

Dear Terry Lee,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You wanted to know if there was any biblical reference pertaining to the afterlife of animals. You wondered if you would ever see your dog again.

First, we must say that we are very sorry for your loss. We know from personal experience how painful it is to lose a beloved animal companion and understand why you would desire to see your dog again. Although there is no scripture in the Bible regarding the afterlife of animals, we hope our explanation will give you some comfort.

Because Jesus paid the ransom price by sacrificing his perfect sinless life for Adam and all his progeny, the entire human race has been redeemed and will have a chance for life either in heaven or on earth in the future. "For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive." (I Corinthians 15:22)

Although Jesus' incredible sacrifice was for humanity, not for animals, nonetheless, animals play an integral role in God's grand design. Animals have been vital to the earth's ecology, have assisted man in his labors, have been a means of sustenance and have been comforting loyal companions since the creation of man. God had great love for his animals and asked Adam to name them (Genesis 2:19-20). The prophet Isaiah alludes to the role animals will play in the future peaceable kingdom on earth. "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand in the viper's nest." (Isaiah 11:6-8) From the above scriptures we learn that animals will no longer be predators, but will be tame, loving vegetarians.

Will you ever see your dog again? If you ask God to return your dog to you in the Kingdom, will God grant such a request? Because the Bible gives us no direct answers to these questions we offer the following possibilities: 1. God would allow the return of a beloved animal from someone's past so that their relationship could continue. 2. If, for some reason, that allowance is outside God's plan, we do know that God's compensating blessing to fill that void would not only be sufficient, but it would be glorious – far beyond our expectations. God's plan for man, the earth and its creatures is all encompassing and will be more wonderful than our imperfect finite minds can fathom. We look forward with great anticipation to the day when suffering, sickness and death of man (and God's beloved animals) will be but a distant memory. "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away. He who was seated on the throne said, 'I am making everything new!'" (Revelation 21:4-5)

We hope our reply has given you some comfort and much hope for the future. Be sure to sign up for CQ Rewind at www.christianquestions.net. The service is free without obligation and will provide you with scriptural perspective on many questions and topics.

Sincerely,

Christian Questions Radio