

*The Zend Avesta is to
Zoroastrianism what the
Veda is to Brahmanism*



Abstract and train of thoughts¹

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When the Kalki-Avatara appears, seated upon a white horse, our sufferings in this world will come to an end

The white horse is animating principle of the Sun; its four legs represent for the four Root-races of the world: black, russet, yellow, and white. The Chinese clothed their four orders of priests in black, red, yellow, and white; John saw these very colours in the symbolic horses of the Revelation.	16
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¹ Frontispiece by Lady Yana Dhyana.

**ZOROASTER IN HISTORY AND ZARATHUSHTRA IN THE SECRET RECORDS
ABSTRACT AND TRAIN OF THOUGHTS**

The four Zoroastrian ages are the four Root-races, the progression of the human life-wave on any globe of a planetary chain.	16
The colours of each of the four races are: gold for the Mongolian, silver for the Caucasian, brass for the Red Indian, iron for the Negro.	17
There are seven Ahuru-asters, or spiritual teachers of Ahura-Mazdha (an office corrupted later into Guru-asters and Zuru-asters) from Zera-Ishtar, the title of the Chaldean or Magian priests.	18
The last one was the Zaratusht of the Desatir, the thirteenth prophet, and the seventh of that name. He lived between 1200 and 1300 years B.C.	18



“Chaldeans, Hierophants of the Aryan Root-Race” and “Sacred Islands and Continents in the Classics,” in the same Series.

“Desatir on the eye of the heart” and “Zoroaster on virtue, wisdom, and equity,” in our Mystic Verse and Insights Series.

“The Chaldean Oracles of Zoroaster” and “Wilder on the Wisdom Religion of Zoroaster,” in our Theosophy and Theosophists Series.

It is only by studying the relics of old and by comparing, free from sectarian bias and personal prejudice, the religious ideals of all nations, that we finally acquire the conviction that they are all streams from one and the same source.

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (ZOROASTER IN "HISTORY" AND ZARATHUSHTRA IN THE SECRET RECORDS) III, pp. 449-59.

The original manuscript of this incomplete essay in H.P. Blavatsky's own handwriting exists in the Adyar Archives. It was transcribed for the first time in 1958, and published in the pages of *The Theosophist* in October and November 1958. By consulting Colonel Henry S. Olcott's remarkable lecture on "The Spirit of the Zoroastrian Religion," which he delivered at the Town Hall in Bombay on the 14th of February, 1882, it will be seen that portions of it are identical with Blavatsky's manuscript. It is most likely that Colonel Olcott was given special help with his lecture, and Blavatsky's text itself, though fragmentary and obviously unfinished, bears in more than one place the characteristics of a higher authority. This is perhaps especially the case in regard to a long footnote concerning Zoroaster which was appended to Colonel Olcott's lecture when it was published in book form, together with other lectures, under the title of *Theosophy, Religion and Occult Science*: (London: George Redway, 1885). On the authority of several of the early members, this footnote was supplied at the time by Blavatsky. It is reprinted herewith also.

The facts outlined above date H.P. Blavatsky's manuscript as of the early part of 1882, or possibly even earlier. It is evident that it represents but a rough draft of an essay in preparation. Rather than to make any changes, we have left unaltered a number of peculiarities in style, uncertainties in the use of quotation marks, and occasional grammatical errors, which, however, are only of minor importance.

BORIS DE ZIRKOFF



The Zend Avesta is to Zoroastrianism what the Veda is to Brahmanism

Well-meaning blunders in history are often no better than wilful misrepresentations in their effect, for they leave a false impression on the mind of the student difficult to efface. Thus some of our European philologists are unable to find a more philosophical meaning for *Zend-A-Vesta*, than that “it signifies *a tinder box*.”

Speaking of the religion of the great Āryan Reformer, in *Nineteenth Century*, Professor Monier Williams, after making the just observation that

. . . perhaps few more remarkable facts have been revealed by the critical examination of non-Christian systems than the highly spiritual character of the ancient creed which it is usual to call the religion of Zoroaster,

makes it follow by some remarks, which, when analysed * * * ¹ false * * * ² as usual — with Christian professors — the *whole* truth is cleverly screened, and the spirit of partisanship — ever on the watch to make the best of the few meagre facts on hand — attempts, were it but inferentially, to glorify the Jewish Bible at the expense of all the other religions. So, for instance, he says:

Only within the last few years has the progress of Iranian studies made it possible to gain an insight into the true meaning of the text of the Avesta — popularly known as the *Zend Avesta* — which is to Zoroastrianism what the *Veda* is to Brāhmanism. The knowledge thus obtained has made it clear that contemporaneously with Judaism an unidolatrous and monotheistic form of religion, containing a high moral code and many points of resemblance to Judaism itself, was developed by, at least, one branch of the Āryan race.

Nor does the certainty of this fact rest on the testimony of the Zoroastrian scriptures only. It is attested by numerous allusions in the writings of Greek and Latin authors. We know that the father of history himself, writing about 450 years before the Christian era, said of the Persians that “it is not customary among them to make idols, to build temples and erect altars; they even upbraid with folly those who do.” The reason of this Herodotus declares to be that the Persians do not believe the gods to be like men, as the Hellenes do, but that they identify the whole celestial circle with the Supreme Being.

