

On Gods

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 19 Apr 2001

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James Jordan — 19 Apr 2001, 15:04

Dan'I,

Good post on gods. Just a note from a professional Old Testament teacher: the word "gods" ('elohim) is used for angels and for human judges. At root, it means "power/s." Certainly the Israelites continued to fool with other "false" gods, as the OT shows us all the time. But having no other gods "before Me" does not imply approval or a temporary toleration of idolatry, but rather means that no created power is to be placed equal to the Creator.

To use Biblical language, Clinton and Bush are gods. So are volcanoes, hurricanes, and any other power in the world that is more powerful than human beings. We have to respect such gods, but never confuse them with the Creator, or render them worship as we do the Creator. I don't think Yahweh expected any less of ancient Israel.

And I think this is also part of what Wolfe is dealing with. Such gods do exist, and some are bad gods who want the worship that should go only to the Outsider/Pancreator/Increate. One has to sort this out: properly respecting such gods without worshipping them, even if some of them try to demand it.

As for Operation ARES: I'd enjoy a discussion on Urth list. Any takers? Sure, it's inferior, but interesting. I wish Wolfe would let somebody publish the whole thing, which I recall as being about 3x as long as the published version. Even inferior Wolfe is good, and it would be fun to read.

Nutria

*This is WHORL, for discussion of Gene Wolfe's Book of the Long Sun.