

# Animals and the Image of God in the Bible and Beyond

By Joshua M. Moritz

**Abstract:** This article examines theological thought pertaining to the *imago Dei* doctrine in light of its relation to non-human animals within the framework of biblical, intertestamental Jewish, and early Christian writings. Evaluating theological understandings of human nature as they relate to and interact with theological and philosophical understandings of animals and animal nature, the author finds that the understandings of the image of God and dominion as they are ideally conceived in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures are significantly more closely related to the ideas of human-animal continuity, compassion, and responsibility than to human rationality or the human immaterial immortal soul (and the entailed implication of animals' lack thereof).

**Key Terms:** animal theology, image of God, anthropology, Messianic peaceable kingdom, priests of creation

God created man's nature to be midway, so to speak, between angels and animals.<sup>1</sup>

—Augustine, *City of God*

While largely neglected as a primary focus in most contemporary systematic theological discussions, concepts of non-human animals have played a key part in the theological and philosophical history of human self-understanding and continue to play an important role to this day.<sup>2</sup> The project of demarcating and defining humanity—in terms of *uniqueness* and the *image of God*—by contrasting the human with the non-human has been called the 'comparative question' of theological anthropology and has been described as "a quest for ways in which the human is different from other entities."<sup>3</sup> In this article I examine the role of the Jewish and Christian scriptures in spearheading this theological quest for human identity as it relates to animals. I explore conceptions of human identity in light of animal nature as they are found in the Hebrew Bible, in early Jewish intertestamental literature, in the New Testament as viewed within its first century cultural context, and in influential early Christian extracanonical writings. Evaluating

the relationship between the *imago Dei* and animals within this corpus of sacred writings I show that the ancient Hebrew, early Jewish, and early Christian concept of the image of God presents a challenging ecological, incarnational, and cosmos-embracing vision of how humans, created in God's likeness, are to rightly and justly relate to their kin in the world of non-human animals.

## Animals and Anthropology among the Ancient Hebrews

The Jewish and Christian scriptures begin with the clear testimony that all life—plants, animals, and humans—has its ultimate source in God's free creative decision. In this way, "the orientation of scripture is *theocentric* as opposed to *anthropocentric*." It is exceptionally clear from the witness of Scripture that "humans are not God: they are not made gods in creation and they are not the goal of creation . . . The world is not made just for human beings."<sup>4</sup> In both Genesis and in the larger Hebrew

Joshua M. Moritz is the former managing editor of the journal *Dialog* and the current managing editor of *Theology and Science*. He is a PhD candidate in philosophical and systematic theology at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, CA.

conception of creation, it is unambiguous that human beings were meant to share the earth and its resources with their fellow creatures. While “animals in the pagan religions were little more than extras in the drama” of reality—as mythical mouthpieces of morality, gods in disguise, props for allegorical exposition, omens, instruments of divination, and ‘objects of fantasy’—the Hebrews presented the world with

a vision of God who loves and cares for each person and with that vision a view of the creatures as individual beings also known by him, sharing with man not only earth’s bounties but also—a still more intimate bond—in its punishments and suffering. For the first time animals are not only significant in themselves, belonging to Him and not to us; they are players, however lowly, in the story of our own moral development.<sup>5</sup>

In Genesis we read that animals are produced via a combination of God’s empowering word and the earth’s direct response to God’s command to be creative and “bring forth living creatures according to their kind.”<sup>6</sup> We notice from the text that animals were here first, that this earth is their God-given home, and that God blesses their lives and activities, and pronounces them ‘good.’

### *A Bond of Kinship between Humans and Animals*

There is no hint here that the immortal soul or capacity for rationality are of any ontological consequence. Such body-soul dualism is entirely foreign to the Hebrew text. If one desires to read an anthropology of immaterial souls *into* the text, then one must indeed grant animals such ‘souls’ as well. Animals are ‘brought forth’ from the earth, and humans are likewise shaped into existence by the hand of God from the very same soil.<sup>7</sup> As the offspring of God’s word and the earth’s fertile receptiveness to God’s command, animals are described as ‘living souls’ or ‘living beings’ (נֶפֶשׁ, *nephesh*).<sup>8</sup> The exact same term is used in Genesis to describe human beings, and thus implies a profound kinship,

making human-animal ontological continuity explicit. Other Hebrew biblical terminology reflects this unity of human and beast before God as well. For example the phrase ‘spirit of life’ (רוּחַ חַיִּים, *ruach hayyim*) can indicate both animals and humans, as can the word ‘flesh’ (בָּשָׂר, *basar*), which literally refers to “the softer parts of the body of an organism, or to the body in general, or to humanity in general.” In a similar manner, the expression ‘all flesh’ (כָּל בָּשָׂר, *kol basar*) can mean “all living creatures, animal as well as human.”<sup>9</sup>

A bond of kinship between land animals and humans is revealed in the fact that they share the same day of creation. As the days of Genesis 1 represent concentric “circles of greater or lesser intimacy with God,” one notices that land animals “belong to the innermost circle of intimacy,” having been created on the sixth day together with humans.<sup>10</sup> The culmination and crown of creation—the seventh day Sabbath rest—also embraces both animals and humans.<sup>11</sup> God rests with the *whole of creation* on the Sabbath, the enduring proleptic eschatological “symbol of the destiny of the entire created world—to be with God as God intended for all eternity.”<sup>12</sup> Another tie that ontologically binds human and non-human animals together is that both creatures taste the bitter sting of death, and inherit in common the grave of mortality:<sup>13</sup> “For the fate of humans and the fate of animals is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and humans have no advantage over the animals; for all is vanity” (Eccl 3:19).

