

Chapter 1 : Leviathan; or, Whale Theology - Seedbed

Theology from the Belly of the Whale is rewarding reading for students of liberation theology, theological education, and Church History. -- The Midwest Book Review.

The story in a nutshell is about an obscure prophet named Jonah who was sent by Yahweh to change hearts in the rough town of Nineveh. Jonah tried to escape in the opposite direction but his ship was hit by a storm at sea, a storm so wild that the men on board thought they would die that day. The crew threw Jonah overboard to save their lives. Jonah subsequently got eaten by a whale but managed to stay alive inside its belly for three days, after which Jonah was spit back onto dry land, ready to preach to Nineveh at last. The implausible part of the story comes next: Every other prophet in scripture begins his teaching: He seems almost detached from his message. It means something else might account for his success. Certainly the story is about how God accomplished his purpose through the feckless Jonah in spite of him. But there seems to be more. What is the point of describing a harrowing adventure at sea if it added nothing to the story? In any event, whatever happened to him during his three days at sea was so life-changing that once he appeared in Nineveh he stood as a man fully alive, a man whose eyes were wide open. By his face alone these people could see that he was speaking the truth. This would explain the unlikely conversion of Nineveh. Mind you the power of a transformed face in scripture is not without precedent. Can a human face move an entire nation? Think of how Jacqueline Kennedy appeared in pictures on the way home to Washington D. She intentionally remained in the pink dress she wore that day, a dress now spattered with blood. The expression on her face conveyed the totality of the meaning of a suffering wife, and this image was assimilated and transformed overnight into the suffering of a nation. This is the kind of immediacy I am talking about, a presence that is self-interpreting due to its transparency. In the Gospel of Matthew, there is a section where the tension between Jesus and the Pharisees has reached a boiling point over questions about the Sabbath. The frustrated Pharisees gave Jesus an ultimatum. Jesus had in fact given them many signs, but they refused to see them in the light of faith. The belly of a fish, and the heart of the earth. Here is how I interpret this astonishing allusion of Christ. Jonah had converted Nineveh because he had descended to the depths of his own sinfulness and was transformed, and the people of Nineveh knew it. Yet Jesus, who was greater than Jonah, would literally descend into hell, into the heart of the earth, taking on the sinfulness of all humanity, yet he could not turn the hearts of the Pharisees. It seems germane to what I am getting at here: When you hear that Christ descended into hell in order to deliver the souls dwelling there, do not think that what happens now is very different. The heart is a tomb and there our thoughts and our intellect are buried, imprisoned in heavy darkness. And so Christ comes to the souls in hell that call upon Him, descending, that is to say, into the depths of the heart; and there He commands death to release the imprisoned souls that call upon Him, for He has the power to deliver us. In some mystical way the descent into the belly of the whale is an honest descent into the depths of our hearts without pretense or defense. A good psychologist can tell you that most of us have attachments that drive us away from what we genuinely need. These attachments are so deep that we develop habits of dismissing them automatically before they can even form clearly in our minds, so they control us to greater and lesser extents without our full awareness. These disordered attachments trap us in addiction, narrowness of thought, and recklessness that hurts the people around us. This is why such a journey into the dark night can only be completed inside the Church, with the Sacraments, aided by Grace and the Holy Spirit. Read it carefully, and have mercy on those who believe they are perfectly self-sufficient and self-aware, who say they have no need for God, who think the Book of Jonah is just a fairy tale about a man and a big fish.

Chapter 2 : Jonah - Life, Hope & Truth

The late Frederick Herzog, long-time professor of systematic theology at Duke Divinity School, challenged his peers to expand the boundaries of the field by paying close attention to what was happening in the church and in the world, to do theology 'from the belly of the whale.'

