

PROPHETS OF ISLAM SERIES



THE BIOGRAPHIES OF
YUNUS AND AYYUB

عليهما السلام



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THE BIOGRAPHIES OF YUNUS AND AYYUB

(عليهما السلام)

Written By

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلاة والسلام على
سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين

PART - I

THE PEOPLE OF YUNUS (عليه السلام)

Yunus (عليه السلام) has been mentioned in Quran 4 times. He is also known as Dhan-Nun.

It is in Quran - وَذَا النُّونِ إِذْ ذَهَبَ مُغَاضِبًا فَظَنَّ أَنْ لَنْ نَقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَى فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ - [And (remember) Dhu an-Nun (Yunus عليه السلام) when he went away enraged (at his people). So, he thought that We would not cause him any distress (during that journey). Then he cried out in the darkness (of the night, under the sea from the belly of the fish who had swallowed him): 'There is no God except You. Glory be to You! Surely, I was of those who wrong (themselves).! We answered his prayer and rescued him from the anguish. And so, do We save the (true) believers.] (Al-Anbiyaa - 87-88)

Yunus (عليه السلام) was sent to the people of Neneveh, an ancient town in the present-day Iraq. The inhabitants of Nineveh were idolaters. He called them towards Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ), but they rejected him and persisted in their disbelief for a long time. They disliked Yunus's (عليه السلام) interference in their way of worship. When he warned them that they may be subjected to Allah's punishment if they insisted on their idol worship, they argued that their forefathers have been worshipping idol gods for many years and no harm was caused to them, therefore, they do not believe in his teachings or his warnings.

Many years passed like this and their insistence on idol worship continued. When Yunus (عليه السلام) he realized that they were adamant in rejecting the faith, he prayed Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) either to bring them on the right path or punish them. And he left the town in anger. Before going away from the town, he gave them three days to realize their mistake, at the end of which they will be subject to Allah's (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) wrath. This threat was to bring them to the right path. And it worked for their benefit.

Though his people rejected his teachings, they were aware that Yunus (عليه السلام) was honest. When he left the town, they saw dark clouds appeared over their heads. They got panicked and ran away from their homes to the desert with their children and cattle and flocks. They separated the mothers from their children and pleaded to Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) for forgiveness. They were forgiven for their misdeeds as they repented and believed in what Yunus (عليه السلام) preached them.

It is in Quran - فَلَوْلَا كَانَتْ قَرْيَةٌ أَمَنَتْ فَتَنَفَعَهَا إِيمَانُهَا إِلَّا قَوْمَ يُونُسَ لَمَا آمَنُوا كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُمْ عَذَابَ الْخُرِّي فِي - [Then has there not been a (single) city that believed so its faith benefited it except the people of Yunus (عليه السلام). When they believed, We removed from them the punishment of disgrace in worldly life and gave them enjoyment for a time.] (**Yunus - 98**)

Yunus (عليه السلام) leaving the town proved to be a blessing for his people as they realized that what he used to say was right. As he was absent during this ordeal, they could not request him to plead to Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) on their behalf. As a result, they got panicked and started repenting for their past misdeeds in all sincerity with Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ).

The people of Yunus (عليه السلام) are the only Ummah, among the past several prophets who were pardoned after the punishment became imminent to them. Quran testifies to this fact.

It is in Quran - صَلَّى اللهُ - [(Prophet Mohammad - صَلَّى اللهُ) وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَى - إِنَّ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَى - (عليه و آله وسلم) does not say anything with his self-desire, except that this is the revelation which is coming to him (from Allah - عَزَّ وَجَلَّ)]. (**An-Najm - 3-4**).

Leaving the town was an act of benevolence for his people even though Prophet Yunus (عليه السلام) personally went through severe hardship.

Prophets do not hate their people. Even in testing times, they pray for their welfare. We do not know what Yunus (عليه السلام) intended to do after leaving his people. One thing is confirmed that he left them in the hands of Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) and wanted to live separately from them for a while to see what Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) decides for them. Even while he was leaving the town, his heart was crying for Allah's (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) beneficence for his people as prophets cannot see the suffering of their people. He did it as a last resort to help his people and his sacrifice worked in their favor. Surely, Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) listened to the prayers of Yunus (عليه السلام) as his people were forgiven.

