There is no doubt that animals will be in Heaven. The Bible is clear. "When I saw Hea...e and behold a white horse..." Rev 19:11. The Bible describes the angels around God's throne as having features and characteristics like that of a lion, a leopard, a bear (Hosea 13:7-8) and an eagle (Ezekiel 1). God Himself is likened in Scripture to a lion, a leopard, a bear (Hosea 13:7-8) and an eagle (Deut. 32:1). God made a good and perfect earth, populated by many animals. God directed Adam to name the animals - indicating relationship.

Creation worships the Creator

The largest book in the Bible, the middle book of the Bible, the Hymn and Prayer book of the Bible - the Psalms - reveal that all of God's Creation have contact with Him (Psalm 93).

All God's Creatures praise Him. "Praise the Lord from the earth...beast and all cattle creeping things and flying above...let them praise the Name of the Lord for His Name alone is exalted. His Glory is above earth and Heaven." Psalm 148:7-13. "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord." Psalm 150:6.

The living creatures around God's throne singing, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of His Glory!" are animals (Isaiah 63).

As the animals in the Ark shared the salvation of Noah and his family, so we can have every confidence that our beloved pets and animals will share in redemption.

Every creature in Heaven...

The last book of the Bible presents the final climax of the ages when all Creation faces the Creator. First the four living creatures (the animal-like angels around God's throne, as described in Ezekiel 1) praise God, then the twenty-four elders, then the Redeemed people of God, then the angels (Rev 4:10; 5:12). Finally the great scene is described when all living beings present their worship to Almighty God. "And every creature which is in Heaven and on earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying, 'Blessing and honour and glory and
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For the animals, “Jesus said: ‘are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God.’” Luke 12:6. It is that Scripture which inspired the first act of the Union of South Africa, the minting of the half cent coin and later the one cent coin with two sparrows on it—reminding us that God cares for the very least.

Animals matter to God

There are those who say that animals do not matter, but the Lord Jesus taught that His people are worth more than many sparrows (Matt 6:26). If a sparrow is worthless, then of what value are you? A hundred times zero equals zero. A million times zero still equals zero.

For you to be of great value, the birds of the air must be of some value. Obviously animals matter to God because the presence of animals in Nineveh is recorded as one of the reasons for God’s mercy in not destroying that sinful city (Jonah 4:11).

The Ark included animals and is a picture of salvation

The most Revealing Old Testament picture of God’s redemptive work is Noah’s Ark. God took great care to save the animals from the Flood. In God’s instructions to Noah we see many details and repeated emphasis on animals (Gen 6). The Redemption of mankind from the Judgement of the Flood is a picture of Salvation. The rescue of the animals in the Ark is also a picture of how animals share in the benefits of Christ’s Redemption. Just as with the animals in Noah’s Ark, we see that the Salvation provided by Christ includes animals. “That in the dispensation of the fullness of the times, He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven and which are on earth—in Him.” Eph 1:10

In his commentary on Genesis, John Calvin wrote: “It was a kind of restoration of the former state of things when God brought to Noah those animals, which He intended should be preserved through Noah’s labour and service...Moses explains the manner in which the animals were gathered together into the Ark and says that they came of their own accord...which shows that the blessing of God rested on the obedience of Noah, that in a moment such an assemblage of all animals should take place.”

“Then God remembered Noah and every living thing and all the animals that were with him in the Ark...” Gen 8:1

Noah’s Ark is the most revealing Old Testament picture of God’s redemptive work and the salvation He offers to us. Interestingly, the Ark included animals...

Reversing the curse

Following the Flood, “God made a Covenant with Noah and with every living creature...for perpetual generations...The rainbow shall be in the cloud, to remember the everlasting Covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” Gen 9:12,16

In the words of Isaac Watts’ immortal Hymn, Joy to the World: “He comes to make His blessings flow far as the curse is found!” Just as the rebellion of Adam and Eve brought death to every creature, so in the second Adam — Jesus Christ — the effects of the curse are reversed. “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.” 1 Cor 15:22.

The blessings of the second Adam, Christ, are greater than the curse of the first Adam. “And all flesh shall see the Salvation of God.” Luke 3:6 (The Greek word ‘sarx’ translated flesh is equally used to refer to all mankind and all breathing creatures, all animals and all Creation).

“Because the Creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.” Rom 8:21

King David’s view

The prophet Nathan spoke to King David of a poor man in his kingdom who had a little lamb who shared his food, drank from his cup and even slept in his arms.

Animals on special assignment

Throughout the Bible we read of various animals to whom God spoke and gave assignments. A raven was assigned to bring food to Elijah (1 Kings 17:4-6). The donkey through whom God spoke, (Num 22:21-41).

The lion whom God sent to kill the prophet who disobeys God (1 Kings 18:41).
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13:24-30. The big fish that swallowed Jo- nah and transported him to the shore (Jo- nah 1:7). The lions whom God command- ed not to harm Daniel (Dan 6:22). All the animals that God commanded to present themselves to Adam to be named (Gen 2:19), and the animals whom God guided to assemble in Noah’s Ark (See Genesis 6 and 7).

Do animals have souls?

The Hebrew word ‘nephesh’ is translated soul more than 130 times in the Old Testament (KJV). The same Hebrew word ‘nephesh’, which is translated soul whenever it refers to man, is translated as beast, living creature or life when referring to animals. In Genesis 1:21, when referring to God’s creating of the whales and every living creature which moves and the birds in the air, the same word ‘nephesh’ is used. When God made a Covenant with Noah and every living creature, the word ‘nephesh’ is used again to refer to the animals (Gen 9:9-10). Proverbs 12:10 speaks about a good man being kind to his animals, the word again is translated from the Hebrew ‘nephesh’.