### *The Significance of Naming*

Comrades in death, this kinship with our fellow creatures also is manifest in the fact that God considers animals as possible companions in life for the newly formed human being. In Genesis 1 and 2 animals are portrayed as part of the same created family of God that includes humans. One aspect of this special family relationship is witnessed in the act of Adam ‘naming’ (קָרָא, *qara*) the animals that God presents before him. It is crucial to understand that this ‘naming’ in itself does not establish

a *relationship of dominion* as has often been argued, but rather a *personal relationship* between two parties. While such naming relationships of dominion, authority, possession, protection and care are established in the Hebrew Bible by a king, ruler, or person giving a city, person, or entity his *own* name,<sup>14</sup> in Genesis 2 the act of naming the animals according to *their own* identities transitions them from an 'I-it' relationship to an 'I-thou' relationship.<sup>15</sup>

In the Hebrew Scriptures the act of naming "went beyond a concern for a convenient means of providing individual designation. Naming intended to capture in some way the essence of an individual, expressing actual identity rather than mere identification." A name was understood to accurately reveal and reflect the individual's character, personality, and even destiny, and one's "name was often considered to be but an expression, indeed a revelation, of his [or her] true nature."<sup>16</sup> Thus, to name someone in the biblical sense involves a deep understanding of his or her nature and implies a considerable level of intimacy. When one gives someone a name he or she is acknowledging another's identity in community. To use this concept of naming here in 'the Beginning' to describe humankind's relationship to animal-kind is significant in that it "expresses a profound relationship and kinship" between the two parties.<sup>17</sup> In the Hebrew Testament to be 'inconsequential' and 'senseless' is to literally be 'without a name,' but, as we have clearly seen, there is no danger of this in the biblical understanding of animals.

The biblical act of receiving a name brings one into the sphere of God's promises, and it is evident in the Hebrew scriptural tradition that animals have a special morally responsible and redemptive relationship with God. This means that, like humans, animals—according to the Hebrew Bible—are culpable and thus punishable for their actions and violations of God's commands. The serpent, as the cleverest of animals, reaps the consequences of the deceptive discord he sows. Other animals, having been given, along with humans, every green thing to eat but forbidden to consume the flesh of fellow beasts, are held accountable by God for the violence that they and 'all flesh' or 'every living animal' have done upon the earth, and for the

corrupting of God's ways. The flood in Genesis is thus as much a punishment for the wayward ways of animals as for those of humans. In a similar manner, "at Mount Sinai, animals as well as humans are threatened with punishment should they touch the mountain." While earlier Mesopotamian legal codes exact no such punishment, for the Hebrews, an ox that gores and kills a human is to be held capitally guilty.<sup>18</sup> In a similar fashion, animals are to fast and to put on sackcloth and ashes with the rest of the repenting Ninevites in Jonah, lest they be destroyed by God's judgment upon the city.<sup>19</sup>

### *God's Covenant with Animals*

The Hebrew Bible clearly reflects a theological zoology in which animals possess the capacity to stray from the will of God. "The doctrine of reward and punishment . . . retributive justice, is extended to beasts as well as to men . . . and scripture does not spare animals from responsibility for their deeds."<sup>20</sup> Accountability, in the form of judgment, however, is merely the dark side of redemption—both of which are grounded in God's covenantal relationship. In Genesis 9 God establishes a covenant not just with Noah and his family, but also with "every living creature." Thus, in the Hebrew scriptural tradition "animals are included within the moral dealings of God with humankind."<sup>21</sup> God enters into covenantal community with both human and animal beings, and both partake in the curses and the blessings. The understanding of covenant in the Hebrew Scriptures as "God-given community with all living beings" demands a deep sense of human responsibility towards animals, defines moral limits for our interactions with animals, and provides a theological basis for Judaism's radical acceptance that "in practice animals have certain basic rights."<sup>22</sup>

As God's caring providence embraces animals and "tender mercies are over all his works"<sup>23</sup> so the regulations of Torah, spiritual insight of the Psalms, and wisdom of the Proverbs defend animals as subjects to be treated with compassion and deference. Thus, Old Testament law forbids one from taking

a mother bird together with the young, from muzzling an ox that treads out corn, from yoking an ox and a donkey together to plow, from mutilating or castrating any animal, and so on.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, such regulations and sentiments have been largely interpreted within Judaism as expressions of compassion towards animals rather than as utilitarian measures to protect one's property, or pious mandates "directed against heathen magical practices."<sup>25</sup> The Psalms praise the Creator God for caring and providing for animals, and Proverbs reflect on the relationship between righteousness and one's kind regard for beasts.<sup>26</sup>

It is in the context of such care and concern for, and kinship and covenanting with animals that one must understand the biblical concept of the *image of God* bestowed upon humans, and the notion of *dominion* entailed therein. The biblical ideal for the relationship between humans and animals is one of peace and harmony. Within the created order of Genesis 1 and 2, which God proclaimed 'very good,' there is no trace of violence or bloodshed between humans and animals or even among different species of animals. Safeguarding this harmony, God commands humans to adopt a vegetarian diet "in the immediate context of the bestowal of the image of God and the granting of dominion."<sup>27</sup> It is only later, after this intended harmony has already been broken "and all living things had corrupted their way upon the earth," that God concedes to permit humans to eat the flesh of animals;<sup>28</sup> and even then such permission is ambiguous as humans are told that they will be held accountable for the life-blood of every animal and every human that they kill. As all life ultimately belongs to God and not to humans, so we, as the image of God, are to bear in mind that for every life we take—whether animal or human—we are personally answerable to God.<sup>29</sup>

### *Animal Sacrifice*

Animal sacrifice in the Hebrew Bible and among the Israelites must be understood in the context of such accountability. Indeed, while the children of Noah were "permitted to eat meat once the blood

has been removed, the Israelites appear to have been required to have the blood drained at the sacrificial altar, and thus the sacrificial ritual would seem to have been a necessary prelude, as it were, to the eating of meat . . . Profane slaughtering, as such, would appear to have been forbidden."<sup>30</sup> In the Hebrew tradition the "very legitimacy of consuming the meat of an animal is, in part dependent on its sacrifice on an altar." Approaching the altar, one is reminded that the life of the sacrificed animal originates in God, belongs to God, and returns to God. This context of remembering is the only acceptable place where the slaughter of animals may lawfully take place. Outside the vicinity of the sanctuary altar, the killing of animals is condemned as murder, and such "unauthorized slaughter is deemed unlawful bloodshed, and the perpetrator is deserving of divine punishment!"<sup>31</sup> In practice the ritual regulations governing acceptable sacrifice actually function to drastically limit the amount of flesh that can be consumed.<sup>32</sup>

In addition to acting as a tangible rite stressing humanity's accountability to God for the lives of animals, the institution of animal sacrifice for human atonement also paradoxically emphasizes humankind's kinship and commonality with animal-kind in that one may be substituted for the sake of the other. As a sacrificial surrogate, the blood of animals is taken in lieu of human blood.<sup>33</sup> As our silent stand-ins and faithful friends, animals liberate and rescue us as they pay with their lives for the covenants we break.

