christ. It's the good news of His way of unselfish, compassionate love and promise to rescue human and animal souls, to set them free from this infected world of suffering. Or as animal experts Dr. Marc Bekoff and Dr. Jessica Pierce more applicably describe it - the freedom to experience “well-being”. *THE ANIMALS' AGENDA: FREEDOM, COMPASSION, AND COEXISTENCE IN THE HUMAN AGE*. 2017. Pp. 3-4

QUESTIONS DESERVE ANSWERS, especially those that might need reexamination & reformation:

KNOWLEDGE? What if there's more to this physical world we study with science? Are there limits to science's ability to answer all of our questions?

ANIMALS? Is it possible the animals are here to help us learn about ourselves and what's beyond this physical world?

SCHOLARS? What if there are 1,000's of scholars who are beginning to discover these things about animals, but are censored by culturally conditioned consensus?

DOMINION? If humans were designed to have dominion over animals, then what kind of rule should it be? Tyrannical dictatorship or Good Shepherd servant leadership?

RACISM? Could it be that our arrogant abuse of power over one another has the same root as our treatment of animals?

HEAVEN? Do some animals have souls? Will they go to heaven? Are human souls qualitatively different from animals?

SACRIFICES? Were animal sacrifices in the Old Testament originally designed and desired by God or by humans?

EATING? Were humans originally designed to be carnivores or vegetarians? Have global environmental changes in history caused a need for diet changes? Is it reasonable for cultures living in the desert or arctic regions of the world to be vegetarians?

ACCOUNTABILITY? Does the Good Shepherd consider it a sin to abuse or even misuse an animal? What constitutes abuse?

FACTORY FARMS? Are the ways that most of our animal-based products produced acceptable to the Good Shepherd Creator? What does it mean to be a compassionate consumer?

HUNTING? EXPERIMENTING? Does the Good Shepherd ever allow it? If so, are there any forms of it that are wrong to God?

ZOOS & CIRCUSES? Are these acceptable to the Good Shepherd? If yes, are there any aspects of it that are not?

PETS? Does our relationship to *them* carry any obligations - considering their relationship to *Him*?

One of my children was born with a severe congenital heart condition requiring five open chest heart surgeries throughout his childhood. When he was seven years old and on our way to the third, dangerous surgery, we tried to distract him from the fear and stress with a couple of new toys. But he put down his toys, leaned up from the back seat of the car and said, *"Hey Dad, you know what's most important in life? It's not toys and just doing a bunch of fun stuff. It's relationships with people you love, especially God!"* Usually it's old people like me, near the end of their lives, who finally come to this simple yet profound realization.

For any thinking-feeling soul, human or animal, what in the world could be more important? Sadly, we're so easily tempted to let the desires of the eyes (toys), the desires of the flesh (physical pleasure), and the boastful pride of life (ego) cause us to misuse our opportunities for human and animal relationships (1 John 2:16).



This is my son at four years old on the way to his second surgery. He rescued this little frog and we released it later. His loving concern and care for this little soul helped turn his fearful focus from his own needs and replaced it with meaning, purpose, and joy.

PART ONE: **ANIMAL SOULS** **in SCRIPTURE**

“The righteous **cares**
for the **life** [*Hebrew = nephesh = soul*]
of their **animals**,
but the kindest acts of the **wicked** are **cruel**.”
Proverbs 12:10 - Solomon

*“Now there is a final **reason** I think that **Jesus** says,
“**Love your enemies**.” It is this: that love has within it
a redemptive **power**. And there is a power there
that eventually **transforms** individuals.”*

A Knock at Midnight: Inspiration from the Great
Sermons of **Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Humans have always been religious creatures. Every culture in history has sought answers to the big questions of life: origin, purpose, and destiny. Even the few modern communist cultures that tried to force atheism, like Stalin’s Russia, Mao’s China, Pol Pot’s Cambodia, and Castro’s Cuba, could never erase the deep human belief that the physical universe is not all there is.

An international research project spanning a three-year period and directed by two Oxford University Academics concluded that humans are predisposed to religious belief. The massive project involved over 50 researchers conducting 40 separate studies in 20 different countries, therefore a wide range of cultures.

“The researchers point out that the project was not setting out to prove the existence of god or otherwise, but sought to find out whether concepts such as gods and an afterlife appear to be entirely taught or basic expressions of human nature....”

“Project Co-Director Professor Roger Trigg, from the University of Oxford's Ian Ramsey Centre, said: 'This project suggests that religion is not just something for a peculiar few to do on Sundays instead of playing golf. We have gathered a body of evidence that suggests that religion is a common fact of human nature across different societies. This suggests that attempts to suppress religion are likely to be short-lived as human thought seems to be rooted to religious concepts, such as the existence of supernatural agents or gods, and the possibility of an afterlife or pre-life.'

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/07/110714103828.htm>

“Scriptures” from many different religions have addressed the reality and importance of our relationships and responsibilities toward our fellow creatures. My specific focus in this book is the *Judeo-Christian* scriptures and the story of their followers within His-story.

Chapter 1 TRADITION or TRUTH:

A Need for Reexamination and Reformation

“Jesus said, ...
The **thief** comes only to steal,
and to kill, and to destroy.
I have come that they **may have life**, and that they
may have it more **abundantly**.
I AM the **GOOD SHEPHERD**. The Good Shepherd
gives His life for the sheep.”
John 10:10

Jesus replied, “And why do you **break** the **command of God** for the sake of your **tradition**? For God said, ‘Honor your father and mother’ But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used **to help their father or mother** is ‘devoted to God,’ they are not to ‘honor their father or mother’ with it.

Thus, you **nullify the word of**

God for the sake of your **tradition**. You **hypocrites!**

Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you:

“These people honor me with their **lips**, but their **hearts** are far from me.

They worship me in vain; their teachings are **merely**

human rules.” Matthew 15:3-9 NIV

One of my greatest joys over the years has been helping others glimpse the Good Shepherd’s unique character through His extraordinary animals. But that joy has always been undercut by the knowledge that every year millions of thinking, feeling animals suffer under the cruel rule of human desire.