I was looking over the manuscript and got up to go to the kitchen to get a drink. I was very surprised by what I heard next. There was a talk show on that was talking about the story of Jonah, which I had just been thinking and praying about. God, most certainly at work, yes! This was exactly the proof I needed! I researched that name and came up with nothing. A real life Jonah story! The Biblical story of Jonah came first, and then there were rumors of men being swallowed by whales from the early 19th century whaling ships. Most people find it hard to swallow that a man could possibly survive in the belly of a whale for 3 days, especially in light of the deadly passage through the foot jaws and 8-inch teeth. In 1820, *Natural History* magazine published a newly discovered letter from written by a man on the ship *Star of the East* that told of a crew member surviving several hours in the belly of a whale. The ship was sailing near the Falkland Islands, when the crew spotted a sperm whale and began to chase it. As they neared the whale, the whale turned on the boats and attacked them. It rammed the boat, scattering the crew in the water. All were accounted for except for two men, one of them the young apprentice whaleman, by the name of James Bartley. Everyone believed Bartley and the other man drowned. But was the story, in fact, true? Gardner and his crew were off the coast of Peru in 1841. They lowered the boat for a sperm whale. Gardner, as captain, was the boat header. After the whale was harpooned, he switched places with the boat steerer to kill the whale with a lance. The whale turned on the boat, and bit the bow. An article in *Our Flag*, a midth-century publication out of New Bedford, tells the story. Apparently the captain was bitten but not completely swallowed, but his crew retrieved him, put him in the bottom of the boat, and thought he was dead. But he croaked out that he wanted to go to a doctor in Peru, where he convalesced. But, in fact, with so much giant squid in their diet, sperm whales probably do very little chewing at all. The person would more likely be gulped to the back of the mouth, and forced down. Should they somehow survive, they would then enter the first stomach. The stomach capacity of a large whale can reach gallons. It would easily fit a grown man. Though the letter in the Bartley story was questioned on its authenticity, there were other records of that story which help to substantiate its accuracy. The records of the British Admiralty testify that James Bartley, an apprentice seaman on a whaler, was swallowed by a whale in February, 1841, some two hundred miles east of the Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic. He survived the ordeal and lived to tell about it. Young James Bartley was in the first longboat to reach the whale. They crept so near that the harpooner leaned over and stabbed his spear deep into the whale. The whale dove eight hundred feet before he ended his dive, measured by the heavy line attached to the harpoon. Then a slacking in the line signaled the whale was surfacing. Without warning there was a mighty crash which sent the longboat spinning into the air. The whale splashed about wildly, snapping at the men and the wreckage with its huge jaws before it dove again. Another longboat picked up the survivors of this encounter, but two men were missing – one of them the young apprentice, James Bartley. The wind now abandoned the *Star of the East* and for hours the ship sat still in the sweltering heat, waiting in gentle waves. Shortly before sunset, finally the now dead whale floated to the surface a few hundred yards from the ship. The hot weather climate made it imperative that the whale be cut up at once before it spoiled. Having no way of raising it to the deck, the men took their knives and peeled off the blubber as they slipped and slid along the huge back of this giant mammal. Late that night, working by lantern-light, the tired crewmen removed the stomach of the whale and slowly winched it to the deck for flensing. They were startled to notice something moving inside the large sack, movement that looked like something living and breathing. There on the deck before them was the doubled up missing sailor, James Bartley, as if he were suffering from severe stomach cramps. He was alive, but unconscious. The doctor ordered Bartley drenched with sea water, which restored his consciousness but not his reason, for he babbled incoherently. Confined to a cabin for several weeks and bound so he could not injure himself in his wild floundering, Bartley gradually regained his senses; and within a month he was able to relate what had

happened to him in his horrible experience. Bartley said that as he was thrown into the water from the boat he saw a huge mouth open over him and he screamed as he was swallowed by it. He could breathe, but the hot, fetid odor soon made him lose consciousness and the last thing he remembers was kicking as hard as he could at the soft stomach. He lapsed into unconsciousness until he finally came to his senses almost a month later. His skin was bleached to an unnatural whiteness that gave the appearance of being bloodless, although he was healthy otherwise. James Bartley never made another trip to the sea and settled down to shore life as a shoe cobbler in his native city of Gloucester, England. He died eighteen years after his extraordinary survival and horrifying adventure. On his tombstone in the churchyard at Gloucester is a brief account of his experience at sea and a footnote, which says: James Bartley "A Modern Jonah. So what do you think? A sperm whale seen from above.

Chapter 3 : From the Belly of the Whale – The Haystack

The late Frederick Herzog, long-time professor of systematic theology at Duke Divinity School, frequently challenged his peers to expand the boundaries of the field by doing theology "from the belly of the whale." In brief, he never stopped reminding the church and theologians that they should.