### *The Messianic Kingdom*

Scripture anticipates a day, however, when sacrifices and bloodshed shall end and nonviolent harmony between human and non-human animals will be restored. In this age of God's messianic kingdom, aggression between humans and animals will cease. As the Lord declares in Hosea 2:18: "In that day I will also make a covenant for them; with the beasts of the field, the birds of the sky and the creeping things of the ground. And I will abolish the bow, the sword and war from the earth; and will make them lie down in safety."

In a similar way Isaiah 11:1-10 proclaims the eschatological messianic kingdom as a time when enmity between human and animal shall cease. The prophet speaks of a future time when the “shoot from the stump of Jesse” will judge the poor with righteousness and

decide with fairness for the meek and afflicted of the earth; and the rod of his mouth will come down on the cruel, and with the breath of his lips he will put an end to the evil-doer.

... And the wolf will dwell with the lamb,  
And the leopard will lie down with the young goat,

And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together;

And a little child will lead them.

Also the cow and the bear will graze,

Their young will lie down together,

And the lion will eat straw like the ox.

The nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra,

And the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den.

They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain,

For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD

As the waters cover the sea.

The messianic age or kingdom of God will be characterized by God's creatures living together in harmony.<sup>34</sup> As a restitution of edenic tranquility, this age will witness the restoration of dominion properly exercised by a humanity renewed in the image of God. Such dominion is rightly carried out on behalf of the poor and helpless. The Hebrew notion of dominion as a central aspect of the *imago Dei* is a key concept in the relations between humans and animals and their identity before God. Taken from the background of the Hebrew king who was to rule on behalf of Yahweh, the ruler granted with dominion must “watch carefully over the rights of his subjects, and so ensure, in particular that the weaker members of society may enjoy his protection and thus have justice done to them according to their need.” From the beginning the Hebrew understanding of kingship “makes it clear that the king is both dependent upon and responsible to

Yahweh for the right to exercise his power; for his subjects, whatever their status in society, are one and all Yahweh's people.”<sup>35</sup> Within the framework of the original Hebrew understanding of dominion it stretches the imagination to think that any Jewish king would have been regarded as justified in hunting down his subjects, or in slaughtering and eating them.<sup>36</sup>

The image of God and dominion as they are ideally conceived in the Jewish scriptures thus have much more to do with responsibility than with human rationality or the immaterial immortal soul (and the entailed implication of animals' lack thereof). In the Hebrew tradition humans as the image of God are the priest-kings of creation. Representing God's righteousness, justice, compassion and care of their subjects in the non-human animal world, humans as creation's priest-kings both offer the world of creatures back to its Creator in thanksgiving, and intercede on behalf of the whole creation by bringing the brokenness and affliction of the creaturely realm before God to beseech divine intervention and healing.

## Animals in the New Testament and Beyond

Within the New Testament the Gospels reflect the continuity with the Hebrew tradition typical of the Palestinian-Antiochan Christian tradition. The four Evangelists portray a Jesus steeped in the Old Testament themes of mercy and compassion towards animals. The Jesus of the Gospels is the one who inaugurates the peaceable kingdom of the messianic age described in Isaiah 11, and who fulfills the early Jewish messianic tradition. Within this tradition the Messiah as the new Adam and the renewed image of God ushers in the climax of creation. In the Gospels, Jesus, like Adam, is born into the world surrounded by animals as his faithful companions. As the ox and ass adore the newborn king in the manger, the early Christians saw Old Testament prophecy concerning the Messiah fulfilled (“the ox knows his owner and the donkey

the crib of his Lord,” Isaiah 1).<sup>37</sup> As we read the familiar words of John, “The word became flesh,” we should be reminded that the Word did not merely become *man* (άνήρ) or even *human* (άνθρωπος), but rather the Word became *flesh* (σάρξ)—“the term which defines the solidarity of humanity with the rest of creation in its bodiliness.”<sup>38</sup> In the Gospel’s message of God’s incarnate solidarity with the rest of creation, humanity in its true form as the image of God is not *removed from* creation, but rather *restored to* creation in order to reclaim the material cosmos on behalf of God’s in-breaking kingdom.

Jesus as God’s Messiah and the renewed *imago Dei* comes to restore all relationships that have been disfigured by sin. In early Jewish thought preceding Jesus there was significant concern over the distorted and disharmonious relationship between humans and animals as a result of the marring of the image of God in humans. Picking up from the Old Testament tradition regarding animals, early Judaism viewed such discord to be the natural consequence of sin as expressed both in the enmity between humans and wild animals, and in human cruelty and callousness towards animals of all kinds. Human maltreatment of animals is a violation of God’s covenant, is unrighteousness, and is a betrayal of our own human vocation—for the granting of dominion calls us to be the protective sovereigns and peacekeepers of the animal world. In intertestamental Jewish literature we see this apprehension over the failings of humans with regard to animals articulated through both ethical mandates and eschatological admonitions. For example, Zebulon, the son of Jacob and one of the Twelve Jewish Patriarchs, in his pseudepigraphical *Testament* counsels his descendents in his parting blessing: “And now, my children, I tell you to keep the commandments of the Lord: to show mercy to your neighbor, and to have compassion on all, not only human beings but also voiceless animals. For on account of these things the Lord has blessed me.”<sup>39</sup>

While compassion towards animals is the prerogative of the righteous person and earns God’s blessing, the man or woman cruel to animals stirs up God’s anger and judgment. Thus In *II Enoch*

we hear the souls of animals cry out to God for justice to avenge the cruelties and sins that have been committed against them by humans. There we read that “. . . the Lord will judge human souls for the sake of the souls of animals . . . And just as every human soul is according to number, so also it is with animal souls. And not a single soul will perish until the great judgment. And every kind of animal soul will accuse the human beings who have sustained them badly . . .”<sup>40</sup>

