

INFLUENCE AND ROLE OF IRANIANS IN OTHER RELIGIONS

[Paganism](#) [Judaism](#) [Christianity](#)

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Almost all scholars and theologians credit Zarathustism, one way or the other, with the introduction of some or all of the following concepts into all religions.

[Heaven and Hell](#)
[One supreme God](#)
[The Messiah to come for the final restoration](#)
[Resurrection and the final judgment](#)
[Satan, Paradise etc.](#)

But what is important is, did such concepts as interpreted today, exist in the original teachings of Zarathushtra?

We shall discuss these concepts a little later, after we have seen the real role of the teachings of Zarathushtra, in other religions as documented by the holy scriptures of those concerned religions and their history.

Iranians have throughout their recorded history played an important role in developing and introducing religions. Zarathushtism existed long before the Bible and Torah came into existence. Thus the Old Testament and the Torah have faithfully recorded the role of the ZARATHUSHTIES and the New Testament has recorded the teachings of Zarathushtra; but vested interests and scholars have chosen not to see or understand the Truth. Those who have seen the Truth and recognized the signs in the Bible, have even gone to the extent of trying to remove them from the Bible, as is done in Luke 10.1 which has a foot note to that effect in most copies indicating the change. Unexceptionally the role of the Zarathushties have been played down in the interpretations of the these scriptures and even villainized, like in the interpretation of the story of Daniel and the lion (Bible : Daniel Chapter 6). But if we do not pay

attention to the interpretations, the Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls in their un-interpreted form have remained faithful to their authors.

Role And Influence On Religions

The Zarathushties when they came to the Iranian plateau saw themselves surrounded by pagan and semi-pagan religions, Babylonians, Assyrians, Armenians, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Jews etc. They did not believe in forcing a sudden change upon the people. Zarathushtra has recommended that;

Through words excellent
We shall turn (convert)
Those who do not know
(with tongue) by speaking
Zarathushtra-Gatha Ha 28.5 (F.R.)

' Win over opponents by discussion and persuasion and not by persecution and ill treatment.' was the maxim.

For practical purposes they divided these people into groups. The Babylonians and Assyrians, their immediate neighbours that they had conquered, the Jews, the Egyptians, the Greeks and Romans. Each of them had different temperaments and required different treatments.

ANCIENT PAGANISM

As far as the Babylonians and Assyrians were concerned, initially Cyrus the Great, to gain their confidence, respected their gods of clay. This was against the existing practice among the Babylonians and Assyrians themselves, who destroyed each other's gods in war and the conqueror, would replace the conquered god with his own clay god. The Zarathushties initially respected the clay gods of the conquered nation thereby gaining their confidence and respect, after that they started working on their beliefs, **with words**. Within two generations the Babylonians and Assyrians had abandoned their gods of clay and their temples. The Zarathushti way of life had no statues or temples to replace

it with, so when Herodotus passed thru the Empire this is what he recorded.

' The following are certain Persian customs which I can describe from personal knowledge. The erection of statues, temples, and alters is not an accepted practice among them, and anyone who does such a thing is considered a fool, because, presumably, the Persian religion is not anthropomorphic like the Greeks. '

He further states;

' As for ceremonial, when they offer sacrifice to the deities I mentioned, they erect no altar and kindle no fire; libation, the flute music, the garlands, the sprinkled meal - all these things, familiar to us, they have no use for; but before a ceremony a man sticks a spray of leaves, usually myrtle leaves, into his headdress, takes his victim to some open place and invokes the deity to whom he wishes to sacrifice. The actual worshipper is not permitted to pray for any personal or private blessing, but only for the king and the general good of the community, of which he is himself a part. When he has cut up the animal and cooked it, he makes a little heap of the softest green stuff he can find, preferably clover, and lays all the meat upon it. This done, a Magus utters an incantation over it in a form of words which is supposed to recount the Birth of the gods. Then after a short interval the worshipper removes the flesh and does what he pleases with it. '

We should remember that Herodotus saw everything from the Greek viewpoint and looked for parallels, for he was writing for the Greeks who were his readers. For example he says:

' Zeus, in their (Zarathushti) system, is the whole circle of the heavens, and they sacrifice to him from the top of mountains.'

Thus when we study what Herodotus has said about the Persians, with our knowledge of the ancient form of Zarathushtism, we see that he has mentioned the truth. But he is at a loss; he sees their customs and in trying to explain them, to his Greek readers, he does his best to match it with their beliefs so that they would understand it.

The use of the natural laws for the benefit of mankind, the reverence for nature by not polluting them, is all considered as worship by the non-scientific mind.

In Avesta we have three different types of reverence 'Satayesh' (Vahmyam) which means worthy of Adoration, 'Niyayesh' (Yesnyam) which means worthy of Praise and 'Parastesh' which means to Care For. Those who do not understand the difference see all these as WORSHIP.

The Greeks were used to sacrificing animals to gods so when Herodotus does not find a statute where the Zarathushties slaughtered an animal for food, he thinks it was sacrificed to the natural surroundings; the earth, water, wind, sun, moon, fire etc. But he soon contradicts himself by saying, ' ... They kindled no fire...' during sacrifice. How could one sacrifice to the fire without the presence of the fire?