We know, too, that Cyrus the Great, who must have been a Zoroastrian, evinced great sympathy with the Jews; and was styled by Isaiah “the righteous

¹ [Manuscript damaged]

² [Manuscript damaged]

one,”¹ “the Shepherd of the Lord,”² “the Lord’s Anointed,”³ who was commissioned to “perform all God’s pleasure” and carry out His decrees in regard to the rebuilding of the temple, and the restoration of the chosen people to their native land.⁴

Zoroaster is a generic title; so is Thoth-Hermes.

Hundreds of students may read the above and yet not one of them notice the spirit of the inferences contained in those few lines. The Oxford professor would make his reader believe that the “nonidolatrous and monotheistic” Zoroastrianism was developed “contemporaneously with Judaism”; that is to say, if we understand the value of words at all, that the former system developed at the same period of history as the latter — than which statement nothing could be more erroneous or misleading. The religion of Zarathushtra is most undoubtedly attested by more than one well-known Greek and Latin author, in whose writings, by the way, one would vainly search for like reference to Judaism or the “chosen people,” so little were they known before the return (?) from the Babylonian captivity. Aristotle affirms that Zoroaster lived 6,000 years before Plato.⁵ Hermippus of Alexandria, who claims to have read the genuine books of the Zoroastrians, shows the great Reformer as a pupil of Agonaces (Agonach or the Agon-God) and having flourished 5,000 years before the fall of Troy, his statement thus corroborating that of Aristotle, as Troy fell 1194 before our era and, on the testimony of Clement, some think that the Er or *Erus*, the son of Armenius, whose vision is related by Plato in his *Republic*,⁶ means no other than Zardosht.⁷ On the other hand, we find Alexander Polyhistor saying of Pythagoras (who lived about 600 years BC) that he was a disciple of the Assyrian *Nazaratus*;⁸ Diogenes Laërtius⁹ affirming that the philosopher of Samos was initiated into the mysteries “by the Chaldeans and Magi”; and finally Apuleius maintaining that it was Zoroaster who instructed Pythagoras. All those contradictions put together prove

- 1 That “Zoroaster” was a generic title;¹⁰ and
- 2 That there were several prophets of that name.

¹ xli, 2

² xliv, 28

³ xlv, 1

⁴ “The Religion of Zoroaster,” *Nineteenth Century*, Vol. IX, January 1881, p. 156

⁵ [Cf. Pliny, *Natural History*, XXX, ii]

⁶ Book X, 614ff.

⁷ [Clement Alex., *Stromateis*, V, xiv]

⁸ Zoroaster is often called by the Greek writers the Assyrian *Nazaratus*. [Cf. Clement, *Stromateis*, I, xv.] The term comes from the word *Nazar* and *Nazir* (set apart, separated), a sect of adepts very ancient and which existed ages before Christ. “They were physicians, healers of the sick by the imposition of hands, and initiated into the Mysteries” — See *Mishnah Nazir* in the *Talmud*, which has nine chapters and gives statutes concerning *Nazarenes*. — I.M. Jost, *Israelite Indeed*, II, p. 238. They let their hair and beards grow long, drank no wine and pronounced vows of chastity. John the Baptist was a Nazarene, and Elijah of whom it is said in *2 Kings* (i, 8) that “he was an hairy man.”

⁹ [Lives: “Pythagoras,” § 3]

¹⁰ [So was Thoth-Hermes. See “Egypt was the image of heaven on earth and temple of the whole world,” in the same series. — ED. PHIL.]

There was the primitive and pure Magianism, and one degraded later by priesthood, as is the case with every religion whose spirit is lost and the dead letter of it alone remains. Again we find the proof of it in Darius Hystaspes, shown in history to have crushed the Magi and introduced the pure religion of Zoroaster, that of Hormazd — he had, nevertheless, an inscription cut out on his tomb (recently found) stating that he, Darius, was “teacher and hierophant of *Magianism*.” But the greatest proof is found in the *Zend-Avesta* itself. Although *not the oldest* Zoroastrian Scripture, yet, like the *Vedas* in the case of the Deluge upon which they are completely silent¹ — these ancient writings do not show the slightest sign of its author *having ever been acquainted with any of the nations that subsequently adopted his mode of worship*, although there are several historical Zarathushtras:

- He who instituted sun worship among the Parsis;
- That other who appeared at the court of Gushtasp; and
- He, who was the instructor of Pythagoras . . .

Prophet Isaiah lived 200 years earlier than Cyrus (from 760 to 710 BC) while the great Persian King began his reign in 559.

The Jews were simply a Persian colony imbued with Magianism and Zoroastrianism.