If I ascend into Heaven, You are there; if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me" Psalm Jonah, according to Hebrew tradition, was the son of the widow, whom Elijah, the prophet, raised from the dead at Zarephath of Sidon II Kings Forty-eight verses comprise the entire story. This is a story of a legendary character with a nature similar to our own. Jonah, a contemporary of the prophet Amos, had faults, shortcomings, and weaknesses. The Lord chose Jonah the Prophet despite his faults and used his weaknesses to make him stronger. The Lord worked through him, in him, and with him to give him guidance and to teach him. Mentally and spiritually Jonah benefited from many lessons within his Old Testament Book. Let us more closely examine why perhaps the Lord loved Jonah. He went down to Joppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare, and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord" Jonah 1: As you know, Jonah attempted to flee from the presence of the Lord. On route to Tarshish a mighty and powerful wind came upon the sea. So strong was this wind that the ship was threatening to break into pieces and sink. Jonah and his troubles were discovered to be the cause of the tribulations upon the mariners of the ship. After much contemplation, prayer, and the casting of lots, Jonah was finally thrown overboard into the raging sea. Events do not happen without Divine Providence. Even so, the Lord also sent Jonah a place of safekeeping in his oppression. Jonah could have met death as he was tossed over the ship. But the Lord in His Goodness chose to protect Jonah. Why did God love Jonah? Perhaps the answer lies within the belly of the great fish that swallowed Jonah. God sent a fish beside the boat to swallow Jonah. He was most probably tossed about constantly with the diving and swimming motions of the fish. Further, one can imagine the salty water ever present and immersing most of his human body. As Jonah underwent all of these perils within the fish we are not told of anything negative he said against the Lord. I am quite sure Jonah realized the God of the sea received him and protected him. It would take a very wise man to rationalize this message under these dire circumstances. He was given a place of safekeeping not death. For three days and three nights he remained in the belly of the whale. Perhaps God loved Jonah for his inspiring faith while captive in the fish. Inside the whale, Jonah the Prophet blessed the Lord. He called upon the Lord in his affliction. Jonah did not demonstrate fear nor are we told he appeared troubled. There is no documentation that he grieved his circumstances. Jonah in his wisdom knew the Lord created this great fish that consumed him. Perhaps God loved Jonah for his trust in the Unseen. Within the belly of the whale, Jonah returned to his senses. He knelt down and prayed to God. He beheld the Lord "his" God and rejoiced in His presence. He returned once again to his prophetic rites. He returned to an obedient God-loving man, believing in His Holy promises. Perhaps this nature of Jonah during hardship was what made God love him so. Just as Jonah came upon this realization we should too. Jonah is a symbol of our weaknesses, which can also help to make us stronger. The waves did not suffocate Jonah. The whale caught him up and he did not perish. After three days and three nights, the Lord commanded the fish to "vomit Jonah onto dry land" Jonah 2: His salvation came from the Lord. Be careful in your complaints. The great fish can come in many disguises in the contemporary world of today. As Christians we need to take on this spirit of wondrous faith and assurance of the Unseen. Jonah was given another chance. I believe our God is long-suffering. He does not hastily abandon or become angry with those servants who fall by the wayside. Let us draw closer to the Lord "his" God realizing through his Biblical example that this also makes Him the Lord "our" God.

Chapter 4 : calendrierdelascience.com - Jonah and the whale

The late Frederick Herzog never stopped reminding the church and theology to listen to those who had been left out of their influential ranks. This reminder is the thread that holds together Herzog's work, which has been brought together here in a single volume for the first time.

Jesus, Jonah, and Islam - Matthew Islam claims that Jesus did not die because Jonah was alive in the belly of the whale. Because Jesus says here that Jonah was alive in the belly of the big fish, Islam claims Jesus did not die and therefore was not crucified. The comparison Jesus made was to the number of days and nights. He states nothing about being literally alive or dead, as this was not part of his illustration. However, in both cases, each returned to life in a manner of speaking: Jonah to Nineveh and Jesus to Jerusalem and eventually his Father ; Jonah from the belly of a whale and Jesus literally from the dead and the tomb. There are many differences between a tomb and a huge fish. The fish is alive, the tomb is not. The dead remains of what the whale had already eaten were present, but were not present with Jesus in the tomb. The whale was in the sea, the tomb in Jerusalem. Jesus was buried in the ground and not a fish. However, none of these things were what Jesus was referring to. The leaders of Israel asked for a sign Matt. Signs point a certain direction, have certain limitations, and are not meant to be exact representations. According to Islam the color green symbolizes nature and life. Are these signs and colors literally Islam? Or is it that these signs and colors have particular meanings? For example, for some in the Islamic faith, the five points of the star reveal the five pillars of Islam. Signs and symbols have built-in limitations as designed by their authors. Even the three days and three nights are not to be taken literally. It was a figurative expression of speech, which is a Jewish way of reckoning time. Past days were counted inclusively with the first and last portion of those days each being counted as full days even though only a portion of those days had actually been involved in the event. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

