GUIDE · ZOROASTRIANISM

A guide for people of the Zoroastrian tradition.

Zoroastrian teaching centers on humata, hukhta, hvarshta (good thoughts, good words, good deeds) and on a real choice between asha (truth and order) and its opposite. Texts speak of a person's deeds being judged after death, and later Pahlavi works praise generosity, including toward a stranger. Zoroastrians understand this within their own cosmic story of Ahura Mazda and a struggle between good and evil, which differs from the guide's idea.



In your own tradition

> "...as to thought, as to word, and as to deed. And between these two let the wisely acting choose aright."
>
> YASNA 30.3 (A GATHA ATTRIBUTED TO ZARATHUSHTRA) · L. H. MILLS, THE ZEND-AVESTA, PART III, SACRED BOOKS OF THE EAST VOL. 31, OXFORD: CLARENDON PRESS, 1887 · READ IT IN CONTEXT

> "...he is a man of Asha, a holy one, if he offers sacrifice to Ormazd and the gods, if he helps them by good thoughts, words, and deeds"
>
> JAMES DARMESTETER, INTRODUCTION, SECTION 37 (HIS SUMMARY OF ZOROASTRIAN TEACHING, NOT SCRIPTURE) · JAMES DARMESTETER, THE ZEND-AVESTA, PART I (VENDIDAD), SACRED BOOKS OF THE EAST VOL. 4, OXFORD: CLARENDON PRESS, 1880 · READ IT IN CONTEXT

> "I have wished that I might give a recompense to a munificent man, if it be suitable for him, but I have not found any recompense and happiness that are suitable for him, except a blessing."
>
> SAD DAR, CHAPTER 79, SECTION 3 (A LATER PAHLAVI-ERA TEXT) · E. W. WEST, PAHLAVI TEXTS PART III, SACRED BOOKS OF THE EAST VOL. 24, OXFORD: CLARENDON PRESS, 1885 · READ IT IN CONTEXT

> “And virtuous men and the united archangels are perpetually uttering blessings on account of the liberal man who maintains no refusal of his own things to a stranger.”
>
> SAD DAR, CHAPTER 79, SECTION 4 (A LATER PAHLAVI-ERA TEXT) · E. W. WEST, PAHLAVI TEXTS PART III, SACRED BOOKS OF THE EAST VOL. 24, OXFORD: CLARENDON PRESS, 1885 · READ IT IN CONTEXT

Five things to do this week

- [ ] **Pause on thought, word, deed**
  Before a conversation this week, check whether your thought, then your word, then your deed would each pass as good, following humata, hukhta, hvarshta.
- [ ] **Give to someone who can't repay**
  Offer a meal, money, or help to a person outside your circle, in the spirit of the generosity the Sad Dar praises.
- [ ] **Welcome a stranger**
  Share your food or time with someone new, treating hospitality as part of living by asha.
- [ ] **Make a daily good choice**
  Name one moment each day when you chose truth or kindness when it was easier not to, as the Gathas call each person to choose.
- [ ] **Recite the Ashem Vohu with intent**
  Say it slowly once a day and think of one deed that serves truth and order.

Questions to bring to your own teacher

- How do Zoroastrians today understand the call to choose between asha and its opposite in everyday life?
- What role do charity and hospitality play in your community's understanding of a good life?
- How is a person's reckoning after death understood in your family's tradition?

What this guide is not claiming. Scholars and Zoroastrian communities differ on how to read the Gathas, on the dating of later texts like the Sad Dar, and on how Parsi and Iranian practice relate. The Darmesteter line is a 19th-century scholar's summary, and this guide does not claim Zoroastrianism teaches that life is a test set by a higher intelligence. I am not a scholar of your tradition, and no tradition or its leaders have endorsed this site. Ask your own teachers and community what these passages mean to them.

thisisdisclosure.com



A free message about how we treat each other. Nothing to buy, nothing to join. One person’s hypothesis, not advice. Woodcut images were made with AI tools; the words are Keith Adler’s. Share freely.