Nor does the appellation bestowed by Isaiah upon Cyrus — “the Righteous One” and “the Shepherd of the Lord” prove much to any but those who believe in the divinity of Biblical prophecies;² for Isaiah lived 200 years earlier than Cyrus (from 760 to 710 BC) while the great Persian flourished and began his reign in 559. If Cyrus protected them after conquering Babylon, it is because they had long before become converted to his own religious system; and if he sent them *back* (and many a learned archaeologist strongly doubts today whether the Jews were ever in Palestine before the days of Cyrus) it was for the same reason. The Jews then upon their return were simply a *Persian colony* imbued with all the ideas of Magianism and Zoroastrianism. Most of their forefathers had once agreed with the Sabaeans, in the Bacchic-worship, the adoration of the Sun, Moon and Five Planets, the SABAÖTH of the realm of light. In Babylon they had learned the worship of the Seven-Rayed god — hence the *Septenary System* running throughout the Bible and the *Heptaktys* of the *Book of Revelation*; and the sect of the Pharisees (150 BC) — whose name might with far more reason be derived from “Pharsi” or Parsi than from the Aramaic *Perishin* (separated) — whose greatest rabbi was Hillel the Babylonian, and whose “beliefs and observances by succession from their fathers . . . *are not written in the law of Moses*,” says Josephus, a Pharisee himself.³ By these the whole Angelology and Symbolism of the Persians or rather the Zoroastrians was adopted. And the Chaldean *Kabbalah* extensively read and studied by them at their secret Lodge, whose members were called the Kabirim from the Babylonian and Assyrian *Kabeiroi* — the great mystery-gods, are good

¹ A fact going to well prove that the *Vedas* were in existence before the deluge, or that cataclysm which changed the face of Central Asia about 10,000 years BC Baron Bunsen places Zoroaster at Bactria and the emigration of Bactrians to the Indus 3784 BC and the historical and geological deluge at the date first mentioned, about 10,555 years before our era. (*Egypt's Place in Universal History*, Vol. V, pp. 77-78, 88)

² Many critics (Christian) suppose the latter portion of the book of *Isaiah* (ch. xl to lxvi) to be by some author of the time of the captivity, whose name is unknown.

³ *Antiquities*, XIII, x, 5 & 6

proofs of the above.¹ The present Jews are *Talmudists* holding to the later interpretations of the Mosaic Law,² and the few learned Rabbis-Kabbalists remain alone to give the student an inkling into the true religion of the Jews of the two centuries preceding and the first century subsequent to Christ.

The true history of Zoroaster and his religion was yet never written. The Parsis themselves have lost the keys to their faith and it is not to their learned men that they are to look for any information upon the subject. Whether we accept the time when Zarathushtra lived on the authority of Aristotle — 6,000 years BC — or on the more modern ones of Naurozji Faridunji of Bombay who fixes it in the 6th century BC³ — all is darkness and contradiction and every statement conflicts with insurmountable facts. Nor was the *Rahnuma-e Mazdayasnan Sabha*, the Society organized in 1851 for the restoration of the creed of Zoroaster to its original purity — any happier in its investigations. Can we wonder then at the discrepancies, often nonsense, given by our modern scholars, when these have no other authority to base their researches upon, than a few classical but for all that unreliable writers, who are found to have mentioned what they had heard in their days, about that grand prehistoric figure.

Zoroaster, the Sage of remote Antiquity, is transformed by Christian bigots into a “slave of Daniel.”

Aristotle, Diogenes Laërtius, Strabo, Philo Judæus, Tertullian and finally Clemens Alexandrinus with a few others are the only guides that our European scholars have at hand. And how trustworthy are the latter patristic fathers may be inferred from what the Rev. Dr. H. Prideaux, treating of the *Sad-dar* says of the teachings of Zoroaster. The prophet — he tells us — preached *incest!* Zaratusth teaches “*that nothing of this nature is unlawful; but that a man may not only marry his sister, or his daughter, but his mother*”!!⁴ The “Sage of remote Antiquity” — as Plato calls Zoroaster, is transformed by Christian bigots into a “slave of Daniel,” the very existence of the latter being now regarded by the men of science as a myth, and [they] accuse the “Prophet of the Persians” of having been “a *false Prophet*” and teaching “a doctrine stolen from the Jews”!⁵ Truly remarks Warburton in his *Divine Legation* that “the whole is a pure fable and contradicts all learned antiquity,” one Christian writer making Zoroaster “contemporary with Darius Hystaspes and servant to one of the Jewish Prophets — *yet in another fit of lying*, they place him as early as Moses, they even say he was Abraham, nay stick not to make him one of the builders of Babel.” The Zoroaster of Dr. Prideaux, says Faber, “seems to have been a totally different character from the most ancient Zoroaster.”⁶

¹ The *Kabeiroi* were worshipped at Hebron, the city of Beri-Anak or *Anakim*.

² No Hebrew MS is known to be older than Kennicott's No. 154 which belongs to AD 1106 (Donaldson). “The Masorah was committed to writing in 506 AD.” (*Elias Levita*)

³ *Tareekh-i-Zurtoshtee* or “Discussion on the Era of Zoroaster”

⁴ *An Universal History from the Earliest Accounts of Time to the Present*, London 1747-54. Vol. V, p. 405; & quoting Prideaux.

⁵ Dr. Prideaux

⁶ *On the Mysteries of the Cabiri*, II, p. 154

In this jungle of contradictions the point at issue is whether:

- 1 There remains any possibility of obtaining anything like a correct information on the *last*, if not on the original Zarathushtra,¹ and
- 2 By what means is the true religion preached in the *Avesta* (with the older *Gāthās* included in it) to be interpreted from the allegorical dialogues of the *Vendidad*.