Chapter 5 : In the Belly of the Whale - The Walls Came Tumbling Down

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Many readers of the Bible are intrigued by the story of Jonah being swallowed by a great fish. But does this fascination distract people from the main purpose of the book? Arguments over this incident should not blind us to the main reason the book of Jonah is in the Bible. The book of Jonah gives no indication of his prophetic activity in the land of Israel. It merely begins with an instruction from God to go to Nineveh and prophesy to its inhabitants. Nineveh was founded by Nimrod shortly after the Flood Genesis Years later, Assyria began the process of conquering Israel, and Jonah clearly saw this nation as an enemy and feared what it would eventually do. The Assyrians were extremely brutal and cruel, even skinning their captives alive. The prophet Nahum describes them as lions, tearing and feeding on the nations Nahum 2: The city of Nineveh eventually fell to the invading armies of the Babylonians and Medes about B. Why Jonah fled Instead of going northeast toward Nineveh, Jonah boarded a ship and headed in a westerly direction to Tarshish likely in Spain , but was overtaken by a severe storm. Jonah found it difficult and agonizing to take a message of repentance to an empire destined to destroy his own nation and people. Out of patriotic zeal for his nation Israel, he fled in the opposite direction. He shuddered to consider the implications if Nineveh actually responded to his message: Historical accuracy Some scholars doubt the authenticity of the biblical narrative and the person of Jonah. However, there is biblical evidence that he lived. It is taken for granted that He would not make this statement based on a fictitious and imaginary character. Those who question the accuracy of the book of Jonah focus at length on Jonah surviving in the stomach of a fish for three days and nights. What some fail to recognize is the greatness and miraculous power of the Creator of the entire universe. Is it beyond His power to preserve a person in the belly of a fish? Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. It is an error to bring God down to our human way of thinking and doing. God was more than capable of safeguarding Jonah in the belly of the fish for as long as was necessary. Jonah is not just a prophetic book, as there is only one prophecy recorded 3: One of the major themes is the relationship between God and Jonah. Out of love for his nation Israel, Jonah fled in order to avoid going to Nineveh. He boarded a vessel headed for Tarshish. But God had other plans. The crew reluctantly threw Jonah overboard when a great storm battered the ship. Chapter 2 Out of the belly of the fish Jonah cried out to God for deliverance. He realized that, unless God intervened, he would certainly die. It is a prayer well worth careful study. Chapter 3 God gave His commission a second time, and now Jonah was ready to do His bidding. He entered the city and proclaimed the message to the inhabitants. Unbelievably, they respond positively and the king proclaims a fast for both man and beast! The prophecy was no idle threat. The city would have been destroyed in 40 days verse 4. Why such an astonishing reaction? The Bible does not tell us, but it could be that people from the city witnessed the fish spewing Jonah onto dry land. This was a temporary repentance by the people of that generation, but sufficient for God to spare the city at that time. Jonah needed to learn the biblical principle that God grants repentance to whom He will. Chapter 4 The change of heart on the part of the people of Nineveh displeased Jonah. All along, he feared that Nineveh would heed the warning and repent verse 2. When the plant withered, Jonah showed resentment and anger. The message Christ brought when He walked the earth was that He came to die for the sins of all of humanity John 3: Lessons from the book of Jonah Here are some lessons from the book of Jonah: The book exemplifies the miraculous power and supremacy of God over His entire creation. The amazing power of God was illustrated by these miracles: The severe winds and boisterous sea that God sent, then miraculously calmed Jonah 1: The sailors cast lots and by a miracle the lot identified Jonah 1: Jonah was alive after three days and nights in the fish 1: These events are manifestations of the mighty power of the Creator of the entire universe. Despite human weaknesses in those God selects, He is still able to use them in His service. The Bible mentions imperfections in other renowned individuals, such as Noah, Abraham, Jacob, David, the apostle Peter and so on. Upon genuine repentance God is willing to forgive,

and will continue to work with us. The young evangelist Timothy was admonished by the apostle Paul: Today we also are blessed to have the Holy Scriptures, including the book of Jonah, which God has faithfully preserved for our instruction and learning. May you be richly blessed as you determine to study and apply the teachings found in the pages of your Bible.

Chapter 6 : Jonah and the Whale | Christian Forums

The three days in the belly of the whale is allegory for the birth in the cave, the stationing of the sun at the winter solstice leading into the rebirth at Christmas, and the harrowing of hell on Easter Saturday.

