

Health for You:

3. Dominion: Does it mean ownership?

“What is man without beasts? If all the beasts were gone, men would die from great loneliness of spirit. For whatever happens to the beasts, soon happens to man. All things are connected.” Chief Seattle (Duwamish tribe)

It is interesting that in Genesis 2 where God said it was not good for man to be alone, He first made the animals and brought them to Adam to name. Then after that God created Eve.

Who owns the earth?

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” Genesis 1:1:

Only God can create life! All life belongs to God. Life is God’s property; this earth is His property. This was true in the beginning before mankind fell; it was true after sin came into the world; and it is true now. Notice:

“Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the LORD’S thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is.” Deuteronomy 10:14

“The earth is the LORD’S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.” Psalm 24:1

Adam’s Job Description

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.” Genesis 1:26

So God made a special race of beings; mankind was designed to be like God; in what way? Was he to have God’s power? Was he to take God’s throne? No; so in what way was he to be in the image of God? Was he to look like God? Well it can’t be that aspect because man is a flesh and blood entity and God is a Spirit. (See John 4:24) So how was he to be in the image of God? He was to have God’s character. What is God’s character? “. . .God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.” 1 John 4:16.

How was Man Created?

“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” Genesis 2:7.

So the Creator, which by the way is the Being we later know as Jesus (see John 1), did not just speak “Let there be a man.” He took more time with him, He formed him of the dust of the earth, then He breathed life into him and man became a Living soul; notice he did not *have* a living soul, he *was* a living soul; this is important! Now what about the animals?

“And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.” Genesis 2:19, 20

You can see that although God did take extra care in making man, it was not a lot extra; He also formed the animals out of the ground. They are also living souls. (See Genesis 7:21-22 to see that the animals also have the breath of life in their nostrils.)

God created Eve from Adam; it is interesting that it had to be that way; He could not have created Adam from Eve, why? Because a male has **both** gender chromosomes and a female only has the female chromosome; fascinating.

So let's look again at what God was doing when He created Adam (by the way the name 'Adam' was what God called our race; both Adam and Eve were Adam; I guess you could say Mrs. Eve Adam. (See Genesis 5:2)

Who still owns the Earth and the Animals?

We saw that at no time does God say the earth and all the creation *belonged* to Adam. Here is another text about what God says about the animals:

"For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine." Psalm 50:10, 11.

What did Jesus say about God's care for His creatures?

"Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?" Luke 12:6

Yes, even a sparrow is not beneath the notice of our wonderful God! And here in this next verse we see beasts in distress crying unto God! We have no real way to fully understand God's relationship to the animals!

"The beasts of the field cry also unto thee: for the rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness." Joel 1:20

What did Adam sell out?

In the Middle Ages, the dark time when the papal power ruled the main part of the earth with a cruel hand, there was a priest they call "St." Thomas Aquinas: (1225-1274). He put forth the idea that it did not matter at all how man treated the animals as they were *given* to man by God to do whatever he wants with them. I do not know if he originated this idea, but sadly, it was largely the belief of the so-called 'Christian' nations of Europe for centuries, and I blush with shame to say it, but many so-called Christians still believe it today. The sad thing is that many New-age type people really believe that *is* what the Bible teaches! This is a preposterous lie; you won't find any such thing even hinted at in the Bible; no person that is cruel to animals is a 'righteous man'.

"A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast: but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel." Proverbs 12:10.

The original word means he looks after, or cares about, his beast. So Adam was given *dominion*—not *ownership*! So what did this entail? Notice here:

"And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it." Genesis 2:15.

Suppose I hire you to dress and keep my garden, does that mean you *own* it? What would I say if you came in with a bulldozer and destroyed it all? Would I say that was fine? No Way! So man's job was to

take care of the earth and he was responsible for it. The dominion was also a special relationship that existed between man and the animals and nature. The animals looked to man, and before sin came along they were all in obedience and harmony. They and all nature sang in harmony, and man was included and was to see to it that all continued as such. He was sort of God's farm manager.

Again, suppose I had a lovely farm and on it I had beautiful horses, purebred dogs and the finest of cattle. I hire you to manage my farm; I give you dominion over it. If I come back and find my beloved animals suffering abuse and being killed and tortured, I would not say it was fine with me. I would discharge you from your position and likely have you jailed. Did you know that is just what God is going to do in the near future? Notice:

"And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and *shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth.*"

Revelation 11:18

If man really *owned* it, and it did not matter what they did with it, why would God destroy those who do this harm to the earth?