Many people are quiet and keep their passions and burdens to themselves. Some seem naturally driven to get it out and persuade others to get involved. That was

me, even as a little boy. But I’ve always been more a talker than a writer. Writing takes too long. Thoughts, feelings, and words don’t flow freely. I wish I could just sit down with you and share together what our animal friends can teach us about our *Good Shepherd*. The one who cares about all His sheep: both human and non-human.

So, this attempt at writing won’t likely end up topping your list of awe inspiring entertainment. My simple hope and prayer is that despite my limitations, it might in some way stir your compassion, further open the eyes of your heart, and motivate greater action for the sake of all suffering souls. Especially the littlest, most vulnerable, suffering souls among us, regardless of species.



It’s written to four groups. *First* is to apologize to all the people and animals who’ve been ignored, abused, and oppressed by man’s pursuit to please self. *Second* is to seek forgiveness from my non-Christian friends who’ve been turned off by callous, often cruel, words and actions of people who

claimed to follow the Good Shepherd. *Third* is to challenge Christian friends (especially my fellow evangelicals) to reexamine and reform their worldview so it more clearly reflects the image and character of the one we represent, for His honor. *Fourth* and most of all, is to seek forgiveness, wisdom, and guidance from our Good Shepherd Creator who will hold us responsible for how we treat all His sheep.

Historically, many individual followers of the good Shepherd (*careful students of the Bible*) understood, spoke up, and lived out our Good Shepherd’s true worldview

toward animals. From Adam to King David of Israel, to his philosopher son Solomon, to St. Francis of Assisi, to William Wilberforce, to Andrew Linzey, and others, there have always been voices for those who cannot speak for themselves.

Christians who understood the full scope of Christ's love in Scripture fought against unnecessary suffering not only for people, but also for animals. One of my favorite examples is William Wilberforce who was instrumental in the fight to stop slavery in England. His pastor was John Newton, the transformed former slave ship captain, who wrote the hymn, AMAZING GRACE. Dr. James Davison Hunter of the University of Virginia describes the heart of Christians like Wilberforce.

"The majority were exceptionally well educated. **Wilberforce**, ... for example were all educated at Cambridge. ... they created numerous volunteer organizations, ... and made **maximum use of the media** of the day – sermons, lectures, pamphlets, and newspapers. The abolition of . . . **slavery** . . . may have been their primary concern but it was **not their only concern**. Among other things, they devoted themselves to everything from the care of the **poor** and charity schools to **prison** reform and the **prevention of cruelty to animals**."

[**Emphasis Added**] *TO CHANGE THE WORLD: The Irony, Tragedy, and Possibility of Christianity in the Late Modern World*, 2010. KINDLE [Dr. Hunter at the University of Virginia is Professor of Religion, Culture, and Social Theory. Since 1995, Professor Hunter has served as the Director of the Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture, a university-based, interdisciplinary research center concerned with understanding contemporary cultural change and its implications for individuals, institutions, and society.]

Historically, most "institutionalized" Christian groups and their leaders rightly

emphasized the priority of *people*. But most neglected what the Bible says about the Good Shepherd's *animals*. This left a vacuum, a hole, in the "Christian" theological worldview and practice. Nature abhors a vacuum, so naturally the surrounding cultural views of animals were sucked into the church's beliefs about animals. As history progressed, corrupt cultural beliefs and cruel treatments were absorbed like social, spiritual osmosis. After the death of the first century Christian apostles, Greek philosophical beliefs like those of Aristotle were embraced by leading theologians like Augustine and Aquinas. Dr. Andrew Linzey, Director of the Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics, explains this problem well.

"What is so problematic then about Aquinas is that this great Christian scholar was not quite Christian or scriptural enough in allowing for theological argument either drawn from the **humanitarian** tradition of the Old Testament which acknowledged that humans and at least some **responsibilities to animals**, on the one hand, or to theological argument centred on the exercise of **costly merciful loving** expressed for us in **Jesus Christ**, on the other. We may be tempted to go further. For the **emphasis upon rationality** in Aristotle, Augustine and Aquinas has left a **bitter legacy** in Christian theology."

[**emphasis added**]

[*ANIMAL THEOLOGY* by Andrew Linzey. Pp. 13-19]

Yes, *it is* a sad fact that many Christians in the past *underestimated* animal qualities and abilities in a distorted way to emphasize the special nature of humans. Not only did this open the door to institutionalized cruelty, but also blinded many so they could not see and learn a vital truth. The opportunity to learn how similar we are to animals in many amazing ways can teach us *humility*.

“... God **tests** them [*humans*]
so that they may **see**
that **they are like the**
animals.”
Ecclesiastes 3:21

We humans are not the little gods we so naturally want to be. Self-esteem is not good enough for us. Our naturally selfish natures often want self-deification, to be honored and idolized as the stars of music, media, sports, politics, and academia. Our human ego, pride, and prejudice have been the cause of so much suffering throughout history. In fact, a major theme of God’s story (His-story) in the historical flow of the Bible is the revelation of the vital need for humans to learn humility.

Today, some Christians have *overreacted* to animal rights advocates by diminishing or even denying the amazing abilities that many animals exhibit. As a result, these Christians have neglected wonderful opportunities to highlight animal *psychology* and *ethology* as powerful evidence for our mutual Good Shepherd Creator. The very existence of *immaterial* animal minds and emotions, capable of

intimate relationships, love, joy, peace, patience, or grief, anger, depression, anxiety, etc., cannot be explained fully by natural laws of *matter*. More on this in PART 2: ANIMAL STORIES IN SCIENCE.

Worse is that many people are polarizing into two opposing worldviews on extreme sides when it comes to animals. One side sees animals solely as *objects* to be used for the benefit and pleasure of humans. The other group views animals as not only sentient beings, who should not have to endure unnecessary suffering caused by humans, but as fully equal to or even more important than humans.



TRANSFORMATION OF TRADITION

What if the “traditional” Christian view of animals falls far short of the true character of our Creator? Is it possible that the “church” should reexamine and *reform* our human perspective of our Good Shepherd’s *world* of animals in the light of His true *Word*? If the answer is yes and then we humbly correct our way, could the “church” then have a more powerfully positive impact now and forever, for the Good Shepherd’s honor and the benefit of all His sheep?

