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# Co-creaturely Associates or Peers? The Nature of Animals as Portrayed in Isaiah

A. Rahel Schafer

**A**nimals are portrayed in a variety of ways in the Bible, and have many roles and functions throughout the Old Testament (OT). Interest in the types of animals mentioned in the Bible, along with those animals present in surrounding regions, is expressed by zoological surveys and faunal analyses.<sup>1</sup> Some scholars have examined the functions of animals in the ancient Near East,<sup>2</sup> and the history of the

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<sup>1</sup> For example, see F. S. Bodenheimer, *Animal and Man in Bible Lands*, Collection de travaux de l'Académie internationale d'histoire des sciences 10 (Leiden: Brill, 1960); Joachim Boessneck, *Die Tierwelt des alten Ägypten: Untersucht anhand kulturgeschichtlicher und zoologischer Quellen* (Munich: Beck, 1988); Luc Delvaux, and Eugène Warmenbol, eds., *Les divins chats d'Égypte: Un air subtil, un dangereux parfum* (Leuven: Brill, 1991); Jehuda Feliks, "Animals of the Bible and Talmud" in *EncJud*, 2:166–72; Patrick F. Houlihan, *The Animal World of the Pharaohs* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1996); Patrick F. Houlihan, *The Birds of Ancient Egypt* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1986); Rosalind Janssen and Jack Janssen, *Egyptian Household Animals* (Haverfordwest: Shire, 1989); Jaromir Málek, *The Cat in Ancient Egypt*, rev. ed. (London: British Museum, 2006); Dale J. Osborn, *The Mammals of Ancient Egypt* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1998); W. Pangritz, *Das Tier in der Bibel* (München: Ernst Reinhardt Verlag, 1963).

<sup>2</sup> For example, Oded Borowski, *Every Living Thing: Daily Use of Animals in Ancient Israel* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira, 1998).

domestication of animals.<sup>3</sup> A few studies have argued that animals are important to God,<sup>4</sup> or even more important than humans,<sup>5</sup> but few have directly and comprehensively considered the nature of animals in relation to humans and God.<sup>6</sup>

However, concerning passages that seem to equate animals with humans on some level, there are three basic views among scholars. Many argue that animals are only the property of humans in the Bible, and any hints of equality should be interpreted as anthropomorphism at best, or care for the animal only because it belongs to a human at worst.<sup>7</sup> Other scholars contend that the Bible is responding to the surrounding ANE myths and worship of animals, so any reference to equality is simply a remnant of such thought.<sup>8</sup> Lastly, some consider only the biblical data referring to the

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<sup>3</sup> See Frederick E. Zeuner, *A History of Domesticated Animals* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963); I. L. Mason, ed., *Evolution of Domesticated Animals* (London: Longman, 1984); Juliet Clutton-Brock, *A Natural History of Domesticated Mammals* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Douglas Brewer, Donald B. Redford, and Susan Redford, *Domestic Plants and Animals: The Ancient Egyptian Origins* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1992); P. Ucko and G. Dimbleby, eds., *The Domestication and Exploitation of Plants and Animals* (Chicago: Aldine, 1969); H. Nachtshiem, *Vom Wildtier zum Haustier* (Berlin: Paul Parey, 1949).

<sup>4</sup> Peter Riede, *Im Spiegel der Tiere: Studien zum Verhältnis von Mensch und Tier im alten Israel* (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 2002); Chilkuri V. Rao, *Ecological and Theological Aspects of Some Animal Laws in the Pentateuch* (Delhi: Indian Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2005). Most modern supporters of animal care from the Bible begin with Genesis and then jump to the New Testament. See J. R. Hyland, *God's Covenant with Animals: A Biblical Basis for the Humane Treatment of All Creatures* (New York: Lantern, 2000); Robert N. Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals: An Invitation to Enlarge Our Moral Universe* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003).

<sup>5</sup> For examples, see Norman C. Habel, ed., *Readings from the Perspective of the Earth* (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim, 2000).

<sup>6</sup> A few exceptions include B. Janowski, U. Neumann-Gorsolke, and U. Gleßner, eds., *Gefährten und Feinde des Menschen: Das Tier in der Lebenswelt des alten Israel* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1993); David S. Cunningham, "The Way of All Flesh: Rethinking the *Imago Dei*," in *Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals*, ed. C. Deane-Drummond and D. Clough (London: SCM Press, 2009), 110. For other theologians with similar views, see Kari Weil, *Thinking Animals: Why Animal Studies Now?* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012); Lorraine Daston, and Gregg Mitman, eds., *Thinking with Animals: New Perspectives on Anthropomorphism* (New York, Columbia University Press, 2005); H. Peter Steeves, ed., *Animal Others: On Ethics, Ontology, and Animal Life* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999); David L. Clough, *On Animals: Volume 1 Systematic Theology* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2012).

<sup>7</sup> For example, Cyril Rodd states that the OT is "thoroughly anthropocentric, one of the worst vices in the eyes of those championing the rights of animals. . . . In the end, it is difficult not to say, 'Why bother? We have the New Testament and modern moral sensitivities'" (*Glimpses of a Strange Land: Studies in Old Testament Ethics* [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2001], 233, 309).

<sup>8</sup> For some examples, see E. J. Schochet, *Animal Life in Jewish Tradition: Attitudes and Relationships* (New York: Ktav, 1984); Robert Murray, *The Cosmic Covenant: Biblical Themes*

apparent superiority of animals, or blow up any references to equality into an injunction to protect animal life above or at least similarly to human life.<sup>9</sup>

These three disparate viewpoints result from more than presuppositional differences among scholars, and seem to be closely related to the different interpretations of metaphorical language regarding animals. Since the meaning and function of the metaphor may have little to do with the animal itself, the most common view is that any attribution is only anthropomorphic. Many scholars, however, are confused and inconsistent in their treatment of animal metaphors. For instance, Schochet speaks almost in the same breath about how animals do not actually have emotions or morals or character, and yet contends that these animal metaphors are meant to denote/teach about the emotions or morals or character of humans.<sup>10</sup> When the animals are portrayed in conscious or active roles, Schochet calls this only an “effective literary device,” and yet states that “humans would do well to learn certain vital moral lessons and basic religious truths by observing the behavior of animals.”<sup>11</sup>

However, the reason that metaphors work is that they are dependent on some common knowledge about the thing/being to which they refer or are compared.<sup>12</sup> The reality behind the comparison is important. Thus, when animals are described in metaphorical terms, or used in similes, there must be some correspondence with certain characteristics that animals have, or

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*of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation*, Heythrop Monographs 7 (London: Sheed & Ward, 1992).

<sup>9</sup> For instance, Waldau contends that the “mainline Christian tradition has, in a meaningful sense, been speciesist” (*The Specter of Speciesism: Buddhist and Christian Views of Animals* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002], 217).

<sup>10</sup> Schochet continues by noting that animals are a commodity, and any punishment is just sharing in the fate of the owner, and yet he mentions that by becoming covenantal partners in Genesis 9, responsibility for animals is implied (*Animal Life*, 63). When referring to fables, this confused and inconsistent picture regarding animals is even more evident. Schochet contends that if there is not a reality that makes sense, the fable would not work at all. He states that “we use the phrase ‘normal’ in describing such fauna because, for the most part, they retain their essential natural characteristics. Indeed, they are easily recognizable precisely because they conform in feature and in personality to the accepted stereotypes of their respective species” (*Animal Life*, 110). See also Benjamin A. Foreman, *Animal Metaphors and the People of Israel in the Book of Jeremiah*, FRLANT 238 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 3.

<sup>11</sup> Schochet, *Animal Life*, 110, 129.

<sup>12</sup> Gitay notes that “in order to argue realistically and effectively the speech’s thesis must be perceived by listeners/readers as a fact of life;” thus, as nature provides “stable and unchangeable” realities, it is used often in biblical metaphor (“Why Metaphors? A Study of the Texture of Isaiah,” in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition*, ed. C. C. Broyles and C. A. Evans, VTSup 70 [Leiden: Brill, 1997], 1:59, 65).

the usage would not seem plausible or even work at all. In addition, when the animals are portrayed in a “shocking” way, this also implies that there is at least something basic about their character that can be ascertained. Cyril Rodd argues for the “double-sided” metaphor when looking at the biblical picture of animals, in that “they reveal both the writer’s views on human [behavior] and the way he thinks about animals.”<sup>13</sup>

There is also a difference between metaphor and poetic/prophetic language. Prophets use emotive and hyperbolic language that may not necessarily be intended to be taken as literal, but simply to refer to the worst or best possible thing that could happen in apparent reality. For example, in destruction by God, prophets want “to explain as clearly as possible how God could and would bless the people—and on the other hand, how he could and would curse the people—and the prophets conceptualized that future reality in things common in their own day.”<sup>14</sup> Although some background knowledge about the portrayal of animals can be garnered from a metaphorical usage, much more information is ascertainable from these realistically portrayed, though hyperbolic, possible situations.<sup>15</sup> Even when similes are used, Schochet notes that different animals are used in certain comparisons not only because they were common, but also because they actually at least appeared to have certain emotions, and did have characteristic behaviors and actions. “Scripture often focuses on unusual traits of animals to effectively illustrate religious truths.”<sup>16</sup> Thus, these characteristics of animals are

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<sup>13</sup> Rodd, *Glimpses*, 299.