We know beforehand the answer: “The most learned Orientalists — Haug, Müller, *etc.* — having failed, there is no help for it.” The *Avesta* has become and must remain a sealed book to the Parsīs, and the teachings of Zoroaster — a dead letter to the future generations.



¹ It is said of Zarathushtra that he had *a renewal of life*. “*I am he who lives and dies*” is the inscription in the Avestan or old Bactrian language running around the waist of his gigantic statue which remains for ages in the circular cave in one of the Mountains of Bokhara. The cave is in a rock and consecrated to Mithr-Az — the invisible Deity produced *from a cave hewn out of a rock* . . .

The key to understanding the Avesta lies concealed at the bottom of the rightly interpreted Kabbalah

Kabbalah is the record of doctrines received by the Chaldean Magi and the initiated Jews from Zarathushtra whose teachings, on account of their profound philosophy, were meant only for the few.

We believe the notion is a mistaken one — at least as regards question the second. If everything regarding the personality of the Founder himself, however well authenticated by identical traditions and material proofs in the shape of his statues in various parts of the world and especially in Central Asia, has to be regarded as simple tradition (and what else is *History?*) his religion at least could be restored as faultlessly as exact Science restores the shapes of the antediluvian animals from bits of fossil bones collected in a hundred different places. *Time, Patience* and especially *sincere Zeal*, are the only requisites. Our Orientalists have never bethought themselves of the only sediment of genuine Zoroastrianism now left among the old records. Nay — till very lately they despised it and laughed to scorn its very name. Hardly half a century ago it was not yet translated, and up to this day is understood but by the very, very few true Occultists. We speak of the Chaldean KABBALAH, whose very name is unknown to hundreds of educated men. Notwithstanding every denial of the ignorant, we say and repeat that the key to the right understanding of the *Avesta* and its subdivisions lies concealed at the bottom of the rightly interpreted books of the Kabbalah,¹ composed of the *Zohar* (Splendour) by Rabbi Shimon Ben Yochai; of *Sēpher Yetzīrah* or *Book of the Creation*² (attributed to the patriarch Abraham but written by a Chaldean priest); and of the *Commentary of the Sephīrōth* — the latter being the creative Principles or powers identical with the *Amshāspends*. The whole of the *Avesta* is incorporated with the ethics and philosophy of Babylonia — hence must be sought for in the Chaldean Kabbalistic lore, as the doctrines of Zoroaster spread through Zarathushtra the *fifth Messenger* (5,400 BC) from Bactria to Media and thence under the name of Magism (the Magavas or the “Mighty Ones”) became at one time the universal religion of the whole Central Asia. It is now called “monotheistic” on the same principle that vulgarized Magianism became the monotheism of the later Israelites. If the attributes of Ahura-Mazdhā or Ormazd are said to strongly resemble those of the Jewish Jehovah (albeit far more practical), it is not because either of the two was the true Mystery Deity — the INCOMPREHENSIBLE ALL but simply because both are human ideals evolved from the same stock. As Ormazd springing from Primordial Light, which itself emanated from a Supreme incomprehensible essence called “Zeruane-Akerene,” the Eternal or Boundless Time, comes but *third* in the deistic evolution; so Jehovah is shown in the *Zohar* as the *third* Sephīrōth (moreover a

¹ The Hebrew word *Kabbalah* comes from the root “to receive.” It is then the record of doctrines received by the Chaldean Magi, and the initiated Jews (Daniel was chief of the Magi) from Zarathushtra, whose teachings on account of their profound philosophy were meant but for the few, while the exoteric rites of Magianism dwindled down to popular vulgar magic, Judaism, and other degraded anthropomorphic and ritualistic systems.

² Rather Evolution. The book is the demonstration of a System whereby the universe is mathematically viewed, showing from the systematic development of “creation” and from the harmony reigning in all its laws that it must have proceeded from One Cause AIN-SOPH — the Endless NO-THING. That it never had a beginning nor will it ever have an end; from which dead letter rendering in *Genesis* — incomprehensible without the help of the *Kabbalistic* . . . [Manuscript cut off . . .]

feminine passive potency) denominated “Intelligence” (Binah) and represented by the divine name Jehovah and Aralim. Hence none of the two ever were the ONE “Supreme” God. With Jehovah it is AIN-SOPH, the *Boundless*, the ONE from which emanates AUR — “Primordial Light” or the “Primordial Point” which, containing the all of the *Sephirōth*, emanates them one after the other, the totality representing the Archetypal man, Adam Kadmon. Jehovah then is but the tenth portion (*seventh* Kabbalistically, for the first three are ONE) of Adam or the Intellectual world; whereas Ormuzd is at the head of the seven Amshāspends or their Spiritual totality — hence higher than Jehovah, yet — not the SUPREME.

Physically and intellectually, we may progress and grow in strength and sophistication, but lose daily in spirituality and wisdom.

Let us confess at once that, gross and material in our conceptions, we have anthropomorphized and, so to say, animalized every grand religious idea which has descended to us from the antiquity. Physically and intellectually we progress and grow in strength and wisdom, but lose daily in Spirituality. We may “wax in strength” — never in Spirit. It is but by studying the relics of old; by comparing, free from every sectarian bias and personal prejudice, the religious ideals of all nations, that we finally acquire the conviction that they are all streams from one and the same source. Many and various are the lights and shadows which our dazzled eye can hardly follow on a sunlit valley. The fool will exclaim: “That shadow is *mine* — it is cast by my house! . . .” The sage will lift his eyes heavenward, and calmly remark: “it is but an effect and temporary!” [and] will rivet his attention to the One Cause — the Great “Spiritual Sun.”