The book of Jonah—“is it history, allegory, or romance? Was he really swallowed by a great fish as Scripture records? Or was he even a real person? Did he really go to Nineveh and preach so effectively that an entire city repented and escaped divine judgment? These are important questions that not only involve the integrity of Scripture, but that of our Lord Jesus Christ, who referred to Jonah as a real person. Here is an example: The Book of Jonah is unlike any of the other prophetic books in that it is not primarily a record of the utterances of the prophet. Rather it is a short story, clearly fictional. The hallmarks of fiction rest in its anachronisms and its elements of fantasy. If it was a whale that swallowed Jonah, then we are left with the fact that the only type of whale with a throat large enough to swallow a man is the sperm whale. Sperm whales are not found in the Mediterranean and, in the course of nature, it is completely unlikely that a man should be swallowed by one there, or still further, survive three days and nights of incarceration. All difficulties disappear, however, if it is remembered that the Book of Jonah is a fantasy. Locked into this naturalistic view of reality, it is not surprising that skeptical theologians encounter difficulties throughout the Bible. Their attempts to accomplish this throughout the Bible are often so ludicrous, varied, and contradictory, that we turn with relief back to the Bible, preferring the miraculous to the ridiculous! This always reminds me of the illustration Dr. Norman Geisler alludes to in his many debates: A man visited a psychiatrist to share a problem which greatly concerned him. May I ask you a question? Dead men bleed after all! Those who prefer this presupposition and there is good reason to prefer it acknowledge that God has, and can activate, for His Sovereign purposes, the prerogative to intervene, to override the natural laws of the universe created by His Hand. Historical Considerations Jonah 1: In 2 Kings With respect to the narrative itself, there is no indication within it, nor among any of the early Judaic traditions that would suggest that it is not historical. Interestingly enough, during the third century B. However, they do have historical and literary merit for biblical studies. Tobit, addressing death-bed comments to his son, Tobias, says: And one of the most prominent biblical scenes found in the Catacombs of Rome is of Jonah and his Fish. Jesus In Matthew But this is not the only mention of Jonah by our Lord. He goes on to say in Matthew 12 about Nineveh: The context does not allow an inference that one generation is parabolic and the other historical. With these words in Matthew 12, Christ clearly confirms the historicity of the book of Jonah. Only the King James Version of does that. And the Matthew passage It may or may not have been a whale. Whales There are two basic types of whales if differentiated by their mouth and throat structures: Baleen whales are by far the most numerous species in the oceans and include the Blue, Gray, Humpback, and Right Bowhead. They have a very small throat like a funnel and feed by straining krill, plankton, and small crustaceans as they swim through the water with their mouths open. It would be impossible for any of these whales to swallow a human, so they can be ruled out. These include the dolphin, porpoise, Beluga, Narwhal, Orca Killer whale , none of which is large enough to swallow a whole human being, and the Sperm whale, which definitely is. The Sperm whale is the largest of the toothed whales, adult males measuring over sixty feet in length walk into your garage and multiply the length by four! They are most prominent in the Pacific Ocean, but not unknown in the Atlantic and a favorite of Norwegian whalers. Henn, a resident of Birmingham, England recounted the following story: I was one of twelve men, who went into its mouth, passed through its throat, and moved about in what was equivalent to a fair-sized room. Obviously it would be quite easy for a whale of this kind to swallow a man. On the coast of England, Mr. Frank Bullen in his book, *The Cruise of the Cachalot* another name for the Sperm whale , notes that the sperm whale always ejects the contents of its stomach when dying. But who is to say that was the case years ago? There are a lot of marine creatures not found today due to the intense, world-wide fishing pressure of the past years. We know all whales migrate toward warm water to bear their young. One would also suspect that if a Sperm whale did find itself east of Gibraltar, it probably would not fare well in the shallower depths and could well be very hungry! We have just discovered that this is, regrettably, an urban legend, and therefore

cannot be used to support our argument. Here is a link to the debunking of this urban legend: We have come across the following news-item in the Madras India Mail of November 28th, It is thought that the victim may have been one of those lost at sea during the recent cyclone. The shark was caught by fishermen thirty miles from Bombay. The Tiger is a medium-size shark. The Great White is much larger, over thirty feet in length and weighing four tons. This shark has attacked swimmers all along the Atlantic seaboard on both sides of the ocean. Which bring us to another important point: It is possible that Jonah actually did die. There are several indications in chapter 2 vs. There are also several miracles recorded in this book: God preparing the great fish, the hearts of the people of Nineveh, the gourd plant, the east wind. If Jonah did die in chapter 2, another miracle involving his resuscitation after the watery sojourn would not be anymore difficult for God to perform than the other miracles in the book. In Genesis or Jonah the answer is the same: The main personal application of the Book of Jonah is simply this: Before God can use the prophet, He must first break the prophet! Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time.

Chapter 7 : Jonah and the Whale is an ancient SUN myth - calendrierdelascience.com

Belly of the whale. It is a turning point in the Hero's Journey where the hero is swallowed by a larger monster or representative of evil and comes out with a new sense of self.