When Yunus (عليه السلام) left the town, they searched for him frantically as they witnessed the punishment for their crimes became imminent. They prayed giving the Wasila of Prophet Yunus (عليه السلام) and testified that they believe in him with all sincerity. Based on these prayers, they were forgiven.

It is in Quran - وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذْ ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ الرَّسُولُ لَوَجَدُوا اللَّهَ تَوَّابًا رَّحِيمًا -
[If they had only, when they were unjust to themselves, come to you and asked Allah's forgiveness, and the Apostle had asked forgiveness for them, they would have found Allah indeed Oft-returning, Most Merciful). (An-Nisa - 64).

Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) made the nature of prophets in such a way that they do not mind suffering personally for the benefit of their people. They are the teachers of humanity in every sphere of their lives.

It is in Hadith - Ibn Abbas (رضي الله تعالى عنه) narrated that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه) said, 'one should not say I am better than Yunus Ibn Matta (عليه السلام).'" (Sahih Bukhari).

PROPHET YUNUS (عليه السلام) WAS SWALLOWED BY A FISH

After leaving the town, Yunus (عليه السلام) traveled in a ship. During the journey, the ship was caught in a sea storm. The people in the ship got panicked and feared that they could be drowned. As it was the custom those days, they would cast lots to identify the person who was the cause of their misfortune. Whoever was identified, they would throw him into the sea for the ship's safety. It so happened that when they cast the lot, the draw went against Yunus (عليه السلام).

It is in Quran - فَسَاهَمَ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْمُدْحَضِينَ [And he (Yunus - عليه السلام) drew lots and was among the losers.] (As-Saaffaat - 141)

Yunus (عليه السلام) stood up, removed his outer garments, and threw himself into the sea in the darkness of the night. A large fish appeared on the scene and swallowed him and went deep into the sea.

Yunus (عليه السلام) remained alive in the belly of the fish for about an hour or so and he prayed Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) seeking His mercy from the darkness of the belly of fish. His prayer was answered. The fish came back on the surface of water and spew him out on a beach which had thick vegetation. It took some days for Yunus (عليه السلام) on the beach to get fully healed as his skin was partially burnt.

PROPHET YUNUS (عليه السلام) RETURNED BACK TO HIS PEOPLE

After Yunus (عليه السلام) recovered fully, he went back to his town and was happy to know his people were following his teachings sincerely.

Prophet Yunus (عليه السلام) lived in his people for as long as Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) wished until he died and was probably buried in Neneveh town, located in the present-day Iraq.

PART - II

AYYUB (عليه السلام)

Prophet Ayyub (عليه السلام) was the descendant of Prophet Ishaq (عليه السلام). He lived in Syria. He was very humble. He used to glorify Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) devotedly. He was provided with many bounties, like big house, lands, farms, livestock, servants, and many children.

Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) has praised Ayyub (عليه السلام) in the Quran.

It is in Quran - إِنَّا وَجَدْنَاهُ صَابِرًا نِعْمَ الْعَبْدُ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ [What an excellent servant (he was)!
Indeed, he (constantly) turned (to Allah).] (Saad - 44)

Ayyub (عليه السلام) has been mentioned in the Quran 4 times.

It is in Quran - إِنَّا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ كَمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى نُوحٍ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ [Indeed, We have revealed to you, (O' Prophet ﷺ), as We revealed to Nooh (عليه السلام) and the prophets after him. And we revealed to Ibrahim, Ismail, Is-haq, Yaqoob (عليهم السلام), the descendants, Isa, Ayyub, Younus, Haroon, and Sulaiman (عليهم السلام), and to Dawood (عليه السلام) We gave the book of Psalms (الزبور).] (An-Nisa - 163)

It is reported that once angels were discussing about Allah's (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) servants; how some of them were humble and others were arrogant. One of the angels remarked, the best servant he has seen on planet Earth (at that time) was Ayyub (عليه السلام) who displayed great patience and is always involved in the zikr of his Lord. The angel said, 'he is an excellent model for people at that time. Allah has blessed him with a long-life riches and servants. He is very generous to the needy and never hesitates in helping the poor.'

