

Why should Christians care about animals in the future tribulation period?

We believe that the removal or rapture of true believers will take place before the seven year tribulation period begins (1 Thes. 5:9). Yet, there will be many who come to faith in Christ during those seven years. Most of these will be martyred for their faith (Revelation 6:9-11), and these martyrs will call upon the Lord to avenge them (6:10). Some of these future martyrs may be killed by wild animals, somewhat like how many early martyrs were killed by wild animals in the Roman Colosseum.

Why do the wild animals come last on the list in 6:8?

Apparently more people will be killed in and by war, hunger, and pandemics, than by the wild predators. Nevertheless, since the population of the world is now very large, there will still be millions killed by starving beast of prey. Being killed by a wild animal will probably be more common in rural areas, while dying from disease will be more common in the cities.

Why are these wild beasts only mentioned in 6:8?

Revelation chapter six seems to be about the beginning of the Great Tribulation, the second half of the seven year tribulation period. Later in Revelation 19:17-18, only scavenging birds are mentioned. So perhaps most of the predators will die of starvation well before the end.

Is there a connection between these wild beasts and "the beast" in 11:7?

The beast in Revelation 11:7 and many other verses (13:2-4, 14-18, 14:9-11, etc.) is the future Antichrist who is probably called a beast because of his lack of human compassion. He is also probably the one who will wage war in Revelation 6:2 which will lead to famine and environmental collapse (6:5-8). So the beast, the Antichrist, will negatively impact the animals as well as the people.

The beasts of the earth in Revelation 6:8 are future animals rather than those which killed believers in the Roman Colosseum, but it is interesting to note that the coming Roman Antichrist through his wars will cause starving wild beasts to kill even more.

Why is Revelation so controversial?

Apocalyptic prophecy is, of course, uncomfortable reading even for believers because we naturally dislike change, especially negative change involved on a grand scale. We don't like to read about millions of people being killed by wild animals during the tribulation period, but it is going to happen. So this passage should not be skipped or, worse still, misrepresented as something that happened long ago in Roman times.

How should we apply this study?

Some may think that Revelation chapter six shows that we should work to protect the environment so that animals have enough to eat. Others may think that they should become preppers in order to have food for their family and fend off wild animals. Though these ideas may be valid to some extent, ultimately human efforts always come up short. Moreover, since the rapture will come **before** the tribulation period, the main thing is to believe in the Lord like Noah did in order to be removed and avoid God's judgement (1 Thes. 5:9).