

## Reconstruction of the Meaning of the Story of the Prophet Yunus (a.s.) in Q.S. As-Sāffāt: 142 - 144 Perspective of Tafsir Maqashidi

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### Abstract

This study analyzes the story of the Prophet Yunus A. S. in QS. Verses 142–144 of As-Saffat are often discussed from modern rational and scientific perspectives, particularly regarding the possibility of human survival in the belly of a large fish. This discussion shows the conflict between religious interpretations and modern biological logic, which is increasingly gaining strength in the digital world. This research aims to reconstruct the understanding of the story of the Prophet Yunus through the maqashidi interpretation, as an effort to address rational skepticism without ignoring the theological truth in the Qur'an. The method used is qualitative research using literature studies, which includes analysis of relevant verses, books of interpretation from the past and modern, and related scientific sources. The findings of the study show that the word *al-hūt* does not refer to a specific species of fish, but rather to a category of large fish as a whole, so it is not limited by modern biological assumptions. In addition, the story of the Prophet Yunus is understood as a theological reality that a combination of literal and symbolic meanings can explain. Using the tafsir of Maqashidi di, this story affirms the divine purpose in terms of soul protection, spiritual strengthening, and civility in preaching, so that it remains relevant to face the challenges of modern-day rationality.

Maqāshidi Interpretation; Prophet Yunus; Rational Skepticism; Qur'anic Hermeneutics

### Abstract

Studi ini menganalisis cerita Nabi Yunus A. S. dalam QS. As-Saffat ayat 142–144 yang sering menjadi bahan diskusi melalui sudut pandang rasional dan ilmiah modern, terutama mengenai kemungkinan manusia selamat di dalam perut ikan besar. Diskusi ini menunjukkan adanya konflik antara interpretasi religius dan logika biologis modern yang semakin menguat di dunia digital. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk membangun kembali pemahaman tentang kisah Nabi Yunus dengan pendekatan tafsir maqashidi sebagai upaya menjawab skeptisisme rasional tanpa mengabaikan kebenaran teologis dalam Al-Qur'an. Metode yang dipergunakan adalah penelitian kualitatif dengan menggunakan studi pustaka yang mencakup analisis terhadap ayat-ayat yang relevan, buku tafsir dari masa lampau dan modern, serta sumber ilmiah yang berkaitan. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kata *al-hūt* tidak mengacu pada spesies ikan yang spesifik, tetapi lebih pada kategori ikan besar secara keseluruhan, sehingga tidak terbatas oleh asumsi biologis yang bersifat modern. Selain itu, kisah Nabi Yunus dipahami sebagai realitas teologis yang dapat dijelaskan dengan perpaduan antara makna harfiah dan simbolis. Dengan menggunakan tafsir maqashidi, cerita ini menegaskan tujuan ilahi dalam hal perlindungan jiwa, penguatan rohani, dan keadaban dalam berdakwah, sehingga tetap relevan untuk menghadapi tantangan rasionalitas zaman modern.

**Keywords:** Tafsir Maqāshidi; Kisah Nabi Yunus; Skeptisisme Rasional; Hermeneutika Al-Qur'an.

## INTRODUCTION

The Qur'an has told many stories of previous prophets with the aim of how the prophet dealt with his people, one of which was the Prophet Yunus a.s. In his story, he was so desperate in the face of severe rejection and resistance that finally, the Prophet Yunus left his people in a

state of anger. In Surah as-Saffat, verse 142, it is even narrated that he was swallowed by a hut (big fish), and if he did not dhikr to Allah swt, then he would have remained in the stomach of the hut fish until the end of the Apocalypse. This has been explained in verses 143-144 (Khikmatiar, 2019). However, scientifically, this is considered irrational in this modern world. Baratier (2020) explains that if a human being is swallowed by a whale, then he will not survive for long. First, there is no air or oxygen in their stomachs, so humans cannot breathe if they get into the whale's stomach. Both whales are carnivores. If ingested, the enzymes will be digested.