### Compassion for Animals in Jesus’ Ministry

At the time of Jesus, “Jewish eschatological expectation included the hope that the righting of all wrongs in the messianic age would bring peace between the wild animals and humans.”<sup>41</sup> In Mark 1:13 we see Jesus depicted as the new Adam who at the beginning of his ministry is led by the Spirit into the wilderness. Here, Mark informs us that “ήν μετά τών θηρίων.” While the usual English translation reads “he was with the wild animals,” the expression “ήν μετά τών” in the Greek original “has the strongly positive sense of close association or friendship,” and “in Mark’s own usage elsewhere in his Gospel, the idea of close friendly association predominates.”<sup>42</sup> Understood in its proper Jewish theological and historical context, Mark’s declaration that Jesus is the friendly companion of the wild animals means that as the “eschatological Adam” and “as the messianic Son of God on behalf of and for the sake of others,” he proleptically and representatively establishes “the messianic peace with wild animals” in anticipation of Isaiah 11.<sup>43</sup>

While Jesus does not make the relationship between humans and animals the primary focus of his preaching and teaching, as described in the canonical Gospels, his ministry is remarkably continuous with the Hebrew scriptural themes regarding animals discussed above. Jesus “presupposed the religious and ethical attitudes to animals which were traditional and accepted, both in the Old Testament and in the later Jewish tradition.”<sup>44</sup> Consideration, care and compassion for animals are

presuppositions for many of Jesus' teachings regarding humans. Consider for example the following passages: "Suppose one of you has only one sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath; will you not lay hold of it and lift it out? How much more valuable is a human being than a sheep. So it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." (Mt 12:11-12) And, "If one of you has a small animal or an ox that has fallen into a well, will you not immediately pull it out on a Sabbath day?" (Lk 14:5) Finally, "Does not each of you on the Sabbath day untie his donkey or ox from the manger and lead it away to give it water? And ought not this woman . . . be set free on the Sabbath day?" (Lk 13:15-16)

Divorced from their early Jewish context, one might be led to think that Jesus was merely reiterating the value of humans over animals. One must consider, however, that the Greek phrase 'more valuable' (*diapherein*), meaning 'superior to,' is to be understood in the sense that a king is 'superior to' his subjects. Certainly, as we have seen above, a king in Hebrew scriptural thought is 'superior to' his subjects only as the first among equals and not in any intrinsic sense.<sup>45</sup> Removed from the early Jewish context, one might miss that here animals are considered not for their *property* value any more than humans are. Instead the issue is the relieving of suffering through compassion, and the practice of righteousness on the Sabbath. When Jesus spoke, his audience was not all in agreement over this issue of compassion on the Sabbath as it regarded animals. The Essenes in fact forbade such acts of mercy for animals on the Sabbath, considering them to be work: "No man shall assist an animal to give birth on the Sabbath day. And if it should fall into a cistern or pit, he shall not lift it out on the Sabbath."<sup>46</sup> They did not however, forbid such saving acts for humans.<sup>47</sup> In a similar way, "later rabbinic opinion was still divided as to whether it was permissible to help the animal out of the pit" on the Sabbath.<sup>48</sup> The contentious issue here is not loss of property, because first, the animals are not in immediate danger, and second, such concerns over possessions are categorically forbidden on the Sabbath. But rather, the matter is concern with acts of compassion intended to prevent suffering *for both humans and animals*.<sup>49</sup> The

historical context of the debate makes it apparent that Jesus understood the issue in this way and cast his lot with those who opted for unfettered compassion and mercy to all God's creatures.

Not only are *humans* to show concern for individual animals, but Jesus teaches that *God* cares for them as well. From feeding the birds of the air, even unclean ravens, to remembering and caring for each individual sparrow ensnared in the fowler's net and sold at the market as the animal cheapest in price, God's providential concern even extends over individual creatures valued little by humans and deemed unimportant and limited in their usefulness.<sup>50</sup> Jesus in his teaching regarding humans and animals assumes an unbroken continuum between the two that allows Jesus to compare them. Humans, according to Jesus are not set on a different ontological plane from animals. The difference is one of degree rather than kind.

### *Non-Canonical Sources*

While the Gospels do not elaborate on the details of Jesus' thoughts and actions regarding humans and animals, other early Christian writings continue to portray the mission of Jesus the Christ within the Hebrew tradition of compassion and the Old Testament messianic tradition of the new Adam inaugurating the peaceable kingdom. Whether such non-canonical orthodox Christian writings are fictional stories about possible events in Jesus' life or authentic historical memories is beside the point. What is important is that these stories reveal the character and identity of Jesus as it was understood in many early Christian communities. Furthermore, some of these documents were highly influential in the early church and remained so throughout the Middle Ages.

In the *Protoevangelium of James* (around 130 CE) the author recounts that at the birth of Jesus the animals in the surrounding countryside pause in reverent awe. In the historically influential *Infancy Gospel of Matthew*<sup>51</sup> dangerous wild beasts fulfill the Hebrew scriptures as they worship the young Jesus and obey his commandments.<sup>52</sup> Jesus meanwhile explains to his mother, "all the beasts of the

forest must necessarily be docile before me.”<sup>53</sup> The *Infancy Gospel of Matthew* continues:

Lions and panthers adored him and accompanied them in the desert. Wherever Joseph and Mary went, they went before them showing them the way and bowing their heads; they showed their submission by wagging their tails, they worshipped him with great reverence... And the lions kept walking with them, and with the oxen and the asses and the beasts of burden... and did not hurt a single one of them... they were tame among the sheep and the rams which they had brought with them from Judea... they walked among wolves and feared nothing; and not one of them was hurt by another. Then was fulfilled that which was spoke by the prophet ‘wolves shall feed with lambs; lion and ox shall eat straw together.’