Here are just a few possibilities.

1. **Honor** our Creator as the source of even greater goodness than most people realize.
2. **Humble** our prideful desire to exalt and please self over others.
3. **Enhance** the understanding of our unique human role, rank, and responsibility in His cosmos.
4. **Reflect** the Good Shepherd’s servant leadership over His amazing *animals and creation*.

5. **Multiply** genuine, “good” shepherd service to our fellow *human creatures*.
6. **Witness** to a world that suffers under the cruelty of selfish survival of the fittest.
7. **Enjoy** deeper relationships with our fellow creatures who bless our lives every day in every way.

GENERATIONAL REJECTION OF TRADITION

Understandably, many people, especially the newer generations, are rejecting institutionalized “Christianity”, in part because of what they see as hypocritical, insensitively cruel beliefs and practices toward thinking, feeling animals. Why would anyone want to follow a Creator who supposedly designed and desires - as His “way” of life - the process of cruel competition and survival of the fittest with humans as the top predators and parasites? That “way” is *inconsistent* with the nature and *character* of Christ, the “Good” Shepherd.

Jesus said, **I AM** the **GOOD SHEPHERD**.
The Good Shepherd **gives His life**
for the sheep.” John 10:10

“Jesus answered, ‘I am the **WAY**
and the truth and the life. No one comes to the
Father except through me.” John 14:6

Many of these young people are turning to new theories claiming that human morality did not come down from a God, but evolved up from animal ancestors and is now at its peak in some but not all humans. This is understandable, considering the often inconsistently cruel hypocrisy seen in the teachings and lives of many “Christians”. However, the theory of morality evolving from a process of “survival of the fittest”, parasites, predators, competition, pain, fear, suffering and death is equally inconsistent. More on this in *CHAPTER 6*

SEARCH for MORALITY: Science Seeks Redemption

Christians, if faithfully following the Good Shepherd, should be *leading* in the effort to stand against oppression and abuse of not only people but even His sentient animals. Most Christians and even many pastors, who are not familiar with the Hebrew language, assume by *tradition* that the difference between humans and animals is that animals do not have “souls”. I’m not at all a Hebrew or Greek expert. Even though I earned my master’s degree from a respected seminary, I admittedly have forgotten most of the Hebrew and Greek I learned. It’s one of those use it or lose it subjects. The good news is that the commentaries of many past and present scholars of the Bible and biblical languages are readily available for anyone wanting to see what the Bible says about animals, animal souls, and our responsibilities towards them. Even better news is that a “GOOD” Shepherd Creator would have led the revelation and writing of His message in a way that is simple enough for a youth, yet profound enough for any PhD. And that’s just what the Bible is. A plain and simple reading of its *progressive* revelation across history from the first book Genesis by Moses to the last book Revelation by John is a clear, consistent, and profoundly *simple* message. In fact, some language experts have said that Jesus deliberately spoke so that even a youth could understand. Theologians call this fact of biblical simplicity the doctrine of “*perspicuity*”. Sort of ironic that a doctrine that means the Bible is written in a clearly simple manner would be labeled by theologians using a ridiculously unclear and complicated term. A lot of scientists tend do the same in their own fields.

http://www.epm.org/static/uploads/downloads/12_Chapter_39.pdf

DO ANIMALS HAVE SOULS?

This is one of the most important questions to answer when it comes to our relationships with, and our responsibilities to - animals. We'll examine this question and others in more depth in CHAPTER 3. For now, consider the following comment from Randy Alcorn in which he highlights a crucial fact from Dr. J. P Moreland and Dr. Gary Habermas. Moreland is Distinguished Professor of Philosophy at Talbot School of Theology in Biola University. His PhD is from the Univ. of Southern California. Habermas is Distinguished Professor of Apologetics and Philosophy at Liberty Univ. PhD from Michigan State University in the History of Philosophy and Religion.

“Am I suggesting **animals have souls**? Certainly they do not have human souls. Animals aren't created in God's image, and they aren't equal to humans in any sense. Nonetheless, there's a **strong biblical case for animals having non-human souls**. I didn't take this **seriously** until I **studied** the usage of the Hebrew and Greek words *nephesh* and *psyche*, often translated “soul” when referring to humans. (*Nephesh* is translated *psyche* in the Septuagint.) The fact that these words are often used of animals is compelling evidence that they have non-human souls. That's what most Christians in the past believed. In their book, *Beyond Death*, Gary Habermas and J. P. Moreland point out,

“It wasn't until the advent of seventeenth-century Enlightenment . . . that the existence of animal souls was even questioned in Western civilization. Throughout the history of the church, the classic understanding of living things has included the doctrine that animals, as well as humans, have souls.”

RANDY ALCORN, *HEAVEN. Chapter 39 Will Animals Inhabit the New Earth?*

The exact same Hebrew term, *nephesh* (נֶפֶשׁ), is used for both humans and the most complex animals. It's often arbitrarily translated by tradition as "soul" for humans and as "creature" for animals, but there is no grammatical or linguistic reason for such a translational distinction. It was traditionally translated this way to emphasize the uniqueness of humans over animals. Sadly, this effort effectively hid from readers, who did not know Hebrew, the wonderful truth of sentient animal souls.

For example, Genesis 1:20, describes the creation of the first animal souls. “And God said, “Let the water teem with living (*chay*) creatures (*nephesh*)” Then Genesis 2:7, describes the personal creation of a human. “Then the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (*chay*), and the man became a living (*chay*) being (*nephesh*).”

This term, *nephesh*, is used in the Hebrew Old Testament about 750 times. In the King James version, 475 of those times it is translated as “soul” when referring to *humans*. Only 9 times is this exact same term translated as “creature” and these are when referring *animals*. In the remaining 266 times which refer to humans, the term is translated as person, being, mind, heart, himself, yourself, man, etc. So, the primary meaning of *nephesh* is soul or personhood, and obviously refers to the ability to think and feel. What about *plants*? The term is never used for plants because they have no brain or nerves and are not souls. They are qualitative different from *nephesh* animals.