<sup>14</sup> D. B. Sandy, *Plowshares & Pruning Hooks: Rethinking the Language of Biblical Prophecy and Apocalyptic* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 71. This helps to visualize all the possibilities “if its totality is to be expressed. . . . The point was not to announce the precise and only forms it would take” (Sandy, *Plowshares*, 90).

<sup>15</sup> Sandy (*Plowshares*) defines many different ways in which a metaphor can be recognized: it is identified in the passage itself; the impossibility of two concepts that are linked; the Hebrew parallelism matches referents; a simile establishes one; certain numbers may be metaphorical; it compares history with current situations; it is often in language full of emotion; it “uses an image that points to an underlying idea” (191); one part of the OT helps to identify other OT metaphors; there is a diversity of poetic language about one idea; prophecies seem to disagree with each other; it contains stylized language of judgment to “depict the depths of God’s wrath” (193).

<sup>16</sup> Schochet, *Animal Life*, 43. He also states that “the effectiveness of Scripture’s use of the animal as a literary device is dependent upon the animal’s being recognizable to the audience in all of its natural features and behavioral characteristics as an animal” (45). Animals are also used as messengers of God and even as agents of his judgment (1 Kings 13; 17; 2 Kings 2; 17). Schochet states that “it is true that many of these ‘agency’ roles played by animals are perfunctory and unthinking roles. But on another level, some scriptural passages seem to exalt the virtues of

compared directly to human characteristics, implying that similar “creature” characteristics are found among all of them (cf. Gen 6:17; Job 7:7–16; 10:9; 20:8; 34:15; Pss 36:6; 104:14, 29; 145:16; 146:4; 147:9; Ecc 3:19–21).

### Methodology

This paper attempts to determine how the nature of animals is pictured in Isaiah. Since animals are so prevalent in Isaiah, especially in metaphor and imagery, it is impossible to examine comprehensively all of the passages in this paper. Hence I will first broadly categorize the passages as to the ways that animals are considered, distinguishing between domestic and wild animals. I will consider the following scenarios for each passage where animals are mentioned, in order to ascertain as best as possible in which category or categories to place them.<sup>17</sup>

- If the animals mentioned are domestic and portrayed simply as belonging to a human or working for them, the passage will be in the “property” category.
- If the animal is offered as a sacrifice or burnt offering, the category will be “sacrifice.”
- If the animal is worshipped or represented as a supernatural being in some way, the passage will be in the “superior” category.
- The category of “peer” involves several possible scenarios:
  - animal behavior/emotions/characteristics are used as a metaphor for similar human or divine behavior/ emotions/ characteristics
  - animal rights/responsibilities/accountability are compared to human rights/responsibilities/accountability
  - animal actions are described with verbs used elsewhere only for human actions
  - animals receive similar gifts from God as do humans

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animals far above those of humans!” (*Animal Life*, 55). Cf. Isa 1:3; Jer 8:7; 1 Kgs 4:33; Job 36:33; Num 22.

<sup>17</sup> Dell considers animal imagery in the Psalms, and classifies it into seven categories: denoting human social context, illuminating human behavior, instructing human behavior, observing animal behavior, showcasing God’s relationship with the creation, describing God’s work in creation, and witnessing to God’s actions in salvation history (“The Use of Animal Imagery in the Psalms and Wisdom Literature of Ancient Israel,” *SJT* 53 (2000): 275–91). Although I found these categories to be helpful comparisons, they seem to be tied more closely to the wisdom literature, as certain categories are unclear in other genres like prophecy. In addition, Dell does not seem to consider any relational nature from the perspective of the animals themselves.

In addition, although others may find different references in the metaphors related to animals than I do, I will tentatively classify the metaphorical use of animals along the same lines as the clearer passages. Where I am uncertain, I will signify this with a question mark. If there seems to be two categories referred to, I will list the text in both groups.

Many passages mention animals on a functional level alone, especially when they are considered as property, sacrifices, or representing supernatural beings. These categories do not as explicitly answer the question about the relational nature of animals. Therefore, the remainder of the examination will focus on the passages concerning animals as associates or peers, which seem to be able to help most clearly delineate the nature of animals as portrayed in Isaiah.<sup>18</sup>

Regarding the three views about animals mentioned above, in this paper I contend that there is a fourth and mediating position, with a spectrum of living creatures as they relate to God and each other. At least in the picture of Isaiah (which may or may not cohere exactly with that of the Pentateuch or the rest of the OT), domestic animals appear to be considered more as associates to humans, ones who have a subordinate status but are joined in purpose on a nearly equal basis, and accountable to humans more than to God. On the other hand, it seems that wild animals are portrayed more as peers to humans, especially concerning their relationship to God and possession of the land.<sup>19</sup>

In order to demonstrate this distinction, the book of Isaiah will be examined as a synchronic whole in regard to the passages involving animals as associates/peers. I will first briefly survey the texts in Isaiah that seem to correspond to the category of domestic animals as associates. Within this section, I will separate the passages in which the characteristics/emotions/behaviors of domestic animals are metaphorically compared to the characteristic/emotions/behaviors of humans and/or God, and those passages in which a more poetic/non-metaphorical usage is demonstrated. I will then look in more detail at Isa 60:7, which seems to elucidate most clearly the nature of domestic animals. The next section of the paper will briefly consider the passages that seem to correspond to the category of wild

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<sup>18</sup> Appendix A contains all the passages that refer to animals in Isaiah.

<sup>19</sup> This does not in any way diminish the special function of humanity as the “image of God” (Gen 1:27), but is simply an attempt to clarify the portrayal of animals in Isaiah. These two pictures are not necessarily incompatible.

animals as peers to humans, again differentiating between metaphorical and poetic/non-metaphorical usage. I will then proceed to examine more closely Isa 43:20, which appears to be the passage which most explicitly sets forth the nature of wild animals. Any theological implications regarding the nature of animals in Isaiah will be noted in the conclusion.

### **Domestic Animals as Co-creaturely Associates**

When comparing the nature of animals as compared to humans in Isaiah, the picture is not easy to articulate in words. The word “associate” is here defined as someone who has subordinate status, or less than full rights/membership in an organization, but is often joined in purpose or relationship on a nearly equal basis. Different aspects of domestic animals as associates of humans will be examined in this section. First, the metaphorical use of animals in various passages will be noted, and any pertinent conclusions regarding the nature of animals will be suggested. Then, non-metaphorical uses of animals will be mentioned, and Isa 60:7 will be examined in more detail.

### **Metaphorical Usage of Domestic Animals**

The following chart sets forth the passages in which it appears that domestic animals are described in metaphorical terms.

<b>Text</b>	<b>Animal</b>	<b>Kind</b>	<b>Brief description of passage</b>
13:14	Sheep	Domestic	People will flee on the day of the Lord like sheep that are not gathered by anyone
38:13–14	Lion, swallow, crane, dove	Wild/ Domestic	Hezekiah writes that he meditated like a lion, and cried like a crane or swallow, and mourned like a dove
53:7	Sheep, lamb	Domestic	Servant is compared to a lamb that is silent when going to slaughter or being sheared
63:13–14	Flock, horse, animal	Domestic	God led his people (flock) like a surefooted horse in the wilderness; the spirit of God causes animals to rest, like he will lead his people



Domestic animals are portrayed in metaphorical language as having certain characteristics that are at least superficially similar to those of humans.<sup>20</sup> The silence of the servant in Isa 53:7 is compared to the silence (אלם) of a lamb (להל) before its shearers. This comparison likely reflects the lack of struggling in sheep that trust their masters. Isaiah 63:13 refers back to the Exodus, where YHWH's people were led by him through the deep, in order that "like the horse in the wilderness, they might not stumble."<sup>21</sup> The surefootedness of the horse here seems to symbolize the stability and care YHWH provided for Israel. In Isa 13:14, those people who flee on the day of YHWH are compared to a sheep that is not gathered in by anyone. The picture is that of a lost, lonely and wandering animal, with no one to care for it, which is in stark contrast to the many pictures of YHWH as gatherer of his people even when they are outcasts (Isa 11:12; 34:16; 40:11; 43:5; 56:8; 66:18). In Isa 38:14, Hezekiah describes his mourning (הנה) like that of a dove. This comparison seems to be based on the call of doves, which often is described as sorrowful or grieving.

Thus, for these metaphors and similes, the comparisons are pointing to certain characteristics in animals that seem similar on some level to those of humans. Although metaphors do not usually serve as evidence for an ontological comparison between the two objects/creatures, these metaphors do seem to imply similar attributes or attributions. If this were not the case, no comparison could be made and the metaphor would not be relevant or make any sense.

### **Non-metaphorical Use of Domestic Animals**

The following chart shows the various passages in which domestic animals are portrayed with poetic imagery, but as part of a literal/potential reality or situation, and not simply a comparison, simile, or metonymy.

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<sup>20</sup> Assyrian literature has also been shown to use animal similes in much the same way as the Old Testament (D. Marcus, "Animal Similes in Assyrian Royal Inscriptions," *Or* 46 [1977]: 86–106).

<sup>21</sup> All biblical quotations are translations of the author. Isa 63:14 states that "as an animal (בהמה) goes down into the valley, the spirit of YHWH causes it to rest (נוח); so you lead your people, to make yourself a glorious name." Just as in Exod 23:12, the verb נוח is used in reference to animals, implying that rest for animals involves more than physical rest and is comparable in some way to God's rest in Exod 20:11. For further reference, see A. Rahel Schafer, "Rest for the Animals? Nonhuman Sabbath Repose in Pentateuchal Law," *BBR* 23 (2013): 15–34. In addition, YHWH takes responsibility for the well-being of all his creatures, not just humanity. In fact, his spirit *causes* animals to receive tranquility, possibly even emotional/mental rest.

