

1. The Holy Qur'an on Yunus (Jonah) alayhi's-salam.

Source: The Holy Qur'an. Translation and Commentary by Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali.

Surah 10: Yunus

98. Why was there not
A single township (among those
We warned), which believed –
So its faith should have
Profited it – except the People
Of Jonah? When they believed,
We removed from them
The Penalty of Ignominy
In the life of the Present,
And permitted them to enjoy
(Their life) for a while.

Surah 21: Al-Anbiya'

87. And remember Dhu'n-Nun, [2744]
When he departed in wrath:
He imagined that We
Had no power over him!
But he cried through the depths
Of darkness, "There is
No god but Thou:
Glory to Thee: I was
Indeed wrong!"
88. So We listened to him:
And delivered him from
Distress: and thus do We
Deliver those who have faith.

2744. *Dhu'-Nun*, "the man of the Fish or the Whale", is the title of Jonah (Yunus), because he was swallowed by a large Fish or Whale. He was the prophet raised to warn the Assyrian capital Nineveh. [...] When his first warning was unheeded by the people, he denounced Allah's wrath on them. But they repented and Allah forgave them for the time being. Jonah, meanwhile, departed in wrath, discouraged at the apparent failure of his mission. He should have remained in the most discouraging circumstances, and relied on the power of Allah; for Allah had power both over Nineveh and over the Messenger He had sent to Nineveh. He went away to the sea and took a ship, but apparently the sailors threw him out as a man of bad omen in a storm. He was swallowed by a big Fish (or Whale), but in the depth of the darkness, he cried to Allah and confessed his weakness. The "darkness" may be interpreted both physically and spiritually: physically, as the darkness of the night and the storm and the Fish's body; spiritually as the darkness in his soul, his extreme distress in the situation which he had brought on himself. Allah Most Gracious forgave him. He was cast out ashore; he was given the shelter of a plant

in his state of mental and physical lassitude. He was refreshed and strengthened, and the work of his mission prospered. Thus he overcame all his disappointment by repentance and Faith, and Allah accepted him.

Surah 37: As-Saffat

139. So also was Jonah [4119] Among those sent (by Us).	Till the Day of Resurrection.
140. When he ran away (Like a slave from captivity) [4120] To the ship (fully) laden,	145. But We cast him forth On the naked shore In a state of sickness,
141. He (agreed to) cast lots, [4121] And he was condemned:	146. And We caused to grow, Over him, a spreading plant Of the Gourd kind.
142. Then the big Fish [4122] Did swallow him And he had done Acts of worthy of blame.	147. And We sent him (On a mission) To a hundred thousand [4127] (Men) or more.
143. Had it not been That he (repented and) Glorified Allah,	148. And they believed: So We permitted them To enjoy (their life) For a while.
144. He would certainly have Remained inside the Fish	

4119. [...] Jonah's mission was to the city of Nineveh, then steeped in wickedness. He was rejected and he called down Allah's wrath on them, but they repented and obtained Allah's forgiveness. But Jonah "departed in wrath", forgetting that Allah has Mercy as well as Forgiveness.

4120. Jonah ran away from Nineveh like a slave from captivity. He should have stuck to his post and merged his own will in Allah's will. He was hasty, and went off to take a ship. As if he could escape from Allah's Plan!

4121. The ship was fully laden and met with foul weather. The sailors, according to their superstition, wanted to find out who was responsible for the ill-luck; a fugitive slave would cause such ill-luck. The lot fell on Jonah, and he was cast off.

4122. The rivers of Mesopotamia have some huge fishes. The word used here is *hut*, may be a fish or perhaps a crocodile. If it were in an open northern sea, it might be a whale. The locality is not mentioned; in the Old Testament he is said to have boarded a ship in the port of Joppa (now Jaffa) in the Mediterranean (Jonah, i. 3), which would be not less than 600 miles from Nineveh. The Tigris river, mentioned by some of our Commentators, is more likely, and it contains some fishes of extraordinary size.

4127. The city of Nineveh was a very large city. The Old Testament says: "Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' "journey" (Jonah, iii. 3); "wherein are

more than six score thousand persons” (Jonah, iv. 11). In other words, its circuit was about 45 miles, and its population was over a hundred and twenty thousand inhabitants.

Surah 68: Al-Qalam

48. So wait with patience
For the Command
Of thy Lord, and be not
Like the Companion [5629]
Of the Fish – when he
Cried out in agony.
49. Had not Grace
From his Lord
Reached him, he

Would indeed have been
Cast off on the naked
Shore, in disgrace.
50. Thus did his Lord [5631]
Choose him and make him
Of the company
Of the Righteous.

5629. This was Dhu'n-Nun, or Jonah... Jonah was asked to preach to the people of Nineveh, a wicked city. He met with hostility and persecution, fled from his enemies, and took a boat. He was caught in a storm and thrown into the sea. He was swallowed by a fish or whale, but he repented in his living prison, and was forgiven. But the people of Nineveh were also forgiven, for they, too, repented. Here is a double allegory of Allah's mercy and forgiveness, and a command to patience, and complete and joyful submission to the Will of Allah.

5631 Jonah was chosen by Allah's Grace and Mercy to be Allah's Prophet to Nineveh. If in his human frailty he lost a little patience, he suffered his punishment, but his true and sincere repentance and recognition of Allah's goodness and mercy restored him from his physical and mental distress, and from the obscuration of the spiritual Light in him.

Lessons from Jonah's story are:

1. No man should take it upon himself to be the judge of Allah's wrath or Allah's mercy;
2. Allah forgives true repentance, whether in a righteous man, or in a wicked city; and
3. Allah's Plan will always prevail, and can never be defeated.

2. Hadith on Yunus alayhi's-salam.

Source: In his tafseer, Ibn Kathir says that Abu Muhammad 'Abd al-Rahman Ibn Abi Hatim mentions in his tafseer on the authority of Anas bin Malik that the Holy Prophet said:

When the Prophet Yunus was in the stomach of the fish, he said, 'O Allah, there is none worthy of worship except You, glory be to You. Indeed, I was among the wrongdoers'. It [this du'a] reached [from the stomach of the fish] to beneath the Throne. The angels asked [Allah], 'O Lord, we hear a very weak and familiar voice coming from a strange place.' Allah said, 'Don't you know who he is?' They replied, 'No our Lord, who is he?' Allah said, 'It is my slave Yunus.' The angels said, 'Is this Your slave Yunus whose prayers and deeds You have always accepted?' They said, 'O Lord, why don't You bestow Your mercy on him for what he did during times of comfort and thus free him from this trial?' So Allah said, 'Yes. I will.' He then ordered the fish to release Yunus and the creature released him onto the shore.