Again he does not find the ritual of praying and asking favours of the gods during the sacrifice so he says, ' The actual worshiper is not permitted to pray for any personal or private benefits....' Why then should one sacrifice, isn't the very purpose of sacrifice to please the gods for past considerations or for anticipated favours?

All this contradicts the very purpose of Greek sacrifice but he calls it so, for this is the only parallel Herodotus could find to explain what he saw to his readers.

We also see that the animal is cooked without any ceremony except for the presence of a Majus, so also for the use of the meat there were no rules or restrictions, and the owner could do what he pleased with it. This couldn't be so if it was a religious sacrifice for all religious sacrifices have a set ritual. The description given by Herodotus is true but it is closer to that of a butcher slaughtering an animal for sale and the presence of the Magus has a dual purpose, one; as an health inspector being present to control and approve it for use. Two; due to their knowledge of the secret life of animals and plants and in respect for the animals feelings, the Magus was present to ensure that the slaughter was performed according to set standards, like it is done today.

Thus we see that Paganism had been wiped out of the Babylonian region.

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JUDAISM

The next group was the Jewish prisoners of the Babylonians, who had a private God - Jehovah, who did not have a statue but had a house where he dwelt. The Torah and the Old Testament tells us in full detail, about the role of Zarathushties as far as the Jews are concerned.

Apart from the well know treatment given by Cyrus the Great to the Jewish people and his support to their wish to build a temple for their God. We see future generations of Zarathushties still continuing to influence and support the Jews. As per the Old Testament (Ezra 7:25-26). Ardeshir I commissioned Ezra, the leader of the Jewish community of Babylon to go to Jerusalem and bring order and good regulation among the Jews.

'And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God that is in thine hand, appoint magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the law of thy God; and teach ye him that knowest them not. And whosoever will not do the LAW OF THY GOD, and the LAW OF THE KING, let judgment be executed upon him with all diligence.... '(Ezra 7:25-26)

The Zarathushties had approved the law that was to replace the existing law in Jerusalem to bring good order among the Jews living on the other side of the river. This was direct influence.

The Zarathushties used all peaceful means of persuasion to change the paganistic ways of its subjects. We can clearly see this in the Old Testament (Ezra 7:25-26). It is important to note that those Jews under the influence of the Zarathushties had changed their ways and those on the other side of the river were now targeted. This difference in belief and the influence of Zarathushties on them can also be seen in Ezra Chapter 4

' Then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the father, and said unto them, Let us built with you: for we seek your God, as ye do; and we sacrifice unto him since the days of Esar-haddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither. ' (Ezra 4:2)

' But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, Ye have nothing to with us to built an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will built unto the LORD GOD of Israel, **as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us.**' (Ezra 4:3)

Although the temple had the blessings of the King of Kings Cyrus the Great it was not built for some time. The 'Children of Captivity' on return to Jerusalem were trying to influence the Jews on the other side of the river and change their ways and so the temple was stalled till the days of Darius and Ardeshir.

Ezra 5.16: Then came the same Sheshbazzar, and laid the foundation of the house of God, which is in Jerusalem: and since that time even until now hath it been in building, and yet it is not finished.

Remember what Herodotus had to say, if not here is a reminder.

' The erection of statues, temples, and alters is not an accepted practice among them, and anyone who does such a thing is considered a fool, because, presumably, the Persian religion is not anthropomorphic like the Greeks. '

But paganism had deep roots on the other-side of the river and they came after decades with an appeal to the king.

Ezra 5.17: Now therefore, if it seem good to the king, let there be search made in the king's treasure house, which is there at Babylon, whether it be so, that a decree was made of Cyrus the king to build this house of God at Jerusalem, and let the king send his pleasure to us concerning this matter.

These are just examples which should suffice to prove the point.

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CHRISTIANITY

The most important group were the Greeks and the Romans, they had a well-integrated and advanced system of gods and beliefs. Every thing that they needed to do was done only after offering sacrifices and provoking the gods to show them the path. The use of their brain

(Vohumana) was not what they believed in. To the extent that God in Geneses is said to have forbidden Adam and Eve to use their brain.

2:16: And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

2:17: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Converting people to Zarathushtism required time and had to be done step by step. First of all, knowledge that was in the realm of gods, had to be brought within the reach of humans. This was attempted by exporting philosophy into their pagan world.

When Cyrus the Great conquered Babylonia he released Pythagoras from Babylonian prison and brought him to Persia and trained him and sent him back to his home in Greece. Pythagoras is said to have drawn two columns under the heading of Good things and Bad things. He had learned his geometry from the Zarathushties, he put into words, as a theorem, what was common working knowledge among the Zarathushties who used it to built tunnels called Qhanats to carry water and irrigate the fertile lands in the deserts far from the source of the spring.

In 449 BCE Artabanus concluded a peace treaty with Athens known as the Peace of Callias, under which the roadstead of the Phaselis in Lycia was designated as the boundary between the spheres of action of the navies.

That the age of learning and scholarly works started in earnest among the Greeks after the Peace treaty of 449 BCE, is a proof of Zarathushti influence. The most famous philosophers, historians, poets and men of learning all thrived after this date. Among them were Socrates, Plato, Xenophon, Herodotus and Democritus.

Democritus of Abdera studied Mathematics and Astronomy and Herodotus who was raised in Halicarnassus, a Vassal state of the Zarathushti Empire began wandering in the Empire collecting first and second hand information and stories and systematically writing them down, which he called his 'Researches'.