In the modern era, the story of miracles in the Qur'an is often questioned through the lens of scientific rationality. One example can be seen in the upload of the TikTok account @kedamaianhening888, which asked if humans could live for three days in the belly of a whale as told by the Prophet Yunus, a.s. The upload builds an argument that in the whale's stomach, there is no oxygen or air, as well as the presence of stomach acid, so how can humans survive? This statement is in line with Celia Bartier's. Netizens' responses to the upload were varied, as seen in the comment column, which showed the pros and cons positions with their respective arguments. This phenomenon shows the difference in views between religious interpretation and modern rationality, as well as marking the need for an interpretive approach that is able to explain the meaning of miracles more contextually and substantially. Therefore, it is very relevant to analyze and prove the truth of the miracles of the Qur'an with science and technology today, considering that modern humans think scientifically and rationally so they tend to only accept the truth that is supported by concrete evidence (Mandalika et al., 2023).

Previous research on the story of the Prophet Yunus has explored various dimensions, but no one has specifically confronted the narrative with the challenges of modern science through the lens of Tafsir Maqashidi. Muzakky (2020) focusing on the value of responsibility and patience of da'wah using Abdullah Saeed's hermeneutics. Meanwhile, Aulia (2022) dissect the terminology of abaqa through Roland Barthes' semiotic approach, and Fatih (2025) analyze it from a pedagogical perspective or Tafsir Tarbawi. Although Robikah (2021) and Syamsir (2024) have begun to apply Tafsir Maqashidi in order to reconstruct the story of the Qur'an and contemporary problems, their study has not touched on the dialectic between the text of al-hut and the biological facts regarding the digestive and respiratory systems of whales. This is where the originality of this research lies; In contrast to previous research that tends to dwell on ethical, linguistic, and educational aspects, this study seeks to reconstruct the meaning of the story of the Prophet Yunus in QS. As-saffat: 142–144 to answer rational-scientific doubts using the framework of Tafsir Maqashidi.

The research uses the Maqashidi tafsir method. This method is used as a framework for analysis in reading the tension between the interpretation of Qur'anic verses and the biological reality of modern science. The purpose of this framework is to link sacred texts with the dominance of scientific reasoning, determining that religious narratives remain consistent with the present era. Using this approach, this study has three main objectives: *first*, to explore the identity of the pronunciation of al-hut in surah as-saffat verse 141, the aim is to see that the term refers to whales or other types of large fish; *second*, to explore the events that befell the Prophet Yunus, whether they happened in real or imaginary ways; and the *third*, to describe the interpretation that befell the

Prophet Yunus from the perspective of Maqashidi interpretation, to reveal the intention behind the miracle narrative.

This research begins with several basic assumptions that are the theoretical foundation. *First*, the event that befell the Prophet Yunus a.s. is understood as a reality that has the basis of absolute theological truth in the sacred text. This is based on the principle of God's sovereignty as hinted at in QS. Yasin verse 82, that all things can happen through the will of *Kun Fayakūn*, which goes beyond the limits of material causality (Kharisman, 2021). Within this framework, human limitations in understanding the phenomenon of miracles often create a distance between text and rationality (Riza, 2022). *Second*, the tension between the textual narrative and the biological fact of human safety in the stomach of a fish that is scientifically considered impossible due to the absence of oxygen and the attack of digestive enzymes is a difference that demands a deeper explanation, not just a rejection of the facts (Baratier, 2020). This study assumes that this inconsistency arises due to the limited human understanding of the specific identity of al-ḥūt in QS. As-Saffat is not explained absolutely, thus opening up space for a broader scientific interpretation beyond the whale species known today. *Third*, the existence of sacred texts is assumed to have a purpose (*maqashid*) that goes beyond physical and biological facts. Therefore, even though the event is believed to be a theologically real reality, its substantial meaning can still be reconstructed through a non-literal approach to answer rational challenges without ignoring the spiritual value of the miracle.

