

## ***Matthew 12:40 the whale's belly, a big fish or a sea monster?***

"For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the WHALE'S belly: so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

The Greek word correctly translated in the King James Bible as "Whale" is ketos. I have a modern Greek dictionary called Diury's Modern English-Greek and Greek-English Dictionary 1974. It has nothing whatsoever to do with the Bible. It's just a Greek/English dictionary. If you look up the Greek word ketos it simply says whale. If you look up whale, it says ketos.

Here is an easy to use online Greek-English dictionary. Just type in the word "whale" on the English to Greek side, or kitos on the Greek to English side and see what you come up with - WHALE, not a fish. <http://www.kypros.org/cgi-bin/lexicon>

The Greek Septuagint (LXX). Even though I do not at all believe the so called Septuagint is inspired Scripture, yet we can learn some valuable information about the meaning of Greek words from these texts. In Genesis 1:21 the King James Bible as well as many other translations in English and foreign languages tell us that "God created GREAT WHALES". The Septuagint version uses this very word ketos here and the English translation of the LXX is "And God made GREAT WHALES". That IS the meaning of the Greek word ketos.

In Websters dictionary 1999 edition, there are two English words listed which come from this Greek word ketos. Cetus is the constellation of the Whale. Cetology is the branch of zoology dealing with whales and dolphins. These are both English words derived from ketos. This word occurs only one time in the New Testament. The word is not "fish", which is an entirely different Greek word - ixthus.

Jonah 1:17 refers to a "great fish" which the LORD had prepared to swallow the errant prophet Jonah. The whale, though by today's man-made "scientific" classification is a mammal, has a fishlike body, and the word fish is defined in all dictionaries as including any aquatic animal with a fishlike body. This "scientific" classification was unknown in the days of Jonah and of Jesus, and is of no relevance to the way God classifies His creatures. Most people even today, when they see a whale, say: "Wow, that's one big fish!" That is, until some pedantic type says: No, that's a mammal.

God's classification system differs from that of man's. In 1 Corinthians 15:39 we read: "All flesh is not the same flesh; but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds."

Perhaps in an attempt to appear scientific rather than correctly translating what the Greek word really means, the NKJV, Holman Standard and ESV have "the great fish"; the NIV, NET and Holman Standard have "the huge fish" while the NASB 1995, Amplified 1987 and the NRSV of 1989 have "the sea monster"!

Bible versions that have correctly translated this word as WHALE are the Anglo-Saxon Gospels

Corpus Christi mss. circa 1000 A.D, Wycliffe 1395, Tyndale 1525, Coverdale 1535, the Great Bible 1540, Matthew's Bible 1549, the Bishops' Bible 1568, the Geneva Bible 1599, Luther's German bible 1545 - "Walfisches Bauch" (Whales belly), Webster's 1833 translation, Mace's N.T. 1729, Worseley version 1770, the Revised Version 1881, the American Standard Version of 1901, the Spanish Sagradas Escrituras 1569, the Reina Valera of 1602, 1858 and 1909 - "**la ballena**", the 2005 Reina Valera Gomez "la **ballena**", the Italian Diodati 1649 - "della **balena**", the Portuguese de Almeida of 1681 and the Portuguese A Bíblia Sagrada - "como Jonas esteve três dias e três noites no ventre da **baleia**", the French La Bible de Geneva 1669, the French Martin 1744 - "**la baleine**", the Douay-Rheims, Lamsa's 1933 translation of the Syriac Peshitta, Goodspeed 1923, the Revised Standard Version of 1952, the New American Bible of 1970, the Hebrew Names Version, the World English Bible, the 2004 Updated Bible version, the 1994 KJV 21st Century, the 1998 Third Millennium Bible and the brand new 2011 Common English Bible.

What big fish would have swallowed up Jonah alive except a whale? Or was it the NASB's SEA MONSTER?

The ever revolving door of modern scholarship can't seem to get its act together. The RSV, NRSV, and ESV are all revisions of each other, yet the RSV says "a whale", the NRSV has "a sea monster" and the ESV reads "the great fish". The Catholic versions are in their usual disarray with the 1582 Douay-Rheims reading "Whale", while the 1950 Douay has "fish", then the 1968 Jerusalem bible went with "sea monster", then the St. Joseph NAB of 1970 went back to "whale", and the 1985 New Jerusalem has "sea monster" but the latest 2009 Catholic Public Domain Version has once again gone back to "whale".

The Greek word itself means "a whale"; it does not mean a fish nor much less a sea monster. The Lord Jesus Christ said Jonah was swallowed by a whale and the King James Bible is correct while the NKJV, NIV and NASB are in error.

Science vs. religion clash: is a whale a fish?

In 1818, a whale oil dealer refused to pay a fish-product fine on whale oil, because a whale isn't a fish. The inspector insisted on the tax, and a spirited court and public battle played out.

Ultimately a jury ruled that a "whale is a fish," until the New York legislature settled the matter by voting that whales are not fish. I knew we could count on NY.

This fascinating tale comes from D. Graham Burnett in Trying Leviathan: The Nineteenth-Century New York Court Case That Put the Whale on Trial and Challenged the Order of Nature.

The Princeton University website says this about the book:

"In *Moby-Dick*, Ishmael declares, "Be it known that, waiving all argument, I take the good old fashioned ground that a whale is a fish, and call upon holy Jonah to back me." Few readers today know just how much argument Ishmael is waiving aside. In fact, Melville's antihero here takes sides in one of the great controversies of the early nineteenth century--one that ultimately had to be resolved in the courts of New York City. In *Trying Leviathan*, D. Graham Burnett recovers the strange story of *Maurice v. Judd*, an 1818 trial that pitted the new sciences of taxonomy against the then popular and biblically sanctioned view that the whale was a fish. The immediate dispute was mundane: whether whale oil was fish oil and therefore subject to state inspection. But the trial fueled a sensational public debate in which nothing less than the order of nature and how we know it was at stake. Burnett vividly re-creates the trial, during which a parade of experts - pea-coated whalers, pompous philosophers, Jacobin lawyers - took the witness stand, brandishing books, drawings, and anatomical reports, and telling tall tales from whaling voyages. Falling in the middle of the century between Linnaeus and Darwin, the trial dramatized a revolutionary period that saw radical transformations in the understanding of the natural world. Out went comfortable biblical categories, and in came new sorting methods based on the minutiae of interior anatomy, and details about the sexual behaviors of God's creatures."

In any event, the King James Bible is right, as always and these modern versions that change the clear meaning of the word that means WHALE are not.

The King James Holy Bible = God's perfect words in the English language. Accept no substitutes.

Will Kinney