Tradition has caused the average Christian, and even most pastors and theologians, to have lost this truth when it comes to complex animals. The result has been a flawed, unbiblical view of God's "creatures".

A full study of when, how, and why the Holy Spirit chose to use the term "nephesh" in the Old Testament and the corresponding "psyche" in the New Testament, reveals further important and wonderful truths about humans and special categories of animals. More importantly, it reveals truths about the character of our Creator, who is the "Good" Shepherd. *(More about this in CHAPTER 3 PAW PRINTS: All Over His-story from Genesis to Revelation. Also in Chapter 8 THEIR STORY, and Chapter 10 HIS-STORY.)*

Before diving into the Bible's teachings about animals, it seems best to briefly address the history of people who claimed to follow the God of the Bible. That includes, not only those whose lives reflected the image and character of the Good Shepherd, but also *hypocrites*, since by all practical definitions, everyone is one, especially me.

NOTE TO MYSELF ...
This chapter needs to be rearranged so that the flow of time in history is more consistent. Various sections need to be moved and blended with similar discussions. Plus, add some of the paragraphs/sections from drafts of chapters 8 and 10

Chapter 2 HYPOCRITES: His "Followers: The False, The Faithful, The Future

[Jesus said] "You **hypocrites!**
Well did **Isaiah** prophesy of you,
when he said: 'This people **honors** me
with their **lips**, but their **heart** is **far** from me;
in vain do they worship me,
teaching as **doctrines** the commandments of men."
Matthew 15:7-9

None of us fully practice what we preach

HYPOCRITE (Merriam Webster)

- 1 - a person who puts on a false appearance of virtue or religion
- 2 - a person who acts in contradiction to his or her stated beliefs or feelings

The number one *reason* I hear from people who say they reject Christianity is "hypocritical-Christians". I understand. It was once the main reason I rejected it and pursued science and eastern religions instead. But for me back then, it was also an

excuse to keep pretending I was my own sole authority. It was sort of my way to maintain self-deification. Sadly, my understandable rejection of hypocritical "Christians" led to my mistaken rejection of the Good Shepherd *Christ* for a long time.

PROGRESSIVE REVELATION

More about this important principle of progressive, gradually unfolding truth will be discussed in later chapters, but here's a brief and necessary introduction. Just as teaching and training a little child, from immaturity into maturity, requires gradual revelation of knowledge and principles, the Good Shepherd's training of His human creatures across history has been similar. It began with a few simple rules about *WHAT* to do and *WHAT* not to do for guidance, safety, and security, for the same reasons that a child must start simply. Deep understanding of the *WHY* behind the rules requires time and experience.

For example, it was not until the time of Moses that God revealed His *personal* "name", a label that conveyed more about His nature and character. Prior to that time, He was referred to generically as "El" or "Elohim", which simply means God. Later, when preparing to rescue the Hebrew slaves out of Egypt, God revealed Himself to Moses using a term derived from the verb "to be" that means the "I AM". It conveys the reality that He alone is self-existent, eternal. In contrast, all things in creation including us are dependent on Him for our existence. Apart from Him we would cease to exist.

FOOTNOTES:

<https://www.tms.edu/m/msj24.2.pdf>

THE TRINITY IN CREATION.

*The Masters Seminary Journal, Fall 2013,
pp. 167-177*

Bryan Murphy, Th.D. Associate Professor of Old Testament The Master's Seminary
- See also Carl F. H. Henry, *God Who Speaks and Shows*, vol. 2 of **God, Revelation and Authority**
Henry explains this concept: By this introduction to **ELOHIM**, Creator ... we are brought into the arena of biblical revelation, with its **progressive** disclosure of EL, not ... **I AM's** second advent to redeem creation.

In the Old Testament Hebrew, God's personal name is YHWH, often translated as Jehovah or Yahweh. In most English Bibles, it is translated as LORD using all capital letters. When Lord is not in all caps, it is translating the Hebrew term "Adoni", simply a generic term for any "authority", even humans. This further personal revelation of the "I AM" was in stark contradiction to the surrounding cultures that believed in many gods who competed with one another, had a beginning, and could die – cease to exist.

Years later, Moses asked for deeper understanding about God. YHWH revealed to Moses, and through him to us, more about His divine character, emphasizing His Way of compassionate, forgiving love.

"Then the LORD [*I AM*] came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD [*I AM*]. And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD [*I AM*], the LORD [*I AM*], the **compassionate** and **gracious** God, **slow to anger**, and abounding in **lovingkindness** and **truth**; who keeps **lovingkindness** for thousands, who **forgives** iniquity, transgression and sin" Exodus 34:5-7

OLD TESTAMENT "ISRAEL"

Progressively, our Good Shepherd Creator revealed that His consequences are not *lashing-out* like an out-of-control egotist, as Hollywood likes to portray. Just the opposite, when His consequences occur, it is due to Him partially "**letting-go**". As the only Self-existent being, He holds all things

together (*Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3*). His infinite omniscient and omnipotent response to selfish sin is to *let-go*, to strategically separate. He lets those who choose their own way bear their inability to protect and provide for themselves.

"There is a **way** which **seems right** to a man, but its **end** is the way of **death**." Proverbs 14:12

"We all, **like sheep**, have gone astray, each of us has turned to **our own way**; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isaiah 53:6

"... He has cut off All the strength of Israel; He has **drawn back His right hand** from before the enemy." Lamentations 2:3

"... Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often **I wanted to gather your children** together, the way a **hen gathers her chicks** under her wings, and **you were unwilling**." Matthew 23:37

Remember that the Bible is not just *His-story* about His love for all His nephesh creatures. It's also the revelation of our story, focusing on our *purpose*, our *potential*, our *greatest problem*, and most of all God's *provision* to solve it. It begins in Genesis 3 with the human decision in the Garden of Eden to arrogantly serve self, instead of the Good Shepherd's way of humbly serving one another. It metastasizes from Cain's murder of his brother Abel, into the violent competition of the ancient world that culminated in God *letting-go* and allowing the cleansing of a global flood. It was not only a washing of the world from the escalation of moral devolution, but also from the accumulation of mutational-meltdown. More about this biological reality in *PART 2: ANIMAL SOULS*

IN SCIENCE, Chapter 5 HEART OF REPENTANCE: Science Sees the Light.