Iblis overheard the conversation of angels and was annoyed as he felt jealous of Ayyub (عليه السلام). He vowed to tempt Ayyub (عليه السلام) for corruption and disbelief and started distracting him in his prayers. Ayyub (عليه السلام) was a Prophet. When Iblis attempts failed, he complained to Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) saying that although Ayyub (عليه السلام) was continuously glorifying Him, he may not be doing it out of his sincerity but to please Him in order to safeguard his wealth. It may all be a show, an all-out of greed. The Satan said, 'if You remove his wealth and other

benefits, You will find that his tongue will no longer mention Your name and his praying will stop.'

Allah told Iblis that Ayyub (عليه السلام) was His sincere servant. He did not pray because of His favors. To prove Satan the depth of Ayyub's (عليه السلام) sincerity and patience, Allah allowed Satan to do whatever harm he and his helpers wished but they will find him always thankful to his Lord.

Thus, the great trial of Ayyub (عليه السلام) began and Satan did everything possible.

Ayyub (عليه السلام) was stripped of all his wealth and possessions. But it did not matter to Ayyub (عليه السلام) as he remained committed to the glorification of Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ). Then Ayyub (عليه السلام) lost all his children, one by one. Then he lost his health as he was afflicted with a loathsome disease with terrible pain. The disease worsened day by day to an extent that people of his community abandoned him outside the town where no one visited him except his wife who remained with him through all these trials. She worked in the homes of people to make a living and to look after him who was abandoned alone. Even in this condition, Ayyub (عليه السلام) did not lose heart and remained steadfast in the glorification of Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ).

It is in Quran - [And remember Our servant (Prophet) Ayyub (عليه السلام), when he called: My Lord, Satan has afflicted me with hardship and suffering.] (Saad - 41)

The wife of Ayyub (عليه السلام) remained steadfast in serving him during his long illness. It is reported that one day she could not find anything to feed her husband. In desperation, she sold her hairs to a rich woman and with that money she bought food for him.

Ayyub (عليه السلام) was a prophet. He knew she sacrificed her hair for buying him the food. However, he was sacred of Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) as he thought she may have broken the law of their Sharia even though it was for a noble cause of feeding her husband who was a Prophet. The Prophets are examples for their followers and even in extreme circumstances their actions are examples for the people to follow. He thought that as an expiation for her removing the hair, she was liable for whipping with the required lashes. This shows how sincere the prophets are in their lives.

Ayyub (عليه السلام) remained in this state for about 18 years. Then one day he prayed - وَأَيُّوبَ إِذْ نَادَى - [And remember Ayyub (عليه السلام), when he called his Lord saying, 'Hardship has afflicted me, and You are the Most Merciful of all those who have mercy.] (Al-Anbiya - 83). Allah responded - [(We responded), 'Strike (the ground) with your foot; here is a (spring for you) for cool bath and drink.' (Saad - 42)

The moment he struck the ground with his leg, a fountain sprung over from it. He took bath in it and drank from it and all his afflictions were removed from him and he became as sound as he had been earlier.

His wife was not there at that time. When she returned, she did not recognize her husband standing in front of her hale and hearty. She asked him, 'may Allah bless you, have you seen the Prophet of Allah who was ill, lying here? And by Allah, I have not seen a man, more like him when he was healthy, than you. Prophet Ayyub (عليه السلام) said 'it is me only'. She felt incredibly happy to see the beneficence of Allah in giving her husband back to her, hale and hearty.

As regards to Ayyub's (عليه السلام) consideration that his wife was liable to be whipped as an expiation for selling her hairs, Allah said, *وَأَخَذُ بِبِيَدِكَ ضِعْفًا فَأَضْرِبُ بِهِ وَلَا تَحْنَنْتَ إِنَّا وَجَدْنَاهُ صَابِرًا نِعْمَ الْعَبْدُ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ* [(And We told him), 'take in your hand a bundle of (thin) grass, and strike (your wife) with it, and fulfill your thought of honor (you made during your sickness). What an excellent servant (he was)! Indeed, he (constantly) turned (to Allah). **(Saad - 44)**.

Later Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) returned all his wealth, possessions and his children.

Prophet Ayyub (عليه السلام) died at the age of 93 year.