

# Zoroaster



# Introduction:

- Zoroaster was born about 1700 B.C. in northeastern Iran, in what is known as Bactria today.
- Zoroaster's mission was to establish a monotheistic religion with one creator: Ahura Mazda rather than the polytheistic worship of powers of Nature, prevalent at the time.
- It believes in the absolute Creator who is the essence of all that is good, and a dark force acts to deceive mankind.
- From the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC the Gathas were the existential philosophy of the vast Empire that stretched from the Mediterranean Sea to the Himalayan Mountains (see the map).
- It was the first 'state religion' and under Cyrus the Great, the first "Charter of Human Rights" came into being. The Doctrine was engraved 2541 years ago on a clay prism that currently resides in the British Museum.
- Zoroastrianism's influence spread to China, Greece, Eastern Europe (Poland and Germany), Egypt, and India.
- Emperor Cyrus the Great (580-529 BC) established the first "Charter of Human Rights." It states:
  - “I have granted to all humans the liberty to worship their own Gods and ordered that no one can ill treat them for this”
  - “I order that no house should be destroyed”
  - “I guarantee peace and tranquility for all humans”
  - “I recognize the right of everyone to live in peace in the country of their choice”

# The Persian Empire



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- The language of the Gathas is very similar to Sanskrit. It is believed that there was communication between the Iranians and the Indians in the Vedic period.
- Pliny the Elder states that Pythagoras, Plato, and others, travelled to study the sciences of Zoroaster.
- In his treaty 'On Philosophy' Aristotle says that the "magoi are more ancient than the Egyptians." Diogenes states that "Zoroaster was the originator of wisdom."
- The three Abrahamic religions inherited the Doctrines of angelology, demonology, awaiting the coming of a 'savior', the resurrection of the dead, and final judgement, from Zoroastrianism.
- After the Greek invasion in 334 BC all the great libraries were burned. But Gathas were memorized by the Magians (priests) and with the rise of the Parthian Empire in 248 BC they were recorded in the Zend Avesta, the Zoroastrian scriptures.
- In 642 AD Arabs invaded Parthian Empire and Zoroaster's vision came to an end, some of the priests found refuge in India.

# The Doctrine of Zoroaster

- **Monotheism:**
- Ahura Mazda, the Wise Lord, is both Mother and Father of the Universe; “the Soul of Nature”
- **Good and Evil:**
- Opposing Ahura Mazda, is an evil force, named Angra Mainyu, who pollutes humanity and causes illness, poverty, sorrow, and unhappiness.
- **Saoshyants-Saviors:**
- In both the original Indo-European and Zoroastrian religions, is a belief in Saviors, human heroes who have been and will be born in the world, to guide mankind toward the final perfection of the world. Zarathustra was such a Savior, Saoshyant.
- **Final Judgement and Resurrection:**
- After death the soul is judged. If it is judged to be good, it easily passes to the other side. If it is judged to be bad, the bridge (Chinvat) becomes narrow and the soul falls into a hellish realm to be purified.
- Because all souls were created as good beings, it is the will of the Wise Lord that in the end all souls should be saved and made perfect and immortal.
- **Magic:** Unlike sorcery, magic is the practice of enjoining the Archangels, Angels, and Guardian Angels (Amesh Spentas, Yazatas, and Fravashis) to create harmony between the spiritual and physical world.

# Rituals and Initiation

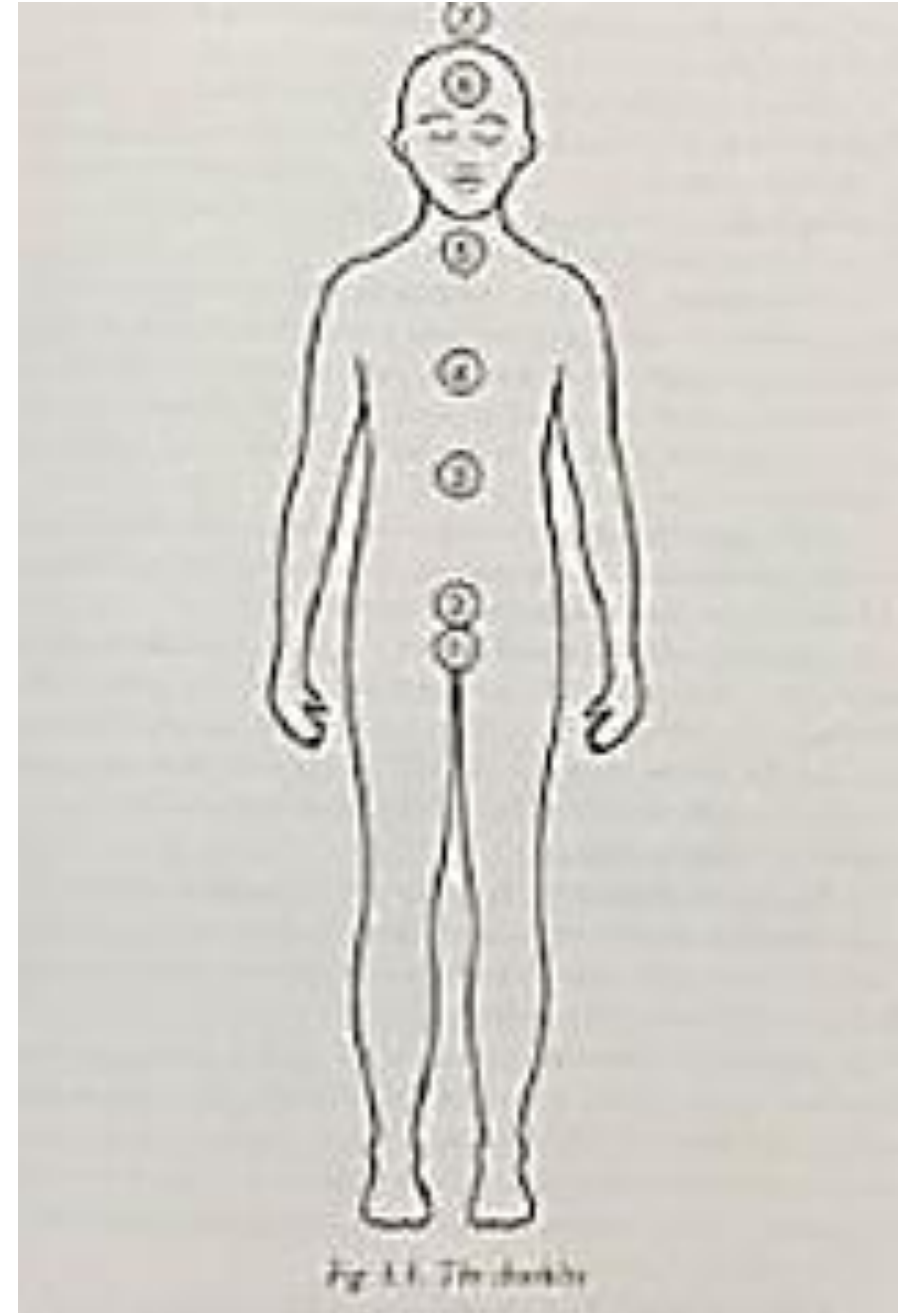
**The Aim-** of ritual is individual enlightenment and perfection.