<b>Text</b>	<b>Animals</b>	<b>Kind</b>	<b>Brief Description of Passage</b>
1:3	Ox, donkey	Domestic	Animals know their master, Israel does not
11:6–9	Wolf, lamb, leopard, young goat, calf, young lion, fatling, cow, bear, lion, ox, cobra, viper	Domestic /Wild	Peace between animals and humans that should be killing each other; no hurting or destruction in God's mountain
17:2	Flock	Domestic	The ruins of Damascus are for flocks to lie down, and they will not be made afraid
30:6	Animals, lion, viper, fiery flying serpent, donkeys, camels	Wild/ Domestic	The oracle against the animals of the south: riches are carried on domestic animals through a land filled with dangerous wild animals
32:14	Wild donkeys, flocks	Wild/ Domestic	Deserted cities become a joy of wild donkeys, a pasture for flocks
34:6–7	Lambs, goats, rams, wild oxen, bulls	Domestic /Wild	God's slaughter of Edom is compared to a sacrifice of many animals
46:1	Animals	Domestic	Animals are burdened by heavy loads, including idols
60:6–7	Camel, flock, ram	Domestic	Animals praise God, serve humans; offer sacrifices?
65:25	Wolf, lamb, lion, ox, serpent	Wild/ Domestic	No hurting or destruction in God's mountain
66:3	Bull, lamb, dog, swine	Domestic /Wild	Different sacrifices that are offered by people that are rejected by God as abominations

Domestic animals are also described in non-metaphorical language as having emotions or characteristics comparable to humans. In Isaiah 46:1, animals are described as being weary (עִיף) under heavy loads, an adjective used elsewhere only of humans when hungry, thirsty, or exhausted.<sup>22</sup> Although this could be classified as physical symptoms, rather than emotional, some passages hint at mental weariness as well (Jer 4:31; 31:25).<sup>23</sup> Isaiah 17:2 paints a picture of desolated human civilization, where the deserted cities will be “for flocks, which lie down (רָבִיץ), and will not be caused to tremble (אֵין מַחְרִיד).” Most other passages that speak of trembling or fear (חָרַד) refer to humans and not animals,<sup>24</sup> but this text parallels Lev 26:6, which is speaking of blessings to obedient Israelites “who will lie down (שָׁכַב), and will not be caused to tremble (אֵין מַחְרִיד).”<sup>25</sup> Zephaniah 3:13 also picks up this language and applies it to the remnant of Israel, who will “feed as flocks (רָעָה) and will lie down (רָבִיץ) and no one will cause them to tremble (אֵין מַחְרִיד).” Thus, the emotion of fear is attributed to both animals and humans interchangeably with this verb.<sup>26</sup>

In some passages, actions against domestic animals are compared on some level to actions against humans. Although the exact translation of Isa

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<sup>22</sup> The implication here is that “Yahweh will carry and save when the weary Babylonian animals, trying to carry the idols, cannot” (F. J. Gaiser, “‘I Will Carry and Will Save’: The Carrying God of Isaiah 40–66,” in *And God Saw That It Was Good: Essays on Creation and God in Honor of Terence E. Fretheim*, ed. F. J. Gaiser and M. A. Throntveit [St. Paul, MN: Word & World, 2006], 99).

<sup>23</sup> Bosman, “עִיף,” *NIDOTTE* 3:390–6, notes that this weariness often involves mental, emotional, and spiritual exhaustion.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Gen 27:33; Exod 19:16; Lev 26:6; Judg 7:3; 1 Sam 16:4; Isa 10:29; 19:16; 32:11; 66:2, 5; Jer 30:10; Micah 4:4.

<sup>25</sup> However, in the covenant curses of Deut 28:26 (and reiterated in Jer 7:33), animals are pictured as feasting on the carcasses of the disobedient Israelites, and “no one will frighten them away” (אֵין מַחְרִיד). However, there is no mention of lying down here, as in Isa 17:2 and Lev 26:6. Other passages in which חָרַד refers to nonhumans include Isa 41:5 (the ends of the earth חָרַד); Ezek 26:18 (the coastlands חָרַד); Hos 11:11 (people will חָרַד like doves); Nah 2:11 (there is a place where lions dwell and no one makes them afraid [אֵין מַחְרִיד]); Zech 1:21 (the horns that scattered Judah will be caused to tremble [חָרַד]). Interestingly, Ezek 34:28 seems to reverse the covenant curses, where God’s people will dwell safely, no longer prey for the wild animals and “no one will make them afraid (אֵין מַחְרִיד).”

<sup>26</sup> Although this might at first seem like anthropomorphic attribution to animals, words of simile are not used. In addition, the reality that these words are otherwise used only for God/humanity does not mean that they cannot be used for animals, just that they *have* not been. This could mean personification (the traditional view), but could also be relying on a shock factor, and/or reflecting an emotional reality behind the application to animals. Not all meaning/significance can be limited to the main point of the passage. The message could still be regarding humanity, but that does not negate underlying currents of other informative realities.

66:3 is uncertain, some sort of association is warranted, if not a direct comparison.<sup>27</sup> Animal life is sacred to God, too, even if this text has been improperly used to equate animal sacrifice as morally unacceptable like human sacrifice.<sup>28</sup> Isaiah 34:5–7 compares YHWH’s slaughter of Edom to the sacrifice of animals. The language shifts back and forth between Edom, people, Bozrah, and the blood of lambs, goats, rams, and bulls. Again, this passage does not seem to equate the sacredness of human life with animal life, but a definite association is made. Just as the blood of animals provides propitiation for sin before YHWH in the Levitical cult, here the slaughter of Edom is recompense for the evil they have performed against Israel.

In Isa 11:6–9, the peace among God’s creatures involves both domestic and wild animals along with humans.<sup>29</sup> Interestingly, v. 9 summarizes the previous verses by declaring that “they will not cause evil (רעע) or destroy (שחת) in all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of YHWH, as waters cover the sea.” The natural referents of these two verbs include the animals mentioned in vv. 6–8 as well as humanity. Animals as well as humans will not be the perpetrators or recipients of evil or destruction.<sup>30</sup> Isaiah 65:25 reiterates this point, repeating the phrase “they will not cause evil (רעע) or destroy (שחת) in all my holy mountain,” but addresses only wild and domestic animals, although humans would surely be implied as well.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> The debate is over the difference between the following two translations: “he who kills a bull is as if he slays a man. . .” or “he kills a bull, he slays a man.” Although the first one seems to equate human and animal death in the eyes of YHWH, it also requires the addition of words not present in the Hebrew text. Either way, however, this is a list of abominations before God by those who have chosen their own ways. The bull is being slaughtered, as are other humans, likely with a lack of correct motive so that sin is the problem, not the sacrifice. See A. Davies, *Double Standards in Isaiah: Re-evaluating Prophetic Ethics and Divine Justice*, Biblical Interpretation 46 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 92.

<sup>28</sup> Some argue that the prophets condemn sacrifice outright in this passage and others (e.g., Amos 5:21–27), but the context seems to be either incorrect performance or improper attitudes toward YHWH, not the sacrifices themselves. Isaiah 43:22–24 condemns Israel for not honoring God with their sacrifices. See K. Baltzer, *Deutero-Isaiah: A Commentary on Isaiah 40–55*, Hermen (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2001).

<sup>29</sup> Although it does not seem completely clear, the interwoven nature of the creatures mentioned in the passage seems to suggest it could be both peace “from” and peace “with” animals.

<sup>30</sup> Perhaps even the “knowledge of YHWH” could be attributed to animals here. Job 12:7–10 seems to hint at this possibility. Cf. Jer 8:7; Dan 5:21.

<sup>31</sup> Some have interpreted this passage as allegorically or symbolically referring to the nations (e.g., C. R. Seitz, *Isaiah 1–39*, Interpretation [Louisville, KY: John Knox, 1993]), but the only other place where Isaiah seems to use such an allegory is in Isa 5, where the vineyard is

In some instances, domestic animals are even highlighted as more faithful than humans, at least in their own sphere. Isaiah 1:3 states that “the ox knows (עֵד) its owner, and the donkey the feeding trough of its master; Israel does not know (עֵד), my people do not consider.” From the very beginning of Isaiah’s prophecies, animals play a central role in the relationship of Israel and God, such that YHWH wishes Israel even had the sense of their animals (cf. Jer 8:7). Although this may at first seem derogatory towards the ox and donkey, the presumption is actually the opposite. Animals are explicitly mentioned first, before Israel is named, in the book of Isaiah. The animals know, but Israel does not! It seems that even if Israel had the knowledge of an animal, it would be enough to commend her to YHWH, keep her from iniquity, and result in faithfulness to YHWH rather than abandonment (v. 4). This comparison seems to hint that domestic animals have some sort of responsibility, certainly to their owners, and perhaps even to YHWH if the knowledge of an animal would suffice for Israel.

### Domestic Animals in Isaiah 60:6–7

The passage that seems most unusual in regards to the domestic animal/human relationship is found in Isa 60. The chapter begins by describing the return of Israel from exile, and the resulting glory of God that will be upon them despite the darkness of the earth (vv. 1–2). Indeed, the beginning, end, and center focus of the chapter is upon YHWH, as the following chiasmic structure that arose from my textual analysis illustrates:<sup>32</sup>

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directly identified as Israel. See D. Fleer and D. Bland, eds., *Preaching the Eighth Century Prophets*, Rochester College Lectures on Preaching 5 (Abilene, TX: ACU Press, 2004).

