

The Climb – Part 5 G.O.A.T.

Our world is in desperate need of heroes... We want heroes... and the question is—who is GREAT enough to fill that role.

In our current culture, we've popularized an acronym – **G.O.A.T.**
And we debate who is the **greatest of all time**...

How About Jesus!

*"He shall be **GREAT**, and will be called the Son of the Highest... the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David."*
Luke 1:31-32

*"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the **GREATNESS** of his government and peace there will be no end..."*
Isaiah 9:6-7 (NIV)

It doesn't take long, once Jesus becomes a public figure, that he is drawn into that debate about who is the greatest...

- The Samaritan Woman (**John 4:12**): *"Are you greater than our Father Jacob?"*
- The Jews in Jerusalem (**John 8:53**): *"Are you greater than our Father Abraham? Who do you make yourself out to be?"*

It's a fair question. Just what is Jesus' claim to greatness?

Jesus never allowed himself to get drawn into the celebrity comparison game...

Except for one time... and recorded in only one Gospel... **Matthew 12**

"I tell you that there is one here who is even greater than the Temple!" Matthew 12:1-6 (NLT)

Jesus Said He Is Greater Than The Temple!

First, there was Solomon's Temple...

1. I Chron.22:5 David to Solomon - Temple must be *"exceedingly magnificent, famous and glorious throughout all countries."*
2. Begun in 975BC and took almost 8 years to complete
3. Solomon spared no expense... Cedar and overlaid w/Gold... today the estimated cost would be around 20 Billion!
4. Destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in 586BC!

Fifty years later... 536BC Temple is rebuilt: (Nehemiah / Ezra)

1. Finished 516BC - This 2nd@ Temple never close to the original
2. Desecrated by Antiochus Epiphanes in 1st Century BC

Temple Jesus compared Himself to is Herod's Temple:

1. Herod the GREAT... The Idumaen "king" enthroned by Rome
2. Started in 20 BC (18th year of his reign) as his gift@ to Jews
3. Jn 2:20 *"Forty-six years in the building of this Temple..."*
4. Finished in 66AD (over 80 years!) - destroyed in 70AD

Herod's Temple was built at a greater cost than Solomon's. Jewish maxim: *"He that has not seen the Temple of Herod has never known what beauty is."*

A GREATER THAN THE TEMPLE IS HERE!

But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, but no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet. 40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the huge fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. 41 The men of Nineveh will stand up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, someone greater than Jonah is here. Matthew 12:39-41 (WEB)

Why Jonah? The Jews had more well-known Prophets.

Yet Jonah IS unique... more than any of the others... why?

1. Not just because it's one **whale** of a AFish@ story!

2. Or even that Jesus uses Jonah as the greatest sign pointing to THE greatest event in human history - the resurrection!
3. Jonah had Greatest revival in the Old Testament.
4. There was no Amissionary like Jonah.

Ever wonder why God called Jonah to go to Nineveh!?

1. One of the oldest / greatest cities in AW. Founded 6000 BC.
2. Even God called it GREAT (1:2) **“Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it, for their wickedness has come up before Me.”** (3:2, 4:11, 3:3 **“exceedingly Great city”**)

Jonah gets down to business... “Until forty days – you’re done!”

1. He may not even have used the word **“Repent!”**
2. But Jesus says: **“they REPENTED at the preaching of Jonah.”**

THERE IS HERE, SOMEONE GREATER THAN JONAH!

Jesus is not done...

The Queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, someone greater than Solomon is here.

Matthew 12:42 (WEB)

Now, we are talking about perhaps the greatest King in antiquity!

1. Josephus: *“Solomon became the most glorious of kings”*
2. Who amassed the wealth of Solomon?
3. Who attained the wisdom of Solomon?

His reign was legendary. Unparalleled wisdom! Unequaled wealth!

1 Kings 10 - Queen of Sheba comes to visit his court

1. Vss. 1-3 She comes with a great caravan loaded with wealth...

2. Read:

The queen of Sheba learned that Solomon was very wise. She saw the palace he had built, 5 the food on his table, his many officers, the palace servants, and their good clothes. She saw the servants who served him at feasts and the whole burnt offerings he made in the Temple of the Lord. All these things amazed her. 6 So she said to King Solomon, “What I heard in my own country about your achievements and wisdom is true. 7 I could not believe it then, but now I have come and seen it with my own eyes. I was not told even half of it! Your wisdom and wealth are much greater than I had heard.

1 Kings 10:4–7 (NCV)

3. **1 Kgs 10:14** **“Each year Solomon received about 25 tons of gold.”**
 - a. 25 tons = 50,000 pounds / 50,000 pounds = 800,000 ounces
 - b. Today an ounce of Gold = \$1932.00 (Feb 2023)
 - c. Every year he brought in a cool 1,545,600,000 dollars!

Alfred Edersheim: **“Solomon was unexampled in wealth and magnificence, as well as his undisputed political influence and supremacy as a king.”**

James Barlow: **“All the attributes of greatness were united in him; riches, dignity, ability, fame, and splendor.”**

That’s what they say about Solomon... but there is Someone greater than Solomon!

A Greater than Solomon is here!

JESUS IS GREATER THAN SOLOMON... GREATER THAN JONAH... AND GREATER THAN THE TEMPLE!

Why did He pick these three? Did Jesus choose them randomly? Or do they have, collectively, some special significance?

Christ’s comparison of greatness with them reveals the all-important association which is three-fold...

1. Who is associated with the Temple? The **PRIESTS**

2. Who is associated with Jonah? The **PROPHETS**

3. Who is associated with Solomon? **KINGS**

Now we have this Truth in Trilogy... The comparisons point to Jesus as **PROPHET, PRIEST** and **KING!**

- But not just any Prophet... He is the Greatest of all Prophets
- And not just any Priest... He is Greatest of all Priests (read *Heb*)
- Not just any King... He is Greatest of all Kings (**King of kings!**)

Gabriel had it right alright... ***“He shall be GREAT!”***

And all of human history attests to that fact!

1. History is—HIS STORY!
2. Emerson: ***“His name is not so much written but plowed into the history of the world.”***
3. Joseph Ernest Renan (Vie de Jesus): ***“All history is incomprehensible without Christ. He is the incomparable man. To tear His name from the world would rend it to its foundations.”***

CONCLUSION... How do you define the G.O.A.T.?

There is only one real Hero. There is only one true Champion.

There is only one Greatest Of All Time!

Napoleon: ***“Not I, nor Alexander, Charlemagne, or Caesar can be compared to Him!”***

British historian Arnold Toynbee wrote: ***“And now, as we stand with our eyes fixed on the future shore, a single solitary figure arises from the flood and straightway fills the whole horizon. There is a Savior!”***

And by that he meant—there is only ONE Savior!

DO YOU KNOW THAT?

Do you know that there is a Savior? His name is Jesus Christ.

Do you know that the Greatest who ever lived, ***ever lives*** to make intercession for those who believe in Him?

Do you know that the Greatest of All Time...

Was NOT a GOAT... HE WAS A LAMB!

“Behold! The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”

John 1:29 (NKJV)

Have you allowed him to take away your sin? If not, why not?

- You waiting for a Hero? He’s the Hero!
- You need a Champion? Christ is your Champion!
- You looking for the Greatest Of All Time? Jesus is the Greatest Of All Time...
- Look no further than the Cross... where the GOAT became a Lamb.