The problem addressed in this study arises from the tension between the theological interpretation of the story of Prophet Yunus a.s. in QS. As-Saffat verses 142-144 and modern rational and biological approaches, particularly concerning the possibility of a human surviving inside the belly of a large fish, which often leads to skepticism about the validity of the narrative. Furthermore, the ambiguous identity of al-ḥūt in the Qur'anic text opens up space for interpretive debate that has not been fully resolved by conventional exegetical approaches. Therefore, this study aims to reconstruct the meaning of the story of Prophet Yunus a.s. through a *maqashidi* interpretive perspective by emphasizing the integration of literal and symbolic dimensions, in order to address the challenges of modern rationality without neglecting the theological truth of the Qur'an, while also affirming its divine objectives (*maqashid*), such as the preservation of life, spiritual strengthening, and ethical guidance in preaching.

## METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research design using a library research approach, as the primary object of analysis is textual in nature, namely the Qur'anic verses and their interpretations. The focus of the study is the term *al-ḥūt* in QS. As-Saffat verse 142, along with its narrative continuity in verses 143-144, which together form a unified and interrelated discourse. Accordingly, all data are derived from relevant written sources, including classical and contemporary tafsir literature, as well as scholarly works that discuss Qur'anic interpretation and its engagement with modern scientific perspectives.

The analytical framework of this research is based on the *maqashidi* approach to Qur'anic interpretation as developed by Mustaqim (2019). This approach emphasizes the importance of uncovering the higher objectives (*maqashid*) of the Qur'an by integrating textual analysis with

contextual understanding, while maintaining a balanced position between literalist and overly liberal interpretations. In this perspective, meaning is not confined to explicit textual expressions (*mantāq*), but also includes implicit dimensions (*maskūt ‘anhu*), particularly in relation to theological, ethical, and purposive messages embedded in the narrative of the Qur’an.

The data were collected through a systematic literature review by identifying, classifying, and comparing various interpretations of the relevant verses from different *mufassirin*, as well as contemporary academic perspectives. The analysis was conducted in several stages: *first*, examining the linguistic and semantic aspects of *al-hūt* within its textual context; *second*, comparing classical and modern interpretations to identify patterns and differences; and *third*, reconstructing the meaning of the narrative through a *maqāsidī* lens by identifying its higher objectives, such as the preservation of life, spiritual strengthening, and ethical guidance in da’wah. Through this procedure, the study aims to produce an interpretation that remains faithful to the theological foundations of the Qur’an while also responding to modern rational challenges.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Identification of the Meaning of *Al-Hut* Pronunciation of Surah As-Saffat Verse 142

The pronunciation of *al-hut* contained in Surah As-Saffat verse 142 is one of the words in the Qur’an that is rich in meaning and gives rise to various interpretations among scholars. As Allah says in the Qur’an:

فَالْتَمَّهَ الْحُوتُ وَهُوَ مُلِيمٌ

“He was then swallowed by a large fish in a despicable state.” (Q.S. As-Saffat: 142)

This verse describes the incident of the Prophet Yunus peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), who was swallowed by *al-hut* (fish). Describing the incident of the Prophet Yunus, who was swallowed by *al-hut* (fish). To gain a deep understanding of the meaning of this word, a linguistic approach through the use of dictionaries and an interpretation approach is needed by studying explanations from the *mufasir*. In the field of Arabic lexicography, the word *al-hut* shows the basic meaning of fish, but it also has a significant expansion of meaning. The Complete Arabic Al-Munawir Dictionary defines *al-hut* as a fish in general and can refer specifically to whales (*al-bal*), with the plural form *hitan*. This explanation shows that the term *al-hut* does not refer to one specific species, but rather includes a category of large fish that live in the ocean. In line with this, the Yunus Dictionary emphasizes that the plural forms *hut* and *hitan* mean a large fish, without establishing a limit on its type. From a linguistic point of view, the word *al-hut* has indeed had a general meaning from the beginning that is open to various possible interpretations, especially when it is connected to the context of the story of the Prophet Yunus. This interpretation is an important basis for understanding the interpretation of scholars, because the Qur’an does not mention specific types of fish, but uses a common word that can include various types of large fish. This variation of interpretation appears among *mufasir* inseparable from the breadth of the meaning of the language of the recitation of *al-hut* itself.