[An unfinished note in a handwriting different from H.P. Blavatsky’s, and obviously having to do with one of her footnotes in the above article.]

“I am he who lives and dies” is the inscription that runs around the waist-belt of his statue in the circular rock-temple of Bokhara. It was the old belief that Z[arathushtra] *renewed his life* from time to time but whether or not in the same way as the Lamaists claim to return in the reincarnation of Buddha I cannot say.¹ The brother who visited Armenia as I have told you, found near the Lake Van and the great mountain chain South of Bayazid, “a whole library of cylinders” — similar to the precious clay-cylinders exhumed by George Smith at Nineveh. And he says that these cylinders “may serve one day to strongly damage the wild theories and interpretations of the Anquetil-Duperrons, the Spiegels and Haugs.”²

As the Hindu pilgrims affirm that on approaching the temple at Badrinath one sometimes sees far up amid the snow, *etc.*, so in Armenia is there a similar tradition. The rumour is that daily at sunset there appears, *etc.*

¹ [See “Hints about the triadic hypostasis of Buddha,” in our Buddhas and Initiates Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² [The “brother” referred to is the Adept known as Hillarion Smerdis. See my footnote appended to the second portion of this manuscript. — *Boris de Zirkoff.*]

[The second portion of H.P. Blavatsky's manuscript is as follows It may have been intended at one time to be the continuation of the previous portion:]

He who would penetrate the secrets of Fire, and unite with It, must first unite himself soul and body to Earth (his mother) to Humanity (his sister), and to Science (his daughter).

Parsīs justly complain that the Mobeds themselves have forgotten truth about their religion, and there are some learned scholars among them who try to unravel the mysteries of Zoroastrianism, but how? Not by reading and studying Zend MSS or exercising their own brain, but by giving forth to what the Western scholars tell them. How misrepresented is the religion of Zarathushtra can be inferred by a few instances. The Rev. Dr. H. Prideaux, for instance, commenting upon *Sad-dar* assures his readers that Zaratusht taught his people *incest!*¹ He says:

Zaratusht teaches that nothing of this nature is unlawful; but that a man may not only marry his sister, or his daughter, but his mother.

Only in support of his argument he quotes no Zend work, nothing written by a Parsī, but such Christian and Jewish authorities as Philo Judæus, Tertullian, Clemens Alexandrinus.² Euty chius, a priest and archimandrite of the 5th century, of a cloister at Constantinople, writes on Zoroastrianism as follows:

Nimrod beheld a fire rising out of the earth, and he worshipped it, and from that time forth the Magi worshipped fire. And he appointed a man named Ardeshan to be the priest and servant of the Fire. The Devil shortly after that spoke out of the midst of the fire [as Jehovah to Moses out of the *burning bush?*] — saying, no man can serve the Fire, or learn Truth in my religion, unless first he shall commit *incest with his mother, sister and daughter* as he was commanded, and from that time the priests of the Magians practiced incest, but Ardeshan was the first inventor of that doctrine.

Now what does that mean? Simply a dead letter misconstruction. In the secret doctrine, portions of which are committed to writing in old Armenian MSS or so-called Mesrobian MSS (until the year 312 the Armenians were Parsīs) preserved to this day at Etchmiadzin, the oldest monastery in Armenia,³ it is said of the Initiate or Magi:

He who would penetrate the secrets of (sacred) Fire, and unite with it (as the yogi unites his soul to the Universal Soul) must first unite himself soul and body to Earth, his mother, humanity, his sister, and Science, his daughter.

No need of explaining the symbolic meaning of this. Everyone knows in what respect Zarathushtra held Earth, how he taught kindness to *all*; and Knowledge or Science will never become the daughter or progeny of man, never evolve out of his brain in its purity, unless he studies the secrets of Nature and man which beget Science or Knowledge.

¹ [This allegation has also been made on p. x.]

² See *An Universal History*, as quoted above.

³ [See "The Oldest Armenian Monastery," in our Masters Speak Series. — ED. PHIL]

The ancient name of Persepolis was Ista-Char, or Throne of the Sun, the place sacred to Ista or Esta

Eventually, Ista/Esta became Vesta, to whom the Romans burnt inextinguishable fire.

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (ZOROASTER IN "HISTORY" AND ZARATHUSHTRA IN THE SECRET RECORDS) III, pp. 460-68.