Interestingly, Rodd finds the transformation/eradication of wild animals for human civilization to be best described as “nature is reordered for the sake of Israel” (*Glimpses*, 232).

<sup>32</sup> Many others see Isa 60 as “little more than a collage of quotations, revisions, and allusions,” its composition “untidy and disjointed” (Clements, “‘Arise, Shine, for Your Light Has Come’: A Basic Theme of the Isaianic Tradition,” in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition*, ed. C. C. Broyles and C. A. Evans, VTSup 70 [Leiden: Brill, 1997], 1:450, 452). See also Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 56–66: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 19B (New York: Doubleday, 2003); Brueggemann, *Isaiah 40–66* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998). Goldingay calls Isaiah 60 an “unstructured stream-of-consciousness” (*Isaiah*, NIBC 13 [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2001], 338). See also R. N. Whybray, *Isaiah 40–66*, NCBC [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1975].

However, Motyer (*The Prophecy of Isaiah* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994], 493) does see a chiasm in this passage, but only notes thematic parallels, with a climax in v. 12 in the discussion of Zion. Polan sees a very broad chiasm or “concentric pattern” in Isa 60, with 5 stanzas and many repeated words, but little notation of parallels between sections (“Zion, the Glory of the Holy One of Israel: A Literary Analysis of Isaiah 60,” in *Imagery and Imagination*

- A—Glory (כבוד) of YHWH (v. 1)  
 B—Light (אור) and darkness (vv. 1–2)  
 C—Daughters will be nursed (אנין) (v. 4)  
 D—Hearts will swell with joy (v. 5)  
 E—Nature—Abundance of the sea (v. 5)  
 F—Wealth (חיל) of the nations is brought to Israel (v. 5–6)  
 G—Animals will serve Israel (שרת) Israel (v. 7)  
 H—YHWH’s house will be glorified (פאר) (vv. 6–7)  
 I—All will come to the Holy One of Israel (v. 8)<sup>33</sup>  
 H’—YHWH has glorified (פאר) Israel (v. 9)  
 G’—Kings of the nations will serve (שרת) Israel (v. 10)  
 F’—Wealth (חיל) of the nations and kings are brought to Israel (v. 11)  
 E’—Nature—Trees (v. 13)  
 D’—YHWH makes Israel a joy (v. 15)  
 C’—Israel will drink (ינק) the milk of the nations, and the breast of kings (v. 16)<sup>34</sup>  
 B’—YHWH will be their light (אור) everlasting, with no darkness (v. 19–20)  
 A’—God will be their glory (תפארת) and will be glorified (פאר) (vv. 19, 21)

The nations and their kings will be drawn to Israel (v. 3), along with the abundance of the sea and the wealth/strength of the nations.<sup>35</sup> However, in verse 6, the focus shifts from the nations to specific animals, which parallel the kings that will also serve (שרת) Israel (v. 10):

שפעת גמלים תכסך | A multitude of camels will cover you,

in *Biblical Literature: Essays in Honor of Aloysius Fitzgerald*, ed. L. Boadt and M. S. Smith, CBQMS 32 [Washington, D.C: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 2001], 50–71). Vermeulen finds a 5 part “structure concentrique,” but mentions no verbal linkages (“La lumière de Sion Isaïe 60 et ses rédactions successives,” in *Quelle Maison pour Dieu?* ed. C. Focant [Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2003], 179). Oswalt finds Isa 60 to be unified, but with no clear structure, only “a recurring treatment of similar themes” (*The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40–66*, NICOT [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998], 536).

<sup>33</sup> Oswalt notes that this is the climactic use of the phrase “Holy One of Israel” (*The Book of Isaiah*, 543).

<sup>34</sup> Blenkinsopp notes that this imagery implies “rich and satisfying prosperity” (*Isaiah 56–66*, 216).

<sup>35</sup> Blenkinsopp compares the language here to the enthronement psalms, as well as the repatriation in Isa 49:12, 18, 22 (*Isaiah 56–66*, 211–12).

בכרי מדין ועיפה כלם משבא יבאו זהב ולבונה ישאו ותהלל יהוה יבשרו	Dromedaries from Midian and Ephah; All those from Sheba will come; They will carry gold and incense, And they will proclaim the praises of YHWH.
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The subjects of the verbs in this verse seem continually to be the camels. Although the last phrase might initially seem to refer to the humans upon the camels, there is no mention of the humans, unless they are tied to the wealth of the nations in v. 5. Thus, it seems possible that there is no other subject for the action of praising God than the animals themselves.<sup>36</sup>

Several additional hints point to the camels as the subjects of the verbs in v. 6.

First, as mentioned above, there is no mention of human owners of the camels in v. 6 or other animals in v. 7. Second, the ones coming from Sheba are described as actually carrying/bearing (נשא) the gold and incense. With this in mind, it seems at least possible that “all of those (כלם)” is referring to the camels, at least along with the humans.<sup>37</sup> An interesting parallel is Isa 30:6, where treasures are carried (נשא) on the humps of camels, but the treasure is portrayed as belonging to the animals (בהמות) of the south within the poetic imagery. Also, later in this chapter (Isa 60:11), the wealth of the nations is brought to Israel, but it is once again not specified whether humans or animals are responsible for this.

In addition, v. 7 continues to speak of animals, not humans:

כל-צאן קדר יקבצו לך אילי נבות ישרתונך יעלו על-רצון מזבחי ובית תפארתי אפאר	All the flocks of Kedar will be gathered to you, The rams of Nebaioth will serve you; They will go up with acceptance on My altar, And I will glorify the house of My glory.
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<sup>36</sup> Young argues for this interpretation (*The Book of Isaiah 40–66* [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1972], 447). Clements captures the possibility of animals praising God in his translation: “Laden with gold and frankincense, they proclaim Yahweh’s praise” (“Arise, Shine,” 441). Goldingay also hints that the herds of camels praise God (*Isaiah*, 343). Cf. Psalm 148.

<sup>37</sup> Brueggemann, however, interprets these verses as camel caravans like 1 Kgs 10:1–13 (*Isaiah 40–66*, 205). This would entail some sort of metonymy, or the camels as an instrumental rather than efficient cause. Although this is likely to be part of the picture, the focus seems to be more on the camels themselves, not as much on those bringing them.

Oswalt notes that אֵיל can refer to human leaders in some circumstances, and thus “it is tempting to think that the writer is referring to the flocks and the leaders of Nebaioth at the same time” (cf. Ezek 27:21).<sup>38</sup>

The verb שָׂרַת is nowhere else used with a non-human or non-angelic subject in the OT.<sup>39</sup> It usually refers to the ministry of the priests and Levites in the name of YHWH (e.g. Deut 10:8), even within the most holy place, or the care of the tabernacle as a whole (Exod 28:43; 30:20). Sometimes שָׂרַת refers to a human serving a superior (like Joshua to Moses in Exod 33:11; Josh 1:1), or the priestly work on behalf of the people, which involves sacrifices of animals (Ezek 44:11, 15). The only other references in Isaiah are 56:6, where the sons of foreigners serve (שָׂרַת) YHWH, 61:6 where Israel is called servants/ministers (בְּשָׂרָתִי) of God, and 60:10 where the foreign kings “will minister (שָׂרַת) to” Israel. Here, however, the rams are to שָׂרַת the returned exiles, and this certainly involves the animals as well as the humans in freewill service, rather than forced labor.<sup>40</sup>

The use of this term often associated with priesthood is juxtaposed with another commonly cultic term in the next clause: “They will [cause to] go up (עָלָה) with acceptance (רָצוֹן) [on] my altar.” This clause is difficult, because עָלָה in the hiphil stem usually refers to offering a sacrifice when referring to cultic practices, and thus almost always has as the object of the verb the type of sacrifice offered.<sup>41</sup> However, since the animals are the subjects here, there does not seem to be an object. Scholars have taken this to mean one of two things: “offered” or simply “ascending.” Although enigmatic, the first translation seems to be preferable with the abundance of cultic terminology

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<sup>38</sup> J. N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40–66*, 542. Blenkinsopp notes that Midian, Ephah, Sheba, Kedar, and Nebaioth were established Arabian trading partners in Transjordan and Edom, but makes no mention of the animals (*Isaiah 56–66*, 213). Childs also finds this a reference solely to the wealth of the nations (*Isaiah*, OTL [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001], 496–7). A. Motyer points out that these four locations basically represent the four points of the compass, implying a “world converging on Zion” (*Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999], 372). Goldingay (*Isaiah*, 341) considers that these events will reunite all of Abraham’s descendants, as Ephah was a grandson of Abraham and Keturah (Gen 25:4), and Nebaioth and Kedar were the oldest grandchildren of Abraham and Hagar (Gen 25:12–13).

<sup>39</sup> T. Fretheim, “שָׂרַת,” *NIDOTTE* 4:256–7, concludes that only Ps 103:21 and Ps 104:14 refer to non-humans, but interprets שָׂרַת in Isa 60:7 as referring to Israel in contrast to the foreigners, as in 61:6. Although there are many interesting parallels between Isa 60:7 and 61:6, this interpretation does not seem to do justice to the syntax and immediate context of Isa 60:7. In addition, this would seem to imply that Israel was to be serving Israel in 60:7.