As the animals travel with Jesus and his family, he feeds them and takes care of them until “all were satisfied... and they gave thanks to God.”<sup>54</sup> When Jesus is older he goes into a cave of a lioness and her young near Jericho. “And when the lions saw Jesus, they ran to meet him and worshipped him.” Later Jesus, speaking to an unbelieving crowd declares, “how much better are these beasts than you, seeing that they recognize their Lord and glorify him; while you men, who have been made in the image and likeness of God, do not know him! Beasts know me and are tame; men see me and do not acknowledge me.”<sup>55</sup>

We witness a portrayal of the mature Jesus in an ancient Coptic manuscript which possibly relates a “genuine historical reminiscence.”<sup>56</sup> Jesus, while traveling with the disciples found a man whose mule had collapsed because the burden was too heavy to carry. As the man was beating the animal until it bled,

Jesus came to him and said, ‘Man, why do you beat your animal? Do you not see that it is too weak for its burden, and know you not that it suffers pain?’ But the man answered and said, ‘What is that to you? I can beat it as much as I please, since it is my property and I bought it for a good sum of money’... But the Lord said, ‘Do

you not notice how it bleeds, and hear you not how it laments and cries for mercy. But three times woe to him of whom it complains and cries in distress.’ And he came forth and touched the animal. And it arose and its wounds were healed. And Jesus said to the man, ‘Now go and beat it no more, that you also may find mercy.’

## Philo

While the Palestinian tradition of scriptural exegesis witnessed in the Gospels and non-canonical writings above reveals a strong continuity with Old Testament themes, and exhibits a quite literal interpretation of Hebrew Scripture, the tradition of exegesis in diaspora Judaism and in Pauline Christianity is much more influenced by Greek philosophical thought and Hellenized Judaism, and prone to an allegorical understanding of certain Old Testament passages. One of the most influential Hellenized Jews was the Alexandrian philosopher Philo. Philo’s philosophy integrates Stoic teachings and Middle Platonism—a form of revised Platonism, which incorporated Stoic doctrine and terminology under Antiochus of Ascalon (130-68 BCE) and Eudorus of Alexandria (35 BCE).<sup>57</sup> Philo enlists Stoic allegorical methods of interpreting Homer in order to derive the hidden spiritual meaning behind certain Old Testament passages. In Genesis 1:24, for example, where God creates the animals on the sixth day, and in other places where animals are mentioned, Philo interprets them as the human passions (*παθoί*) rather than literal non-human creatures.<sup>58</sup>

Taking up Stoic philosophy and ethics into his Judaism, Philo, like the Stoics, also denies that animals possess rationality.<sup>59</sup> For Philo however, the Hebrew tradition of compassion is too strong to be overthrown by the procrustean Stoic moral disregard of animals. Indeed, Philo points out that “Moses extends his principles of humanity and compassion even to the race of irrational animals, allowing them always to share of those benefits.”<sup>60</sup> Philo interprets the dietary laws and many other Old Testament regulations in terms of compassion



for animals as well. While his ethical inclusion of animals within the sphere of morality sets him apart from the Stoics, Philo does follow the Stoics' lead in a key distinction that would have great repercussions for later Christians who were influenced by his thought. Namely, he identifies reason (*λόγος*) with the Divine and consequently defines the image of God in humans as mind (*νοῦς*) and as rationality. According to Philo, the *imago Dei* indicates humanity's 'endowment of reason.' And this is what scripture means when "God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." This expression, says Philo, "means that God breathed the divine reason into man" through the mediating agency of the Logos. "The Logos is the seal with which God has stamped his image upon the personality of man. The rational soul is therefore unlike other created things. Since this image is the stamp of the Eternal Logos, it naturally possesses in itself the attribute of eternity."<sup>61</sup>

### *Paul's Echo of Philo*

The apostle Paul, as a fellow Hellenized Jew, is, like Philo, influenced by the Stoic allegorical exegetical tradition. Searching for the deeper 'spiritual meaning' of Old Testament scripture leads Paul at times to sacrifice instances of biblical concern for animals on the altar of allegorical interpretation. For instance, we read Paul's understanding of Deuteronomy 25:4 in 1 Corinthians 9:9-12: "For it is written in the Law of Moses: 'Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.' Is it about oxen that God is concerned? Surely he says this for us, doesn't he? Yes, this was written for us, because when the plowman plows and the thresher threshes, they ought to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest."

The literal meaning interpreted by the Palestinian exegetical tradition as expressing God's concern for animals is glossed over by Paul here to arrive at the deeper hidden meaning—that apostles such as Paul have the right to financial recompense from the churches for their ministry.<sup>62</sup>

A diaspora Jew like Philo, Paul is likewise influenced by the Stoic philosophical and ethical

tradition. Paul's "basic anthropological and ethical structure is similar to, indeed dependent upon, Stoicism."<sup>63</sup> Paul and the Stoics use many of the same terms, share key phrases and metaphors, and have numerous conceptual parallels.<sup>64</sup> Paul agrees with the Stoics that humans are the children of God and even directly quotes the Stoic Aratus to this effect in Acts 17:28: "For we are indeed his offspring." At times Paul also seems to pick up the Stoics' notion of humans as the sons and daughters of God via the capacity for reason, or Philo's parallel concept of the image of God in humans as mind or rationality. This appears to be the philosophical context behind Paul's discussion of the nature of men and women in 1 Corinthians 11:3-16. Paul's discussion regarding male and female hair lengths and female head coverings parallels a line of reasoning of the Stoic Epictetus. As Paul asks, "Does not nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a disgrace to him, but that if a woman has long hair, it is her glory?," Epictetus similarly appeals to "the instruction of nature with regard to hair on the chin as a sign of the distinction between sexes that is to be preserved and not confused."<sup>65</sup> In this same discussion Paul refers to a distinction between human males and females in their capacity to bear the image of God. Though Paul does not elaborate much on the nature of this difference, in light of his later assertion (1 Cor 14:34-35) that women are to be in submission to men with regard to theological information and instruction we may reasonably surmise that Paul, like Philo, is ascribing to men a greater degree of rationality, intelligence (or mind, *nous*), and wisdom.<sup>66</sup> From this presupposed difference in rational capacity he argues to a distinction in the image of God as it is displayed in men and women.

