

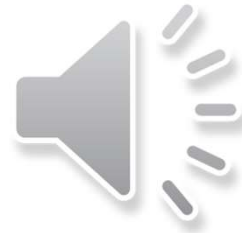


ZOROASTRIANISM

Fred Bhesania, Armaity Irani, Cyrus
Khubcher, Anhaita Jamula, Cyrus Jamula,
Mahrukh Motafram

PRAYER

ASHEM VOHU



Righteousness is the best good

And it is happiness

*Happiness is to him/her who is righteous
for the sake of best righteousness*

Zoroastrian Faith

- **Prophet Zarathustra** - received his revelations directly from Ahura Mazda, and from his Archangels - Amesha Spentas
- **Ahura Mazda** – Lord of Wisdom, creator of all things good, including man.
- Oldest **monotheistic** religion in the world
- **Duality of Existence** – Good and evil principles
- **Pillar** - Practicing good thoughts, good words, good deeds
- **Divinity of Creation**
- **Scripture** – Avesta
- **GATHAS** – Hymns of Zarathushtra





Symbols of the Zoroastrian Religion

Navjot /Sudreh Pushi Ceremony

1. Fire in the Afarghan
2. Avesta
(Gathas - Hymns of Zarathustra)
3. Sudreh & Kusti
4. Asho Farohar

Amesha Spenta

Divinity of Creation

Amesha Spenta

- Bountiful Immortals
- Each represents human virtue
- Each also watches over Ahura Mazda's 7 Creations
- Pray through them in order to communicate with Ahura Mazda



Wholeness, Integrity: Waters Holy Serenity, Devotion: The Earth Holy Creative Spirit: Human Beings



Truth and Justice: Fire Good Mind, Intelligence: Animals Righteous Power: The Sky, Metals Immortality: Plants

<http://www.pyracantha.com/Z/ameshas.html>



SPENTA MAINYU

- Mankind-must protect all elements
- The Good Spirit (Be a good Human Being)



Vohu Manah

- Animal
- Good Mind (so you can learn and live a good life of Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good deeds)



ASHA VAHISHTA

- Asha = good
- Fire
- Truth, Order, Justice, Righteousness (Always speak the truth)



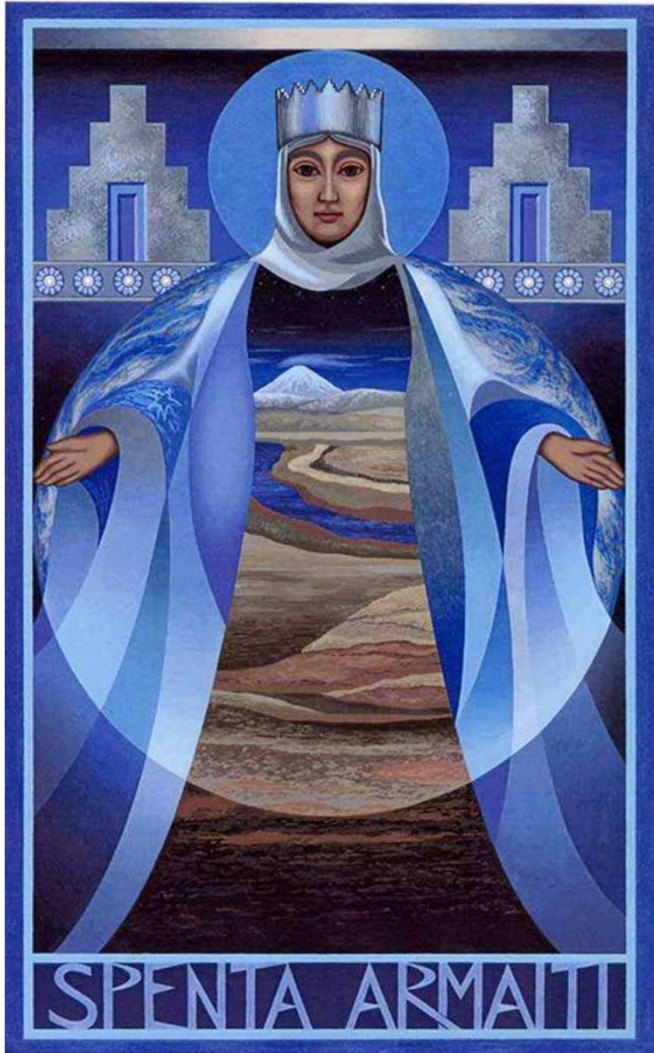
KHSHATHRA VAIRYA

- Sky and Metal
- Strength, Power, *hard quality of metals*
- Become Strong, Healthy, so you can fight evil