As Yggdrasill is the Tree of Life of the Scandinavian *Edda*, so *Haoma* is the sacred Tree of Life of Zaratusht, which we may see represented in the Assyrian monuments.¹ The Deity or God is Fire. The Rosicrucians understood it well and took it from the Magi, the successors of Zaratusht. There were several Zaratushts (a generic name). This is proved by himself in saying: "I am he who lives and dies"; but the Zoroaster of the Parsis appeared 5,400 BC and Persepolis (the City of Splendour) was founded according to the tradition of the secret records 5,000 BC by a Gian Jin, a priest of Ōannēs or Dagon.² Its ancient name was Ista-char, the place sacred to *Ista*, or *Ashtar*, or *Esta*, who finally became *Vesta* to whom the Romans burnt inextinguishable fire. *Vesta* was the divine anthropomorphic Divine Fire or Holy Spirit. *Char* means on the Assyrian monuments the *Sun* and *Istar* or *Ista-Char* the *Vesta* of the Sun and throne of the Sun translated by the Greeks *Perse-polis*. "Char-is" is the *City of Fire*. *Ceres* was also the Deity of Fire, of Heat fecundating Nature, and at Cnidus she was called *Kura*, a title of the *Sun*, her Roman name *Keres*, not *Ceres* (as Cicero — *Kikero*), originally the name of a city, *Charis*. In Arabic the meaning of the radical word *Char-is* is to *preserve*, and of *haris*, "guardian," "preserver" (of the fire). Hence the name of *Cyrus* which is the male name of *Ceres*, the female. But the name is Indian (for *Heres* is the same as *Char-is*) and *Hara* or *Hari* is a name of *Hara-Deva*, *Hari* meaning Saviour, I think. *Koros* is a name of *Bacchus* the son of *Keres* or *Ceres*, and *Koros* is *Divine Wisdom* or the *Holy Spirit*. In the first Vol[ume] of *Father Bernard de Montfaucon's Antiquity Explained*, on a plate representing the *Mother of Gods*, one of her names is *Suria*, the *Hindu* name for *Sun*. On another plate she is called *Mater Suriaæ*, black with long hair (hence *Syria* the land).

¹ See Layard, *Nineveh*, p. 472

² See Illarion's letter in *Theosophist*.

[This has reference to *The Theosophist*, Vol. II, July 1881, pp. 213-15, where was published the greater part of a letter signed X * * *, F.T.S. It was entitled "A Letter from Surb Ohannes." See pages 211-18 in the present Volume. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.

The full text of this article can be found under the title "The Oldest Armenian Monastery," in our *Masters Speak Series*. — ED. PHIL.]

The red dress of the Roman Cardinals has the same origin as the bronze-red yellow dress of the Sannyasis and Buddhists.

The red dress of the Roman Cardinals has the same origin as the bronze-red yellow dress of the Sannyāsi and Buddhists, from Divine Fire — knowledge. As Zerah in Hebrew means rising of Light, so *Surya* means Sun and the name of Zarathushtra is a combination of the Indian and Hebrew appellations. Sir William Drummond shows that Hyde has most erroneously placed Zoroaster as contemporary with Darius. Suidas fixes his era at 500 years before the Trojan war; Plutarch at 5,000 before that time and Pliny many thousands before Moses. All these contradictions show that there were several Zoroasters, one of which, he of the Parsīs, was an historical personage, an Initiate, and Sir Wm. Drummond in his *Oedipus Judaicus* places Zoroaster many centuries before Moses. After calling him the greatest mathematician and the greatest philosopher of the age, Rev. H. Prideaux forthwith calls Zoroaster an “imposter and juggler” as the Christian newspapers call us.

Abul-Faraj [Bar-Hebræus] in the *Book of Dynasties*¹ states that Zaratusht taught the Persians the manifestation of the *Wisdom* (the Lord’s anointed Son or *Logos*), “Honover” (the living manifested Word, or Deific Wisdom), and predicted that a Virgin should conceive (Saoshyant) immaculately and that at the birth of that Messenger a six-pointed star would appear which should shine in the noonday, in the centre of which would appear the figure of a Virgin. In the Kabbalah the Virgin is Astral Light or Ākāśa and the six-pointed star the emblem of the Macrocosm. The Logos or Saoshyant born means the Secret Knowledge or Science which divulges the Wisdom of God. The prophecy of the Epiphany is in the *Zend-Avesta*.

The fire burning in the sacred altar meant heavenly truth, and the smoke of incense waving into the faces of the worshippers imparted the knowledge thereof.

Into the hand of the Messenger Prophet Zaratusht were delivered many gifts when filling the censer with *fire from the sacred altar* as the Parsī Mobed did in ancient times (and the Roman Catholic does now, only getting his burning coals and fire for his censer out of the kitchen grate) — the fire meant heavenly truth, and the smoke of incense waved into the faces of the worshippers — *imparting the knowledge thereof*: the everlasting Fire-Word of Zaratusht. “The mortal who approaches Fire will receive a light from Divinity.” Krishna informs Arjuna in the *Gita* that God is in the fire of the altar. “I am the Fire; I am the Victim.” The *Flamens* (priests of the Etruscans) were so named because they were supposed to be illuminated by the *tongues of Fire* (Holy Ghost) and the Christians took the hat, the scarlet robes of the Cardinals symbolizing this Fire of Esoteric Divine Knowledge. “Pure and happy are they,” says Ferdowsi, the Persian poet, “who while worshipping One Supreme Wisdom, contemplate in sacred flame the symbol of Divine Light” — the *Hiranyagarbha* (ask Dāmodar for Sanskrit name) of the *Vedas*. “A magus,” says Pausanias, “when entering the temple performs an incantation and when finished, all the wood on the altar becomes *enkindled without fire and emits a very splendid flame.*”² Prometheus, or “Pra-Ma-Tha-

¹ p. 54

² *Elis*, I, xxvii, 6 [Footnote continued overleaf.]