### *Paul's Departure from Greek Thought*

In his use of allegory to interpret Scripture, his understanding of human nature, and his linking of the image of God with intelligence, Paul appears to be following Philo and the Stoics. For the most part, however, when Paul speaks of the image of God, he makes a radical departure from the Stoics and

Philo, and favors theological themes from the Hebrew messianic tradition. Like the Gospel writers, Paul sees Christ Jesus as the ‘final (*eschatos*) Adam’ who is the renewed image of God, and as such is the purpose and goal (*telos*) of human nature (1 Cor 15:45). As human beings our destiny is to be conformed to the image of Christ who is the image of God. Though this “being renewed in knowledge after the image of the Creator” at times involves an intellectual component (Col 3:10), Paul, contra the Stoics and Philo, understands the human transformation into the likeness of Christ as fundamentally “not an achievement of rational knowledge, but an affirmation of faith.”<sup>67</sup>

Jesus, the Messiah and the renewed image of God, is also the central agent in the renewal and redemption of the entire created cosmos (Col 1:15-20, 2 Cor 5:19). While for the Stoics animals are excluded from ethical concern and forgotten in the final tally of what matters, the strong Hebrew roots of Paul’s theology remain too entrenched for him to exclude the non-human creation—including animals—from God’s redemptive concern. For the Stoics, only the rational—in other words, the humans—partake in the freedom reserved for the offspring of God. For Paul, however, the non-human “creation itself will also be liberated from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious freedom of the children of God” (Rom 8:21). The gospel of Jesus the Messiah is a message of reconciliation and redemption not just for humans, but for all of creation.

Going against the Stoic philosophical tide of anthropocentric exclusionism, Paul invokes the Hebrew theological tradition to extend the community of belonging (*oikonomia*) to include the non-human creation. The Christian human being, having been renewed through Christ Jesus once again into the true image of God, will live in harmony and even fellowship with non-human animals in fulfillment and anticipation of the messianic peaceable kingdom that Jesus inaugurated. We see hints of the realization of this harmony through events referred to in Paul’s own writings, such as his being protected from “wild beasts in Ephesus” (1 Cor 15:32) and “delivered out of the mouth of the lion” (2 Tim 4:17).

## The Acts of Paul

Other ancient sources give us a more complete theological picture of the apostle Paul as an agent of reconciliation anticipating the new creation. One account of particular interest, which concerns Paul’s interaction with a lion, comes from *The Acts of Paul*—an influential body of documents well-known in the early church, regarded as orthodox by many church fathers, and even included within the New Testament canon within certain parts of the ancient church.<sup>68</sup> Like the non-canonical narratives of Jesus mentioned above, it is difficult to assess the historical veracity of such traditions. We know that the *Acts of Paul* appeared in written form before the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, and that the author “used stories and traditions that were told many decades before they were finally written down.”<sup>69</sup> We also know that the narrative of “Paul and the Lion” discussed below is of particular antiquity and is consistent with events mentioned in Paul’s canonical letters. The value of such stories for the present study lies not primary in their undeniable historicity, but in how they were regarded and received by the early church and throughout the Middle Ages. In the case of “Paul and the Lion” we know that church fathers such as Hippolytus are “so sure that his readers believe the *Acts of Paul* that he can argue from its statements to those of the Book of Daniel.”<sup>70</sup> We also know that this account, along with the greater contents of the *Acts of Paul*, was quite popular throughout the Middle Ages and significantly “influenced Christian art and literature not least for its description of Paul.”<sup>71</sup>

I, [Paul], was walking in the night, meaning to go to Jericho in Phoenicia, and we covered great distances. But when morning came, Lemma and Ammia were behind me... There came a great and terrible lion out of the valley of the burying-ground. But we were praying... But when we finished praying, the beast had cast himself at my feet. I was filled with the Spirit (and) looked upon him, (and) said to him: ‘Lion, what wilt thou?’ But he said: ‘I wish to be baptized.’

I glorified God, who had given speech to the beast and salvation to his servants. Now there was a great river in that place; I went down into it and he followed me. I myself was in fear and wonderment, in that I was on the point of leading the lion like an ox and baptizing him in the water. But I stood on the bank, [and prayed] . . .

When I had prayed thus, I took (the lion) by his mane (and) in the name of Jesus Christ immersed him three times. But when he came up out of the water he shook out his mane and said to me: 'Grace be with thee!' And I said to him: 'And likewise with thee.' The lion ran off to the country rejoicing.<sup>72</sup>

Here in this strong witness to the Hebrew scriptural tradition we see Paul as an agent of the messianic peaceable kingdom. In this narrative "the author of the *Acts of Paul* wanted to show by the baptism of the lion that in the activity of Paul the redemption of creation is realized, that is, God's *oikonomia* attains its goal."<sup>73</sup>

This text clearly indicates that eternal life is not only for humans. The lion, considered the wisest animal in the ancient Roman and Greek world, "realizes that eternal life is the most important value and that there is only one way to obtain it: by becoming a Christian in baptism. So when on the way to Jericho the lion requests baptism from Paul the apostle, it is requesting eternal life."<sup>74</sup> Paul, in turn, gladly rescues the lion from eternal death, thereby welcoming him into the eschatological community of God, and fulfilling the words of Isaiah 40:5 and Luke 3:6: "Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all flesh will see it together." As the Word became flesh in Christ, so 'all flesh' or 'all living things' shall together see God's redemption.<sup>75</sup> Just as, ultimately, 'every creature' will praise God and the Lamb (Rev 5:13).

While many of these non-canonical traditions may sound foreign to the majority of Christians in the present age, the early church fathers were quite familiar with these stories and many accepted them as legitimate narratives of Jesus and the apostles that were judged to be in harmony with the documents of what would later become the canonical New Testament.

## Conclusion

In this article I have surveyed ancient Hebrew, early Jewish and early Christian understandings of theological anthropology as it relates to the nature of animals. I have argued that the image of God as understood within these sacred texts betrays no hint of the centrality of the immortal, immaterial soul or of the unique human capacity for rationality. Rather, such body-soul dualism and anthropological focus on the rational soul are alien to the Jewish and Christian scriptures' understanding of the human likeness to God. Resisting Gnostic notions of anthropology, which see escape from the material world as the ultimate goal and vocation of human beings, the early Jewish and Christian vision of humans pictures them as fully at home within the created physical universe. Humans, the created priest-kings of creation, as understood by the Scriptures, are called to be God's mediators to the animal world. As the first among equals, humans represent God's will and compassion to non-human animals, protect and care for the helpless and poor, and work as agents of reconciliation to bring justice, harmony, and peace to all creatures of God's earth. From the ancient Hebrew covenants to early Jewish and early Christian visions of eternal life in the renewed creation, the proclaimed eschatological messianic kingdom is a future reality inclusive of 'all flesh,' human and non-human animal alike. Contrary to commentators such as Peter Singer and Lynn White who would place the blame of humanity's estrangement from nature entirely on the Christian notion of the image of God in humanity,<sup>76</sup> it is evident that such forces of humanity's alienation from nature are not endemic to Christianity itself or to the Christian doctrine of the *imago Dei*.