The majority of scholars, both classical and contemporary, agree that the recitation of *al-hut* in surah as-saffat 142 is interpreted as a large fish that the Prophet Yunus swallowed, but when it

comes to the type of fish itself, they have different opinions. Buya Hamka interprets al-hut in the tafsir of al-Azhar as something that is not explained in the Qur'an, whether it is a whale, a fish that is the size of a whale, or one that exceeds a whale. What is clear in the Qur'an is that only the word *nun*, as a result of which the Prophet Yunus got the title, namely *dzun nun*. This opinion is a form of scientific prudence, and the focus of the discussion is on the moral message, not on the species of fish itself. On the other hand, Quraish Shihab in Tafsir Al-Misbah gives a more actual interpretation of the possibility that al-hut is a large shark. He quotes the tafsir al-Muntakhab: there are two possibilities. First, it includes the large shark with toothless fins like the one in the Mediterranean Sea, which is about 20 meters long. Second, it is possible that a large type of shark that has teeth and is 20 meters long, is in the middle sea, eating large animals that are 3 meters in size. Meanwhile, in the interpretation of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia al-hut is interpreted as a fish in general, both small and large, although some scholars limit it to large fish. Al-Hasil can be seen that this difference in views provides a pattern of interpretation of the meaning of al-hut according to the background of the mufassir.

The characteristics of the profound interpretation of al-Hut can be seen in the commentaries of Ibn Assyria, Wahbah Az-Zuhaili, and Sayyid Qutb. Ibn Ashur, in his commentary, known as *at-tahrir wa tanwir*, interprets al-Hut in Surah As-Saffat, verse 142, as a large fish that swallows without teeth. It is said that this type of fish is a baleen whale in European languages. This interpretation links the biology of the fish with the word *iltiqam*, which means swallowing completely. This term reflects Ibn Assyria's tendency to combine linguistic analysis with contextual and logical interpretation, an approach that is unique to his work in modern interpretation (Halim, 2014). Al-Maraghi and Wahbah Az-Zuhaili, in their interpretations of al-Hut, both identify the big fish that Prophet Yunus swallowed. They focus more on the moral state of Prophet Yunus during the incident than on identifying the fish itself. In the tafsir *fi zilalili Qur'an*, Sayyid Qutb uses a thematic approach that emphasizes the importance of education and the consequences of abandoning the task of da'wah without God's permission. This approach demonstrates that the meaning of al-Hut cannot be separated from the context and spiritual message of the verse, so the type of fish is not fully explained compared to the theological significance conveyed by the verse. Therefore, the lexical analysis of *iltiqamahu* in Arabic points to the idea of swallowing entirely (*muttasa'u al-dakbilat*) and also refers to a large fish (*as-samaku al-kabir*) that does not injure its prey when swallowing (Muzakky, 2020).

In classical interpretations, such as the works of Imam Ar-Razi, An-Nawawi Al-Bantani, Ath-Thabari, Az-Zamakhshari, and Thantwai Jauhari are harmoniously interpreted as the big fish that the Prophet Yunus swallowed, with a strong emphasis on linguistic meaning *iltiqam*, which means swallow. Imam Ath-Thabari and Ar-Razi mark *iltiqam* and *Iltiham* similar meanings, i.e., swallowing directly. While the Nawawi Imam interprets Al-Hut with which Lakhm, Zamakhshari, in his book, namely Al-Kasyaf Perform an analysis of the pronunciation. Despite many variations in interpretation, they agree that Al-Hut is God's creature who was chosen as the test of the Prophet Yunus. It can be concluded that the Al-Hut in Surah as-saffat verse 142 lexically means a big fish, and from the point of view of interpretation, it leads to a symbolic meaning as a form of the power of Allah swt, not just a biological object. The semantic methodology used by Zamakhshari is often used to understand the meaning in Qur'anic verses, including how a term can maintain *Aqidah* and understand the laws in it (Yusron, 2021). Scholars in interpreting *Al-Hut*

with big fish agree, but the way they interpret and deepen the meaning of *Al-Hut*. Of course, adjusting their respective backgrounds. This perspective shows the mufasir in interpreting the story of the miracle of the Prophet Yunus, namely by combining linguistic analysis with theological understanding to affirm the truth of history, in the midst of confronting modern thinking that is often doubtful and considers the story as a myth or symbol (Çaksen, 2024).