Socrates, who was in the army at the age of 18, became a hoplite with heavy armor at twenty. Having been born in 469BCE, in 449 when the peace treaty was signed, he must have been 20 years old and having lost his army job as a hoplite he enlisted as a philosopher. Socrates was a student of Zarathushtra's teachings and had achieved Khordad (perfection) and become Amordad (free from fear of death). Socrates, met with a tragic end for having said, 'KNOW THYSELF ' 'Khod Ah'

What Socrates said was alien to his countrymen and finally the democratic legal system of Athens condemned him to death by consumption of poison, in 399 BCE. We are told he agreed to accept the majority verdict against him and drank the poison handed over to him without fret. Although he was offered a chance initially by the Jury to deny his ideas and buy his freedom and again later his friends arranged for his escape from the temporary prison but death to him was meaningless, he had no fear of it (Amordad) and he preferred to drink the poison.

The charges against Socrates were:

Corrupting the young, of not recognizing the gods recognized by the state, of believing in spirits and practicing rites foreign to the Athenians.

Meddling in the things, which are outside his competence, of enquiring into things under the earth and things above the sky and arguing with everybody on all subjects, trying constantly to make the weaker arguments appear the stronger.

Not believing in gods and believing in supernatural beings.¹

The Zarathushties who were able to spread Asha Vahista to all corners of the Empire had now introduced the golden age of knowledge into Europe. Although all these knowledge were alien to the Greeks in those days and men like Socrates were put to death for introducing Zarathushtism, today we know it as Greek mathematics, Greek medicine and a corrupted form of its philosophy as Greek philosophy, etc..

Plato (born 428 BCE), Antristhenes (born 446 BCE), Euclides (born 435 BCE), and Xenophon became students of Socrates. It is interesting to note that the majority of the so called Greek Scholars were born and gained their knowledge outside Athens

away from Greek influence and almost all of them lived in the Persian Empire before going to Athens.

With peace having its sway more people were engaged in learning. Khash-athra-Vairyu (laws, rules) were made to guide the daily life of the people. It was based on the Asha Vahista (Truth) with regard to ecology, environment, needs and practices of the people.

The laws were therefore divided into two groups, the natural laws (Khash-athra-Vairyu) based on Asha Vahista were called the laws of God, while those concerning trade, commerce, taxes, land rights, punishments etc. was called the laws of the king.

In spite of the introduction of so many philosophers, the general public was still in their paganistic mode. In the Western world, Aristotle was the first to acknowledge that the world was round but he still thought that the earth was stationary and the sun, moon, planets and the stars moved around the earth. In such an Era the teachings of Zarathushtra would be considered blasphemy.

As a matter of fact, even centuries later when Jesus tried to introduce the teachings of Zarathushtra he was stoned.

The Zarathushties used all peaceful means or persuasion to change the paganistic ways of their subjects and neighbours.

The Paganistic World could not digest the Zarathushti concept of God. The Zarathushtrian God was a non Anthropomorphic God and was not confined to a temple nor needed sacrifice; moreover an individual, who was born as the image of God, could become united with God if he developed himself. KNOW THYSELF (KHOD-AH).

All this was hard to consume, and considered a trespass into the realm of gods by the pagan world headed by the Greeks. But the adviser to Alexander was none other than his teacher Aristotle and Aristotle understood the implication of the Zarathushtrian culture and way of life. He feared it in the hands of Rome's enemy and is reported to have advised Alexander that:

' If you destroy them, you will have overthrown one of the greatest pillars of excellence in the world. '

Thus Aristotle had initiated a conflict of a different nature, a war of the brains and a second front had been opened away from the military front. Now Aristotle through his pupil Alexander had launched a direct attack on Zarathushtra's philosophy. To start with they did not have to destroy temples, for the Zarathushties had none, but instead they had to build one. The first reported act of Alexander on entering Babylonia was to restore the temples, which were left to decay by neglect. Thus laying the foundation of the destruction of Human Excellence by bringing back the gods of clay and stone, this time with more power for now these gods were wiser, they had more knowledge.

Having lost their country to Alexander the Zarathushties were subjected to, a cultural and religious torture. The type of in-alienation that would put Hitler to shame. It took them some years but in 250 BCE the Zarathushties changed their approach: theology was developed making use of Caldean, Sumerian, Babylonia and Jewish history and Epics, and we see a natural development rather than imposition or revolution. Thus the development of God from the God of Abraham, who tried to do away with human sacrifice practiced in Babylonia by replacing it with animal sacrifice, to the God of Christ, with whom even animal sacrifice was done away with and Jesus Christ was supposed to be the last sacrifice, the Lamb, washing away the sins of mankind.

The laws given by kings like Hammurabi were made divine in stages by the law given by God through a prophet, so Moses, Daniel, Ezekiel and the rest act as divine media to do away with the unwanted laws. Moreover for breaking the laws of the king they were punishable only if caught. But for breaking the laws of the God they were punishable by God without fail, and it was only a matter of time, but if he failed to punish God was considered merciful and was said to have forgive. Example of such punishments and forgiveness, of the characters in history, were used to prove the point. In this way society was made healthy. Transmission of Khash-athra-Vairyu (good rules), were done through divine media for the paganistic world.