<sup>40</sup> See Young, *The Book of Isaiah 40–66*, 448.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Lev 17:8; Judg 6:26, etc.



surrounding this word. However, this either seems to imply that the animals are offering themselves, or that they are taking a more active role here than in typical sacrifices.<sup>42</sup>

The word רִצִּין in a cultic setting often refers to the free will offering, but can also have connotations of acceptance or blessing.<sup>43</sup> If it means “free will,” this would seem to support the parallel between the rams ministering (שָׂרָת) to the people, and then ascending/being offered on the altar on behalf of the people. Interestingly, it is because of the ministry of the animals, that YHWH states that he will “glorify (פָּאֵר) the house of my glory (תְּפִאֲרָתִי).” In addition, in v. 13, the glory of Lebanon that will beautify (פָּאֵר) the place of God’s sanctuary is the cypress, the pine, and the box tree together.

Thus, domestic animals are portrayed as associates to humans, subordinate and accountable to their owners more than to God. However, they also seem to have some sort of spiritual responsibility as well as a capacity for knowing YHWH.

### Wild Animals as Peers

A better term for wild animals might actually be peers, rather than associates. They are not owned by humans, and compete with them on some level for possession of land, food, and even favor with God. They also seem to be responsible to God rather than humans, and even give honor to him. As with domestic animals, the passages referring to wild animals in a metaphorical sense will be briefly noted first, followed by mention of passages in which wild animals are considered in non-metaphorical/literal language. Isaiah 43:20 will then be analyzed in detail to ascertain more clearly the nature of wild animals.

<sup>42</sup> Oswalt also notes this ambiguity, and connects it with the ambiguous nature of אֵיל noted above (*The Book of Isaiah*, 542).

<sup>43</sup> See T. Fretheim, “רִצִּין,” *NIDOTTE* 3:1185–6. For examples, see Brueggemann, *Isaiah 40–66*, 205; Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 56–66*, 204. Motyer states that the flocks of the nations “are accepted as offerings . . . in their own right as partaking of the benefits of the altar” (*The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 495). While this focus on the humans seems to be accurate on some level, it also downplays the syntax of the text, in which the flocks are the subject of the verb עלה.

Also interesting is the lack of the preposition (ב) before “altar (מִזְבֵּחַ)” which is often present for offerings that are burnt before YHWH. This could be explained by the brevity of the poetic parallelism and imagery (cf. Isa 56:7).

### Metaphorical Use of Wild Animals

The following chart sets forth the passages in which it appears that wild animals are described in metaphorical terms.

<b>Text</b>	<b>Animal</b>	<b>Kind</b>	<b>Brief Description of Passage</b>
5:28–29	Horse, lion and young lion	Domestic/ Wild	Horses' hooves are like flint, showcasing the strength of the invaders/ invaders roar like lions
10:14	Fleeing bird	Wild	After God's judgment on Assyria, the land is compared to an empty nest, with no one moving a wing or peeping
13:14	Gazelle, sheep	Wild/ Domestic	People will flee on the day of the Lord like a hunted gazelle, or sheep that are not gathered by anyone
14:29	Serpent, viper, fiery flying serpent	Wild	Babylon is compared to a serpent with a viper from its roots, and offspring of a fiery flying serpent
16:2	Wandering bird	Wild	Moab is compared to a bird thrown out of its nest
31:4–5	Lions, birds flying about	Wild	God will fight for Zion like a lion or attacking birds
35:6–9	Deer, jackal, lion, violent animal	Wild	The lame will leap like the deer; there will be grass in the home of jackals; no violent animals will be on the highway of holiness
38:13–14	Lion, swallow, crane, dove	Wild/ Domestic	Hezekiah writes that he meditated like a lion, and cried like a crane or swallow, and mourned like a dove
40:31	Eagle	Wild	Those who wait on God will rise up on wings like eagles
41:14	Worm	Wild	Jacob is called a worm by God
46:11	Bird of prey	Wild	One who executes God's counsel is called a bird of prey
50:9	Moth	Wild	Those who condemn God's

			servant are compared to an old garment that a moth will eat up
51:8	Moth, grub	Wild	Moths and worms will eat the wicked like garments/wool
56:10–11	Dog	Wild?/ Domestic	Watchmen are compared to silent dogs that are lazy and greedy
59:5	Viper, spider	Wild	Evil deeds of rebellious people are equated with viper's eggs and spider's webs
59:11	Bear, dove	Wild	People growl like bears and moan sadly like doves because there is no justice
66:24	Worm	Wild	The worm of the transgressors does not die

The actions/emotions/behavior of wild animals are compared to the actions/emotions/behavior of both God and humans. God compares himself to wild animals in several instances. In Isa 31:4–5, YHWH states that he will fight for Zion “as a lion roars, and a young lion (כפיר) is over its prey (טרף) when a multitude of shepherds is called against him; of their voices he will not be afraid, and of their noises he will not be disturbed.” This is in contrast to Israel, who is turning to Egypt for help rather than YHWH, and the image is one of fierceness and determined defense in spite of obstacles. Verse 5 continues the imagery to include birds: “Like birds flying around, so will YHWH Armies defend Jerusalem; in defending, he will deliver (נצל) it.” In Isa 5:29, YHWH calls the nations to discipline Israel, and uses lion imagery to describe their actions as well, as his agents of destruction. “Their roaring will be like a lion, they will roar like young lions (כפיר); they will roar and lay hold of the prey (טרף); they will carry it away safely and no one will deliver (נצל).” The one who executes YHWH’s judgments in Isa 46:11 is called a “bird of prey (עיט).”

The nations and individual humans are also compared to wild animals. Moab is like a “wandering bird thrown out of its nest” in Isaiah 16:2. Jacob is described as a “worm (חולעת)” in Isaiah 41:14, emphasizing his small and helpless nature without YHWH’s help. In Isa 13:14, the refugees are compared to “a hunted gazelle,” fleeing from YHWH’s fierce anger. But when YHWH comes to save his people, the “lame will leap like a deer” (Isa 35:6). The contrast between these last two highlights the difference that it makes to

have YHWH as a deliverer rather than as a destroyer. When he is angry, it is like being banished and driven out or hunted, where one runs for one's life. But the running in Isa 35:6 is that of joy or boundless energy/strength (cf. 2 Sam 22:30; Song 2:8). In Isa 10:14, YHWH's punishment of Assyria equates the people to baby birds in a nest, when the rest of the eggs are snatched from the nest, and not one of them moves or makes a noise.<sup>44</sup>

Those who hope in YHWH will “go up on wings like eagles (נשר)” in Isa 40:31, implying that the ascent will be rapid, tireless and soaring. In Isa 38:13, meditation and consideration (שורה) all night long is compared to the stalking of a lion.<sup>45</sup> Isaiah 56:10–11 compares the watchmen to mute dogs that cannot bark, and greedy dogs that never know when to stop eating.<sup>46</sup> Isaiah 59:11 describes the grief and frustration for the all-encompassing iniquity and lack of justice in terms of the searchers who “growl (הימה) like bears, and moan sadly (הינה) like doves.”<sup>47</sup> Isaiah 59:5 portrays the wicked as hatching viper's eggs and weaving spider's webs, which is compared to conceiving evil and begetting iniquity (v. 4).<sup>48</sup>

Just like the metaphors used for domestic animals, these comparisons point to certain characteristics in wild animals that seem similar on some level to those of God or humans. If this were not the case, the metaphors would not make any sense.

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<sup>44</sup> Along the lines of this comparison, sometimes wild animals are negatively affected because of human actions. In Isa 34:7, even the wild animals are part of the sacrifice of Edom, not only the domestic animals. YHWH rebukes the sea in Isa 50:2 in order to deliver his people, and as a result the fish (דגה) “stink because there is no water, and die of thirst.”

<sup>45</sup> This usage might suggest that it appears the lion is calculating and thinking, rather than simply sitting there and waiting. Daniel 5:21 and Job 12:7–10 also hint that the wild animals know and understand that YHWH is ruler over the earth.

<sup>46</sup> Dogs in and of themselves do not seem to be likened to the lazy, gluttonous, and selfish watchmen, but only certain undesirable types of dogs. This hints at different personalities among animals, and even some sort of uncharacteristic action that is condemned in the useless watch dogs.

<sup>47</sup> The Hebrew word הימה can mean “roar” or “yearn/long for/mourn” and this usage seems to be a play on the dual meaning here (W. Domeris, “הימה,” *NIDOTTE* 1:1041–3). The bear roars, but when compared to humans, they are mourning. This might even imply a certain emotional state for the bear. The word הינה also seems to mean two things: “meditate” or “make sounds of mourning,” even connoting an “emotive force that heightens the sense of tragedy or dread in a particular context” (M. Van Pelt and W. Kaiser, Jr., “הינה,” *NIDOTTE* 1:1006–8).

<sup>48</sup> This could imply that certain animals at least give an appearance of accountability for their transgressions.

### Non-metaphorical Use of Wild Animals

The following chart shows the various passages in which wild animals are portrayed with poetic imagery, but as part of a literal/potential reality or situation, and not simply a comparison, simile, or metonymy.

