

The Six Days Of Creation

By Arifah Momin

Have You Ever Wondered Why There Are 7 Days in a Week?

- The Babylonians adopted the number seven because they observed seven celestial bodies: the Sun, the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn
- Others used the phases of the moon: new crescent, first quarter, full moon, third quarter = 28 days in total, therefore divide by 4 to get 7 days per phase (week)
- Could the Scriptures of the *Ahl al-Kitab* or People of the Book also have something to do with it?

How do the People of the Book (*Ahl al-Kitab*) generally interpret the six days of creation ?

“For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them”

Exodus 20:11

The majority of Christians and Jews believe that originally nothing existed, except God. They believe that God, from nothing, began creating this universe at a certain moment in time and that this process took six days, after which God spent the seventh day resting.

“And He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six days” ~ Qur’an 11:7

The majority of Muslims also believe that Allah, at a given moment in time, started creating the universe, however the length of time for this process is disputed among literalist scholars because while on the one hand Allah says that He created “the heavens and the earth in six days” (7:54), He also says that “one day for God is equal to a thousand years for you (humankind)” (22:47).

How is the seventh day generally interpreted?

“On the seventh day He rested from all His work” ~ Genesis 2:2

The majority of Christians and Jews believe that God, having completed the creation of the universe in six days, rested on the seventh day.

“We created the heaven and the earth and all that is in between in six days, and no weariness even touched Us” ~ Qur’an 50:38

“It is He Who created the heavens and the earth in six days and then established Himself on the Throne” ~ Qur’an 57:4

The majority of Muslims believe that on the seventh day, Allah did not need any rest, but instead seated Himself upon His throne to overlook and establish dominion over His creation.

Exoteric or Literalist Interpretations of Allegorical Scriptures are Problematic

- Advancement in the sciences have shown that our planet is older than six thousand years.
- Archaeological digs have shown that human fossils have been found which are millions of years old.
- The vast majority of the People of the Book have exoteric or literalist interpretations, whereas the esoteric people are in a minority
- Such majority exoteric interpretations become the target of the ridicule of atheist scientists such as Richard Dawkins
- Creation in six days is not about the physical world at all!

Are the literal interpretations of creation coherent?

- The concept of a day comes from the motion of the earth around the sun, but the sun, according to most literalist accounts of creation, did not even exist until the fourth day of creation, meaning there did not exist any concept of a ‘day’ to assign to what literalists call the first ‘three days’.
- To say that God ‘began’ creating the universe at a particular point in time would be to say that God is under the movement of time, and yet we know God is above and beyond time.
- Verse 36:82 of the Qur’an reads: “Verily, when He intends a thing, His command is “Be”, and it is!” How, then, could God have taken six days to create the universe when His act of creation is instantaneous?

Sayyidna Al-Mu'ayyad fi'd-Din Shirazi

- He was a great Fatimid polymath, i.e., he was a great *Hujjat*, a *Da'i*, a writer of prose and poetry, a commander of an army, an eminent teacher etc.
- About a thousand years ago he wrote his *Majalis al-Mu'ayyadiyyah* consisting of 800 lectures
- In some of these lectures he explained the esoteric meaning of the verses of creation in the holy Qur'an
- Such esoteric meaning is known as the *ta'wil* of the Qur'an
- His explanation is summarised on the following slide:

The Esoteric Interpretation

- The six days of creation represent the six great Prophets whose six major cycles completed (created) the **World of Religion**.
- The natural world is full of cycles: when the day ends, the night begins. Similarly, each "day" of creation represents one partial cycle of the creation of the World of Religion. When one Prophet's cycle ends, the next begins; a new Prophet brings to the people a new Law or *shari'a*.
- The seventh day is the cycle of *Qiyamat* - instead of a new *shari'a*, the *ta'wil* (esoteric understanding) of religion that has already been created by the previous six cycles is unveiled. Thus, God establishing Himself upon His Throne on the seventh Day is symbolic of allowing Himself to be recognised by all of His creation.
- Once this final cycle is complete, the entire process of the six days of creation followed by the seventh day of *Qiyamat*, starts once again and so creation is an endless cycle.

How long is each day according to the esoteric people?

- Surah 22 Ayat 47 of the Qur'an reads: "Verily, a day in the sight of your Lord is like a thousand years of your reckoning."
- The six days mentioned by Allah thus equal 6,000 human years
- Hence, the cycle of each of the six Prophets generally lasts 1,000 human years



Six Days = Six Great Prophets

Days	Natiq (Prophet)	Asas
Sunday	Hazrat Adam	Hazrat Shith
Monday	Hazrat Nuh	Hazrat Sam
Tuesday	Hazrat Ibrahim	Hazrat Isma`il
Wednesday	Hazrat Musa	Hazrat Harun
Thursday	Hazrat `Isa	Hazrat Sham`unu`s-Safa
Friday	Hazrat Muhammad	Hazrat `Ali

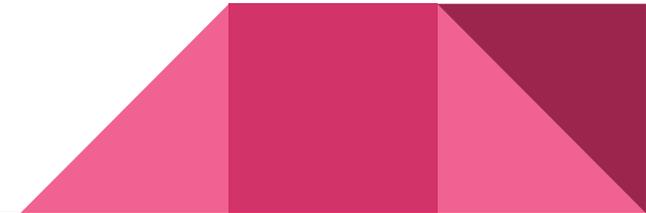
Proof of the Ismaili Esoteric Interpretation

The Ismaili account of creation still leaves open the question of why it takes 6,000 years to complete the World of Religion when God's command of "Be" brings what He wills into existence instantly.

