

Context

- 1] As Jesus preaches in Galilee, the Pharisees are plotting to kill Him (12:14)
- 2] Jesus 'knowing their thoughts' (12:25) warns them of the day of judgement (12:36)

Reading (Matt 12:38-42)**Context**

- 1] Jonah was a prophet in the 8th C BC
- 2] Nineveh was the capital city of the Assyrian Empire, bitter enemies of Israel

Reading (Jonah 1:1-3,11-16,17; 3:10-4:4)

Intro

Behold something greater than Jonah is here' (12:41)

Jonah

- 1] The recalcitrant servant
 - a) The Word of the Lord came to Jonah saying, 'Arise go to Nineveh' (1:1)
 - b) He got a boat going to Tarshish in Spain

nb 1500 miles = 3 x as far away as Tarshish, in the opposite direction!
- 2] The sacrificial Hebrew
 - a) the ship was foundering (1:4)
 - b) Jonah said, 'pick me and hurl me into the sea, then the sea will be quiet' (1:12)
 - c) they picked up Jonah, hurled him into the sea and the sea ceased from its raging (1:15)
- 3] The trusting castaway
 - a) From the belly of the great fish I called out and he answered me (2:1,2)
 - b) I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to you; what I have vowed I will pay. Salvation belongs to the Lord! (2:9)
- 4] The bolshy prophet
 - a) When God saw how (the people of Nineveh), turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that He said He would do to them' (3:10)
 - b) But it displeased Jonah exceedingly and he was angry (4:1)

*nb What a mixture – such barefaced cheek / rebellion against God (1:1-3)
such selfless sacrifice for others (1:12)
such praise & recognition that salvation belongs to the Lord (2:9)
such self-centred petulance (4:1-3)*

Something greater than Jonah

- 1] *Greater than Jonah*
 - a) Jonah was a prophet

(nb a mixture - recalcitrant and bolshy as well as faithful and trusting)

b) Jesus was

1) The Prophet

Nb Like Moses (Deut 18:15)

Greater than -Moses gave the Law Jesus fulfilled it (Matt 5:17)

2) The priest

Nb Like high priest not every year

Greater than – he appeared once for all.. to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself (Heb 9:26)

3) The King

Nb Like David born in his line (Luke 2:4; 11)

Great David's greater Son (Ps 110:1; Lk 20:42)

I.e. in every way like us except without sin (Heb 4:15)

2] **Something**

Nb lit 'thing' – not just a person but an event – the Christ event

I.e. the Lord's incarnation, teaching, example, crucifixion, death, resurrection, ascension

Is here

1] The **Kingdom** - is here

Cf The time is fulfilled and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the good news (Mark 1:15)

2] The **King** - was crowned

I.e. at the crucifixion –the soldiers mocked Him saying 'Hail, King of the Jews' (Matt 27:29)

Over His head they put the charge against Him which read 'This is Jesus, King of the Jews' (Matt 27:37)

3] The **proof** – the resurrection

I.e. Just as Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days and nights in the belly of the great fish so will the son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth' (Matt 12:40)

Nb (Jesus) was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by His resurrection from the dead (Rom 1:4)

Conclusion

1] There are 'glints' of Jesus in the lives of sinful people who served Him in the Old Testament. Read the OT asking him to show us himself, as he did to Cleopas on the day of the resurrection (Luke 24:27).

2] Note – God can use sinful disobedient, truculent folk like Jonah ...and me!

3] The 'sign of Jonah'/ resurrection of Jesus is the defining miracle in the Christ event. Start there with enquirers? ('Who moved the stone' by Frank Morison)