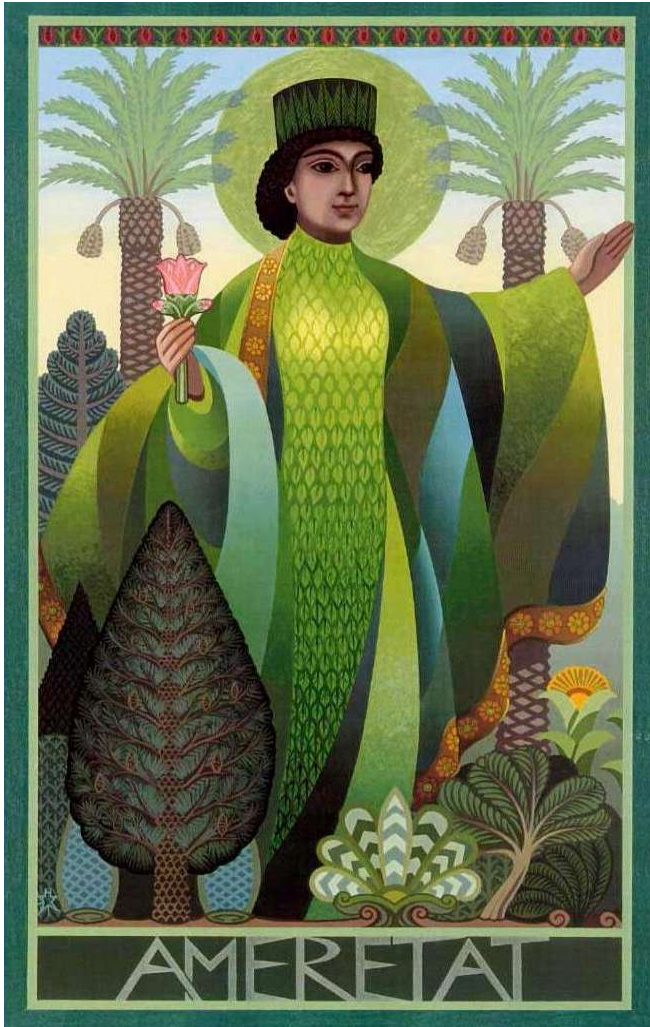
HAURVATAT

- Water
- Wholeness, Perfection
(Doing things the best we can)



SPENTA ARMAITY

- Earth, fertile land and sacred places.
- Spenta Armaity is invoked to purify ritual places.
- Kindness, Faith, Devotion, Dutiful & Hardworking (Put 100% in anything you do)



AMERETAT

- Plants
- Immortality (Take care of Gods creations)

Ecology & Environment

- Zoroastrianism is a pragmatic religion; it is a way of life
 - Lifestyle requires being in harmony with nature and balance/duality
-
- Project Ava Initiative through FEZANA

HISTORY

Birth of Zarathustra – Zoroastrianism



Zarathustra

- Birth: Approx. 1400 to 1200 BCE
- Gathas (Holy Songs) are composed. The Gathas are scriptures in Zarathustra's words, written in old Avestan language. (17 songs and 241 stanzas)
- King Vistasp & Queen Hutoxi start to follow the religion taught by Zarathushtra - Zoroastrianism



What does it mean to be a Zoroastrian?