## Endnotes

1. Augustine *City of God* 12; Paul Waldau, *The Specter of Speciesism: Buddhist and Christian Views of Animals*, American Academy of Religion Academy Series (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 200.

2. For example, the popular “Emerging Church” author Rob Bell’s recent book on theology and sexuality discusses the image of God and humans as between animals and angels. *Sex God: Exploring the Endless Connections Between Sexuality and Spirituality* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2007). For a more academic discussion within the theology of nature concerning human uniqueness among animals see J. Wentzel van Huysteen, *Alone in the World?: Human Uniqueness in Science and Theology* (Wm. B. Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, Michigan and Cambridge, U.K., 2006), 70, 286.

3. Colin E. Gunton, “Trinity, Ontology, and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*,” in *Persons, Divine and Human: King’s College Essays in Theological Anthropology*, ed. Christoph Schwöbel and Colin Gunton (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1991), 47. Gunton describes the two primary approaches towards anthropology as 1) the ontological enquiry and 2) the comparative enquiry.

4. Dan Cohn-Sherbok and Andrew Linzey, *After Noah: Animals and the Liberation of Theology* (London: Mowbray, 1997), 18.

5. Matthew Scully, *Dominion: The Power of Man, the Suffering of Animals, and the Call to Mercy* (New York: St. Martin’s Griffin, 2002), 92; Ingvild Sælid Gilhus, *Animals, Gods and Humans: Changing Attitudes to Animals in Greek, Roman and Early Christian Ideas* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 78.

6. Colin E. Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 61. For an ancient account of how God uses creation to create see Basil *Homily 7*, 1. For an application of this within the field of theology and science see Niels Henrik Gregersen, “The Idea of Creation and the Theory of Autopoietic Processes,” *Zygon 33* (1998): 333–367.

7. “Adam is made from the dust of the ground—symbolizing his organic relationship to the earth.” Cohn-Sherbok and Linzey, *After Noah*, 20.

8. For animals see Gen 1:20–24; 2:19; 9:10, 15; for humans see Gen 2:7; 9:5.

9. Elijah Judah Schochet, *Animal Life in Jewish Tradition: Attitudes and Relationships* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1984), 53.

10. Andrew Linzey, *Animal Theology*. University of Illinois Press, ed. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 34.

11. Jürgen Moltmann, *God in Creation: A New Theology of Creation and the Spirit of God*, 1<sup>st</sup> Fortress Press ed., The Gifford Lectures 1984–1985 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 6. See also Lev 25:6–7.

12. Cohn-Sherbok and Linzey, *After Noah*, 20. For two contemporary discussions on how the Sabbath includes the whole of creation see Jürgen Moltmann, *God in Creation: A New Theology of Creation and the Spirit of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 288 and Hans Schwarz, *Eschatology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 405.

13. Schochet, *Animal Life in Jewish Tradition*, 52.

14. 2 Sam 12:18, 49:11; Isa. 4:1; 2 Ch. 7:14; Jer. 7:10.

15. For a discussion see W. Taylor Stevenson, “I-Thou and I-It: An Attempted Clarification of Their Relationship,” *The Journal of Religion* 43:3 (July 1963): 193–209. For the original discussion on this, see Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Ronald Gregor Smith (New York: Continuum, 2004).

16. G.F. Hawthorne, “Name,” in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, gen. ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, fully rev., Volume Three: K-P (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1986), 485, 481.

17. Cohn-Sherbok and Linzey, *After Noah*, 21.

18. Schochet, *Animal Life in Jewish Tradition*, 54.

19. An interesting tradition within Judaism is that God spared Nineveh chiefly because he had compassion for the animals. “Should I not

have compassion on Nineveh, the great city in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know the difference between their right and left hand, as well as many animals?” Jn 4:11. See Cohn-Sherbok and Linzey, *After Noah*, 26.

20. Schochet, *Animal Life in Jewish Tradition*, 54.

21. Cohn-Sherbok and Linzey, *After Noah*, 22.

22. *Ibid.*, 23.

23. Ps 145:9 and “O LORD, you preserve both man and beast,” Ps 36:6. And see also Job 39 and Job 12:10, “In whose hand is the soul of every living thing and the breath of all mankind.”

24. Deut 22:6; Deut 25:4; Deut 22:10.

25. Contra Passmore, “The Treatment of Animals,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 36 (April-June 1975): 196; and Gary Steiner, *Anthropocentrism and its Discontents: The Moral Status of Animals in the History of Western Philosophy* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005). See Shubert Spero, *Morality, Halakha, and the Jewish Tradition* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1983), 153; Cohn-Sherbok and Linzey, *After Noah*, 30–32.

26. Ps 104; Ps 24:1; Ps 93; Ps 50:10; Pr. 12:10; Pr. 31:8.

27. Cohn-Sherbok and Linzey, *After Noah*, 17.

28. Gen 9:3.

29. Gen 9:4–5. See discussion in Linzey, *Animal Theology*, 125–127.

30. Schochet, *Animal Life in the Jewish Tradition*, 48. Wild animals or birds procured in the hunt must have their blood similarly drained into the earth. It should be mentioned that scripture does not hold the hunter in high esteem, and although ancient art depicts the rulers of Egypt and Mesopotamia as personally involved in the royal sport of lion hunting, no king of Israel is ever described participating in this or any hunt, see Schochet, *Animal Life in the Jewish Tradition*, 49.