(<http://www.logosresearchassociates.org/john-sanford>)
(<http://www.geneticentropy.org/>)

Then, after the new start of nephesh life and human civilization, the inner infection of sinful selfishness regrew into the first tyrannical government, centered in Babylon. It was dominated by Nimrod, an evil “hunter” and enslaver of both people and animals (Genesis 10:9).

Later, the calling of Abraham, out of those self-worshipping cultures of corruption, was designed by God to form a renewed culture, Israel, - to reveal His unique nature in contrast to our need for *transformation*. History has proven that *education*, accumulation of knowledge and technology is not enough. World Wars I, II, and current global conflicts, corporate crime, predatory politicians, terrorism, and cultural corruption are glaring proof.

The entire rest of the Old Testament records Israel’s repeated, rebellious rejection of the Good Shepherd’s way. Since power corrupts, many of ancient Israel’s leaders not only rejected God but reflected the worst forms of selfish abuse. Notice below God’s use of the “shepherd” responsibility in His strong condemnation through the prophet Ezekiel to Israel’s leaders, and then God’s promise through Jeremiah to raise up good *servant*-leaders if the people would turn to Him and His way.

““Son of man, prophesy **against** the **shepherds** of Israel; prophesy and say to them: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Woe to you shepherds of Israel who **only take care of yourselves!** Should not shepherds take care of the flock?’”

Ezekiel 34:2

“Then I will give you shepherds **after My own heart**,” Jeremiah 3:15

Apart from Him, they wouldn’t and couldn’t muster up enough goodness to live out even a minimal set of guidelines. Those commandments were simple principles that modified His Way. As a parent trying to train immature children, or a shepherd guiding sheep, they were rules graciously accommodated to human limitations and understanding at that time. As the centuries and millennia unfolded, the progressive revelation of His character (self-disclosure) and His Way was gradually *unveiled*.

JEWISH TRADITION:

The subtle though powerful Old Testament message of compassion for the Creator’s animals is the root that produced the fruit of Jewish traditions against animal abuse. Since the focus of this book is primarily on what the Bible itself says, I’ll limit discussion of this important subject to just a few examples.

[Note to myself: rework the section below]
... Tanakh, Rabbis, Talmud, Mishnah ...

There are numerous resources available for further study, such as:

- **Jewish Ethics and Nonhuman Animals**, by Lisa Kemmerer. *Journal for Critical Animal Studies*, Volume V, Issue 2, 2007
Dr. Kemmerer is a professor of philosophy and religions at Montana State University Billings, is a philosopher-activist working on behalf of nonhuman animals, the environment, and disempowered human beings. Graduate of Reed, Harvard, and Glasgow University Scotland.
<http://www.criticalanimalstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/JCAS-Vol-5-Issue-2-2007.pdf>

“Moreover, as Jewish morality from the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) remains important to Christians, this article reveals the ethical standards to which others might hold both Jews and Christians accountable in their relations to animals and the world as a whole.” **Kemmerer**

“Even causing frustration or disappointment to an animal is disallowed in the Tanakh. A paragraph, completed by one sentence in the Tanakh, commands: “You shall not muzzle an ox while it is threshing” (Deut. 25:4). This passage demonstrates remarkable sensitivity to the ox’s appetite while laboring, and to her taste for grains.” **Kemmerer**

“Hunting is discouraged in the Jewish tradition. Cruel characters, those who enjoy hunting, are denounced in the Tanakh. When Rabbi Yechezkel Landau was asked about hunting, he responded: “In the Torah the sport of hunting is imputed only to fierce characters like Nimrod and Esau, never to any of the patriarchs and their descendants (Schwartz 25). The Rabbi concludes, “I cannot comprehend how a Jew could even dream of killing animals merely for the pleasure of hunting”; such trivialization of life is “downright cruelty” (Schwartz 25). Such passages remind readers of God’s preference for a vegan world” **Kemmerer**

- “Judaism has invariably held vegetarianism to be the ideal God-given diet” (Linzey, After 57). **Linzey, Andrew, and Dan Cohn-Sherbok. After Noah: Animals and the Liberation of Theology. London: Mowbray, 1997.**

- Jewish tradition, a vegan diet:
“the high ideal of God. . . stands supreme in the Torah for Jews and the whole world to see—an ultimate goal toward which all people should strive” (Schwartz 13)

- Compassion is at the heart of the “Hebrew phrase **tša’ar ba’alei chayim**, the biblical mandate not to cause ‘pain to any living creature’” (Schwartz 15)

Schwartz, Richard H. Judaism and Vegetarianism. NY: Lantern, 2001

NEW TESTAMENT “CHURCHES”

As promised and predicted in the Old Testament, the full revelation of our Creator’s character would come through His personal incarnation into His physical creation.

“Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name **Immanuel** [*God with us*].
Isaiah 7:14

“For unto us a Child is born,
Unto us a Son is given;
And the government will be upon His shoulder. And **His name** will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”
Isaiah 9:6

“Jesus said to them,
‘Truly, truly, I say to you, **before** Abraham was born, **I AM.**’ Therefore, they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.” John 8:58-59

The first century “Christians” were *Jewish* men and women who believed that Jesus proved Himself to be that promised and prophesied Messiah or “Christ”. Christian “churches” are supposed to be simple fellowships of believers encouraging one another to follow Christ, the Good Shepherd.

“I am the **good shepherd**;
the good shepherd lays down His life
for the sheep....” John 10:11

“My **sheep** hear My voice, and I know them,
and they **follow Me.**” John 10:27

But just like Israel, we Christians for centuries have revealed both His loving character and too often the human nature of selfish competition and abusive use of others for our own profit and pleasure. We’ve frequently reflected sort of a Christian version of “survival-of-the-fittest”, instead of the image of God. Gross abuses by “Christian” leaders and groups over the

last two thousand years are what most people remember. However, always and everywhere beneath that religious façade were underground, private groups of Christ-followers, the true Church, who reflected the Good Shepherd's character. They not only sacrificially cared for one another, but also for vulnerable non-believers in their communities. They ran most orphanages, and provided most of the money and resources to help the poor and needy.