- Good thoughts, Good Words & Good Deeds
- Righteousness is Duty
- Happiness is to him who makes others happy
- Preach not by words but by acts of service



ACHAEMENIAN PERIOD - 559- 334 BCE

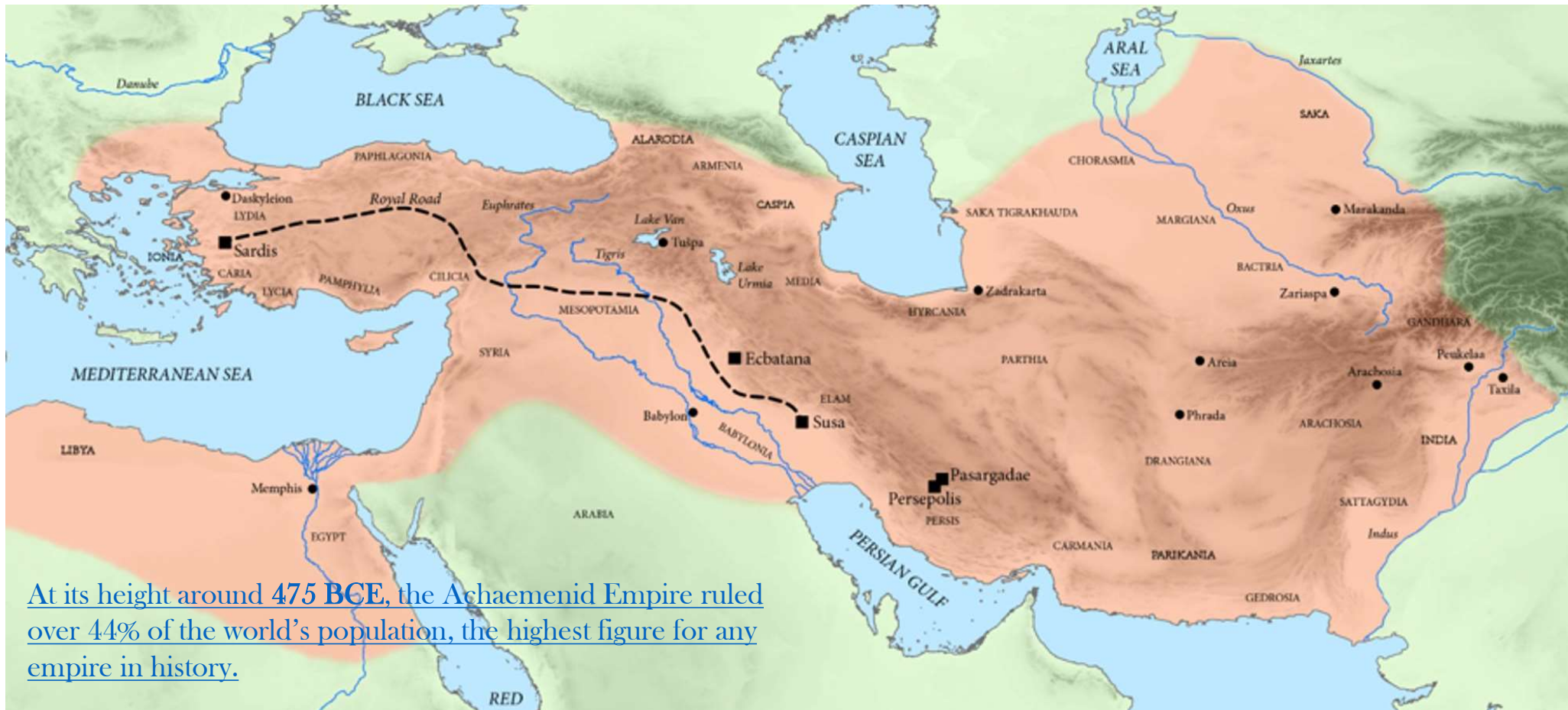
- Zoroastrianism was followed as the state religion
- Cyrus II The Great conquered Medes
- Defeated King Nabonidus at Babylon
- THE CYRUS CYLINDER – 1st Recorded Bill of Human Rights



- The Empire spanned from modern-day India across to the coast of Turkey and down through the Levant (Mediterranean) and Egypt

Persepolis was the ceremonial capital of the Achaemenid Empire

King's messengers (world's first postal system) – Sardis to Susa in 6 days.



At its height around 475 BCE, the Achaemenid Empire ruled over 44% of the world's population, the highest figure for any empire in history.