Issa,” the divine Son of Issa in Sanskrit, *brought fire from heaven*. In an ancient Irish MSS Zaratusht is called *Airgiod-Lamh*, or the “Golden Hand,” the hand which received and scattered celestial fire.¹ He is also called *Mogh Nuedhat*, the Magus of the New Ordinance or Dispensation. Zaratusht was one of the first reformers who revealed what he had obtained at his initiation, the *six periods*, or *Gāhambārs*, or the periodical evolution of the world:

The first is *Maidyōzaremayā* in which the heavens or canopy were formed;

The second, *Maidyōisema* in which the moisture from the clouds became the origin of the waters;

The third, *Paitishahya* when the earth became consolidated out of primeval cosmic atoms;

The fourth, *Ayāthrima* in which earth gave birth to vegetation;

The fifth *Maidyāiryā* when the earth slowly evolved into animal life;

The sixth, *Hamaspatahēdayā* when lower animals culminated in man;

The seventh period comes after the end of a certain cycle, after which will appear the Persian Messiah, *seated on a Horse* — *i.e.*, the Sun of our Solar System will be snuffed out — PRALAYA.



[The Greek text of this quotation is here been placed side by side Thomas Taylor’s rendering into English. — ED. PHIL.

ἔσελθὼν δὲ εἰς τὸ οἶκημα ἀνὴρ μάγος καὶ ξύλα ἐπιφορήσας αὐτὰ ἐπὶ τὸν βωμὸν πρῶτα μὲν τιάραν ἐπέθετο ἐπὶ τῇ κεφαλῇ, δευτέρα δὲ ἐπὶ κλησιν οἴου διὸ θεῶν ἐπάδει βάρβαρα καὶ οὐδαμῶς συνετὰ Ἑλλήσιν: ἐπάδει δὲ ἐπιλεγόμενος ἐκ βιβλίου: ἄνευ τε διὸ πυρὸς ἀνάγκη πᾶσα ἀφθῆναι τὰ ξύλα καὶ περιφανῆ φλόγα ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐκλάμψαι.

A [male] magician entering into this cell, and placing dry wood on the altar, first of all veils his head with a tiara, and afterwards invokes a certain divinity, by an incantation barbaric, and perfectly unknown to the Greeks. This incantation he performs from a book; and when it is finished, all the wood on the altar becomes necessarily enkindled without fire, and emits a very splendid flame.]

¹ Sir Wm. Ouseley’s *Oriental Collections*, I, p. 303

When the Kalki-Avatara appears, seated upon a white horse, our sufferings in this world will come to an end¹

The white horse is animating principle of the Sun; its four legs represent for the four Root-races of the world: black, russet, yellow, and white. The Chinese clothed their four orders of priests in black, red, yellow, and white; John saw these very colours in the symbolic horses of the Revelation.

He who would unravel the mysteries of the sacred Parsī books has to study alike the Scriptures of other people and especially of the Hindus. Then he will find the mystery of the *Sun, Fire and Horse*. As his own *Saoshyant*, the Saviour of mankind, has to appear seated upon a white horse and followed by an army of good genii mounting milk-white steeds, so John in *Revelation* beholds a *white horse* with the “faithful and true” upon it and the armies that follow him are seated upon white horses, so Vishnu as the *Kalki Avatāra* will appear as a warrior seated upon a white horse, etc., etc. The *white horse is the horse of the Sun*. “And I saw an angel standing in the Sun,” says John.² “And he took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the Sun”³ — “the fiery source of Spirit-Life.” The sacrifice of the Horses and the Sun, *Aśvamedha*. The horses of the Sun are famous in all religions (Phæton the Greek, driving the Chariot). The high priest or Mobed riding every morning to meet and salute the rising Sun is typical as the Chariot represents the *body*, the Horse the animating Principle and the four legs of the Horse — the four races of the world — the Black, the Russet, the Yellow and White, or Negro, Indian, the Mongolian and Caucasian (the four castes of Manu come from that); and the Chinese show it in their four orders of priests clothed in black, red, yellow and white; John saw these very colours in the symbolic horses of the *Revelation*.

The four Zoroastrian ages are the four Root-races, the progression of the human life-wave on any globe of a planetary chain.

There exists among the Persian Parsīs a volume older than the Zoroastrian *present* writings. The title is *Javidan Khirad*,⁴ or *Eternal Wisdom*, a work on practical philoso-

¹ [See “Kali-Yuga and the Kalki-Avatara,” in our *Buddhas and Initiators Series*. — ED. PHIL.]

² *Revelation* xix, 17

³ *2 Kings* xxiii, 11

⁴ [In *The Theosophist*, Vol. III, April, 1882, pp. 180-81, there is an unsigned review of a work entitled *The Javidan Khirad*, or “*Eternal Wisdom*,” a *Practical Manual of the Philosophy of Magic*, a book written in Persian and presented to the Theosophical Society by the Editor, a learned Parsī gentleman of Teheran, Mr. Manekje Limji Hooshang Haturia.