The Zarathushties who had taken upon themselves to change the ways of the world during the three centuries that they were in power, had done so without encountering organized opposition. But now the Zarathushties

were powerless specially inside Rome and thus in the areas under the Roman control Paganism was flourishing. The Zarathushties finally decided to root out paganism making use of paganistic ways, so a Three Generation Plan (TGP) was made. This plan would span over a period of three generation where the groundwork would be laid and an attack made on paganism from inside the Roman Empire. Thus Heli of the house of King David the grand father of Jesus Christ was given a foothold in Rome by putting him in charge of the Jews in Rome.

The Jews were awaiting a prophet but the date had passed. The Zarathushties introduced the solar calendar and thus rearranged the date.

' The Qumran sect rejected this seemingly artificial system (of dating) and adopted instead a chronological reckoning, PROBABLY OF PRIESTLY ORIGIN, based on the Sun.' 2

When the day came a group of wise men was sent out towards Bethlehem to support the new prophet that was to be born. It is interesting to note that all the deeds of the Zarathushties reported in the Bible are either referred to wisdom or just reported as ordinary deeds. Even knowing in advance that a prophet is being born is not considered prophetic. This is to show the difference between Zarathushtism which advocates the use of Vohumana (Good Mind) and the other people who were, as if forbidden to eat of the tree of knowledge. All the information and knowledge was from God and they were just messengers, Prophets.

The Treasure of the Magi's, the gifts they gave baby Jesus, was their way of life, the Eternal Law, which has Three things to be achieved Vohu-Mana (good use of the mind), Asha Vahista (acquiring Truth, knowledge) and Khash-athra-Vairyu (making righteous rules). Having achieved these three the rest, that is, Righteousness (Spenta-Armaiti), Perfection (Hurvata), Freedom from the Fear of Death - Immortality (Ameretat) and Ahura Mazda (being one with God by Self Realization) becomes achievable.

After receiving these gifts Jesus was never left alone, he had the support of the Magi's throughout his mission. The Bible records this in Luke 2:46-52.

46 - 'After three days they found him in the temple sitting among the TEACHERS, listening to them and asking them questions.'

And seeing that his parents had been anxious about his whereabouts, Jesus

49 - said to them, "How is that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?"

50 - And they did not understand the saying, which he spoke to them.

52 - And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

In the mean time John the Baptist was doing his bit. (Luke 3) Finally the time for a change had arrived, Jesus had been prepared to lead the assault and before he took charge he had to have his final test.

' Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted by the devil.' (Matthew 4:1)

The use of the Three gifts of the Magi's - Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh - Vohu-mana, Asha Vahista and Khash-athra-Vairyu, was to be put to a test, so although this test lasted 40 days (Mark 1:13 Matthew 4: 2 -Luke 4:2) it comprised of only three questions. (Matthew 4:3-11 - Luke 4:3-13)

The test was from what he had learned from the Scriptures given to him by the Zarathushties (Magi's) as against the paganistic scriptures .. 'But he (Jesus) answered "It is written, ...' (Matthew 4:4) and the paganistic scripture was being used by the devil (the examiner). '..... If you are the son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written ...' (Matthew 4:5,6)

The first symbolic test for Jesus was with regard to Vohu-mana, the use of the power of his mind in the righteous way.

Matt-4:3 And the Tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread."

Matt-4:4 But he answered, "It is written 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'" ' (Matthew 4:3,4)

The tempter wanted the use of the brain limited to earning bread. (Like it is done these days by creating patents and copyrights and buying knowledge and limiting its use - to make money) But Jesus says that the mind should not be used just to feed oneself, instead it should be used in the Vohu way for the benefit of mankind, as desired by God.

Next his Asha Vahista (knowledge, Truth) was tested, a test between the Natural law - the law of gravity, and the Paganistic beliefs of angles and devils.

Matt.-4:5 Then the Tempter took him to the holy city, and set on the pinnacle of the temple,
4:6 and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, 'He will give the angels charge of you, and on their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone'."

Jesus knows his science, he knows the truth, he knows that the force of gravity will pull him down and no angle can stop it. Thus he says, sorry The Truth cannot be changed there are no exceptions.

4:7 Jesus said unto him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God'". (Matthew 4:5-7)

The final test was on Khash-athra-Vairyu (making good rules). He was given the choice of making bad laws and reaping the advantage but he chose to make the Righteous law.

Matt.4:8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them; -4:9 and he said to him, " All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me."

Jesus rejects the offer and says one should serve the righteous law of God.

4:10 Then Jesus said, "Begone, Satan! for it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.'" ' (Matthew 4:8-10)

He came out of the test with flying colours having used the three gifts (Vohumana Asha Vahishta and Khash-athra-Vairyu) successfully ' then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and ministered to him.' (Matthew 4:11)

Next Jesus went out to preach the principles of the teachings of Zarathushtra by spreading Truth and banishing ignorance.

' the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned.' (Matthew 4:16)

With the end result of Self Realization, which he said, was achievable.

" Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matthew 4:17)

Very soon he had many followers,

' And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordon.' (Matthew 4:25)

And he wanted them to be better than the Persian-Jews and the scribes who had failed to spread the Truth.

' For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.' (Matthew 5:20)

Jesus preaches Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds and corrects some of the old beliefs. (Matthew 5:1-48) He drops the barrier between man and God by showing the way to achievement of Hurvatatat(Perfection). He clearly states that Godly Perfection (Hurvatatat) is achievable.

' Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' (Matthew 5:1-48)

(Matthew uses the word Father, My Father, Your Father and Heavenly Father, which means that he was indicating different identities. Example is Matthew 10: 26-33.)

All this surprised those that heard him ' for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.' (Matthew 7:29)

Zarathushtism placed humans on a footing never before known to these scribes and wherever the Zarathushties ventured they left their signature, their mark, in history in a symbolic way, by way of the figure seventy-two. The seventy-two parts of Avesta, the seventy-two parts in the feathers of the Fravahar at Takth e Jamshid (Persepolis) which is above the head of Daryush, the seventy-two columns in the Hall of Nations (Persepolis) and now in the Bible in Luke 10 it has been left for those that can recognize it.

'After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others, and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to come.' (Luke 10.1)

(Most of the modern Bibles have changed it to 70)

'The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, "Lord even the demons are subject to us in your name!" (Luke 10: 17)

Regarding this seventy-two Jesus says:

'All things have been delivered to me by my Father; and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.' (Luke 10: 22) Here Jesus is not speaking of God.

(In Luke 2: 49-50 Jesus refers to his teachers house (Magi's) as Father's house but his parents did not understand what he meant. Some interpret this as house of God. Only pagan gods had statues and houses not the God of Christ he could not be confined to a house.)

Unfortunately whatever Jesus said was paganized and is today interpreted and followed like what the scribes would have said and not like what the Zarathushties had intended.

The Zarathushties believed in family values, and based on their Asha Vahista (knowledge) of human psychology they forbid the practice of divorce. They believed that the first step towards righteousness was a morally healthy society, which could not be achieved but through a

closely-knit family. Even today among the Zarathushties the practice of divorce is forbidden except in case of un-chastity and adultery.

Jesus introduced this Zarathushtrian doctrine, overriding the age old law of Moses. (Matthew 19: 3-9; Mark 10: 2-12; Luke 16:18)

'And I say to you: whosoever divorces his wife, except for unchastity, and marries another, commits adultery.' (Matthew 19:9)

And when ' They said to him, "Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce, and put her away?"

' He said to them, "For your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wife, but from the beginning it was not so." (Matthew 19: 7-8)

Jesus teaches, The Seven Amshah Sepantas (Eternal Law), in a simple language meant for the pagans but its meaning has been lost to us because it has been paganized, thus the Truth has been lost.

' Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God (Truth) and keep it.' (Luke 11:28)

Acquiring Asha Vahista, (Knowledge, Truth) was the foremost consideration in the teachings of Jesus.

' Woe to you lawyers! for you have taken away the key of knowledge; you did not enter yourselves, and you hindered those who were entering'. (Luke 11:52)

This has to be read in the light of the practice among the Greeks, the Romans and other paganistic religions where knowledge was in the realm of the gods. The Oracles stopped people from attempting to make use of their brains and whatever limited knowledge was there they kept it to themselves and did all the thinking and decision making for the people.

The same was the case in ancient Babylonia before the coming of the Persians in 550 BCE, which had lead to the belief in the Genesis 2: 16-17

The aim of Jesus was the Greeks and the Romans - the gentiles, and the wiping away of paganism.

' Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were Greeks. (John 12: 20)

' If anyone (gentiles) serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there shall my servants be also; if any one serves me, the Father will honour him.' (John 12: 26)

One of the most important among the Zarathushties, contemporary to Jesus, was Simon Majus (Magi). 'Simon Magus was a towering figure in history, the major player after Jesus. His position was the head of the Magians of the West Manasseh, or Samaritans; and successor to Menahem (Manuchehr) who had been the actual instigator of the mission'.

(Jesus the Man by Barbara Thiering 1992 Doubleday, Batman Books 1993 ch-12 pp 105)

According to the preface given in the Dead Sea Scrolls Barbara Thiering has traced the actual history of Simon Magus, she writes.

' Simon was the head of one of the missionary orders, a man of extraordinary personal gifts who could attract followers to his version of the doctrine, an amalgam of liberalized Judaism and Greek philosophy and science. As a Samaritan, he had no loyalty to Jerusalem but saw Judaism in northern terms, syncretistic and Diaspora oriented. Following the death of the Baptist and the rise to power of the Hellenists, Simon, after a short period, became Pope. '

The Clementine literature presents Simon as a magician (literal meaning of Majus) who performed magical tricks and even adopted the identities of others. Simon cultivated the reputation of thaumaturge in order to gain the adherence of thousands of simple followers.

Simon is said to have accepted Jesus as the true David and in addition held the view that a layman could act as a Levite. Thus, as a Pope, he was making it possible for Jesus to act as a Levite when he chose.

Simon Magus can be traced throughout the New Testament under different names given to him depending on the circumstances and based on the position he held.

Some of the names according to Barbara Thiering are:

ANANIAS as the servant of the Samaritan high priest Ananias (taking the name of his master). Ananias the Merchant did not want Gentile converts to be circumcised.

DEMERTRIOUS THE SILVERSMITH when acting as bishop in Ephesus.

LEPER when expelled from the celebrate community, as he was sent down to the level of the lepers, who were not permitted on holy premises.

LIGHTNING as Pope, succeeding 'Thunder' Jonathan Annas.