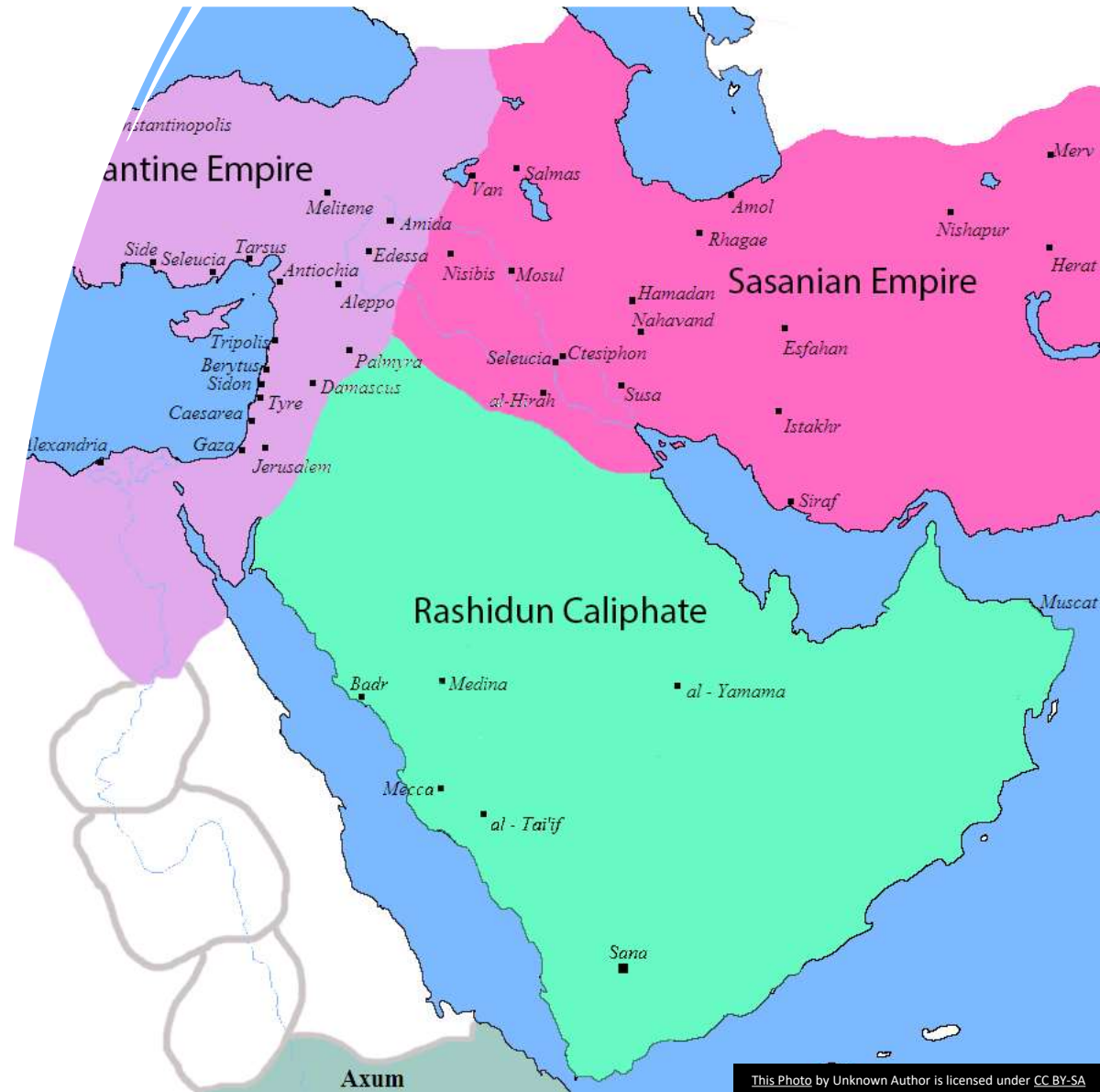


- Decline in the practice of Zoroastrianism after Alexander the Great conquers Persia in 334 BCE. All the Nasks of Zarathushtra and Zoroastrian texts were destroyed.
- The Silk Route helped in the spread of Zoroastrianism during the Parthian Era (247 BC – 224 CE)



Sasanian Period (226 CE to 651 CE)

- Zoroastrianism was revived
- Differences in Practices were standardized
- Avestan Scriptures and Pahlavi Commentaries were written down in a phonetic 45-letter alphabet
- The Arab Conquest in 641 CE.
- Zarathushtis faced oppression causing many to leave Persia. They fled to China and India.