### **Analysis of the Events of the Story of Prophet Yunus a.s. Between Real Meaning *HAqiqi* and Majazi**

The explanation of the story of the Prophet Yunus in the Qur'an has attracted the interest of both classical and modern interpreters (Muhammad Imam Shaf'i, 2025). The Qur'an presents the story of the Prophet Yunus in a separate form, not in one long narrative, but spread across various surahs. These sections include QS. Yunus: 96-98, al-Anbiya: 87, QS. As-Saffat: 139-148, and al-Qalam: 48, each focusing on different aspects of the journey of the Prophet Yunus (Pratama, 2023). This approach reflects the characteristics of the Qur'an, which focuses more on ethics and technology than on the chronological details of history. In Surah Ash-Shaffat (139-148), Prophet Yunus is described as a prophet who fled in a boat, which was then drawn, and it was the name of Prophet Yunus that came out among all the people, until he was thrown into the sea, and then Prophet Yunus was swallowed by a large fish. Thus, this story not only points to the sequence of events, but also highlights the weaknesses and mistakes made by the Prophet Yunus, which is an important lesson for humans to avoid (Muzakky, 2020)

This story, which also appears in other scriptures such as the Bible and the Torah, is often the subject of discussion as to whether it is a mythological narrative or a historical event that contains profound lessons (Çaksen, 2024). In this cramped state, Yunus offered the famous prayer: "Laa ilaaha illa anta, subhaanaka inni kuntu minazh-zhaalimiin". The majority of classical mufasir such as Ath-Thabari, Al-Qurthubi, and Ibn Kathir, understood these verses literally (Katsir, 1994). According to them, the event of Yunus's swallowing by a large fish was a real miracle, as a form of God's rebuke to His prophet as well as a manifestation of His power. This literal interpretation is supported by the theological principle that Allah is Almighty over all things, including keeping a human life in the belly of a fish. This is in line with the purpose of the Qur'an in presenting the stories of the prophets, which is to provide an example in responding to the trials and trials of life, emphasizing that the higher a person's position before Allah, the heavier the test he faces (Novianti, 2019).

Therefore, there is no theological basis for denying the possibility of such an event actually occurring. This argument is in line with the view that, although many natural phenomena follow the law of cause and effect, there is still the possibility of divine intervention that results in unbiased events (Keller, 1988). This idea does not necessarily imply that miracles require the cessation of natural laws, but rather that nature can receive intervention from God (Özer, 2025). However, some interpreters have also emphasized the spiritual and educational aspects of this narrative.

The main point does not lie in how biologically or physically one can survive in the belly of a fish, but rather in the meaning of repentance, an awareness of human limitations, and the all-encompassing grace of God. In this case, the story of the Prophet Yunus being swallowed by a big fish, which is listed in holy books such as the Qur'an, the Hebrew Bible, and the Bible, is not just

a mythical story or symbolic fable, but holds profound lessons for humanity, including the scientific community (Çaksen, 2024). From this point of view, the historicity of events becomes less central than the moral message that the Qur'an wants to convey to its readers. The story of the Prophet Yunus is a clear manifestation that difficulties and trials are divine decrees that must be faced with patience and faith, as described in many prophetic narratives (Novianti, 2019).

This literal historical approach argues that the narrative of the Prophet Yunus reflects real events that occurred at a specific time and place. In Islamic belief, this view is reinforced by the belief that the Qur'an is a perfectly correct revelation, both in terms of theology and facts. As a result, interpreting Yunus's story solely as a metaphor is considered by some to be a reduction to the meaning of the miracle itself. On the other hand, interpreters such as Yunahar Ilyas and Nashruddin Baidan believe that the stories in the Qur'an, including the story of the Prophet Yunus, are representations of factual truth and not imaginative or literary works (Awaluddin & Hakim, 2023; Insan & Chirzin, 2021). In fact, the historical truth of some of the stories in the Qur'an has been proven through scientific studies, such as those related to the body of Pharaoh listed in Surah Yunus (Awaluddin & Hakim, 2023). This shows that the prophetic narratives in the Qur'an are not merely symbolic but can be verifiable historical records, while providing proper spiritual lessons and factual information (Jafar, 2017).