ZEBEDEE meaning 'MY GIFT' to contrast him with the other Samaritan, Jonathan Annas, whose name meant 'GIFT OF GOD'. ZEBEDEE was also 'Father' of James and John as he had instructed Niceta and Aquila before they turned to Zacchaeus.

The other names are LAZARUS (John 11), SIMON THE PHARISEE (Luke 7: 44-46) SIMON - ZEALOT (Luke 6: 15) SIMON A MAGICIAN, SIMON CANANAIOS ...

Barbara Thiering in her book Jesus the Man, believes that Jesus's support of Simon was the cause of the crucifixion of Jesus. The real culprit according to Romans was Simon Majus and Jesus was an accomplice whom the Roman governor Pontius Pilate did not want to crucify but did it just because the Jews wanted it so. (Matthew 27: 23-24; Mark 15: 13-15)

'And Pilate said to the chief priests and the multitudes, " I find no crime in this man. "(Luke 23: 4)

When later Simon Majus sees that the Zarathushtism he had worked so hard to introduce had failed, when he sees the paganization of the teachings of Jesus, he fights against the very Christianity, which he had helped to set up.

' In the final state of the parties about 50ACE, he (Simon Majus) was the head of all eastern factions, and the bitter enemy of the Christians, who had separated out from the peace-Hellenists. Simon was, for the

Christians, the Antipope, the Antichrist, conducting a rival campaign for the hearts and minds of Gentiles, to bring them into what was still an essentially Jewish faith.' (Jesus the Man by Barbara Thiering 1992 Doubleday, Batman Books 1993 ch-12 pp 106)

Jesus's liking and respect for Simon Magus can be seen in that he shared the communion meal, called the agape, or 'love feast' with him. (John 11:5; Jesus the Man by Barbara Thiering 1992 Doubleday, Batman Books 1993 ch-12 pp 106)

The teachings of Jesus were what he had learned from his teachers, the Father, the Magi's. Most of these were considered blasphemy in the eyes of the pagans and true Zarathushtism is considered blasphemy even today.

Asho Zarathushtra shows the way to perfection (Hurvata), immortality (Amertata) and self realization and oneness with God (Ahura Mazda); and Jesus says:

" they follow me and I give them eternal life (Hurvata), and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand (Amertata). What my Father has given to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one." (John 10: 27-30)

To the pagans this was blasphemy and, ' The Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, " I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of these do you stone me?" The Jews answered him, "It is not for a good work that we stone you but for the blasphemy; because you, being a man, make yourself God." (John 10: 31-33)

This is exactly what Zarathushtra has preached and Jesus was repeating. What is also important is that the people refer to the claim of "Make yourself God" and not about being the Son of God. The reply given by Jesus removes all doubt, if any one has any.

' Is it not written in your law "men are gods". (John 10: 34)

He was referring to the Old Testament (Genesis 1:26);

' Then God said, "let us make men in our image, after our likeness;'

Although this fact is in the Avesta the present day Zarathushties, like the Jews in those days, do not believe in it and call it blasphemy.

The wars of the Two Spirits thus lead to a draw. The three-generation plan eradicated Paganism but not completely. Zarathushtism was spread but under paganistic colours. Christianity has come to stay but the words of Christ, although very clearly stated in the Bible, are not followed because the paganistic mind does not permit it to believe that one could achieve perfection.

The Zarathushtis decided to wait and see the results and then give another try. This is the very reason that all religions believe that at the end of time a saviour will come to spread the true religion. Which means what we believe is not true. Otherwise why should a saviour come?

Christianity moved into the pagan West and left the Jews to themselves. The death of pure Paganism leads the western world to a new era. There were great changes in their Way of Life but the change was not complete, it was mixed with paganism. Knowledge became free to man but not completely. The church played the role of the Oracle and put to death whosoever crossed the new limits set for knowledge. Even today in the twenty-first century this function is still performed although they have extended the limits for knowledge a little further every few centuries.

The Dead Sea Scrolls in conjunction with the large number of tablets found by archaeologist dating back to over 3000 years help us to understand the role played by the Zarathushties in the religious development in this part of the World. But the curtain that covers it has been woven with over a thousand years of paganistic thinking and has deep roots in every thing that we do today, thus it cannot be easily rolled aside to uncover the TRUTH. Still today the Real teachings of Zarathushtra will be considered blasphemy and if one tries to remove the cover placed on it, that person may well be crucified even today.

The very fact that all modern religions started in areas surrounding the Persian Empire, where they had no political influence, is a matter for research. Of course this can only be understood and studied if the

teachings of Asho Zarathushtra are understood and studied as they were followed in those ancient days.

Within the Empire from Indus to Oxus to Euphrates people made use of their Vohuman each according to his capacity and capability, beyond these borders there was need for action. Theologies of the people outside their control were studied by the Zarathushtis and ways to develop them towards achieving the final goal were envisaged. The result of further studies in the theology of their neighbours in order to fulfill the promise, resulted in the theories of Mani, Mazdak and Zurvanism in a latter period.

The new God was not a statute and was not confined to the temple but was every where, so the religions began to spread and became stronger day by day, to the extent that, in a couple of centuries, it started influencing Zarathushtism. In 100 ACE the Avesta was written down for the first time. The fire started appearing for the first time on the back of the coins issued by the Parthian Kings. The weakness of the Parthian government and the constant attack of the Romans weakened the nation and Zarathushtism was at its lowest ebb. During this period in Pars the house of Sasan was becoming active and the foundation of the Sasanian Empire and its unique form of Zarathushtism was being laid.