“Your majesty, we shall try to be like this bit of sugar mingling in the milk of your human kindness. We shall sweeten your life with our presence ”

Settled in Sanjaan

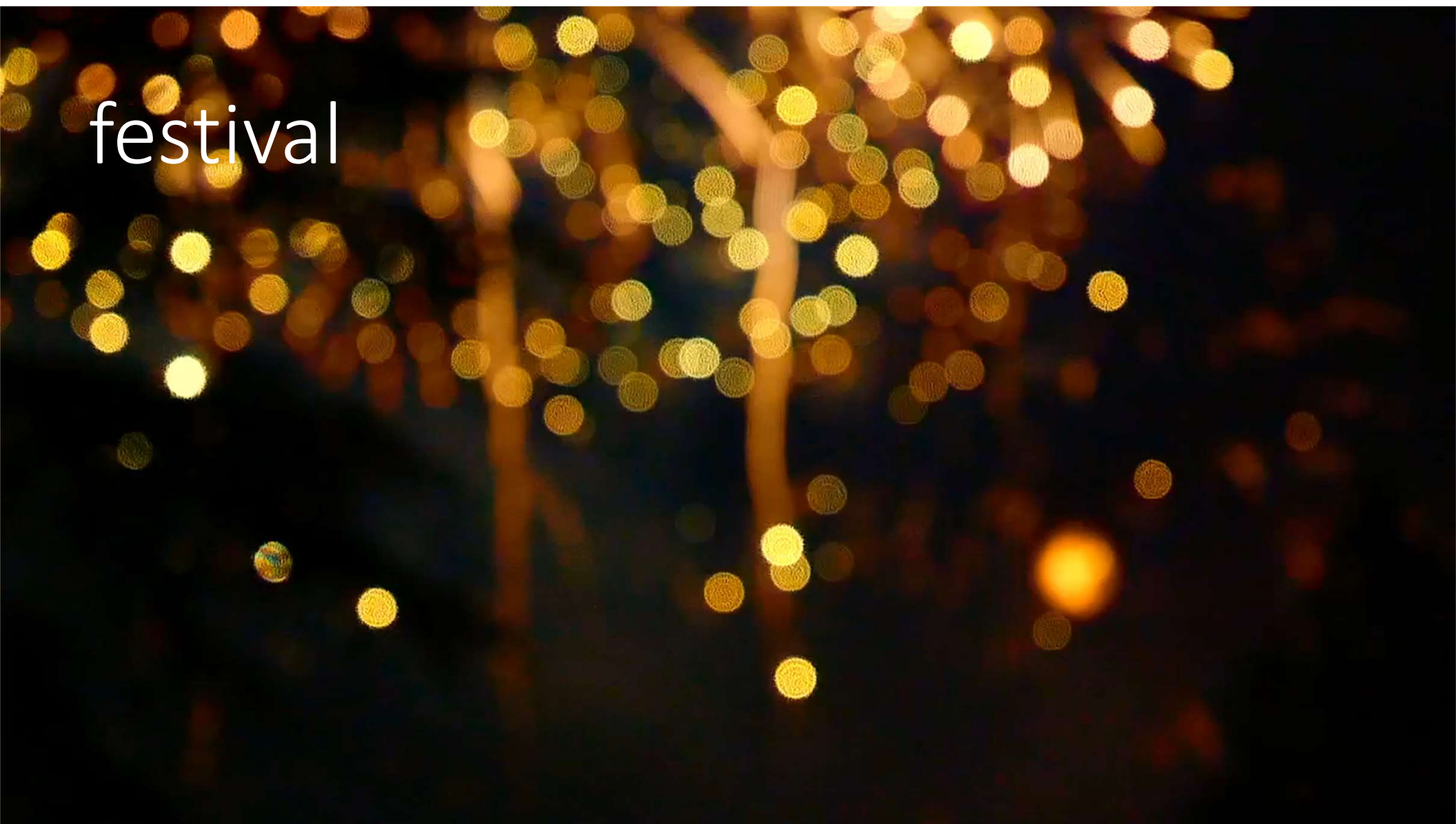
- Give up their weapons
- The women would wear the sari as their costume
- They would speak the Gujarati language as their mother tongue
- They would hold their wedding processions after dusk
- Also refer to themselves as Parsis



