

# Behold, a greater than Jonah is here (Matthew 12:41)

<b>Jonah</b>	<b>Christ</b>
1. Jonah received a message from God to Nineveh warning it and calling on its people to repent otherwise it would be destroyed and ruined.	1. Christ received a message from the Heavenly Father for the salvation of the world and for seeking and reconciling it.
2. Jonah did not accept the mission. He rejected it and fled from it.	2. Christ accepted the Father's message and gladly accomplished it. He said, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent me" and, "I have finished the work you gave Me to do" Jn17
3. Jonah disobeyed God and fled from duty and responsibility. He became stubborn and ignorantly hid in a ship sailing in the opposite direction.	3. But Christ obeyed fully, all the way to death, His death on the cross.
4. Jonah refused to serve Nineveh because of his arrogance and stubbornness and because he feared the cruelty of the people of Nineveh who were a continuous danger to Israel so he wanted them to perish. He was also scared that what he said would not come true if they repented and God forgave them.	4. Christ preached to the Jews and to the gentiles after the Jews had rejected Him. He said, "This is how God loved the world" and He gave Himself up for everyone, friends and enemies.
5. Jonah got on the ship and slept a sound sleep. This is the sleep of the conscience and avoiding thinking about responsibility, the problem and the consequences. He was about to drown but for his repentance inside the belly of the fish where God's mercy reached him.	5. Christ got on a ship and slept because He was tired and exhausted from the numerous services and from staying awake praying for a long time at night.
6. Passengers on the ship awoke Jonah in anger and fury. They admonished him saying, "Why are you asleep? Get up and call upon your God".	6. The disciples woke Jesus up and said, "Teacher, don't you care that we are about to perish?"
7. A mighty tempest came upon the ship where Jonah was. It was so violent that the ship was likely to break up and sink. The storm never stopped until Jonah was cast into the sea because he was guilty, rebellious against nature's God.	7. A mighty tempest came upon the ship where Jesus was. The disciples screamed with fear but He commanded the sea and the wind and there was a great calm because He is holy and without sin.
8. In his stubbornness, Jonah preferred to be cast into the sea (and commit suicide), he preferred this to saving the people of Nineveh.	8. In His love, Christ sacrificed His life for the salvation of every soul in the world.
9. Jonah's mission would not have cost him anything	9. The mission of Christ cost Him His life and all sorts of indignation and torture.

<p>10. Jonah continued to descend lower and lower because of his disobedience. He went down to Joppa then he went down to a ship then he went down to the depth of the sea then he went down into the belly of the whale. He said in his prayers that he went down to the bottom of the abyss and that he was about to perish but for his confession of his error and his repentance.</p>	<p>10. But Christ, of His own free will, came down from high Heaven until He reached “the depth of the earth”. He descended into Hades through the cross. He accepted this for our salvation and to give freedom to those in captivity, therefore,” God (the Father) raised Him and gave Him the name that is greater than any other name. So, in honour of the name of Christ, all beings in Heaven, on earth, and in the world below will fall on their knees”. (Phil2: 5-10)</p>
<p>11. Jonah stayed in the belly of the whale for three days and came out alive by means of a miracle.</p>	<p>11. The miracle of Jonah is a symbol of the death of Christ and His resurrection after three days with His own authority, which is the greatest miracle of them all. (John 2: 18-19)</p>
<p>12. The message of Jonah was one of warning, judgement and threat of devastation and destruction of Nineveh after forty days. This message was not accompanied with any wonders or miracles.</p>	<p>12. But the message of Christ was a message of love, grace, forgiveness, healing and satisfaction. It was accompanied with daily wonders and miracles of mercy.</p>
<p>13. The message of Jonah succeeded 100%. All the people of Nineveh repented under the leadership of their king. They fasted and prayed asking for mercy and forgiveness.</p>	<p>13. Strangely, the message of Christ who is greater than Jonah was met with rejection and ingratitude from the leadership of the evil head priests of the Jews.</p>
<p>14. It was strange for Jonah to become angry, grieved and enraged to death because of the success of his message and the salvation of more than one hundred twenty thousand people.</p>	<p>14. But Christ rejoices and the angels rejoice with Him whenever a sinner repents.</p>
<p>15. Jonah, who was not happy with the salvation of the people of Nineveh, was happy with a plant that gave him shade for one day.</p>	<p>15. Christ, who appeared on the transfiguration mountain in great glory and His face was shining as the sun, refused to have shades made for Him and preferred to suffer death for everybody because He took pity on His creation.</p>

For these reasons, Lord Jesus Christ considered the people of Nineveh better than the people of His generation because they repented by means of Jonah’s preaching and behold, a greater than Jonah is here (Matthew 12:41).