<b>Text</b>	<b>Animal</b>	<b>Kind</b>	<b>Brief Description of Passage</b>
11:6–9	Wolf, lamb, leopard, young goat, calf, young lion, fatling, cow, bear, lion, ox, cobra, viper	Domestic/ Wild	Peace between animals and humans that should be killing each other; no hurting or destruction in God's mountain
13:21–22	Wild animals of the desert, owls, ostriches, wild goats, hyenas, jackals	Wild	Babylon will be inhabited by wild animals rather than humans
14:23	Hedgehog	Wild	YHWH will make Babylon a possession of hedgehogs
15:9	Lion	Wild	Lions are used by God as a means of punishment
21:7–9	Horses, donkeys, camels, lion	Domestic/ Wild	The watchman saw chariots with domestic animals, and then a lion.
23:13	Wild animals of the desert	Wild	Assyria founded the land for the wild animals of the desert by destroying it for people
27:1	Leviathan the fleeing and twisted serpent, the reptile in the sea	Wild	God will punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity, and will punish Leviathan and the sea reptile
30:6	Animals, lion, viper, fiery flying serpent,	Wild/ Domestic	The oracle against the animals of the south: riches are carried on domestic animals through a land filled with dangerous wild

	donkeys, camels		animals
32:14	Wild donkeys, flocks	Wild/ Domestic	Deserted cities become a joy of wild donkeys, a pasture for flocks
34:11–15	Pelicans, porcupines, owl, raven, jackal, ostrich, wild animals of the desert, hyena, wild goat, night creature, arrow snake, vulture	Wild	Animals will possess the land of Edom after destruction
35:6–9	Deer, jackal, lion, violent animal	Wild	The lame will leap like the deer; there will be grass in the home of jackals; no violent animals will be on the highway of holiness
43:20	Wild animals, jackals, ostriches	Wild	Wild animals honor God because he provides water for people in the desert
51:9	Serpent	Wild	The arm of the Lord pierced the serpent
56:9	Wild animals, animals of the forest	Wild	The wild animals are called to eat (the watchmen?)
65:25	Wolf, lamb, lion, ox, serpent	Wild/ Domestic	No hurting or destruction in God's mountain

Wild animals are peers of humans in that they live in the land instead of humans after God punishes humans. But rather than a description of surviving in the land, words of possession, joy, dwelling, making homes, and resting are used for the wild animals in relationship to the land. In Isa 13:21–22, the “wild animals of the desert lie (רביץ) there; their houses are full of owls; ostriches will dwell (שכן) there, and wild goats will dance (רקד) there;

the hyenas will cry in their citadels, and jackals in the palaces of delight.” The word for dance is usually reserved for play or rejoicing, the opposite of mourning (e.g., Eccl 3:4). YHWH will make Babylon a possession (מורש) of the hedgehog after its destruction (Isa 14:23). In Isa 23:13, Assyria establishes (יסד) Babylon for the wild animals of the desert. In Isa 35:7, jackals are described as having a dwelling (נוה) and an abode (הציר). In Isa 32:14, the desolated cities and fortresses will become the “joy (משוש) of wild donkeys.” The word מושוש is elsewhere used only in regards to the joy God or humans have in something, but here it is attributed to animals.<sup>49</sup> Although this wasteland will likely not be permanent, the rejoicing of the donkeys implies pleasure beyond physical nourishment, and seems to clearly suggest the presence of emotions in animals.

After Edom is destroyed by YHWH in Isa 34, “the pelican and the porcupine will possess (ירש) it, and the owl and the raven will dwell (שכן) in it” (v. 11). In vv. 12–15, the land becomes a dwelling (נוה) for jackals, an abode (הציר) for ostriches, a place of rest (מנוח) for the night creatures who rest (רגע) there, and a place of nesting for snakes and of gathering (קבץ) for hawks, every one with her mate (אשה רעותה). Verses 16–17 seem to suggest that God’s spirit has done the gathering (קבץ) and his mouth has commanded that they will not lack a mate (אשה רעותה).<sup>50</sup> Not only that, but God “has cast the lot (גורל) for them, and his hand has divided (חלק) it among them with a measuring line. They shall possess (ירש) it forever; from generation to generation they shall dwell (שכן) in it.” These two verbs form

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<sup>49</sup> Certain emotions that are normally reserved for YHWH or humans are actually seemingly attributed to wild animals. Although this may appear anthropomorphic, the text seems to present the situation as hyperbolically realistic. For other uses of מושוש, see Isa 24:8, 11; 32:13; 60:15; 62:5; 65:18; 66:10; Jer 49:25; Ezek 24:25; Hos 2:11; Ps 48:2; Job 8:19; Lam 2:15; 5:15.

<sup>50</sup> Sandy states that “these extreme statements seem to be stylized ways to emphasize the severity of destruction. To say that wild animals will inhabit it underscores God’s radical judgment on Babylon” (*Plowshares*, 166). However, he seems to have missed some of the logic behind the imagery here. Yes, the main message is not about the animals per se, but still, a reality of habitation and possession is expressed. Even if it is for the purpose of punishing humans, that does not diminish from the actual portrayal, and in fact, depends on it. It seems that most scholars note only what the metaphor is *used* for and *means*, and therefore do not recognize that it can represent both a warning to humans *and* can express a truth about animals as well.

an inclusio around this passage referring to the animals that possess the land.<sup>51</sup>

Perhaps reminiscent of the feast in Ezek 39, where the birds and animals of the field are invited to eat (אכל) of the people and domestic animals of Israel as a sacrificial meal (the ultimate irony), in Isa 56:9 the animals of the field (חיה שדה) and the animals of the forest (חיתו ביער) are invited to come and devour (אכל). Although it is not clear what they are to eat, the following condemnation of the watchmen seems to imply that the wild animals are to devour the greedy selfish humans that were supposed to be serving YHWH (56:10–12).

Non-domestic animals also seem to be punished by God for their transgressions. In Isa 26:21–27:1, YHWH “will punish (פקד) Leviathan the twisted serpent, and thus perhaps other animals are included as well when YHWH comes to “punish (פקד) the inhabitants of the earth.”<sup>52</sup> When Isa 35:9 states that no “violent (פריץ) animals” will be on the highway of holiness, most translations use “ravenous” even though elsewhere פריץ is used of human robbers and destroyers. This perhaps suggests some sort of accountability for animals in regards to harmful acts against humans (cf. Gen 9:5–6). The pictures painted of the peaceable kingdom (Isa 11:6–9; 65:25) also imply that wild animals are involved in doing evil (רעע) and corruption or destruction (שחת).

### Wild Animals in Isaiah 43:20

This passage seems to be the most clear for interpreting the nature of wild animals and their relationship with God, and how that compares with the human-divine relationship as portrayed in Isaiah.

In Isa 43:7, YHWH declares that “all who are called by my name, who I have created for my glory (כבוד), I have formed them, indeed I have made them.” YHWH goes on to describe how these will be his witnesses to his unique and almighty creative and redemptive powers (vv. 8–15). In vv. 16–17, the incredible acts of YHWH to deliver his people in the Exodus seem to be

<sup>51</sup> As an interesting comparison, the noun נורל and the verb חלק occur together in only six other verses in the OT, and five of them refer to the dividing up of the promised land by YHWH for the children of Israel (Num 26:55, 56; Josh 18:10; 19:51; 1 Chron 24:5).

<sup>52</sup> In Isa 51:9, the arm of YHWH is said to have “pierced the serpent (תנין),” which refers back to the reptile of the sea (תנין) that is also killed by YHWH in Isa 27:1.



recalled in the vocabulary and imagery (cf. Exodus 14–15).<sup>53</sup> This sets the stage for the new thing that YHWH is going to do in v. 19: make “in the wilderness, a road (במדבר דרך), and in the desert, rivers (נהרות בישמון).”

Verse 20 continues:

תכבדני חית השרדה	The wild animal of the field will honor me,
תנים ובנות יענה	The jackals and the ostriches;
כי־נתתי במדבר מים	Because I give in the wilderness, water,
נהרות בישמון	Rivers in the desert,
להשקות עמי בחירי	To give drink to my people, my chosen.

In light of the previous background, one would expect that YHWH would be honored and glorified by his people for this marvelous act. Instead, YHWH first proclaims that the “wild animal of the field (חית השרדה) will honor (כבד) me, the jackals and the ostriches” (v. 20).<sup>54</sup> The use of the verb כבד hearkens back to v. 7, and is often used of humans giving glory to God, or animals glorifying God by being sacrificed. But this verse seems to be the only place in the OT where animals are the subjects of כבד to YHWH. Pangritz sees this verse describing “eine geheime Gottesbeziehung und Gottessehnsucht” that the animals have.<sup>55</sup>

The reason that the wild animals honor God in v. 20 is that he gives “in the wilderness, waters (במדבר מים), rivers in the desert (נהרות בישמון).”<sup>56</sup> The focus shifts to the water in this verse, rather than the way in v. 19, perhaps implying that דרך could refer to a path for water to flow down (cf. Deut 1:40; Isa 9:1), or connect to v. 16 (a way through the waters). And yet, the wild animals honor YHWH because the water in the wilderness is “to give drink to my people, my chosen, this people I have formed for myself; they will declare my praise (תהלתי יספרו).” This is not a selfish reason for the

<sup>53</sup> K. Baltzer notes, however, that there is no mention of Egypt or Pharaoh, so Babylon is likely in view as well (*Deutero-Isaiah*, 172). See also J. Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40–55*.

<sup>54</sup> These animals are some of the most timid animals in the desert, and least likely to see people. The jackals and ostriches also occur together in Isa 34:13; Micah 1:8; Job 30:29 (Baltzer, *Deutero-Isaiah*, 174). Goldingay notes that animals praise God “when something new buds” as in Isa 42:10–12; 55:12–13 (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Isaiah 40–55* [London: T&T Clark, 2006], 299).

<sup>55</sup> Pangritz, *Das Tier*, 124.