FOOTNOTES:

- Roman ruler, Julian, wrote proof of this as the character and actions of the early church.
http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Julian_the_Apostate

“Because Christian charities were beneficial to all, including pagans, it put this aspect of the Roman citizens' life out of the control of the imperial authority and under that of the church. Thus Julian envisioned the institution of a Roman philanthropic system, and cared for the behavior and the morality of the pagan priests, in the hope that it would mitigate the reliance of pagans on Christian charity:

Julian's Column in Ankara, built in occasion of the emperor's visit to the city in 362

“These impious Galileans not only feed their own poor, but ours also; welcoming them into their agapae, they attract them, as children are attracted, with cakes.

Whilst the pagan priests neglect the poor, the hated Galileans devote themselves to works of charity, and by a display of false compassion have established and given effect to their pernicious errors. See their love-feasts, and their tables spread for the indigent. Such practice is common among them, and causes a contempt for our gods.

http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Julian_the_Apostate

Yet, they were often viciously persecuted by the false, institutionalized Christianity that dominated the *public* arena. A more extensive understanding of this historical

life-line of underground followers and the persecution they endured can be gained through two excellent works: **THE PILGRIM CHURCH**, by E. H. Broadbent, and **FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS**, by John Foxe.

TODAY

Modern times reflect the same “Christian” dichotomy in culture. The *public* presentation of Christianity seen by the world is usually churches that look more like social clubs and entertainment centers, serving primarily the providentially-privileged, while millions of children, women, and men are being enslaved, abused, tortured, and murdered here and abroad.

Yet as in the past and across the world today, there is a *private* network of believers who follow the Good Shepherd and strive to humbly live out His character, the fruit of His Spirit.

NOTE TO MYSELF: REDUCE THE FOLLOWING QUOTES, & THEN ADD THE OTHERS IN MY LIST FROM SECULAR NON-CHRISTIAN SOCIOLOGISTS & HISTORIANS

ATHEISTS QUOTES supporting positive historical and cultural impact of Christianity. The articles cited below are good summary overviews of the uniquely positive influence of sincere followers of Christ on society.

Journalist and professed atheist Matthew Paris, upon reflecting of his journey to Africa.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/as-an-atheist-i-truly-believe-africa-needs-god-3xj9bm80h8m>

“As an atheist, I truly believe Africa needs God, noted the positive impacts Christianity has had. Essentially, Parris believes, that to remove Christian evangelism from Africa will “leave the continent at the mercy of a malign fusion of Nike, the witch doctor, the mobile phone and the machete”.

Paris believes that

“Africa needs God...Missionaries, not aid money,” as they “are the solution to Africa’s biggest problem—the crushing passivity of the people’s mindset” (64).

Parris also saw how those professing belief in Jesus’ name has made life more bearable for many people in Africa. He explains: “Now a confirmed atheist, I’ve become convinced of the enormous contribution that Christian evangelism makes in Africa: sharply distinct from the work of secular NGOs, government projects and international aid efforts. These alone will not do. In Africa Christianity changes people’s hearts. It brings a spiritual transformation. The rebirth is real. The change is good”

Paris has also seen how Christians, irrespective of race, have worked wonders across Africa:

“Christians black and white, working in Africa, do heal the sick, do teach people to read and write; and only the severest kind of secularist could see a mission hospital or school and say the world would be better without it. I would allow that if faith was needed to motivate missionaries to help, then, fine: but what counted was the help, not the faith.”

However, Parris explains that this doesn’t seem to fit his atheism: “It inspired me, renewing my flagging faith in development charities. But travelling in Malawi refreshed another belief, too: one I’ve been trying to banish all my life, but an observation I’ve been unable to avoid since my African childhood. It confounds my ideological beliefs, stubbornly refuses to fit my worldview, and has embarrassed my growing belief that there is no God”

Paris, M. 2008. *As an atheist, I truly believe Africa needs God.*

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/as-an-atheist-i-truly-believe-africa-needs-god-3xj9bm80h8m>

Another atheist, Roy Hattersley, criticizes his fellow atheists for their lack of effort in charity work:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/sep/12/religion.uk>

“You don’t hear of “Atheist Aid” rather like Christian aid, and, I think, despite my inability to believe myself, I’m deeply impressed by what belief does for people like the Salvation Army... I often say I never hear of atheist organizations taking food to the poor”.

<http://creation.com/atheists-credit-christianity>

Jesus said that the path travelled by His genuine followers would be narrow with “few” choosing to embrace His way of self-

sacrificial love for others. Even though the ever-present remnant of such followers has been far less in number than the many who superficially profess “Christianity”, their *positive* impact on individuals, families, and cultures has been literally world-changing.

However, at the same time, a powerfully *negative* effect on the world has also resulted from the nominal, self-serving “Christians” and man-made institutions that have dominated public Christianity. This less than Christ-like picture of Christianity is not only seen in our treatment of other people, but also in our treatment of Christ’s other creatures. Many Christians mock those who are concerned about *animal* “welfare.” Even worse, some Christian hunters glory in how the suffering of animals doesn’t bother them.

We Christians have at times dishonored the Good Shepherd by presenting the opposite image of His character. The light of Christ and His goodness has been clouded by the darkness of selfish sin in all Christians, especially me. Hopefully less now than in my past. Inherent selfishness, the *natural* way of survival of the fittest, so easily rises to the surface. Sacrificing others for the *desires* of self, eclipses the Way of Christ, which is to sacrifice self for the true *needs* of others.

Even those Christians (and non-Christians too), who sincerely care about the suffering of others, tend to mistakenly address cruelty and abuse concerns in fragmented and selective ways, as if the various issues are separate, mutually exclusive problems. Effectively dealing with this cancerous problem of cruelty and sinful oppression requires that we begin with a comprehensive and consistent worldview.

For Christian or non-Christian, it must begin at the beginning with the *foundational* questions of life. Where did everything come from? Why are we and other thinking, feeling creatures here? Are suffering and death a good or bad thing? Is there life after death, or is this all there is? Can we answer these questions with certainty? How?

