

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



معارف الدین

Understanding of the Religion #13

Islamic questions on a wide variety of topics which have been answered in detail with full explanation by the great Marja' Taqlid, Āyatullāh al-Uzma al-Hājj ash-Shaykh Luṭfullāh as-Ṣāfi al-Gulpāygāni (may Allāh protect him)

Translated into English by Saleem Bhimji (www.al-mubin.org)

Question: In the third verse of the blessed Sūrah al-Ḥadīd it is mentioned that, "He it is Who created the Heavens and the Earth in six days..." where as before the Heavens and the Earth were created, there was no such measurement of time by the name of day in existence and the only way that day can have any meaning is with the presence of the Sun and Earth. Please explain this for us.

Answer: The word يوم and its equivalent (in English) which is *day* is most often used in the meaning of the time period of the shining of the sun - whose opposite is night – however, its meaning is much more vast than this.

In the Venerable Qur'ān, noble aḥādīth, words of the literary men of the 'Arabic language, 'Arabic speakers and the poets amongst the 'Arabs and non-'Arabs, another meaning is given – whose meaning is similar to that of a time period – just as has been mentioned.

Sometimes it is said يوم or *day* and what is meant by this word is the time period between the rising of the Sun and its setting. Sometimes when this word is used, its meaning is the time period that an event happened within; the time period or era of a government; the life of a person; the period of one's youth or old age; the period of one's supremacy and glory; or the prosperity of a nation or group of people. For example it can be said, "today, tomorrow, and from that day" and one would mean the next life, or as the poets have said:

روز بزرگ گرچه جهان کم ندیده است روزی چو روز حضرت خاتم ندیده است

In this poem, the meaning of the line "روز حضرت خاتم" or the *Day of Ḥadhrat Khātam* is the complete time period that the Noble Prophet of Islām (blessings of Allāh be upon him and his family) was alive. Also, the poet A'shi has said the following in a poem:

شتان ما یومی علی کورها و یوم حیّان آخی جابر

In this poem, the word یومی or *my day* has been used in the meaning of the person's entire life. Also, Amīr al-Mo'minīn 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (prayers be upon him) in his khutbah known as Shiqshiqiyah (خطبة الشقیقیة) has cited something similar to this poem and the two time periods and two ages which have been attributed to himself by the use of the word يوم or *day*.

By keeping this brief explanation in mind, it is clear that the term *سِتَّةَ أَيَّامٍ* or *six days* that was mentioned in the blessed Sūrah of al-Ḥadīd and also in Sūrah al-Aʿrāf, verse 54, refers to six time periods in which the Heavens and Earth took form and in which this organization (of the universe) and order and regulation was brought into existence. This also points to the fact that the creation of the Heavens and Earth was not at one time, rather, through the intention of Allāh (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and the wisdom of the Most High, this was accomplished in stages.

Just as in the components of the world of creation and nature, most – rather, all things have been created in stages. For example, rocks and minerals and even the other worlds – some of them were brought into existence through the period of thousands of years while others in longer time period while others came about in less than one year and even some others came about in less than this time.

The Heavens and the Earth, according to these two noble verse of the Qurʾān came about and were created in six days - the time of six periods and through six transformations and events. These two verses of the Qurʾān are of the magnificent signs and miracles of the Noble Qurʾān which announce (to the world) the creation of the entire formation of the Heavens and Earth in stages.

By pondering on the meaning of these verses, it leads one to have stronger faith in Allāh (Glory and Greatness be to Him), the Revelation (Waḥī), and the Prophetic Mission of the Finality of the Prophets (blessings of Allāh be upon him and his family).

...And Allāh knows best