

Do Animals Have Spirits or Souls?

An interesting question! Some people say animals have a spirit but not a soul, some say they have a soul but not a spirit. Men are made up of a body, a spirit, and a soul. Check out the verses below to see how animals also have a spirit and a soul.

Animals Have a Spirit

First, animals have a body. I don't think anyone will try to prove that they don't... But here's a verse that specifically says animals have a spirit:

Ecclesiastes 3:21 – “Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?”

[spirit] – H7307 – translated as “spirit” and “breath”. Everything that has breath has spirit. In Strong's Concordance, translation D says “spirit (of the living, breathing being in man and animals)”. Compare this also with Genesis 1:2, “the Spirit of God”.

[beast] – H0920 – translated as any animal, domesticated or wild, cattle, livestock, etc.

[the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth] – It's not only the body of animals that go in the earth, it's also their spirits. Does this mean that our dogs, cats, and other pet's spirits will go down to hell? That the spirit becomes nothing? One thing is for sure; the spirit of a man and animal differ.

Genesis 1:2 – “And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”

[the Spirit of God] – H7307 – the same word as the “spirit of man” and “spirit of the beast”. It's not to say that the spirit of a God, man, and animal all look the same.

The Spirit Looks like the Body It Is From

2 Corinthians 12:2 – “I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven.”

[I cannot tell] – Judging from 2Cor 12:2, if a person has an “out of body” experience, their spirit looks like their body (or at least they can't tell the difference). This is to say that when a spirit leaves a body, to doesn't look like an animal, a cartoon ghost without legs, or a bright ball of light; it just looks like whatever the body looked like that it came from.

Luke 16:23-24 – “And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.”

[in hell] – In hell, the rich man's spirit had eyes, had a tongue, Lazarus' spirit had fingers, Abraham had a bosom... This implies a full human spirit body.

Animals Have a Soul

Mark 8:36 – “For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”

[soul] – G5590 – translation 2A defines soul as, “the seat of the feelings, desires, affections, aversions (our heart, soul etc.)” Do animals have feelings? Desires? Affections? Yes. My dog feels happy to see me, desires to eat food, and shows affection to the whole family. For a more biblical example, look at the snake in the garden. Even the snake sinned due to its desires (Gen 3:21). The conclusion is that animals have souls.

Spirits & Souls Are Not the Same

Hebrews 4:12 – “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

[dividing asunder of soul and spirit] – just like the joints and the marrow aren’t the same, neither are the soul and spirit. For more evidence on the soul and spirit being different, see Isa 42:1, Matt 12:18, & 1Th 5:23.

There Are Animals in Heaven

There are “spirit horses” (2Ki 2:11, 2Ki 6:17, & Rev 19:14). Why assume that Earth has more variety than Heaven? If anything, Earth should be deprived while Heaven is thriving. Heaven Will Be On Earth.

Many people wrongly believe that their body will be dead forever while their spirit alone stays in Heaven for eternity. The truth is, if a the body of a man who has been justified by faith dies, his spirit will go to God (2Cor 5:8) and wait until his body is resurrected (1Th 4:16), and will then live on earth forever (Isa 65:17-25). There will be animals on earth for eternity:

Isaiah 65:25 – “The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.”

Can Animals Sin?

Yes. The snake in the Garden of Eden sinned (Gen 3:14). Anything with desire can sin (Jam 1:14-15). Genesis 3:14 also calls “the cattle” cursed, though it’s not recorded that they sinned.

Will My Pet Be In Heaven?

You mean to ask, will my pet be raised from the dead in an immortalized and glorified state? Judging from Ecclesiastes 3:21 which says the spirit of an animal falls to the ground when it dies, the answer is probably not. But Ecclesiastes 12:7 says, “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it”, so probably. The bible just doesn’t specify. I wouldn’t worry too much about it, because of John 15:7 that says, “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” Do you want your pet back? The most important thing for you to do is to abide in Jesus, and Jesus in you.