Festivals and Celebrations

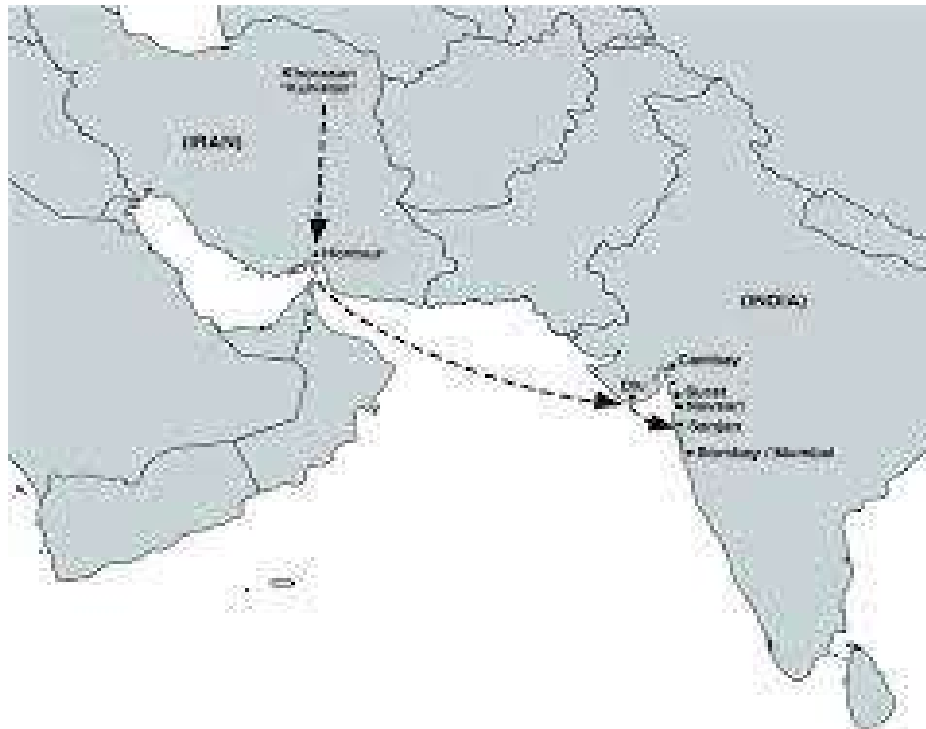


festival



Zoroastrians in Iran and India

Two branches of one ancient tree, Separated by Time, Connected by Faith



The Parsis, whose name means “Persians,” are descended from Persian Zoroastrians who emigrated from Iran to India 10 -13 centuries ago.

About 3500 years ago our prophet Zoroaster (or Zarathustra) brought to his followers the basic tenets of Zoroastrianism that consist of a monotheistic worship of Ahura Mazda (the “Lord Wisdom”) and an ethical dualism opposing truth (Asha) and lie which permeates the entire universe.

Zoroastrians, both in India and Iran, believe in the 3 pillars of our religion – “Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds” that sums up our beliefs and conduct in our daily life.

Nowruz – Triumph of light over darkness

Means "new day."

Begins on the Spring Equinox, marking the first day of Farvardin, the first month of the Iranian solar calendar. Celebrated around March 21st



Teergan Festival

Tirgan, is a mid-summer ancient Iranian festival, celebrated annually on Tir 13 or month of July. It is celebrated by splashing water, dancing, reciting poetry, and serving traditional foods such as spinach soup and sholezard.



Mehrgan

Celebration of Mehr – love, friendship and affection. Held around October 2nd

Celebration of Autumn. Decorative and colorful tables.