He has willfully chosen to disobey God, and has gone his own way. God, however, in His sovereignty, pursues Jonah--God is unwilling to let Jonah go. God begins to slow Jonah down by sending "a great wind" that threatens to "break up" the ship Jonah is traveling on 1: Jonah, apparently choosing death over obedience to God, pleads with the sailors to throw him overboard 1: The text reports that, "the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish three days and three nights" 1: It is almost a shame that the fish mentioned in Jonah has attracted so much attention, for in doing this it has detracted from the other valuable lessons of this book. As one theologian has said, "I was so obsessed with what was going on inside the whale that I missed seeing the drama inside Jonah" Carlisle, You! For this reason, I will attempt to deal with the miraculous nature of this story without becoming obsessed with it. So what of this "great fish"? Did it really swallow Jonah? And can a person actually believe in such a story? For some people, a discussion like this is hardly necessary. Those who believe in the God of the Bible will have little difficulty believing that such an occurrence is possible. As one theologian has said, "If the God of the Bible can raise Jesus Christ from the dead, He can certainly cause a great monster of the deep. For others, however, believing that Jonah survived 3 days in the belly of a whale is not so easy. For this reason, I am compelled to provide you with evidence that affirms that the story of Jonah is indeed true--evidence that I expect will not only strengthen your trust in the Bible, but will also strengthen your trust in God. The first reason why we should believe the account of Jonah is because the Bible is trustworthy. Psalm 19 declares that "the testimony of the Lord is sure" That is to say that if Scripture describes an event, we are to trust its accuracy. The second reason why we should believe the account of Jonah is because Jesus affirms that it is true. When the Pharisees confront Jesus and ask Him to perform a sign, Jesus responds by saying that "no sign shall be given but the sign of Jonah the prophet; for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" Mt. To deny the account of Jonah then, is to imply that Jesus was either extremely naive or a liar. Believing that Jesus is the incarnate Son of God, as we do, both of these implications should be regarded by Christians as, not only erroneous, but also nonsensical. The third reason why we should believe the account of Jonah is because even extra-biblical sources affirm its possibility. Those who question the reliability of the Bible--those who question the reality of miracles, must still face evidence from the Encyclopedia Britannica, no less, that Jonah indeed survived 3 days in the belly of a whale. The report theorizes that the "great fish" was most likely a "sperm whale". While the common "Greenland whale" could scarcely swallow an orange, the sperm whale has a mouth that averages 20 feet long, 15 feet high, and 9 feet wide. It is well known that the sperm whale feeds largely on squid which, of course, are much larger than humans. The report maintains that there would be sufficient air to breathe--air that is necessary for the whale to float. The temperature inside the whale would be great, but bearable at about - degrees F. You may even be surprised to hear that Jonah is not even the only human to ever survive such an ordeal. During a voyage of a whaling ship in February of , a sperm whale was spotted and pursued in the vicinity of the Falkland Islands. In an attempt to harpoon the whale, one sailor drowned while a second one disappeared. Eventually the whale was killed and drawn to the side of the ship where it was dissected. The next day, the stomach was hoisted on deck and opened--with the missing sailor lying inside. The sailor was unconscious, but alive. He was eventually revived and, after a time, resumed his duties on board the whaling vessel Wilson, Sign of the Prophet Jonah, - One does not have to commit "intellectual suicide" to believe the story of Jonah. Extra-biblical evidence aside even, the text is clear--God is in control, "the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah" 1: God was in control, and He had a plan--a plan to teach Jonah to trust in Him. Jonah, who was previously "fleeing from the presence of the Lord", was literally trapped with no place to go. And like many of us do when we are at "the end of our rope", Jonah finally turns to God in prayer, "Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the stomach of the fish" 2: Jonah was not walking with the Lord--he

