

# Men and Animals

Years ago wen we took our children tu Disneyland I was struk by one frase in the biology display: "Man is a human animal." It went on tu sho all the ways in wich peepel and animals share the same bodily parts & functions. I accepted all that; but there was sumthing disturbing about it.

Okay, I askd myself then - & I'm stil asking it now - "How du we differ from animals?" Mor specifically, "How much is it okay for us tu act and think like an animal, & how much is it not okay?"

Now it's time for New Year rezolucions, & that's a good time tu raiz this question and think a bit mor about it. I hav askd my asociats in heven wot they think. "How much can we rely on our animal nature tu gide us?" I askd.

The reaction was a strong one, voiced by sevrul of my frends, leading citizens of heven, gods if u wil, hu as God's victory proceeds ar now reawakening & ar agen strong enuf tu think and talk tu me. "Doant tel them tu act like animals!" "Wy?" I askd.

They imediatly started quoting the Bible, with its warnings agenst the Beast, & the worship ov the Beast. I alredy knew a little about heven's sad downfall & its relation tu the increase of the animal mentality in heven.

Theo: Wot dus it mean tu worship the Beast?

Voice\*: To worship the Beast is tu put yurself in its hands so tu speak. It means trusting too much in the instinctiv animalistic side ov yur nature.

\* Sumtimes this is one person, sumtimes sevrul speaking together.



Theo: So it's a personal matter. Wud being like an animal mean u ar mor self-centered?

V: If I say tu be animalistic is tu be self-centered, u wil contradict me and say animals arnt enny mor self-centered than men. So I hav tu explain. The Beast that the Bible warns us agenst is a particular kynd of beast.

T: Wot kynd? - tho I can guess u ar talking about a self-centered beast, as distinct from one hu is mor unselfish. So that's the kynd we ar wornd agenst?

V: Yes. In moast cases we ar talking about wot u call the alpha male. The alfa male animal is in general wot we must not be. The alfa male animal dusnt make it as a human.

T: U must be referring tu sumthing like the documentary I wochd reecently, shoing a yung kangaroo male ataking the aging alfa male, & finaly defeating him & driving him off. So wot's rong with humans duing that? Isnt it okay for a yung man tu make a New Year's rezolucion that this year he wil be mor of an alfa male?

V: No, that isnt okay. A yung man can rezolv tu be mor agressiv in the sense of mor energetic in pursute of his goals. But if his rezolv shapes up as being too ful of the agressiv part, shoing too little regard for the needs, rites & dezires of others, he's out of line.

T: But surely they ar not all like that. We hav all these animal luvvers on erth hu ar zellusly defensiv of the rites, needs & dezires of animals. They even say animals ar better than humans. They wud justify evrything animals du as being rite & natral & propper.

V: Most of them have not actually lived with wild animals. Either that, or they think it's perfectly okay for some to oppress and kill others, even if they do it not for any reason but for their own glory & their competitive pleasure in physical strength & size alone.

What we are saying is that if you are going to kill others, you had better not be doing it as a game; you had better have a good reason for it. The worst killers among the animals do it for fun. And so do some men. That's where it's important to draw the line.

T: The animal lovers would point out that not all animals are cruel, not all harm others for fun. They would defend their actions on the grounds that any killing they do is justified by hunger. In fact from the tone of their words, the animal lovers would not recognize any animal as ever doing wrong.

V: It's true we make allowances for animals. We take care of them, provide their food, protect them. By & large we do not blame them as sinners. But even with animals we need to face the fact that an alpha male – or other members of the colony – may be self-centered, greedy...cruel, may play life as a game to be won...a game to be played always at the expense of others. With animals as with men, bullies can gain control, humans are unworthy to rule.

Think about stories you have told us yourself...for example Cricket, the boss horse of your remuda when you were at school in the Coachella Valley...how he was mean to all the other horses, making sure they were all afraid of him, biting, bullying them. Or the sled dog you told us about who went around every morning to each member of the team, growling & terrorizing each of them in succession, & insisting that he must lead, even though since he lacked sensitivity in his feet, he couldn't keep them from falling through the ice. That's the kind of thing that as humans we must avoid, if the results on earth are not to be disastrous.



T: So we should make our resolution not to be like the Beast of the Bible, who presumably was a bad beast. The beast of the book of Revelation always has horns, & he is always pushing with them.

V: Right. In other words it saddens us to hear that some men on earth, and also the rebels against God in heaven, justify their sins on the ground that we humans are closely related to animals. Whatever animals do is not a sin, therefore whatever humans do is not a sin either. To accept that, & to justify one's low-life behavior on those grounds, is to worship the Beast.

T: So if I am making a new year's resolution, I do not want to make the mistake of thinking I will be more successful this year if I grow to be more like an animal. Animals are almost always forgiven by God and man when they are selfish, impulsive, greedy, predatory, lazy or wilfully cruel. We forgive the predatory animal or bird's habit of living always at the expense of others. We say "After all they kill only to eat &/or to feed their young."

*Conclusion we agreed on:* We humans have the responsibility of running the universe; animals do not. We have an enormous brain capacity; animals do not. We humans cannot get by with being selfish, greedy, impulsive, predatory, lazy and irresponsibly cruel the way so many dominant animals – male or sometimes female – do. That's something we hope someday all humans will take to heart. Then they will not fall prey to the Beast – often called the beast within. Instead they will always show by their behavior that when you are human, success & the approval of others demands a whole lot more virtue, unselfishness, planning and self-

discipline than is required of any animal.