These are the real influence that the Iranians had on other religions and are never talked about.

NOW LET US CHECK THE CONCEPTS, WHICH SCHOLARS AND THEOLOGIANS CLAIM TO HAVE BEEN CONTRIBUTED BY ZARATHUSHTISM.

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ONE SUPREME GOD

In the paganistic world, before during and after Zarathushtra, gods had human forms but were powerful and controlled every action of the humans on earth. These Gods had their love life and even fought wars and had enemies. Gods had to be pleased with sacrifices, housed in temples and bribed with promises.

Herodotus says the Persian God was a non-Anthropomorphic God unlike that of the Greeks and Romans. It was not confined to the temple nor needed any sacrifice. What he did not understand or if he did he did not dare to say was that an individual, who was already the image of God,

could become united with God if he developed himself. KNOW THYSELF (KHOD-AH).

God for the ancient Zarathushtrian was the force of nature which encompassed the whole universe, something which the whole system was made up of, something which we humans are also part of. No shape or form or symbol was ascribed to Ahura Mazda -The Creator of Wisdom. Zarathushtra's Ahura Mazda would not accept bribes and do favours. Sacrifice, rituals, prayers would not materialize their wants for them. Everyone had to use his Vahu Mana Good Mind and progress. Every human being can be one with Ahura Mazda if he follows the seven steps called Amsha Sepantas the Eternal Law.

In the Gathas Yasna 28.9 Zarathushtra goes to the extend of saying that man is responsible for all his actions and that we should not blame it on Ahura Mazda.

These, you, not Ahura Mazda
Knowledge also brings evil
Mind also is the best
That which strives to create good guidance
For you to be worthy
Mighty, satisfied, also worthy of praise
Zarathushtra - Gatha Yasna 28.9 (FR)

As far as creation is concerned Ahura Mazda (the Creator of Wisdom) only created Mazda Ahura the Wisdom in Creation, the Big Bang. It is this Wisdom in Creation - Mazda Ahura- that is since then expanding and evolving, multiplying and destroying, creating new stars and galaxies while other stars and galaxies are disappearing.

Unfortunately the Paganistic gods evolved into 'The God' in whom we believe today. Who has still to be housed in temples and needs sacrifices. Who is almighty and made the world in seven days. Who created Adam and Eve; Mhashi and Mhashiyana. The followers of 'The God' outnumbered the followers of Zarathushtra and so as time passed by, the God of Zarathushtra lost ground and during the Sasanian Era he was totally replaced by 'The God'. Today most Zarathushtis and many scholars do not like to believe the truth in Herodotus report and stamp it as biased when he says.

" The erection of statues, temples, and altars is not a acceptable practice among them (Persians), and anyone who does such a thing is considered a fool, because the Persian religion is not anthropomorphic like the Greek. they erect no altar and kindle no fire; the libation, the flute music, the garland, the sprinkled meal - all these familiar to us, they have no use for. "

The God of Zarathushtra is in you, no one can describe it to you, you can reach it yourself and find out about it, understand it and be one with it; KHOD - AH. And to know God one does not have to renounce the world and be a hermit. Spirituality is not the only road to God. One has to progress in all directions - Mental, Physical and Spiritual. A computer engineer or an architect stands an equal chance, compared to say a hermit or a saint.

Now lets go to the Bible and the Quran and see if the scholars are right.

The Bible introduces "The God " as the creator who completed his creation in six days and rested on the seventh.

Now lets go through the sequence of his creation to understand him better.

On day one

He first creates heaven and earth

Next he creates light and darkness and calls the light Day and the darkness Night. Gen. 1:1-5

On day two

He divides the waters into two and calls the one above heaven Gen.- 1:6&7

On day three

He creates land in the already existing water, by gathering the water together. He calls this formation land and he calls the water so gathered Sea. He then makes grass and trees Gen 1:9 -12

On day four

He made two great lights the lesser one to rule the night and the greater one to rule the day. Gen. 1:14-19

On day five
He made fish and birds Gen. 1: 20-23

On day sixth
He made animals and man 1:24 - 28

We see that He has created the earth, the trees and the plants and even light by the third day, then on the fourth he creates the sun and the moon.

Some time passes and God is not happy with what he has created.

Gen 6:7: And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

The God in the Bible goes to those people that he chooses. The people cannot go to him.

Gen 17:1: And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

Gen 17:2: And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

Now let's understand Allah the God in the Quran.

I quote from Sura XVI HAHL

16:4 He has created man from a sperm-drop; and behold this same man becomes an open disputer.

16:10 It is he who sends down rain from the sky: for you to drink, and out of it grows the vegetation on which you feed your cattle.

16:11 With it He produces for you corn, olives, date palm, grapes, and every kind of fruit: verily in this is a sign for those who give thought.

16:77 To Allah belongeth the Mystery of the heavens and the earth. And the Decision of the Hour (of judgement) is as the twinkling of the eye, or even quicker: for Allah hath power over all things.

16:78 It is He Who brought you from the womb of your mother when ye knew nothing; and He gave you hearing and sight and intelligence and affection; that ye may give thank to Allah.

16:80 It is Allah Who made your habitations homes of rest and quite for you; and made for you out of the skins of animals,(tents for) dwellings, which ye find so light when ye travel and when ye stop; and out of the wool, and their soft fibers and their hair, rich stuff and articles of convenience (to serve you) for a time.