Christian perspectives of history and reality should begin and remain consistent with the full biblical view of the CREATOR, who has self-revealed as a GOOD SHEPHERD. He is not the Great *Predator*. Reducing cruelty, restoring suffering souls, exposing deception, helping seekers find Truth (John 14:6) in an age of uncertainty, requires repairing the only foundational cornerstone on which to rebuild. It's Him and His Way, not ours (Isaiah 53:6). The cornerstone must be the consistent character of Christ, as He has revealed Himself to be. Not an idol of our own self-serving imagination.

God has clearly made known that the fullness of His care extends to all His "nephesh" creatures. He originally designed them to live in peaceful harmony - all creatures great and small - both nephesh animals and especially humans. (Rom. 1:20; Lev 17:13-14; Pro 12:10)

His *priority*, repeated throughout His written Word (Greek term, "graphae"), is most clearly and fully seen through His unique incarnate Son, Jesus (John 1:1-5; John 1:18). It's His concern for and desire to rescue (save) the weak, vulnerable, and oppressed who suffer spiritually and physically at the hands of predatory and parasitic people. This is the Good Shepherd's biblically-revealed priority. Therefore, consistent compassion is the

only accurate reflection of His glory (Hebrews 1:1-3; Isaiah 1:23). Not *rules*, but soul to soul *relationships* reflecting Him and His soul.

The FAITHFUL:

"A **righteous** person **cares** for the life [nephesh - **soul**] of his **animal**, but even the most compassionate acts of the **wicked** are **cruel**."
(Proverbs 12:10 NET)

Many throughout biblical history, who were called to lead and care for *people* in God's Way, first had to learn, humble *servant*-leadership by practicing it through their relationships with God's *animals*. Adam, in the Garden of Eden, was the first animal caretaker. He was given charge over creation and other creatures, but was commanded to be a protective "servant" leader, like Christ, not a predatory tyrant (Matthew 20:20-28) Genesis 2:15 qualifies Adam's dominion role, rank, and responsibility with two, often neglected, Hebrew terms: *abad* and *shamar*. We'll look more at the good news significance of these qualifiers later in *CHAPTER 3, PAW PRINTS: All Over His-story from Genesis to the Revelation*.

Adam's son, Abel, was a gentle *shepherd* honored by God, yet killed by his prideful brother Cain. Moses, after violently failing to protect enslaved Hebrews in Egypt, later had to spend 40 years as a humble *shepherd* before he was ready to lead the people to freedom.

King David was called by God "a man after My own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22), because David humbly knew the he needed God and His goodness. David grew up nurturing and protecting *sheep*. That's why the prophet Nathan's story about an

abused lamb was such a powerful rebuke of David sin. Here is David's psalm written from his broken, humbled heart.

“Have **mercy** upon me, O **God**,
According to Your **lovingkindness**;
According to the multitude of Your **tender mercies**,
Blot out **my transgressions**.
Wash me thoroughly from **my iniquity**,
And cleanse me from **my sin**.
For I acknowledge **my transgressions**,
And my sin is always before me. Against You, You
only, **have I sinned**,
And done this evil in Your sight
Create in me a clean heart, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit within me

For **You do not desire sacrifice**, or else I would give
it; **You do not delight in burnt offering**.
The **sacrifices of God** are a **broken spirit**,
A broken and a **contrite heart** -
These, O God, **You will not despise.**”
Psalm 51:1-17

David also authored the well-known Psalm 23 that's been so comforting to millions, including the abused “elephant man”, Joseph Merrick. As you read it, it become clear why it was so meaningful to Merrick.

“The Lord is my **shepherd**; I shall not want.
He makes me to lie down in **green pastures**;
He leads me beside the **still waters**.
He **restores my soul**;
He **leads** me in the paths of righteousness
For His name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley
of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil; For You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they **comfort** me.
You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
My cup runs over.
Surely **goodness** and **mercy** shall follow me
All the days of my life;
And I will **dwell**
in the house of the Lord
 forever.”

THE SHEPHERD'S SHEEPDOG PROPHETS

CHAPTER 3 will survey more about the animal-related messages of the Old

Testament prophets. But here considering David's mention of *sacrifices* and shepherds, it's necessary to at least start the discussion. You could say that God's “progressive-revelation” of His character and His way took a major leap forward in through His pre-Christian prophets.

As already mentioned, the previous quotes from Ezekiel and Jeremiah addressed the failure of many leaders to rule or “shepherd” God's way. The prophets also corrected many of the man-made “rules”, rituals, and motives instituted by the leaders and practiced by the people. When it comes to the subject of animals and Judeo-Christian history, animal *sacrifices* understandably come up. Those sacrifices are a big problem for many animal-loving people, and were for me before researching the subject more carefully.

We'll look at this more extensively in CHAPTER 3, but for now, think about the following two example revelations from the prophets Isaiah and Hosea. Why do they seem to *condemn* the practice of animal sacrifices? Why does Isaiah say that sacrificing an ox is like the *murder* of a human? Is it only because when they did it their motives were wrong, or is there more to the meaning of this condemnation? According to Hosea, if God desires *mercy* and intimately *knowing* Him personally instead of sacrifice, then why did Israel and other ancient people practice in the first place? When did that violent ritual start and who is responsible for it? God or humans?

“But he who **kills an ox** is like one who **slays a man**;
He who **sacrifices a lamb**
is **like** the one who **breaks a dog's neck**;
As they have **chosen** their **own ways**,
And **their soul delights** in their **abominations**, ...”