<sup>56</sup> Goldingay sees an envelope structure in vv. 16–21, with “a way of life through water” on the outer parts, and old events contrasted with new events in the center (*Isaiah 40–55*, 292).

animals to glorify YHWH, but hints at an other-centered awareness for wild animals.<sup>57</sup>

In vv. 22–24, a stark contrast is made between the selfish nature of the people who have not honored YHWH, and the wild animals who have.<sup>58</sup> YHWH states that the people “have not called upon (קָרָא)” him, and “have been weary of (יָגַע)” him (v. 22). Not only that, but YHWH reminds Israel that they have not brought sheep for burnt offerings nor “honored (כָּבַד)” him with their sacrifices (זָבַח).<sup>59</sup> The type of comparison made here between human and animal responses to YHWH seems to indicate cognition or emotion for animals on a similar level to that of humans, and is more critical for the understanding of the nature of animals than a simile or metaphor stating that “God is like . . .”

Each clause in these three verses seems to be connected with verbal links either to the previous or following clauses. It is almost as if certain words remind the author of previous words or lead to other phrases using those words, forming a tightly interwoven cluster of indictments. YHWH continues, “I have not caused you to serve (עָבַד) with grain offerings (מִנְחָה),

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<sup>57</sup> Some commentators seem so surprised by this “bizarre parallel” between wild animals and Israel that they explain it away by noting that God is simply making Israel’s journey easier by “rendering wild animals innocuous” (Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40–55*, 228). Whybray calls this verse a “taming of the wild beasts” (*Isaiah 40–66*, 89). No mention is made of the use of כָּבַד by Brueggemann either, who interprets this passage as noting that the water in the wilderness was a benefit for the jackals and ostriches as well, though primarily for humans (*Isaiah 40–66*, 59). See also J. A. Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*.

Oswalt calls this language figurative, as turning a desert into rivers would destroy the homes of the animals, and thus they are “reacting just as thirsty humans would” (*The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40–66*, 155). However, this interpretation does not seem to consider the verbal contrasts between humans and animals, and the textual reason (כִּי) given for the honoring of God by wild animals. Goldingay (*Isaiah 40–55*, 299) agrees, noting that the animals “see what Yhwh has done in bringing down Babylon and restoring Israel.” Lee finds that the honoring of YHWH by animals is a “necessary part of the universal response which reiterates Yahweh’s supremacy” (*Creation and Redemption in Isaiah 40–55* [Hong Kong: Alliance Bible Seminary, 1995], 156).

<sup>58</sup> Although only one sentence is given to this verse by Childs, his statement sums up the apparent reality well: “The way in the wilderness will climax in the honoring of God not only by the wild beasts, but above all by his chosen people who declare his praise” (*Isaiah*, 337). Interestingly, however, the people never כָּבַד God in this passage like the animals do, and are indicted specifically for not honoring God! Goldingay also downplays the contrast between humans and animals, as he states that vv. 16–21 come to a “climax with the reminder that it is Israel’s calling to honor Yahweh” (*Isaiah*, 250) But כָּבַד is not used in v. 21 for humans, only in v. 20 for the animals, and in v. 23 to state that Israel has *not* honored God.

<sup>59</sup> Baltzer (*Deutero-Isaiah*, 180–2) sees verbal and thematic parallels in these verses with the story of Jacob in Genesis. Lee sees vv. 22–28 as a disputation or trial speech (*Creation and Redemption*, 68–71).

nor wearied (יגע) you with incense (לבונה).” The people are weary of YHWH, but YHWH has not wearied them. In v. 24, the people have not satisfied YHWH with sacrifices (זבח), but he reminds them, “you have burdened (עבר) me with your sins (חטאת), you have wearied (יגע) me with your iniquities (עון).”<sup>60</sup> Not only are the verbal parallels between v. 23 and v. 24 many, but even the very words for the sins that the people gave to God instead of sacrifices sound like the corresponding words for grain offering and incense.<sup>61</sup>

This contrast between wild animals and humans is significant, because it is the wild animals who honor God, not Israel. Although in other places, Isaiah seems to hint that wild animals can do evil (e.g., 11:6–9; 65:25) and act violently outside of what YHWH asks them to do as agents for punishment (e.g., 35:9), here they are portrayed as giving glory to God even when humans do not. Thus, wild animals are portrayed as peers to humans, possessing the land, giving honor to YHWH, and more directly accountable to YHWH for their actions.

### Conclusions and Contemporary Implications

This examination of animal references in Isaiah represents a different lens with which to look at passages: what is the relational nature of animals in comparison and response to God and humans? I fully acknowledge that this may not be the lens of the author, and is definitely not the main function or point of the metaphors and comparisons, but as long that is acknowledged, we can still legitimately analyze texts to see the background assumptions and underlying picture of animals. Even though many of the texts dealing with this issue are in poetry or are located within metaphors, the image must rely upon a reality behind it in order to function properly.

As noted in the introduction, I have attempted to avoid the ideological framework that keeps me from seeing how the text is functioning primarily. What I am looking at is different from how the text is mainly being used (to compare humans with God, to teach humans, to simply categorize how

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<sup>60</sup> Booji suggests translating these verses as “do not say that you have called upon me. . .” (“Negation in Isaiah 43:22–24,” *ZAW* 94: 399).

<sup>61</sup> The word association continues in vv. 25–27. YHWH states that he will wipe out their transgressions (פשע) and “will not remember (זכר) [their] sins (חטאת).” In contrast, he calls on his people to “remember (זכר)” him in v. 26. The first father of the people sinned (חטא), and the mediators transgressed (פשע) against YHWH. Davies suggests that the sacrifices were being performed, just to other gods besides YHWH (*Double Standards*, 93).

animals act, or to compare humans to animals based on appearances and not necessarily on realities), but I contend that the main meaning of the text does not exclude the realities about animal nature that are assumed by Isaiah's prophecies, and in fact often depends on those realities.

Thus, based on the preponderance of evidence for domestic animals as associates to humans, and wild animals as peers, I suggest that there may be some sort of continuity or spectrum of a relational nature (or even "personhood") of created beings in relationship to God. The domestic animals seem more likely to act in relationship to humans, often similar in emotions and characteristics, but responsible and accountable to their masters, perhaps even honoring humans in some fashion by serving them faithfully (cf. Isa 60:7). Wild animals, on the other hand, seem to be more of a peer group to humans, with metaphorical comparisons between their actions and God's, possession of land, accountability to God for their actions, and the honoring of God in contrast to rebellious humans (cf. Isa 43:20).

These distinctions may not be so complete and without overlap, however, when the rest of the OT is considered. Other texts seem to suggest praise to God coming from all non-human life.<sup>62</sup> All animals are also responsible for certain things before God (e.g., Exod 19:13; Gen 9:5), although some have argued that this is because of the ultimate human responsibility. There is also a difference between all animals and humanity, as humans were made in the image of God and were created to rule over God's creatures as his representatives (cf. Gen 1:26–28). The OT speaks much more of humans praising God than other living things. Humans are also responsible for much more throughout the Bible than are animals. However, as with other subjects, just because the Bible is relatively silent on a topic does not mean that it is nonexistent. The multiplicity of hints throughout the OT suggests that we must look beyond the standard anthropomorphic explanations given for apparent animal relationality/spirituality and consciousness of accountability before God. The breadth and depth of usage compels us to cull out the reality concerning the nature of animals that is assumed behind the main meaning or significance of the metaphors/hyperboles.

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<sup>62</sup> Cf. Pss 19; 98:8; 148; 150; Isa 44:23; 49:13; 55:12.

Therefore, I contend that not only do the animals in Isaiah serve a didactic function,<sup>63</sup> but also give a glimpse into the nature of animals as associates and/or peers of humans, also responsible to authority and honoring God (sometimes even more than humans do!). This picture of animals heightens the human responsibility to care for and rule righteously over all the creatures that YHWH has made.

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<sup>63</sup> Forti sees a similar function of animal metaphors in Proverbs (“Animal Images in the Didactic Rhetoric of the Book of Proverbs,” *Biblica* 77 [1996]: 48–63).

## APPENDIX

## Passages Referring to Animals in Isaiah

Text	Animal	Domestic /Wild	Category	Meta-phor?	Brief description of passage
1:3	Ox (שׁוֹר)/ donkey (חֲמוֹר)	Domestic	Property/ Associate	Yes	Animals know their master, Israel does not
1:11	Rams (אֵיל)/ cattle (מִרְיָא)/ bulls (פֶּרֶ)/ lambs (כִּבְשׁ)/ goats (עֲתוּד)	Domestic	Sacrifice	No	God has had enough of the sacrifices of Israel
2:7	Horse (סוֹס)	Domestic	Property	No	Represent wealth and strength
2:20	Moles (חֲפֵר פְּרוּת)/ bats (עֲטֹלֶף)	Wild	Peer		The idols are hidden from God in the caves, cast away to the moles and bats
5:17	Lambs (כִּבְשׁ)/ fatlings (בָּזָח)	Domestic	Property	No	Animals eat in the pastures of those who were exiled
5:28–29	Horse (סוֹס)/ lion (לְבִיא) and young lion (כַּפִּיר)	Domestic /wild	Property/ Peer	No/Yes	Horses' hooves are like flint, showcasing the strength of the invaders/ invaders roar like lions
7:21–25	Cow (בָּקָר)/ sheep (צֹאֵן)/ Oxen (שׁוֹר)/ sheep (שֶׂה)	Domestic	Property	No	Animals roam where people used to cultivate crops, representing the desolation