**Astrology and numerology** were used in ceremonies, each degree of the Zodiac and each number, having a particular quality that aided in the effectiveness of a ritual.

**Wheels of Power:** the Charkhs, or chakras as they are commonly known today, was a system understood by the Magavans. It was part of understanding the world, the nature of the individual and helped form a theoretical map we need to navigate cosmos.

## The Wheels of Power: the Charkhs (chakras)

- 7- **Ahura Mazda**: white; consciousness. Good and Powerful. Pure silent thought.
- 6- **Ameretat**: violet; Immortality, timelessness, psychic powers.
- 5- **Haurvatat**: blue; Perfection. Conscious realization of the first four wheels.
- 4- **Spenta Armaiti**: green; Love, devotion, and faith. The power to love and be loved.
- 3- **Khshathra**: yellow; Manifestation and action. Power to alter the environment.
- 2- **Vohu Manah**: orange; Creativity. Can participate in the co-creation of the universe using active, creative, and procreative power.
- 1- **Asha**: red; Order. Law and the root of good existence as created by Ahura Mazda.





# The Gathas- the Songs of Zoroaster

- Gatha, song 1, stanza 1 and 2

“With uplifted arms O Mazda, I pray  
and humbly ask for happiness.

May all my actions be attuned with wisdom  
and good thought, and in harmony with the law of righteousness,  
so that I may please You and bring  
happiness to the Soul of the Earth.”

“Thus, O Mazda Ahura  
I come to you with Good Thought,  
so that I may learn through Righteousness,  
the joy of both worlds,  
the Physical and that of the Mind.  
So, I may teach my companions  
and lead them to happiness.”

Gatha, song 8, stanza 1

**“Ahura Mazda  
Has set the principle of existence  
in such a way that  
happiness is for the one  
who makes others happy.**

# Zoroastrianism's contribution to modern times

- 1. Zoroastrianism embraces practices and initiations that empower the individual with knowledge of the world, and how to use the inner instrument, the Self, to be an effective co-creator with Ahura Mazda to bring about perfection in the world.
- 2. Zoroaster viewed the absolute Godhead as “pure focused consciousness.” Ahura is the *essence and is masculine*; Mazda is the *source of wisdom, and is feminine*.
- 3. Co-Creators: human beings were made as co-workers, as colleagues, as friends, to help Him in the creative process of transforming the world. A world able to provide happiness for all living beings: humans, animals, and plants.
- 4. By understanding the rituals associated with the celestial and symbolic realm (menog), and the terrestrial world (getig), a man can become perfect in the material world, even immortal physically.
- 5. The truth does not belong to any people, country, or race.
- 6. There is no “Original Sin” in Zoroastrianism.

- 7. The Doctrine of Human Rights- 2541 years ago Cyrus the Great made this doctrine for the entire empire:

“I have granted to all humans the liberty to worship their own Gods and ordered that no one can ill treat them for this.”

“I order that no house should be destroyed.”

“I guarantee peace and tranquility for all humans.”

“I recognize the right of everyone to live in peace in the country of their choice.”

8. Persian women enjoyed unprecedented liberty throughout the Empire.

9. The Goal: The end is not for us to be reabsorbed into some cosmic “Oneness” but to be rewarded at the end of the battle with an eternal life of knowledge, power, and pleasure in a spiritual and a physical state. The truth is human beings are born to be wise, strong, and immortal. The Lie is that humans are stupid, weak, and mortal. The key to the activation of happiness is linked to the amount of good we do for others.

10. Clean up the environment, help the helpless creatures, aid your fellow humans in their minds and bodies, and your magic (spiritual realization) will reach a new dimension.