Isaiah 66:3 NASB

“Come, and let us **return** to the LORD;
.... Let us pursue the knowledge of the LORD.
[God says] **For I desire mercy and not sacrifice,**
And the knowledge of God
more than burnt offerings.”
Hosea 6:1, 3, 6

Because of the failure of people and their “shepherd” leaders to live God’s way of compassionate love, He let-go, withdrew, and stopped His revelations through the prophets of Israel for 400 years. Then as predicted and promised through each of those former prophets, He, the Creator who transcends His time and space creation, entered in the most personal way. He became one of us to show how life and leadership should be done. He chose to enter not as a king but as a humble infant, literally surrounded by animals, and placed not on a throne but in an animal feeding trough – a *manger* (Luke 2). In a similar way at the zoo, I had to sort of become an elephant and a lion and a tiger to personally communicate my heart motives with the animals I loved. Many *Christian* individuals and groups throughout history, by God’s grace through their humble faith in His love, did the same for other people. The Apostle Paul, a former persecutor of Christians, expressed it best:

“Though I am free and belong to no one, I have **made myself a slave to everyone**, to win as many as possible. ... To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have **become all things** to all people so that by all possible means I might save [*rescue*] some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may **share** in its blessings.” 1 Corinthians 9:19-23

Here are just a few examples who didn’t play Christianity, but let Christ’s light and

love live through them. The best place to start is with the very first Christian leaders, the Apostles.

It’s important to realize that the focus of the biblical writings was on human relationships with God and our other human neighbors. So, the subject of our relationship to animals is addressed only in a limited way. This is common throughout the writings of Christianity, and applies even to non-Christian writers whose primary focus is not that of animals.

CONTINUE TO EXPAND THIS SECTION

APOSTLES & EARLY CHURCH FATHERS

<https://www.google.com/search?q=early+church+fathers+animal+welfare&ie=&oe=>
<http://www.all-creatures.org/living/early.html>

EARLY CHURCH: AD 33 - 1000

PRE-REFORMATION: AD 1000 - 1500

Roman Catholicism, Popes
St. Francis 1182 - 1226

REFORMATION: AD 1517-1648

Luther, Calvin,

POST-REFORMATION: AD 1648- 20TH C.

John Newton 1725 – 1807

Wilberforce 1759 - 1883

Voltaire 1694 - 1778

Etc....

AMAZING GRACE is one of the best-known songs across the world. The author was a man who wrote that hymn out of a heart that was broken over the horrors of own sinful past, John Newton. He was a

transformed former slave trader. After his transformation through Christ, he became a pastor. His humbled teaching led one of his church members, William Wilberforce, a generation later to become a central leader in the fight against both human slavery and *animal* abuse.

Wilberforce helped form the first "*Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals*" in England. He also wrote a powerful book, *REAL CHRISTIANITY*, published in 1797. A more readable version, updated to modern English is available by Bob Beltz, *REAL CHRISTIANITY: The Book that Helped End Slavery in England*. Wilberforce devoted his life to confront and rebuke the self-pleasing, hypocritical "Christianity" that dominated his day. His critique back then is an accurate and devastating description of many aspects of modern "Christianity" today. The following quote from Wilberforce's book that sums up the state of "Christianity" back in his time, sadly fits today.

"In a great measure, the bulk of the **Christian world knows so little**, and mistakes so greatly, the **foundational principles** of the religion that it **professes**."

During that same general time, theologian John Wesley wrote a sermon (1772) entitled, *A GENERAL DELIVERANCE*, which emphasized God's concern over suffering experienced by *His* animals. The sermon was based on the Bible passage, Romans 8:19-22.

"We may inquire, in the First place, What was the **original state** of the brute **creation**? And may we not learn this, even from the place which was assigned them;

namely, the garden of God? All the beasts of the field, and all the fowls of the air, were with Adam in **paradise**. And there is no question but their state was suited to their place: It was paradisiacal; **perfectly happy**

How beautiful many of them were, we may conjecture from that which still remains; and that not only in the noblest creatures, but in those of the lowest order. And they were all surrounded, not only with plenteous food, but with every thing that could give them pleasure; **pleasure unmixed with pain**; for **pain was not yet**; it had not entered into paradise. And they too were immortal: For "God made not death; **neither hath he pleasure in the death of any living**. Thus, "as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; even so death passed upon all men;" and not on man only, but on those creatures also that "did not sin after the similitude of Adam's transgression." And **not death alone** came upon them, but **all of its train** of preparatory evils; **pain**, and ten thousand **sufferings**."
"The General Deliverance"
John Wesley's Classic Sermon
<http://wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/the-sermons-of-john-wesley-1872-edition/sermon-60-the-general-deliverance/>

Graham, C. S. Lewis, Tolkien, Linzey, Stott, Scully, Alcorn

The FALSE:

Lucifer abuses serpent, Cain, Nephilim, Nimrod (Slavery), Esau, Roman Catholic Popes, ...

PSEUDO-CHRISTIANS

First, please remember that many people who claim to be Christians do not really know Him - personally. They have never been truly regenerated, born again of His Spirit. Therefore, they don't even have the ability to reflect the fruit of His Spirit, His character.

Matthew 7:21-23

[Jesus said] 21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

Worse, is the fact that many people who are "born again", including me, too often say NO to His Spirit's will and YES to our own selfish desires. Our life testimonies dishonor Him and cause stumbling blocks for others. These people are born of His Spirit, but have childishly refused to grow to maturity in Christ. They could reflect His character but do not:

22 **But the fruit of the Spirit is love:** [reflected as] joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. 24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 **If we live in the Spirit [born again],** then let us also **walk [stoicheo = march under His authority] in the Spirit.**"
Galatians 5:22-26



with **justice**, he will give decisions for the **poor** of the earth

.... the **wolf** will lay down with the **lamb** ... the **leopard** ... with the young **goat**, the **calf** and young **lion** together; and a little **child** will lead them ... the **lion** will eat **straw** like the ox.

.... **they will not hurt or destroy** in all my Holy Mountain, for the **earth** will be **full** of the **knowledge** of the **LORD.**"
Isaiah 11:6-10

"There is a way that **seems right** to a man, but it's **end** is the way of **death.**" Proverbs 14:12

Culturally conditioned consensus affects all of us. "Christian" evolutionary racists and eugenicists following the culture that developed surrounding Darwin's view of natural selection and survival of the fittest. Taken to its logical extreme, this perspective supported and fueled Hitler's Nazism, Evo-Racists Pastors, Uninformed Consumers, Inhumane Hunters,

The FUTURE:

"... With righteousness
He will judge the **needy**,