16:81 It is Allah Who made, out of the things He created, some things to give you shade; of the hills He made some for your shelter; He made you garments to protect you from heat, and coats of mail to protect you from your (mutual) violence. Thus does He complete His favours on you, that ye may bow to His Will (in Islam).

For those that don't believe in what has been said the Quran says.

16:88 For those that reject Allah and hinder (men) from the path of Allah - for them will We add penalty to penalty; for that they used to spread mischief.

16:89 One day We shall raise from all Peoples a witness against them, from amongst themselves: and We bring thee a witness against these (thy people) : and We have sent down to thee the Book explaining all things, a Guide, a Mercy, and Glad Tidings to Muslims.

In Quran also we see that it is Allah Who chooses the person he want to guide.

16:93 If Allah so willed, He could make you all one people: but He leaves straying whom He pleases, and He guides whom he pleases: but ye shall certainly be called to account for your action.

These are but just a few quotes there are many more for those that want, can refer to the Bible and Quran for themselves.

Compare these with the words of ZARATHUSHTRA who says Good and Evil are both created by the HUMAN MIND. Zarathushtra - Gatha Yasna Ha 28.9 (FR) (see page 31)

THE MESSIAH

Every religion including modern Zoroastrianism has this element of the Messiah, the Resurrector, the one who is going to come to save mankind. The one who is going to bring good religion.

The fact is, ancient Zarathushtism did not have this element, and Zarathushtra never claimed that he would come back. He gave the guideline; his principle of the seven Amsha Sepantas, and every one was to be a Messiah for himself. In the effort to eradicate Paganism the good religion was instead paganised.

' Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge; you did not enter yourselves, and you hindered those who were entering'. (Luke 11:52)

Zarathushtism starts with Vohu-mana the use of wisdom. While paganism forbids the use of it, Just as Adam and Eve were driven out of Paradise for using it. It was considered a sin for which the whole race was punishable.

Some day when the human race was wiser all this had to be corrected. But the people had to be told that they were not following the right path and so we are constantly told that one day a Messiah would come to set things right.

Is the world ready today to receive the Messiah? No not if he is going to teach ' them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.' (Matthew 7:29) The result will be a repeat performance. ' The Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, " I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of these do you stone me?" The Jews answered him, "It is not for a good work that we stone you but for the blasphemy; because you, being a man, make yourself God." (John 10: 31-33)

If once again any one is going to preach the teachings of Zarathushtra, the seven Amsha Sepentas, the way to perfection and godliness he will end up with the same faith as Jesus Christ. But even if some of the people realize the truth it will not be in vain.

RESURRECTION AND THE FINAL JUDGEMENT

Reincarnation, Resurrection and the Final Judgment are as alien to Zarathushtra's teaching as are **Heaven and Hell**. You have only one chance make the best of it. The reward of good and bad is realized while you still live. The Chinavat Poll or the Bridge of Judgment was in fact the last moments of ones life when all the deeds good and bad flash before the eyes of the person who is dying. A person who has done good spends these last moment in peace while they who have done evil die in turmoil. There is no external bridge to be crossed to another world. Latter in the Zoroastrian religion many things were added.

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SATAN, DEVIL, ANGEL

When we say Satan or Devil, one at once thinks of the Ahrimana as its parallel. But this is not correct. In Zarathushtra's philosophy Ahrimana has no form like the devil and is not a power by itself who manipulates the work of God. Ahrimana is the opposite of Vohumana. It is the evil use of the Mana the mind. Each one of us has the freedom to use our mind in the right or the wrong way and make our life and the life of others happy or miserable. Devil or Satan has no place in Zarathushtra's teachings.

Every one is born with the mind - the mana - which needs to be used and can be used either in a bad or good way or in a combination of both. Ahrimana is the evil state of the mind. Einstein used his mana and discovered the atom; as long as it is used to create electricity and put to other positive uses it is the good use, when it is used to make a bomb that is the Ahrimanic stage. Ahrimana is not an external force like the devil. It is an internal force within each person and its powers is limited to the powers of that individual. Thus a bad leader can disturb the world and a bad storekeeper his neighbourhood. In Zarathushtra's philosophy 'The Devil' with horns and a spear in hand does not exist. Nor does an angle; a person who uses his Mana in a good way is in fact the angle. Zarathushtra says that it is the human mind that does good or evil not even Ahura Mazda.

CONCLUSION

Thus we see that Zarathushtra's teachings had their influence on all major religions directly thru the prophets of these religions but the real influence has either not been understood or played down and the wrong concepts have been attributed to the influence of the teachings of Zarathushtra. The un-interpreted Bible and the Dead Sea scrolls are a testimony to the real influence of the Teachings of Zarathushtra on world religions.

Mulla Nasrudin (*a satirical character in Persian literature*) was sitting at the corner of his street and was getting bored, a neighbour was passing by, Mulla called out to him and said " I have heard that they are distributing free Aash (a Persian soup) in the next village".

Very soon the whole village with pots and pan in hand were going towards the next village and as they passed by Mulla they told him about the free Aash and asked him why was he not joining them.

After seeing the whole village going, Mulla said to himself, "May be it is true" and went home took a pot and started on his way to the next village to get his share of Free Aash.