Yalda — the last night of Autumn, the longest and darkest night of the year — It is also called "Shabe Chelleh", meaning the first night of a forty-day period before another revered Persian celebration, Jashne Sadeh. Winter Solstice falls around December 21st



Sadeh celebration

Around January 30th

A mid-winter festival, Sadeh in Persian means "hundred" and refers to 100 days and nights remains to the beginning of spring.



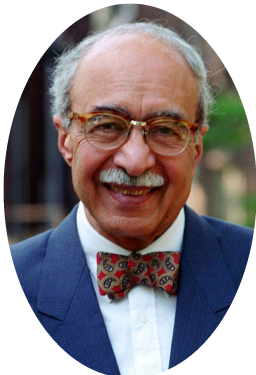
Well-known Zoroastrians of Modern Times

Freddie Mercury



Lord Karan Bilimoria

Adar Poonawalla



Farhang Mehr



Zubin Mehta



Dr Dhun Noria



Ratan Tata

[List of Prominent Zoroastrians - Wikipedia](#)



World Zoroastrian Chamber of Commerce


14 chapters over 4 continents

- *Growing Leaders*
- *Supporting Entrepreneurship*
- *Keeping Zoroastrians Connected*

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- **World Zoroastrian Organization (WZO)**
 - **FEZANA** - Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America
 - Five (5) Zoroastrian Associations in Canada
 - Twenty-two (22) Zoroastrian Associations in the USA
 - **Zoroastrian Society of Washington State (ZSWS.org)** in one of them
 - Other Zoroastrian Organizations across the globe



RESOURCES

- 
- The Divine Songs of Zarathushtra – Dr. Irach Taraporewala
 - Acta Iranica – The Gathas of Zarathustra – Stanley Insler
 - Zoroastrians: their religious beliefs and practices – Mary Boyce
 - Zoroastrianism: An Introduction – Jenny Rose
 - FEZANA – www.fezana.org
 - www.Avesta.org

Presenters

Anhaita Jamula - She is a resident of Kirkland, WA for almost 20 years. She is a mom of two children, a wife, and a healthcare worker. As a professional, she directs the Research Program at Evergreen Health in a broad range of diseases from Neurosciences to COVID-19. And as a mother, she engages in her children's school community by volunteering. She's on the Gifted Education Advisory Council Board of Directors and a Intermediate School Teacher for the Zarathushti children in WA state.

Armaity Irani – She was born and raised in Pune, India. Migrated to United States 8 years ago and currently lives in Sammamish, WA with her husband and 2 boys, aged 7 and 3. She teaches and coordinates Zoroastrian classes for elementary and middle school aged children in the state of Washington. These classes are held every 2 weeks. In her spare time she enjoys listening to music, learning to play the piano, painting, candle making and cooking.

Cyrus Khubcher - He was born and raised in a Zoroastrian family in Tehran, Iran. Both parents have passed on. He has 3 siblings with nieces and nephews. Deep belief in Z principals: good thought, good words and good deeds. Have lived in the states since late 70's, 22 years of which in Western Washington. Lives with his wife, and 3 sons. He serves on the Zoroastrian Society of Washington State as a Vice President since 2018.

Cyrus Jamula – Proud parent of 2 gifted children, Engineer at Microsoft, Volunteer at ZSWS.

Fred Bhesania - Firdosh (Fred) Bhesania is an Engineer, a proud Zoroastrian and a leader in our Zoroastrian society. He was born in India but has spent the last 25 years here in Seattle and works as a Group Program Manager at Microsoft. He is a proud parent of 3 young boys and they are excited to have their Navjote ceremonies in the near future.

Mahrukh Motafram - She is currently a member, trustee and, a past Board member for the Zoroastrian Society of Washington State. She is involved with the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA) where she is currently the co-chair for North American Zoroastrian Congress committee and, a member of the executive steering committee for the World Zoroastrian Congress 2022, to be held in New York City, NY in July 2022. She is a member, past Board member and a past President for the Assistance League of the Eastside. She is also affiliated with the Seattle University, Seattle, WA as a member of the advisory council for the Center for Ecumenical and Interreligious Engagement. She resides in Sammamish, WA with her husband Feroze and, has two (2) children, Freya and Jamsheed.

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