This approach is supported by the argument that miracles, by definition, are outside the laws of nature that humans usually understand. It is impossible that biological or scientific nature can be considered a reasonable reason to deny the historical truth of such events. Meanwhile, scholars who regard narratives as symbolic do not deny the physical truth of the Qur'anic story, but seek to divert the essential meaning into the meaning of *majazi* (Faizin, 2020). In this context, Yunus's presence in the fish is seen as a direct intervention from God that transcends natural causality. However, historical-literal approaches face challenges from contemporary academic research, especially in the disciplines of history and science. This criticism does not necessarily aim to reject belief, but rather to emphasize the need to distinguish between theological truth and empirical testing. This tension is what drives the emergence of alternative approaches that are more symbolic.

This symbolic approach sees the story of the Prophet Yunus as a story rich in moral and spiritual values (Afsar, 2009). In this view, the main concern does not lie in whether Yunus was physically right in the belly of the fish, but rather in the profound meaning of the experience. The belly of the fish is interpreted as a symbol of alienation, crisis, and the lowest point in a prophet's spiritual journey. This view does not automatically deny the existence of Yunus as a historical figure (Olson & Barton, 1986). What is in question is the way the story is told and to what extent the literal level should be applied. Interpreters with a symbolic approach tend to see this incident as a picture of the Prophet Yunus losing control and ignoring divine revelation, assuming that his actions were right without any rebuke from God (Pratama, 2023).

Through understanding the story of Yunus as a symbol, readers are invited to understand the universal message of repentance, humility, and God's love that crosses ethnic and religious boundaries. This kind of interpretation also provides an opportunity to explore a deeper understanding of the sacred texts that have ambiguity, while allowing the exploration of hidden meanings through the *takwil* method to understand the linguistic and literary dimensions of the

Qur'an (Mubaidillah, 2017). In academia, the symbolic approach is often considered to be more in line with the methodology of literary and historical criticism. This facilitates a broader dialogue between religious texts and modern knowledge, without having to override the values of faith.

Rather than arguing sharply between historical and *majazi* approaches, many modern scientists suggest taking a synthesis approach. In this framework, the story of the Prophet Yunus is seen as an event that may be rooted in historical reality, but is expressed through the use of language rich in symbols. This method allows for a deeper understanding of the meaning and values that exist in the story, taking into account the importance of historical and symbolic context in the interpretation of the text. This approach to synthesis is also in line with contextual hermeneutic methods that emphasize the need to merge history, literature, and the present context in order to obtain a more comprehensive interpretation (Maranatha, 2024). In this way, the historical and theological aspects do not erase each other, but complement each other.

This synthesis supports the core purpose of the sacred texts, which is to provide direction and lessons for humanity. It also opens up the view that Islam is not just a static collection of normative texts, but a living belief system linked to human historical experience that always requires critical analysis (Mangunsong, 2019). Regardless of whether Yunus's events happened exactly as told, the essence of the message remains important: man cannot shirk his moral and spiritual responsibilities, and God's love is always open to those who want to repent. The dialogical hermeneutic approach facilitates the reading of texts that are not only fixated on factual truth, but also explore the meaning and value that exist in the story, in accordance with the thought of Umar Junus, who highlights the interaction between fiction and History (Suharmono, 2023)