10:14	Fleeing bird (כנף נדר)	Wild	Peer	Yes	After God's judgment on Assyria, the land is compared to an empty nest, with no one moving a wing or peeping
11:6–9	Wolf (זאב)/ lamb (כשב)/ leopard (נמר)/ young goat (גדי)/ calf (עגל)/ young lion (כפיר)/ fatling (זריא)/ cow (פרה)/ bear (דב)/ lion (אריה)/ ox (בקר)/ cobra (פתן)/ viper (צפע)	Domestic / wild	Associate	No	Peace between animals and humans that should be killing each other; no hurting or destruction in God's mountain
13:14	Sheep (צאן)	Domestic	Property	Yes	People will flee on the day of the Lord like sheep that are not gathered by anyone
13:21–22	Wild animals of the desert (צי)/ owls (אור)/ ostriches (יענה)/ wild goats (שעיר)/ hyenas (אי)/ jackals (תן)	Wild	Peer	No	Babylon will be inhabited by wild animals rather than humans
14:11	Maggots (רמוה)/ worms (תולעת)	Wild	Peer?	No	Maggots covering the king's body seems to

					symbolize death and decomposition
14:23	Hedgehog (קבד)	Wild	Peer	No	YHWH will make Babylon a possession of the hedgehog
14:29	Serpent (נחש)/ viper (צפע)/ fiery flying serpent (שרף מעופף)	Wild	Peer	Yes?	Babylon is compared to a serpent with a viper from its roots and offspring of fiery flying serpent
15:9	Lion (אריה)	Wild	Peer	No	Lions are used by God as a means of punishment
16:1	Lamb (כר)	Domestic	Property?	No	A lamb is sent to the ruler of the land (enigmatic. . .)
16:2	Wandering bird (עוף נודד)	Wild	Peer	Yes	Moab is compared to a bird thrown out of its nest
17:2	Flock (עדר)	Domestic	Property	No	The ruins of Damascus are for flocks to lie down, and they will not be made afraid
18:6	Mountain birds of prey (עיט הרים)/ animals of the earth (בהמת הארץ)/ birds of prey	Wild	Peer	Yes	The branches will be left as food for the wild animals



	(עיט)				
21:7-9	Horses (פרש)/ donkeys (חמור)/ camels (גמל)/ lion (אריה)	Domestic /Wild	Property/ Peer	No	The watchman saw chariots with the three domestic animals, and then a lion.
22:13	Cattle (בקר)/ sheep (צאן)	Domestic	Property	No	When God calls for mourning, the people turn instead to feasting and killing oxen and sheep to eat
23:13	Wild animals of the desert (צי)	Wild	Peer	No?	Assyria founded the land for the wild animals of the desert by destroying it for people
27:1	Leviathan the fleeing and twisted serpent (נחש)/ reptile in the sea (תנין)	Wild	Peer	Yes	God will punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity, and will punish Leviathan, slaying the reptile in the sea.
27:10	Calf (עגל)	Domestic	Property	No	Calf feeds in the desolated city to represent the destruction
30:6	Animals (בהמה)/ Lion (לביא)/ lion (ליש)/ viper (אפעה)/	Wild/ Domestic	Peer/ Property	No	The oracle is against the animals of the south: riches are carried on the backs of donkeys

	fiery flying serpent (שרף מעופף)/ Donkeys (עיר)/ camels (גמל)				and the humps of camels through a land of trouble filled with dangerous wild animals
30:16	Horses (סוס)	Domestic	Property	No	Rather than returning to YHWH, the people flee swiftly on horses
30:23–24	Cattle (מקנה)/ oxen (אלף)/ donkeys (עיר)	Domestic	Property	No	Cattle will feed in large pastures, oxen and donkeys will eat good food, representing wealth and prosperity
31:1	Horses (סוס)	Domestic	Property	No	Woe to those who rely on horses for help rather than God
31:4–5	Lion (אריה)/ young lion (כפיר)/ birds flying about (צפרים עפות)	Wild	Peer	Yes	God will fight for Zion like a lion or attacking birds
32:14	Wild donkeys (פרא)/ flocks (עדר)	Wild/ Domestic	Peer/ Property	No	Cities are deserted, and become a joy of wild donkeys, a pasture for flocks, representing the
32:21	Ox (שור)/ donkey (חמור)	Domestic	Property	No	Those who send out the animals to sow seed are blessed

34:6-7	Lambs (כר)/ goats (עתוד)/ rams (איל)/ wild oxen (ראם)/ bulls (פר)	Domestic / Wild	Sacrifice	Yes	God's slaughter of Edom is compared to a sacrifice of many animals
34:11-15	Pelicans (קאת)/ porcupines (קפורד)/ owl (ינשוף)/ raven (ערב)/ Jackal (תן)/ Ostrich (יענה)/ Wild animals of desert (צי)/ hyena (אי)/ wild goat (שעיר)/ night creature (לילית)/ arrow snake (קפויז)/ vulture (דיה)	Wild	Peer	No	Animals will possess the land of Edom after destruction
35:6-9	Deer (איל)/ jackal (תן)/ lion (אריה)/ violent animal (פריץ חיות)	Wild	Peer	Yes	The lame will leap like the deer; there will be grass in the home of jackals; no violent animals will be on the highway of holiness
36:8	Horses (סוס)	Domestic	Property	No	Horses offered as a gift from Rabshakeh
38:13-14	Lion (ארי)/ Swallow (סוס)/ Crane (עגור)	Wild/ Domestic	Peer/ Associate	Yes	Hezekiah writes that he meditated like a lion, and cried like a crane

	Dove (יונה)				or swallow, and mourned like a dove
40:11	Lamb (טלא)/ flock (עדר)	Domestic	Property	Yes	God will feed his flock like a shepherd, and gather lambs in his arms
40:16	Animal (חיה)	Wild	Sacrifice	No	The animals of Lebanon are not sufficient for an offering
40:31	Eagle (נשר)	Wild	Peer	Yes	Those who wait on God will go up on wings like eagles
41:14	Worm (תולעת)	Wild	Peer?	Yes	Jacob is called a worm by God
43:17	Horses (סוס)	Domestic	Property	No	Horses used in war were brought down by YHWH with the rest of the army (refer to Exodus?)
43:20	Wild animals (חית השדה)/ jackals (תן)/ ostriches (יענה)	Wild	Peer	No	Wild animals honor God because he provides water for people in the desert
43:23	Lamb (שה)	Domestic	Sacrifice	No	The people have not brought sheep to God for sacrifice
46:1	Animals (חיה, בהמה)	Domestic	Property	No?	Animals are burdened by heavy loads, including idols
46:11	Bird of prey	Wild	Peer	Yes	The man who

	(עיט)				executes God's counsel is called a bird of prey
50:2	Fish (דגה)	Wild	Peer	No	Fish stink and die of thirst because God dries up the river
50:9	Moth (עש)	Wild	Peer?	Yes	Those who condemn God's servant are compared to an old garment that a moth will eat up
51:8	Moth (עש)/ grub (סס)	Wild	Peer?	Yes	Moths and worms will eat up the wicked like garments or wool
51:9	Serpent (תנין)	Wild	Peer	No?	The arm of the Lord pierced the serpent
53:7	Sheep (שה)/ Lamb (חלה)	Domestic	Property	Yes	Servant is compared to a lamb that is silent when going to slaughter or being sheared
56:9	Wild animals (חיתו שדי)/ animals of the forest (חיתו ביער)	Wild	Peer	No	The wild animals are called to eat (the watchmen?)
56:10–11	Dog (כלב)	Domestic	Property?	Yes	Watchmen are compared to silent dogs that are lazy and greedy

59:5	Viper (צפע)/ spider (עכביש)	Wild	Peer	Yes	The evil deeds of the rebellious people are equated with viper's eggs and spider's webs
59:11	Bear (דב)/ Dove (יונה)	Wild/ Domestic ?	Peer/ Property	Yes	We all growl like bears and moan sadly like doves because there is no justice
60:6-7	Camel (גמל, בכר)/ flock (צאן)/ram (איל)	Domestic	Associate / sacrifice	No	Praise God and serve humans; offer sacrifices
61:5	Flocks (צאן)	Domestic	Property	No	Strangers will feed the flocks of the returning exiles
63:13-14	Flock (צאן)/ Horse (סיס)/ Animal (בהמה)	Domestic	Associate	Yes	God led his people (flock) so they would be surefooted as a horse in the wilderness, and the spirit of God causes animals to rest as he will lead his people
65:4	Pig (חזיר)	Domestic	Property	No	Those who rebel against God eat the flesh of pigs
65:10	Flocks (צאן)/ cattle (בקר)	Domestic	Property	Yes	Flocks represent the people who seek God, who will lie down in safety
65:25	Wolf (זאב)/ lamb (טלה)	Wild/ Domestic	Associate / Peer	No?	No hurting or destruction in God's mountain

	lion (אריה)/ ox (בקר)/ serpent (נחש)				
66:3	Bull (שור)/ lamb (שה)/ dog (כלב)/ swine (חזיר)	Domestic	Sacrifice/ (Peer?)	No	Different sacrifices that are offered by people that are rejected by God as abominations
66:17	Pig (חזיר)/ mouse (עכבר)	Domestic / wild	Property	No	God will consume those who eat unclean flesh, like these animals
66:20	Horse (סוס)/ mules (פרד)/ dromedaries (כרכרה)	Domestic	Property	No	People will be brought as an offering to God on these animals and in chariot
66:24	Worm (תולעת)	Wild	Peer?	Yes?	The worm of transgressors does not die