

OT - RE: (urth) Sign from the fish's belly

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 28 Jan 2003

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James Wynn — 28 Jan 2003, 19:32

I recently had a conversation with a friend (an Evangelical Christian) about Jonah. My friend is the first person I had met to openly sympathize with Jonah. He was a teenager in New York during the Son of Sam murders. David Berkowitz (S of S) has since professed becoming a Born Again Christian. My friend's point was that the people he killed were refused by Berkowitz any further potential to make such a decision and go to Heaven - but now he's supposedly "saved" and forgiven for his murders. My friend doesn't think that is fair.

When one considers the cruelty with which the Assyrians gained their Empire (and they were ****proud**** of that cruelty and regularly reminded of it those who resisted them), one can perhaps see Jonah's resistance to seeing them forgiven and the slate cleaned.

I must say I like the way "Jonah" ends. It is unique in nearly ALL "morality" literature in that it does not end with the punishment, conversion, or reinstatement of the protagonist. It's Jonah's role not to be a hero, but to be a warning to others.

--Crush

-----Original Message-----

From: Tami Whitehead [mailto:razorkittee at yahoo.com]

Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2003 12:04 PM

To: urth at urth.net

Subject: Re: (urth) Sign from the fish's belly

...In re-reading the Book of Jonah, however, I am still of the mind that Jonah just had a bad attitude, and wasn't so much concerned with the prophecy of Deuteronomy. It is an interesting point you make however, and indeed raises some very important points concerning Gentile Christianity, and the availability of redemption to non-Hebrews. However, if the whole Jonah question is to be followed through, and if this is indeed a semi-serious 'clue' to some obscure goings on in a series I haven't read yet(wink)I point out the following, as it may have a bearing, and again, I leave it to those who more qualified to discuss to the matter:

The Ninevites did not see Jonah come from the fish. The fish spat him out, the Lord spoke to him again, and he went to the city saying it would fall in 40 days, and ***that*** was why the King ordered the city to fast and repent.

This (it says in the Book) really pissed Jonah off, and he went to pout in a little booth outside the city, to wait and watch for God to smite them after all, and would rather die. God sent a gourd to cover him, which made him glad, then God sent a worm to smite the gourd, which made Jonah want to die again. (Maybe Prozac would have helped, hehehe).

So, at this point, and it is a very short book, God tells Jonah, Why be angry about the gourd, and Jonah says he is right to be angry about it. God reminds Jonah he didn't make the gourd, and it lived only a short time, and compares it to the Ninevites "Should not I spare the Ninevah, that great city, wherein there are more than sixscore thousand who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle?"

And so ends the book of Jonah, rather like a GW book, abruptly, and not at all to our satisfaction, let alone Jonah's.

I only point these things out because there seems to be much hinging on the sign from the fish, but there was no sign for the Ninevites of a fish, they never saw it--Ninevah was still a 3 days journey from where the fish spat him out. Also, the question of going over to the Gentiles or pagans becomes more plain, not being a result of Israel's sin in this case, but merely...Mercy? If so, it is a rather 'left-handed' mercy--God seems to say, they are stupid folk, but have lots of cattle, so why not save them, or maybe, they are as stupid as cattle...in any case, it doesn't seem to be any skin off Israel's nose. He isn't leaving them, merely 'not smiting' someone else.

Jonah never really says he hates anyone, or that he is ill, or that he has something better to do, but his attitude of resistance, rebellion and anger is apparent. He argues with God. He resents God. He pouts like Achilles in his tent. And God can't seem to melt and pour it on him that hey, just do what I told you, and don't worry who I smite and don't smite.

razorkittee