



Inscrutable Malice: Theodicy, Eschatology, and the Biblical Sources of Moby-Dick

Jonathan A. Cook

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In *Inscrutable Malice*, Jonathan A. Cook expertly illuminates Melville's abiding preoccupation with the problem of evil and the dominant role of the Bible in shaping his best-known novel. Drawing on recent research in the fields of biblical studies, the history of religion, and comparative mythology, Cook provides a new interpretation of *Moby-Dick* that places Melville's creative adaptation of the Bible at the center of the work. Cook identifies two ongoing concerns in the narrative in relation to their key biblical sources: the attempt to reconcile the goodness of God with the existence of evil, as dramatized in the book of Job; and the discourse of the Christian end-times involving the final destruction of evil, as found in the apocalyptic books and eschatological passages of the Old and New Testaments. With his detailed reading of *Moby-Dick* in relation to its most important source text, Cook greatly expands the reader's understanding of the moral, religious, and mythical dimensions of the novel. Both accessible and erudite, *Inscrutable Malice* will appeal to scholars, students, and enthusiasts of Melville's classic whaling narrative.

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