was "fleeing" from the Lord. Jonah could have avoided all of this if he had simply chosen to obey God in the first place. How often is this true of us? We are negligent in our Christian life, we allow our prayer life to deteriorate, and it is not until a crisis hits that we are awakened from our spiritual slumber. As the hymn suggests, "O what needless pain we bear, all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer! Let us learn a lesson from Jonah and resolve to be diligent in prayer at all times, and not just in the difficult times. Now we have to give Jonah some credit--he did eventually turn to God. He could have chosen to curse God for his predicament, but instead, Jonah takes a humble posture before God. Jonah confesses honestly his predicament, "For Thou has cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the current engulfed me. Nevertheless I will look again toward the holy temple" 2: The text says that Jonah was looking "toward the holy temple"--that is to say that Jonah was now seeking the presence of God. Jonah, who had been previously "fleeing" the presence of God was now reporting, "I called out of my distress to the Lord, and He answered me. I cried for help from the depth of Sheol; Thou didst hear my voice" 2: Surely Jonah was amazed when the Lord finally delivered him, but what amazed him while in the whale was that, when he prayed, the Lord "answered him ". And that when Jonah cried for help, the Lord "heard his voice". It is clear that, even before Jonah is delivered from the whale, he experiences answered prayer--that is, he experiences powerfully the presence of God. So what did Jonah do in order to experience this powerful presence of God? What Jonah did was that he earnestly sought fellowship with God. This is the second thing we learn from Jonah about prayer--that when we pray, we must first seek to have fellowship with God. This is important for us to note because we do not always approach God in this way. We often pray--not because we want to have fellowship with God, but we often pray--because we want God to give us something. So we learn, first of all, from Jonah that we must not limit our prayers to when we are in distress--we must pray at all times. We also learn from Jonah that when we pray, we should be seeking God to have fellowship with Him, not simply to use God to obtain what we want. There is at least one more thing we learn about prayer from Jonah--we learn the need to be thankful in the midst of difficult circumstances. The profundity of verse nine in this chapter can only be appreciated when we keep in mind its context. He was trapped in degree heat with only minimal air to breath. And to make matters worse, he was covered in unpleasant gastric juices. Jonah had no idea whether he would live or die, but listen to his prayer, "I will sacrifice to Thee with the voice of thanksgiving. Salvation is from the Lord". In the most unpleasant circumstances imaginable, Jonah gives thanks for his salvation. Giving thanks to God in the midst of hardship is something we all must work to foster. A story that illustrates this is the story of two men who were being chased by a raging bull. As the men raced towards the nearest fence, it became apparent that neither of them would make it in time. In a state of terror, the one man shouted to the other: This fictitious story contains a valuable truth--a truth we learn from Jonah--that no matter what our circumstances are, being thankful to God is always appropriate. Jonah flees from God, so God sends a violent storm. Jonah flees again by asking to be thrown overboard, so the Lord sends a whale to swallow Jonah. But finally Jonah repents--he seeks the Lord and gives thanks to Him for his salvation. And how does the Lord respond? Jonah may not have expected deliverance, but that is what he received when he sought the Lord. Perhaps we have been fleeing God. Perhaps we have been in distress. The time to seek the Lord is now, and perhaps He will be gracious and deliver us also.

Chapter 8 : Joerg Rieger - Wikipedia

In some mystical way the descent into the belly of the whale is an honest descent into the depths of our hearts without pretense or defense. A good psychologist can tell you that most of us have attachments that drive us away from what we genuinely need.

It is the story of the next segment in my life. In spite of my distaste for my current situation, the words provided me with temporary comic relief. There was not much of it to be had these days. After all, I was in the belly of the whale. There was nothing pleasant about the belly of the whale. Everything about being here sucked. There is nothing glorious about being in the belly of the whale. Only four short months earlier, I had turned my eyes back to Jesus and promised Him I would only go wherever He led. He gave me a fresh filling of His Spirit then led me to the belly of the whale. A place so humbling pride could not exist, yet self-respect had an opportunity to be born. I was in the last place on earth I would ever want to be. Death Valley and the Dead Sea would have been a welcome escape from the belly. I hated the belly. It was so hard. But you probably know something about the belly. You probably have been there, too. It was there in the belly I learned worship. In my desperation, I cried out to Him. You give and take away. At times I sang through gritted teeth. And more than once I sat on the cement floor in the back of a pigpen in a humanly deserted barn and wept. As monotonous hour after monotonous hour passed, I focused on how to survive the belly of the whale. I played games generally inspired by long road trips. I named things God could do that I could not. I remembered the great things He had already done. I listened to Galatians on my mp3 player until I ought to have committed it to memory five times over. I offered myself to Him as a living sacrifice, and I counted the days until I could escape the belly of the whale. Jonah only needed three. Apparently I had run farther than Jonah. The time passed slower than any other segment of time in history. He was my only hope. As the days ticked by, I began to see some good in my situation. But that is a lie. That was merely me in the light. In the dark, the belly of the whale was so different. By day I cried out to my God to save me. By night and on the weekend, I began to numb the pain of the belly with temporary escape. Alcohol, sex and pornography began to rule the night. They crept into my day. Yet I cried out to Him. Yet He had mercy on me. In the belly when the storm became too strong for me to stand, He changed me. Do anything He wanted me to do. Give everything I ever wanted on earth to Him. My own will was laid to rest in the back of a pigpen. It became like an unfortunate jacket an overheated farmer hangs over a fencepost. The pigs get ahold of it and rip it to shreds. God could make my decisions. I was done with that. At least during the day. I did not wait one day past the end of my countdown to escape it. That good Lord, the same one I praised with tears running down my cheeks, had a plan to get hold of my nights, too. He always has been jealous for all of me, never liking to see any of me in pain. So at the end of the car ride away from the belly, I got spit up on dry land. Come to think about it, like the prophet Jonah I sure did complain a lot those first few months back on land. But the good Lord was gracious to me. He brought me to a school gym and sat me on a cold, hard folding chair. If you are new here today, I would love to welcome you to Hoboken Grace. I hope you will make yourself right at home!