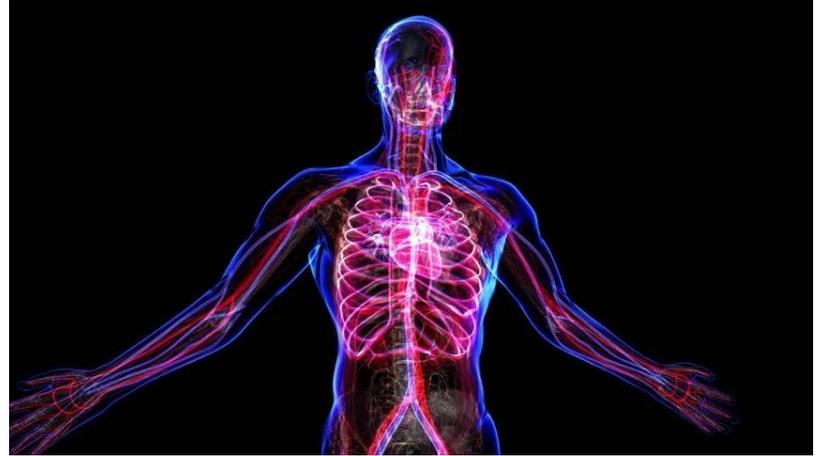
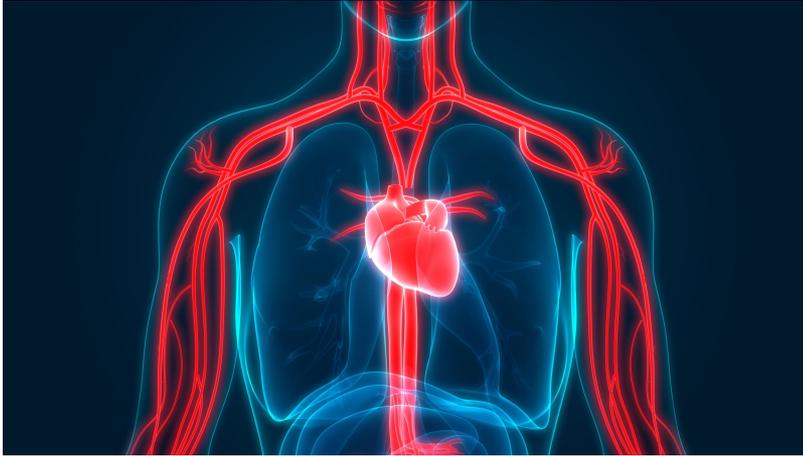
In *'A Thousand Wisdoms'*, 'Allamah Nasir al-Din Nasir Hunzai points out that the actualisation of Allah's will is indeed instantaneous in the spiritual realm (*`alam-i amr*) which is beyond time, but it is only logical that this actualisation should manifest gradually in the physical world (*`alam-i khalq*) which, by Allah's choice, is bound by the movement of time. It follows that for the creation to manifest instantaneously in the physical realm would be for Allah to go against His own choice of subjecting the physical world to the movement of time!

Examples of Circles or Cycles in the Book of the Universe:

Here is our Milky Way Galaxy. Where do you think it starts? Where do you think it ends? The answer is that there is no start or end to this Galaxy, just like there is no start or end to the cycle of six days of creation being followed by the seventh day of Qiyamat.



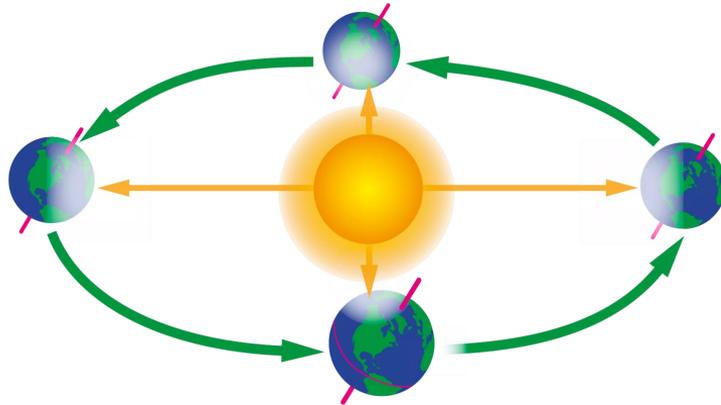
Examples of Circles or Cycles in the Book of the Personal World



The circulatory system is an example of a cyclical process within the human body itself. Arteries carry blood away from the heart, while veins carry blood back to the heart, and this process forms a cycle that repeats itself for as long as the human is alive.

Examples of Circles or Cycles in the Book of God - the Holy Qur'an

“And He it is Who created the night and the day, and the sun and the moon; all float each in its orbit.” (Surah 21:33)



Closing Remarks

In his Memoirs, Mawlana Sultan Muhammad Shah states:

“The creation according to Islam is not a unique act in a given time but a perpetual and constant event”.

This statement affirms the esoteric interpretation of creation outlined in this presentation. Interpreting the six days of creation as partial cycles of the larger cycle of the creation of the World of Religion, each of which continually brings new advancements in the material and spiritual realms, is the only account that truly reflects a perpetual and constant process of creation.

References:

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