### **Analysis of the Interpretation of the Events of the Prophet Yunus in the Perspective of Tafsir Maqashidi**

The interpretation of the Prophet Yunus's story through maqashidi emphasizes the search for divine meaning and purpose in his miracles, especially in QS. As-Shaffat: 139–148, with an orientation to the benefit of the ummah. With a focus on the protection of religion, soul, intellect, and, above all, the goals of sharia, this is the approach of the maqashidi interpretation developed by Abdul Mustaqim. The incident that had befallen the Prophet Yunus when he left his duty was not understood solely as an extraordinary event, but as a means of da'wah and an invitation to repentance (Hakim, 2023). By realizing sharia and exploring wisdom, and also so that the text of the Qur'an remains relevant in every era, this is how the interpretation of maqashidi is understood (Ibrahim & Bela, 2023). Maqashidi tafsir also utilizes the framework of maudu'i tafsir as an initial basis without eliminating the text, by focusing on the purpose and meaning behind the event, so that the story of the miracle functions as a moderate educational medium (Zubairin, 2024).

The story of the Prophet Yunus AS being swallowed by a big fish reflects the principles of maqashidi al-shari'ah, especially the protection of the soul (hifz al-nafs) as the main goal of sharia. The protection given by Allah to the Prophet Yunus, AS, shows that sharia not only protects physical life, but also builds spiritual aspects through the process of repentance and tawakal. This approach is in line with the understanding of maqashidi, which places human interests as the main focus in Islamic law (Auda, 2008; Mustaqim, 2019). In the current context, this story is relevant in dealing with humanitarian crises and mental health issues by affirming that hope and repentance

are part of the mechanism of soul protection in Islam. In addition, the study of maqashidi in the story of the Prophet Yunus a.s. shows the importance of a moderate approach in da'wah, where we must avoid emotional and coercive attitudes, and view da'wah as a process of mutual grace and guidance (Mustaqim, 2019). So this story not only strengthens the protection of religion (*hifẓ al-din*) through the cleansing of monotheism, but also emphasizes the importance of wasathiyah as the goal of da'wah based on maqashidi.

In the perspective of Maqashidi's interpretation, the story of the Prophet Yunus AS is seen not only as a story of miracles that occurred in the past, but also as part of the text of the Qur'an that aims to achieve good and avoid evil. Abdul Mustaqim stated that the maqashidi approach requires us to analyze the verses by identifying key words, understanding the context of da'wah, and applying them in strengthening religious moderation in the current era (Mustaqim, 2019). The experience of the Prophet Yunus being swallowed by a fish can be seen as a symbol of the test that suppresses psychological and spiritual stress, while his salvation shows God's love for the evolved and surrendered servant, in line to protect the soul and the intellect. Recent maqashidi studies show that this approach helps to strengthen optimism towards sharia and prevent despair in modern society, especially in the face of social and mental crises (Nurjanah & Atus Sholeha, 2024). In addition, maqashid-based tafsir encourages inclusive da'wah, with a focus on the common good and the ethics of moderation, so that the Qur'an remains relevant and responsive to the challenges faced by the ummah in the 21st century. In addition, maqashid-based tafsir encourages inclusive da'wah, with a focus on the common good and the ethics of moderation, so that the Qur'an remains relevant and responsive to the challenges faced by the ummah in the 21st century (Tohari, 2024).

In the modern context, Abdul Mustaqim's approach positions this story as the foundation of moderation in Islam, where the miracle of Yunus shows that salvation is obtained through prayer beads and repentance, not through violence, and this is very important for da'wah in an age of pluralism. The story also metaphorically encourages environmental protection, as the large fish depicts nature as a medium of divine testing that needs to be taken care of (Ahmadi & Ghazali, 2018). Prophet Yunus's awareness of his mistakes and sincerity in his prayers is a valuable lesson about the positive effects of sincere confession and repentance. Prophet Yunus's awareness of his guilt and sincerity in his prayers is a valuable lesson about the positive effects of sincere confession and repentance (Pratama, 2023). In the end, this maqashidi invites the people to reflect on current problems, such as despair, and offer solutions through prayer and return to the mission. This miracle also creates protection for the people, because Yunus's experience is a lesson for the people to continue to preach even in difficulties, to create a just and loving society. Dhikr and sincere prayer, such as the one performed by the Prophet Yunus, serve as an indispensable spiritual therapy, providing inner peace and increasing moral energy in the midst of the various challenges that exist today (Kamila, 2022).