Matt For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, Matt condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, Matt something greater than Jonah is here.

A Critical Review and Analysis of the Evidence of His Existence The fact of biblical astrotheology often is either unknown or denied by the public at large, but there is plenty of solar, lunar and astral mythology in the Bible. The Myth of the Israelite Lawgiver. Moses with his shining face descending from Mt. The personification of natural elements ranging from the sun to animals was quite common in ancient myth, as widely known concerning Greek, Roman and Egyptian myths, for example. We find many of these same mythical anthropomorphizations of the sun with their solar adventures in the Bible as well, mixed in with other mythology involving the moon, Venus, stars and more. In reality, the story of Jonah is itself found in other cultures, as Barbara G. Swallowing by the whale indicates an initiation rite, leading to rebirth. The Finnish hero Ilmarinen was similarly swallowed by a giant fish to be re-born. A variant of the story shows that the fish was really a womb. It is this sort of qualities that the ancients looked for and perceived, weaving them into their myths. Hence, we see where this tradition comes from. In any event, there are many myths about gods " largely solar " battling with sea monsters and leviathans or other terminology. I discuss these in depth in my book *Did Moses Exist?* In this regard, ancient mythographers often employed monikers with multiple connotations. The ancient Greeks narrated the story of Heracles who fought a sea monster but was devoured in the process. After three days and three nights he managed to free himself by fighting his way out. Interestingly, the Greeks even specified that it was near the harbour of Jaffa that Heracles was swallowed by the fish. This Greek story was well known in Asia Minor and Syria and was definitely also told among the seafaring Phoenicians. The book of Jonah makes use of quite a few maritime terms most probably borrowed from the Phoenicians, and it can thus be assumed that the motif of the fish probably found its way into the Jewish narrative under Phoenician influence. Some scholars see disguised references to the Babylonian cosmology in the book of Jonah. In these terms the fish would then be a disguised reference to Tiamat, the chaos monster that threatens creation. When Jonah remains in the fish for three days and three nights, it would then refer to the winter time when Tiamat reigned. The swallowing and spitting out by the fish would then represent the annual death and rebirth of the cosmos. It could even allude to the primeval struggle of Marduk, the sun god, with Tiamat. Another Greek solar hero, Jason of Golden Fleece fame, also is depicted as swallowed by a sea monster, regurgitated and restored to life. There is a Hindu fable, very much resembling [the Jonah tale], to be found in the Somadeva Bhatta, of a person by the name of Saktideva who was swallowed up by a huge fish, and finally came out unhurt. In Grecian fable, Hercules is said to have been swallowed by a whale, at a place called Joppa, and to have lain three days in his entrails. That the story is an allegory, and that it, as well as that of Saktideva, Hercules and the rest, are simply different versions of the same myth, the significance of which is the alternate swallowing up and casting forth of Day, or the Sun, by Night, is now all but universally admitted by scholars. The Day, or the Sun, is swallowed up by Night, to be set free again at dawn. The Sun was called Jona. Jonah, Hercules and others personify the Sun, and a huge Fish represents the Earth. The sun myth pictured the descending sun in the west as being swallowed by a monster only to reappear in the east. It was known in Persia and in Egypt. Hence, we see that an old solar myth was altered to make it appear to be historical. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren also remark upon the Jonah myth as astrotheological: Research into the book of Jonah has postulated different phases of a prehistory of the narrative. In a sun myth the sun is swallowed up by the western part of the sea and then rises again. Three-Day Period Since ancient myths more often than not have multiple meanings, and heroes frequently were solar, lunar and stellar in nature, among other attributes, I would add to this analysis that the three-day period is also solar, especially as celebrated during the solstices and equinoxes. It rises and sets the way it does every day. If you watch the sunrise for several days in a row, both before and after the winter solstice, you notice that the rising point scarcely changes from day to day. This repetitive rising is what inspired the idea of the solstice. There are many reasons to evince that the gospel story is yet another remake

of the numerous solar myths found around the Mediterranean, as I have compiled in my ebook Jesus as the Sun throughout History and elsewhere.