31. Schochet, *Animal Life in the Jewish Tradition*, 47. See also Lev 17:3–4 and Isa 66:3.

32. Schochet, *Animal Life in the Jewish Tradition*, 49.

33. Richard D. Ryder, *Animal Revolution: Changing Attitudes towards Speciesism*, rev. and updated ed. (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2000), 25; Schochet, *Animal Life in the Jewish Tradition*, 46.

34. Schochet, *Animal Life in the Jewish Tradition*, 51.

35. Aubrey R. Johnson, *Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1955), 7.

36. Ryder, *Animal Revolution*, 24.

37. Cohn-Sherbok and Linzey, *After Noah*, 62.

38. Walter Houston, “What was the Meaning of Classifying Animals as Clean or Unclean?” in *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics*, ed. Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 32.

39. “Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, The Sons of Jacob the Patriarch: Zebulon, the Sixth Son of Jacob and Leah 5:1” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1 (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 806.

40. “II Enoch 58:4” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1 (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 184.

41. Richard Bauckham, “Jesus and Animals II: What Did He Practice?” in *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics*, 57.

42. Bauckham, “Jesus and the Wild Animals (Mk 1:13),” 5; Bauckham, “Jesus and Animals II: What Did He Practice?” 58.

43. Bauckham, “Jesus and the Wild Animals (Mk 1:13),” 6.

44. Richard Bauckham, "Jesus and the Wild Animals I: What Did He Teach?" in *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics*, 33.
45. Bauckham, "Jesus and Animals: What Did He Teach?" 45.
46. "Damascus Document" (CD) 11.12-14, in Geza Vermes *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, fourth ed. (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 109.
47. Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, "No man shall profane the Sabbath for riches or gain on the Sabbath day. But should any man fall into water or fire let him be pulled out," 110.
48. Bauckham, "Jesus and Animals I: What Did He Teach?" 37.
49. Bauckham, "Jesus and Animals I: What Did He Teach?" 38; Johnson, *Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel*, 7 ff.
50. Mt. 6:29 and Mt. 10:29-31, Lk 12:6-7 and Lk 12:24. "The sparrow's fall to earth is not its death...but what happens when the hunter's throw ensnares it? It will then be sold in the market." Bauckham, "Jesus and Animals I: What Did He Teach?" 40-43.
51. "Infancy Gospel of Matthew" in *The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation*, ed. J.K. Elliott, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 84; "The Infancy Gospel of Matthew" is also known as *The Book About the Origin of the Blessed Mary and the Childhood of the Savior* and *The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew*. This work was very influential in the Middle Ages and indeed "much of medieval art is indecipherable without reference to books such as *Pseudo-Matthew*."
52. "Infancy Gospel of Matthew", 94.
53. *Ibid.*, 95.
54. *Ibid.*, 96.
55. *Ibid.*, 97.
56. Cohn-Sherbok and Linzey, *After Noah*, 66.
57. See David T. Runia, *Philo of Alexandria and the Timaeus of Plato* (Leiden: Brill, 1986), 21. And see also John Dillon, *The Middle Platonists, 80 B.C. to A.D. 220* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1996), 139-183.
58. David T. Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature: A Survey* (Assen: Van Gorcum; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 172.
59. Robert M. Grant, *Early Christians and Animals* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 44.
60. Philo quoted in Schochet, *Animal Life in Jewish Tradition*, 152. See also Bauckham, "Jesus and Animals I: What did he Teach?" 36.
61. McCasland, "'The Image of God According to Paul,'" 92-93.
62. Paul again quotes Deut 25:4 in 1 Tim 5:18 to make the same point. In 2 Cor 6:14 Paul interprets Deut 22:10 "You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey together" allegorically to refer to believers and unbelievers rather than animals.
63. Robin Scroggs, review of *Paul and the Stoics*, by Troels Engberg-Pedersen, in *Anglican Theological Review* 84:1 (Winter 2002).
64. David A. DeSilva, "Paul and the Stoa: A Comparison," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 38:4 (December 1995), 549-564.
65. DeSilva, "Paul and the Stoa: A Comparison," 553. Epictetus *Dissertations* 1.16.9-14; Compare to 1 Corinthians, 11:14.
66. McCasland, "'The Image of God' According to Paul," 86. Philo maintains that the mind (*nous*) is patterned after God (Philo, *Creation* 69.10). For Philo, the woman, who is generally more oriented towards the bodily senses and emotions than the rational mind, displays of the image of God less than the man. According to Philo it is because of the woman's lack of rationality (in comparison to the man) that the serpent spoke first to her in the garden (Philo, *Creation* 165.23). That this difference between the sexes is not an ontological distinction is evident in Philo's example of the Therapeutrides—"manly women" who as members of a Jewish monastic sect participate fully in the sect's life of study, prayer, and spiritual contemplation. These women are the exception to the rule. See Sharon Lea Mattila, "Wisdom, Sense Perception, Nature, and Philo's Gender Gradient," *Harvard Theological Review* 89:2 (1996).
67. McCasland, "'The Image of God' According to Paul," 87.
68. For example, the *Acts of Paul* is listed in the Canonical list of the Codex Claromontanus, and parts of the *Acts of Paul* are found in the Armenian Bible. Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, 350-353.
69. Helmut Koester, *Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 2 *History and Literature of Early Christianity*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York and Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2000), 328.
70. Edgar J. Goodspeed, "Recent Discoveries in Early Christian Literature," *The Biblical World* 46:6 (December 1915), 343.
71. Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, 353.
72. Tamás Adamik, "The Baptized Lion in the *Acts of Paul*," in *The Apocryphal Acts of Paul and Thecla*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer (Kampen, Netherlands: Kok Pharos, 1996), 64.
73. Adamik, 65.
74. Adamik, 73-74.
75. For a discussion of similar accounts that describe the positive interactions of apostles with animals, such as those from the *Acts of Thomas* and the *Acts of Phillip*, see Cohn-Sherbok and Linzey, *After Noah*, 67-69.
76. Lynn White, for example, argues that the historical cause of the current ecological crisis is the Judeo-Christian belief that humanity was made in God's image. "Christianity made it possible to exploit nature in a mood of indifference to the feelings of natural objects." In "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," *Science* 155, no. 3767 (March 10, 1967), 1205. See also Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation*, 1<sup>st</sup> Ecco paperback ed. (New York: Harper Collins, 2002), 187.