On occasion the KJV translates ‘nephesh’ as soul when referring to animals, including Psalm 74:19, and Job 12:7-10. Leviticus 17:10-12 also states that “For the life of the flesh is in the blood...” and the soul is in the blood (Deut 12:23). The Hebrew word ‘nephesh’ is translated psyche in the Greek Septuagint. Throughout the history of the Church, the classic understanding was that animals have souls. It was only from the time of the humanist enlightenment that the existence of animal souls was even questioned.

Do animals have spirits?

Ecclesiastes 3:21 speaks of the spirit (ru- wash) of the animal. There is no doubt that “God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” John 4:24. To worship God one must have a spirit, yet the Psalms and Revelation repeatedly speak of animals worshiping God. Yes, animals are not created in the image of God — but neither are angels and they will be in Heaven.

Character, memory and affection

Anyone who has adopted pets, or seen a litter of kittens or puppies born and raised them is well aware that every puppy and kitten has its own individual character and personality. They plainly have memory, preferences and can express affection, sensitivity and compassion. All of that is what we normally mean by our soul.

Those who have been privileged to have lions, leopards and cheetahs as friends also appreciate the depth of character and deep affection that they are capable of.

Will our pets be in Heaven?

Throughout the years my family has rescued and adopted many cats and also some rabbits and ducks. When I was growing up I had the joy of having a lioness, Vivian and a leopard, Malcolm, as my dearest friends.

When any of our pets have died, we have grieved and wept and buried them with Scripture readings. Hymns singing and prayer, thanking God for all the happy memories and committing our beloved pet into the hands of our Creator. When my children have asked if we will see and recognise our pets in Heaven, I could answer emphatically, Yes!

Together forever

“The wolf also shall dwell with the Lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.” Isaiah 11:6. “Search from the book of the Lord, and read...not one of these shall fail: not one shall lack in their time.” Isaiah 34:16-17. Sprout have also expressed their expectation of seeing beloved pets in Heaven. Animals were part of God’s original paradise before the Fall. The state of paradise before the Fall is the clearest picture of what we can expect in Heaven. “For the earnest expecta- tion of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.” Rom 8:19.

Will extinct animals be in Heaven?

When speaking to Job, God pointed to the great land and sea creatures, including dinosaurs, who reflect something of the glory and greatness of our Creator (Job 40:41). We can expect to see extinct creatures, such as dinosaurs, in Heaven.

Pets in Paradise

Cambridge professor C. S. Lewis wrote that he believed that animals may enjoy immortality along with their masters. In “The Great Divorce” Lewis portrayed Sarah Smith, a woman very ordinary on earth, as great in Heaven. In Heaven she is surrounded by the very animals she cared for on earth.

In her book on Heaven, Joni Eareckson wrote that she expected God to bring our pets back to life in eternity.

The view of many theologians

Theologians John Piper and Dr. R. C. Will we be able to communicate with the animals in Heaven?

God spoke through Balaam’s donkey. Balaam’s donkey was unable to express his own thoughts and feelings in the language understood by Balaam. Whales and dolphins communicate in highly complex ways. The Apostle John in the Revelation “Heard an eagle that was flying in mid-air calling out in a loud voice...” Rev 8:13. In the Garden the serpent spoke to Eve. Revelation 5:13 declares that every creature in the universe will be declar- ing God’s praises audibly. Clearly animals had greater capabilities before the Fall. Christ’s Redemption will reverse all the effects of the curse.

“And there shall be no more curse...” Rev 22:3. No wonder “the whole creation groans and labours with birth pains together until now.” Rom 8:22.
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God’s people and creatures
When Adam was created, God surrounded him with animals. When Noah was protected from the Flood and when God made a Covenant with him, he was surrounded by animals. When Abraham was led to the Promised Land, he was accompanied by many animals. When God led Moses and the Children of Israel through the Red Sea, provided for them in the wilderness and made a Covenant with them, they were accompanied by many animals. When our Lord Jesus was born, He was surrounded by many animals in the stable. When our Lord returns to establish the new Heavens and the new earth, we can have every expectation that He will again be surrounded by the animals He has created.

The Source of love
God is the source of all love. God is the giver of every good and perfect gift (1 John 4:16). It is impossible that we could love our pets more than God does. If God has put such deep love in our hearts for these beloved furry family members, then we may be sure that He loves them far more than we do (James 1:17).

As the animals in the Ark shared the salvation of Noah and his family, so we can have every confidence that our beloved pets who have been adopted into our families will also share in the blessings in Redemption. Our Lord Jesus Christ came to make His blessings flow as far as the curse is found. In Christ the curse of the Fall is reversed. Christ proclaims: “Behold, I am making all things new.” Rev 21:5

The Creator and His Creation
“For since the Creation of the world God’s invisible qualities – His eternal power and Divine nature have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made.” Rom 1:20. In lions we see something of the power of Israel through the Red Sea, provided for them in the wilderness and made a Covenant with them, they were accompanied by many animals. When our Lord Jesus was born, He was surrounded by many animals in the stable. When our Lord returns to establish the new Heavens and the new earth, we can have every expectation that He will again be surrounded by the animals He has created.

Overwhelming evidence
In the light of these and many other Scriptures, many theologians and Bible scholars firmly believe that our Loving Almighty Creator intends all His creatures to enjoy Heaven with Him forever.

The only part of Creation that will be missing from Heaven, according to the Bible, are those sinful human beings who reject the great Salvation that God has revealed in the Bible and provided through Jesus Christ.

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