

Sura Yunus

1. The first ayat of this sura is has three letters of the Arabic alphabet. Can you circle these letters?

ا ب ت ث ج ح خ د ذ ر ز س ش
ص ض ط ظ ع غ ف ق ك ل م ن ه
و ي

2. Which three prophets' stories feature in this sura?

Prophet Nuh, Prophet Musa and Prophet Yunus

3. The drowning of Firawn in the story of Prophet Musa is discussed in some detail in this sura. What does the Holy Quran tell us? Give the ayat number(s).

As Firawn attempted to follow Prophet Musa and the Israelites across the parted sea, he was engulfed by the water. As he was drowning, Firawn submits to Allah (swt) in desperation. Allah (swt) continues to tell us in this sura that Firawn's body would not sink to the bottom of the sea but would be preserved as a sign to humankind (ayats #90-92)

4. In which ayat of this sura is Prophet Yunus (after whom this sura is named) first mentioned? What are the total number of verses in this sura? Why do you think the story of Prophet Yunus features so late in a sura which bears his name?

Prophet Yunus is first mentioned in ayat #98 out of a total of 109 verses. We can't say for sure why Allah (swt) intended it this way but I think it is to give special emphasis to the story of Prophet Yunus out of all the important things he discusses in this reasonably long sura.

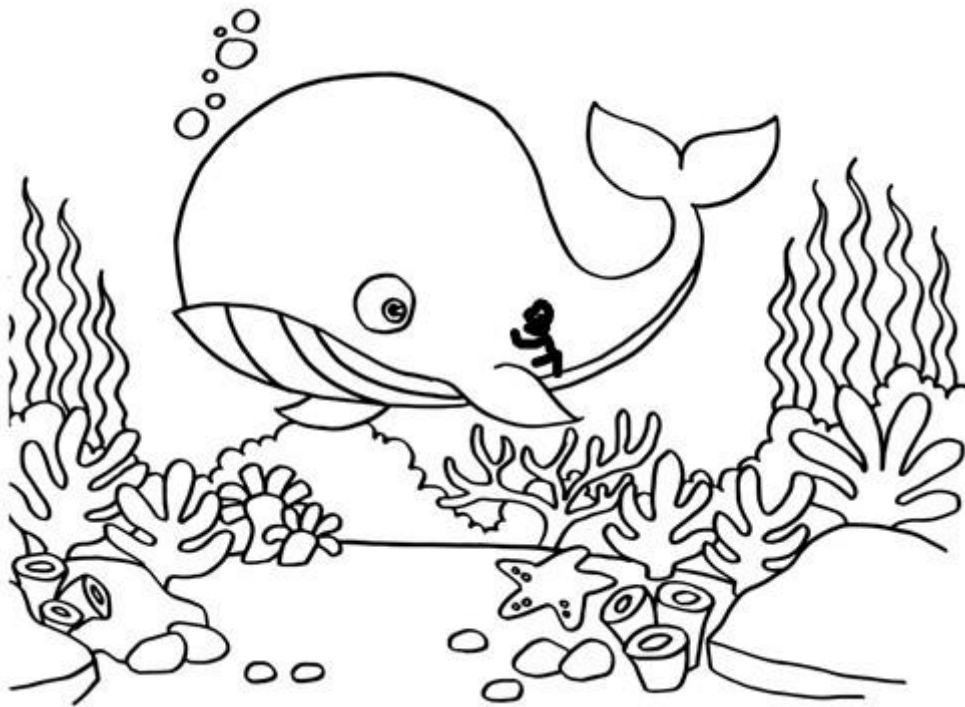
5. The story of Prophet Yunus is mentioned very briefly in this sura. In fact, unlike the story of Prophet Musa, there is very little detail about him in the Holy Quran overall. If you know it, briefly summarise it below. If not, you can refer to Sura Saaffaat, ayats #139-148.

Prophet Yunus was sent by Allah (swt) to guide the people of Nineveh. He tried to tell them to leave their evil ways or risk Allah's (swt) punishment, just as other prophets had done before him, but they would not listen. He became frustrated and didn't think the people would change, so decided to leave them. He got on a boat. While the boat was out on sea, Prophet Yunus was thrown overboard and subsequently swallowed by a big fish (like a whale). Prophet Yunus prayed to Allah (swt) from the belly of the fish and Allah (swt) answered his prayers. Prophet Yunus came out of the fish and washed up on shore where a special tree helped him get better. He returned to Nineveh where the people had a change of heart, heeded Prophet Yunus' message and were spared Allah's (swt) punishment.

What lessons can we learn from this story?

There are many lessons, of which these are a few: we need to keep patience in all our affairs; that there is reward for acknowledging our mistakes/weaknesses and working to rectify/improve them; the importance of repenting for any wrong done – intentionally and unintentionally; that constantly praising Allah (swt) and seeking His forgiveness now can help with challenging situations in the future; and that Allah (swt) is always there for us.

6. Before you colour the picture below, draw Prophet Yunus in the belly of the whale.



**What do you think it must have been like in there...was it dark or bright; quiet or noisy?
How do you think you would feel if you were alone in the stomach of a big fish?**

It must have been dark and quiet and lonely. Maybe sometimes there'd be sudden loud noises like of the fish's stomach grumbling. I think it would be very scary because I'd be alone and I would have no idea what was going to happen to me. Was the whale going to spit me out or would I be there forever? I would be worried about how I was going to get food and water when I'm hungry or thirsty.

7. Prophet Yunus is also referred to as ^{عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام} دَاالْتُون in the Holy Quran. What does this mean in English?

“The man of the fish”

See if you can find the dua (Arabic and/or English) which he recited while in the belly of the whale. (Hint: it is in Sura Anbiya.) We can recite this dua when we need help from Allah (swt) with any hardships that may come upon us during our life. If Allah (swt) can hear the dua of Prophet Yunus from inside the tummy of a big fish that's swimming deep in the sea, He can definitely hear us!

آ إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ
إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

Ayat #87 – “There is no god but You! Truly I have been among the wrongdoers”

8. What is ayat #51 of this sura saying?

Allah (swt) is questioning those who seek to challenge his existence by first demanding He bring forward the punishment which He promised (which in itself demonstrates a rejection of the truth), only to accept Allah (swt) in that final moment when the punishment is upon them. In short, Allah (swt) is addressing the uselessness of a deathbed repentance (The Study Quran by Seyyed Hossein Nasr)

9. Why do you think Allah (swt) forgave the people of Nineveh but not Firawn?

Because the people of Nineveh were genuinely returning to Allah's (swt) guidance and therefore His Mercy (Ayat #98), whereas Firawn was making a final deathbed plea in an effort to save himself (Ayat #91).

Allah (swt) tells us in the Holy Quran: “God only accepts the repentance of those who do evil in ignorance and then turn quickly in repentance: these are the ones unto whom God relents, and God is Knowing, Wise. And repentance is not accepted from those who do evil deeds till, when death confronts one of them, he says, ‘Truly now I repent,’ nor from those who die as disbelievers. For those We have prepared a painful punishment” (4:17-18)

10. What cannot be escaped as told to us in ayat #53 of this sura?

The Day of Judgment/the Hereafter