Satan: the Usurper

There is another question that many who do not know God's Word very well like to ask; it is, "Why did God create a devil?" The answer is that God did not create a devil; He created a perfect angel. See what the Bible says about Lucifer;

"Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity (lawlessness) was found in thee." Ezekiel 28:15

Lucifer had free will, as do all of God's higher moral beings, and he chose to rebel against his Creator; talk about biting the hand that feeds you—he bit the Hand that made him! Lucifer made a devil out of himself; the name Lucifer, which means 'light bearer', was changed to 'Satan' which means 'adversary'.

Satan wanted this world; he had lost his job in heaven and been thrown out for inciting rebellion, and as he wandered the universe, he saw the lovely world that God had created for Adam and Even to live on and care for, and he wanted to steal it. He wanted to set up his rebel-takeover headquarters here, and rule the Universe in the place of God.

God had to give man a test of loyalty; all creatures that God had given free will and moral responsibility to, had to be tested, they had to be given the chance to leave God's service if they wanted to. God set one tree separate from all others and told man he could eat of all the trees but that one; now you couldn't get an easier test than that! Adam and Eve had a whole planet full of trees, and they were to leave just *one* of them untouched. Satan was also allowed to tempt them and try to trick them, but he was *only* allowed to do it in the immediate vicinity of that one forbidden tree.

Oh yes, the newly created pair *were* warned of the rebel leader and his cohorts; they were not in the dark. That is why Satan had to use a disguise to fool Eve. We don't have a lot of details in the Bible record, but in the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy, God has seen fit to share more information.

"Holy angels often visited the garden, and gave instruction to Adam and Eve concerning their employment and also taught them concerning the rebellion and fall of Satan. The angels warned them

of Satan and cautioned them not to separate from each other in their employment, for they might be brought in contact with this fallen foe. The angels also enjoined upon them to follow closely the directions God had given them, for in perfect obedience only were they safe. Then this fallen foe could have no power over them.” Early Writings 147.

We already looked at the story of how Eve listened to the disguised Satan and chose to believe him over their loving Creator. She sold out for a piece of fruit and a fantasy story, and then talked Adam into joining her. Actually, what they did at that point was to lose their dominion; turning it over to the rebel leader. So he thought; but he got a setback in his plans as the Creator Himself stepped into the position as man’s Redeemer—his next of kin, so man could have a second chance.

Why did it happen in this way? Again, it was because Adam and Eve did not *own* the world or its creatures. Basically they lost their job as earth’s caretaker and God did not accept Satan’s claim; He did not hire Satan to take their place. He took their place to pay the penalty of their disobedience, so that they, and any of their posterity who would choose, through the power of Christ, to return to loyal obedience, repenting and confessing their sins and forsaking them; having faith in the blood of the Redeemer, which would one day be shed for them, could eventually receive eternal life, restoration to Eden and one day get their job back—the first ‘dominion’. (See Micah 4:8)

Once Adam and Eve had sold out to the rebel chief, they were now susceptible to his manipulation, where before they chose to disobey God, they were not. Remember too that they suddenly woke up to the fact they were naked; why was this? It was because they lost the special covering of holy light when they chose to rebel against God by breaking His Law. When man rebelled, he lost the ‘image of God’, His moral character; man now had the self-centered character of Satan. Satan had deceived them by getting them to want the same thing as he did—self exaltation; to usurp the power of God, cast off God’s Law, and to do as they pleased. Did you know that Satanists even today say there is only one law; “Do as you will and forbid not.” And as we know, most people live that way, even if maybe they would not admit it.

Man’s ‘Image’ Changed

If you question that Adam and Eve no longer had God’s character, read the story in Genesis and see how they right away began to accuse each other and blame God for their sin. So God gave them a promise that He was going to do something supernatural; He promised to put conflict into the situation, to put enmity between mankind and Satan and He promised a Redeemer. If God had not done this, nothing could have saved man from his chosen slavery to the rebel leader. Man, after the fall, was thinking like Satan, and if things remained that way, even Jesus dying on the cross would not have moved a single heart or saved a single person.

To illustrate that what they had done would cause sorrow and suffering, not only to themselves, but to all nature, and ultimately the Creator Himself, God instituted the sacrificial service of offering an innocent lamb to show that the Lamb of God would be sacrificed to bear their sins and ransom them from eternal death. The Creator Himself was now on death row to provide a ransom for them. Yes, Jesus was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the earth. (See Revelation 13:8)

He demonstrated this while they were still in the Garden of Eden, by providing coats made from the skins of animals; tradition says it was sheep that were used. And, by the way, I am sure the coats God

gave them were not a hunk of fur hanging by one strip over a shoulder like we see in so many of the pictures! I imagine those were fine, shearling coats that God made for His children.

“Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.” Genesis 3:21

Then, because God would not allow the nightmare of vicious sinners that were immortal, they were sent away from the Tree of Life and told they were to live on the earth as farmers and tillers of the soil until they died and returned to the dust from which they were taken.