Through this approach of the interpretation of the maqashidi of Abdul Mustaqim so that we can understand the Qur'an more deeply. Not only reading letter by letter or studying history, but the main thing is to explore the great meaning of Allah through the Qur'an itself (maqashid al-Qur'an) as a guide for the life of Muslims, plus the foundation of Islamic law as a whole (maqashid al-sharia). For example, this story of the Prophet Yunus AS, when the Prophet Yunus

left his people in Nineveh without permission from Allah, is not just an ordinary story. According to Mustaqim, this is a lesson about patience and surrender to the will of Allah. Then, the miracle of his salvation from the belly of a fish is a symbol of life protection (*hifz al-nafs*) for those who repent and ask for forgiveness (Mustaqim, 2019). The famous prayer of the Prophet Yunus (*La ilaha illa anta subhanaka inni kuntu minazh-zhalimin*) has a universal message, namely, strengthen faith and do not despair. This is especially relevant for people today who are experiencing spiritual crises, such as stress or depression. The way it works is methodical, which is to combine thematic analysis with looking at the context and goals of Sharia. Thus, symbols such as darkness in the belly of a fish or the recovery after the trials of the Prophet Yunus can be described as a way to train the intellect, increase spirituality through dhikr, and surrender to the will of Allah (Tohari, 2024).

Abdul Mustaqim said that the main lesson of the story of the Prophet Yunus AS is about balance, not to be too rigid or insistent on religious texts literally (extreme), but also not to be too loose to ignore the authority of the Qur'an (liberal). The goal is that the interpretation of the verses will bring benefits to the people and avoid harm (Mustaqim, 2019). In the story of the Prophet Yunus, who was swallowed by the great whale, his miracle became an example of Islamic moderation. Yunus left his disobedient people not because of surrender, but because of God's test. Finally, the people of Ninawa repented en masse, which showed that religion could protect society socially. This research uses the maqashidi sharia (sharia goals) approach, which can be used for modern issues such as environmental ethics and natural human relations, because the story is full of moral-spiritual values (Tohari, 2024). In essence, Yunus's physical miracle teaches his people to be patient, ask for forgiveness (*istighfar*), and be optimistic about sharia, so that they can be mentally and spiritually strong to face the challenges of now. Thus, the Qur'an remains relevant as an ethical guide today (Nurjanah & Sholeha, 2024).

## CONCLUSION

Leading to the research objectives that have been set, this study concludes the term al-hut in QS. As-Saffat: 142, from a lexical and interpretive point of view, refers to one particular type of fish. The term refers to a large fish with a broad meaning. So that it is not limited by time lag as understood in modern science. These findings suggest that the rational and scientific problems related to the possibility of humans surviving in the belly of fish are due to the simplification of the meaning of the text in a purely biological framework. In addition, the events of the Prophet Yunus show the difference between the way of reading literal history and majazi that do not reject each other, but can be united through a synthesis approach that accepts the technological truth of the event and places moral and spiritual values at the core of the narrative.

By utilizing the interpretation of Maqashidi, this research succeeded in reshaping the story of the miracle of the Prophet Yunus as a story that has a divine purpose. The goal itself is to maintain life, maintain religion, and maintain reason. So the miracle of Prophet Yunus is not seen as a miracle, but also as a moral lesson, how to preach in a more balanced way, and a strengthening of faith for people today. This research suggests that the problems between the Qur'an can actually be solved without clashing with each other. The trick is not to urge a scientific explanation of miracles, but to understand the purpose of the message conveyed by the Qur'an. This approach

makes da'wah more rational and moderate, and opens up new opportunities to interpret the miracle stories in the Qur'an to be more relevant. Further research can discuss the comparison of the interpretation of maqashid with the approach of theological science, the relationship of the symbolism of the Qur'an with modern psychology, and the function of conceptual interpretation in digital religious discussions, so that the Qur'an can be understood as a relevant and meaningful text across the ages.

## DECLARATION OF USING AI

The authors used ChatGPT to improve language and readability. And use Grammarly as a tool to justify a less accurate reading of text. The authors reviews and edits the output and is solely responsible for the content.

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