Adam and Eve were vegans. Man was never a ‘hunter of animals’ until much later in history. Man has not evolved upward, he has devolved downward, and there have been times when some humans have had to live in caves and rude shelters, surviving a lot like animals.

“Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.” Genesis 3:23

So what is Satan’s character like? Jesus clues us in clearly:

“Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.” John 8:44

He is a cruel murderer, a liar and a cheat, and unless a human is choosing to be submitted to God and receiving His keeping power daily, that is our natural character. If you think man is naturally and basically good, you are not having your eyes open to the facts.

What else the Bible Says

“A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast: but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.” Proverbs 12:10

I find this interesting as you look at it closely, the ‘wicked’—who are the wicked? They are those who are not righteous, so that actually includes any who are not fully surrendered to the empowerment of God. So these ‘wicked’, even their ‘tender mercies’; their benevolence—even their kindness is cruel. We can see that demonstrated in how some people use their pets and companion animals only as extensions for their own selfishness and ego, and do not feel for what the animal wants and would ask for, if it could have a moment like Balaam’s ass to speak and accuse its owner.

“And the angel of the LORD said unto him, Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? behold, I went out to withstand thee, because thy way is perverse before me: 33 And the ass saw me, and turned from me these three times: unless she had turned from me, surely now also I had slain thee, and saved her alive.” Numbers 22:32

Here we see an angel rebuking Balaam for cruelty to his donkey, as well as disobeying God. Balaam nearly lost his life in that episode.

Other Insights on Man’s duty to the Animals

Let’s see some of the valuable insights from the Spirit of Prophecy writings.

“Balaam had given evidence of the spirit that controlled him, by his treatment of his beast.” Patriarchs and Prophets 442

This is a very important statement that builds on what we have been noticing in regards to what man became when he joined the rebel prince and broke away from the Law of God. It says here that Balaam demonstrated what 'spirit' controlled him. Yes, in this life whether we know it or not, we are controlled by one spirit or the other and there are only two sides in this world. Notice this profound statement.

"It is not necessary for us deliberately to choose the service of the kingdom of darkness in order to come under its dominion. *We have only to neglect to ally ourselves with the kingdom of light.* If we do not co-operate with the heavenly agencies, Satan will take possession of the heart, and will make it his abiding place. *The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through faith in His righteousness.* Unless we become vitally connected with God, we can never resist the unhallowed effects of *self-love, self-indulgence, and temptation to sin.* We may leave off many bad habits, for the time we may part company with Satan; but without a vital connection with God, through the surrender of ourselves to Him moment by moment, we shall be overcome. *Without a personal acquaintance with Christ, and a continual communion, we are at the mercy of the enemy, and shall do his bidding in the end.*" Desire of Ages 324

According to the record, there was a time when Balaam was under the Spirit of God, but his desire for gain and honor, his greed and self-seeking, had placed him under Satan's control to the extent that while his donkey could see an angel standing in the way, he was blind to it.

"A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast: but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel." Proverbs 12:10. Few realize as they should the sinfulness of abusing animals or leaving them to suffer from neglect. He who created man made the lower animals also, and "His tender mercies are over all His works." Psalm 145:9. The animals were created to serve man, but he has no right to cause them pain by harsh treatment or cruel exaction. Patriarchs and Prophets 442.

"It is because of man's sin that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together." Romans 8:22. Suffering and death were thus entailed, not only upon the human race, but upon the animals. Surely, then, *it becomes man to seek to lighten, instead of increasing, the weight of suffering which his transgression has brought upon God's creatures.* He who will abuse animals because he has them in his power is both a coward and a tyrant. A disposition to cause pain, whether to our fellow men or to the brute creation, is satanic. Many do not realize that their cruelty will ever be known, because the poor *dumb* animals cannot reveal it. But could the eyes of these men be opened, as were those of Balaam, they would see an angel of God standing as a witness, to testify against them in the courts above. A record goes up to heaven, and a day is coming when judgment will be pronounced against those who abuse God's creatures." Patriarchs and Prophets 443.

"Men and women, by their ingratitude to God, reveal that their attachment and devotion to Him, in acknowledgment of His goodness and mercy, is less than that of the beasts of the field. *The dumb animals possess more gratitude to God than do many of the beings who have been endowed with reason and capabilities.* What a reproach to man is the superiority of the service of the beasts over the service of men!" Vol. 18 Manuscript Releases 85.

"The merciful provisions of the law extended even to the lower animals, which cannot express in words their want and suffering." Desire of Ages 500

“The intelligence displayed by many dumb animals approaches so closely to human intelligence that it is a mystery. The animals see and hear and love and fear and suffer. They use their organs far more faithfully than many human beings use theirs. They manifest sympathy and tenderness toward their companions in suffering. Many animals show an affection for those who have charge of them, far superior to the affection shown by some of the human race. They form attachments for man which are not broken without great suffering to them.

“What man with a human heart, who has ever cared for domestic animals, could look into their eyes, so full of confidence and affection, and willingly give them over to the butcher's knife? How could he devour their flesh as a sweet morsel?” Ministry of Healing 315, 316.

“The curse, which has rested heavily upon the earth, and has been felt by the whole race of mankind, has also been felt by the animals. The beasts have degenerated in size, and length of years. They have been made to suffer more than they otherwise would, by the wrong habits of man.” 2 Selected Messages 417.

“Here is a lesson to all who have reasoning powers, that harsh treatment, even to the brutes, is offensive to God. Those who profess to love God do not always consider that abuse to animals, or suffering brought upon them by neglect, is a sin. The fruits of divine grace will be as truly revealed in men by the manner in which they treat their beasts, as by their service in the house of God. Those who allow themselves to become impatient or enraged with their animals are not Christians. A man who is harsh, severe and domineering toward the lower animals, because he has them in his power, is both a coward and a tyrant. And he will, if opportunity offers, manifest the same cruel, overbearing spirit toward his wife and children.

“God, who created man, made the animals, also. They were to minister to man's comfort and happiness, to serve him, and to be controlled by him. But this power was not to be used to cause pain by harsh punishment or cruel exaction. Yet some are as reckless and unfeeling toward their faithful animals as though the poor brutes had not flesh and nerve that can quiver with pain.

“Many do not think that their cruelty will ever be known, because the poor dumb beasts cannot reveal it. But could the eyes of these men be opened, as were the eyes of Balaam, they would see an angel of God standing as a witness to testify against them in the courts above. A record goes up to Heaven, and a day is coming when judgment will be pronounced against men who make themselves demons by their dealings with God's creatures.

“If animals could speak, what deeds of horror would be revealed,--what tales of suffering, because of the perversity of man's temper! How often those creatures of God's care suffer pain, endure hunger and thirst, because they cannot make known their wants. And how often is it determined by the mercy or the caprice of man, whether they receive attention and kindness, or neglect and abuse. Punishment given in passion to an animal is frequently excessive, and is then absolute cruelty. *Animals have a kind of dignity and self-respect, akin to that possessed by human beings. If abused, under the influence of blind passion, their spirits will be crushed, and they will become nervous, irritable, and ungovernable.*

“There were beasts in Eden, and there will be beasts in the earth made new. Unless the men who have indulged in cruelty toward God's creatures here, overcome that disposition and become like Jesus, kind and merciful, they will never share in the inheritance of the righteous. They would, if there, exercise the same spirit that had not been overcome here. All disposition to cause pain to our fellow-men or to

the brute creation is Satanic. Balaam evinced the spirit which he possessed, in his course toward his beast.” Signs of the Times, November 25, 1880 par. 22

Provision for Animals right in the Heart of the Law of God!

I want to look at 2 final passages: first notice Jonah; God had told him to preach that Nineveh was going to be destroyed on a certain day. The people had repented and God spared them and did not destroy them. Now here we see the prophet all bent out of shape because they weren't wiped out and he might be thought to be a false prophet. God's reply to him has an interesting thought in it.

“And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?” Jonah 4:11

See that word 'cattle'? Well it really means any four-footed beast; it means animals in general; but the translators couldn't conceive of God being concerned about animals in general, so they translated it 'cattle' after all, cattle have value and so it was alright for God to be concerned about cattle. No, all the animals have value with God, they are His property, He cares for them and about them.

Now let's look into the very heart of God's Law. Did you know that the Ten Commandments are the very description in human language of the Character of our loving God? Yes it is so. Notice:

“But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, *nor thy cattle*, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:” Exodus 20:10

Here is that same word again and it means all your animals! God wanted the patient beasts of labor and burden to have a day off to rest! Here is another reference to this and it is even clearer:

“Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: *that thine ox and thine ass may rest*, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed.” Exodus 23:12

Now I think by now you can see that God does have a care for the animals He created. They are His property and man is answerable for how they are treated. While it is true that provision was made for man to eat animal flesh in a limited way, it was only under certain strict laws and was not to be done with cruelty, such as we see in the world today. It is also true that in modern times the pages of our inspired guidance urges a vegetarian, even vegan whole food diet.

Old Thomas Aquinas is not only dead, he was dead wrong! Man has no right to cause misery and suffering to animals or to destroy or damage the earth he lives on, any more than he has a right to hurt and harm his fellow humans. Misery and suffering is occurring to animals on a level never before seen in the history of this earth. The ultimate weapons of mass destruction are your knives and forks!