Tradition says that the *Javidan Khirad* was written by King Hū-shang, one of the Peshdadian Kings of Persia; that it was buried in the Palace of King Nashirvan in Baghdad, and was dug up at the request of the philoso-

ophy of magic with natural explanations Thos. Hyde speaks of it in his Preface to the *Historia Religionis Veterum Persarum*. The four Zoroastrian ages are the four races. Speaking of Zoroaster of whom he speaks as one possessed of an extensive knowledge of all the Science and philosophy then known in the world, Rev. George Oliver gives an account of the Cave-Temples of which much is said in the Zoroastrian doctrines.

[Zoroaster] retired to a circular cave or grotto in the mountains of Bokhara, which he ornamented with a profusion of symbolical and astronomical decorations, and solemnly consecrated it to the middle god or Mediator, Mithr-As, or as he was elsewhere denominated, the invisible deity, the parent of the universe, who was himself said to be born, or produced from a cave hewn out of a rock. Here the Sun was represented by a splendid gem, which, with an insupportable lustre occupied a conspicuous situation *in the centre of the roof*; the planets were displayed in order round him, in studs of gold glittering on a ground of azure; the zodiac was richly chased in embossed gold, in which the constellations Leo, and Taurus, with a Sun and Lunette emerging from their back in beaten gold, were peculiarly resplendent. The four ages of the world were represented by so many globes of gold, silver, brass, and iron.¹

The colours of each of the four races are: gold for the Mongolian, silver for the Caucasian, brass for the Red Indian, iron for the Negro.

These “ages” were taught to the disciples as the four Races of men — the gold being the Mongolian, the silver the white or Caucasian; the brass — the Red Indian, and the iron the Negro. Minōs received the laws from heaven in a Cavern on the Mount; Ægeria gave his stabula to Numa in a grotto or cave on a hill; Moses receives on Sinai, *etc.*

Daghdai is the name of Zarathustra’s mother and Vallancey shows it with this spelling to mean Holy Spirit (or Wisdom); and Faber who writes it *Day-dae* says it is *Divine Fish* — so the Parsīs accept it, I think. Ask why did Zoroaster consecrate during the sacred rites — wine (*truth*) extracted from vine (parable of Jesus?), a rose (a

pher Zouban, who received the permission to do so from Ma’mūn al-Rashīd, the son of Hārūn al-Rashīd. Zouban allowed only a small portion of this work to be read and translated by one of the scholars of the time. This is the fragment which has descended to us under the name of *Javidan Khirad*. It was first translated into Arabic, with the addition of various teachings from other ancient philosophers. The book presented to the Theosophical Society is the Persian translation from this Arabic compilation.

At the end of the review giving the historical background of this work, there is a note which, to judge by its style, may have been written by H.P. Blavatsky, although its authorship is not certain. To quote:

“As to the contents of this book, it would take a volume to comment even briefly upon them. In the first place, the hidden meaning of the original has been altogether neglected by the later translators. But even the outward meaning given to the words is full of precepts, moral and philosophical. In the whole compilation there is not a single sentence which can be pointed out as less important than the rest. If space would allow, we could quote passages after passages which may be read with benefit even by the most advanced moralists and theologians of the present day. This book alone is sufficient to show the learning and acquirements of the much-abused Ancients. If those, whom we are taught to look upon as primitive men in semibarbarity, could write such works on theology, morality, and even politics, as are hardly rivalled by any work of the present so-called age of Progress and Civilization, we must confess that we would like to follow in the steps of such semi-barbarous men, and leave the much vaunted civilization to its own deluded followers.”

— Boris de Zirkoff.]

¹ *The History of Initiation*, London 1841, pp. 94-95

phallus), a cup (the womb) and the kernel of a pomegranate (the Messenger). The rose was sacred to the Sun. Zoroaster retired to a mountain of Armenia (Ahriman) to speak with Ormuzd; and when the mountain burnt with fire he was unhurt. Then on the Gordian mountain he wrote the first *Zend-a-vesta*.

[The following is H.P. Blavatsky's footnote appended to the printed text of Colonel Olcott's lecture on "The Spirit of the Zoroastrian Religion."]

There are seven Ahuru-asters, or spiritual teachers of Ahura-Mazda (an office corrupted later into Guru-asters and Zuru-asters) from Zera-Ishtar, the title of the Chaldean or Magian priests.

The last one was the Zaratusht of the Desatir, the thirteenth prophet, and the seventh of that name. He lived between 1200 and 1300 years B.C.

It was he who was the contemporary of Vistasp, the last of the Kaianian princes, and the compiler of Vendidad, the Commentaries upon which are lost, there remaining now but the dead letter.

In the oldest Iranian book called the *Desātīr*¹ — a collection of the teachings of the fourteen oldest Iranian prophets (to make the number fifteen and include, among them, Simkendesh, or "Secander," is a grave error, as may be proved on the authority of Zaratusht himself in that book) — Zaratusht stands thirteenth in the list. The fact is significant. Respecting the period of *Zoroaster the First*, or his personality, there is no trustworthy information given by Western scholars; their authorities conflict in the most perplexing manner. Indeed among the many discordant notices I find the earliest Greek classic writers, who tell us that Zaratusht lived from 600 to 5,000 years before the Trojan war, or 6,000 years before Plato. Again it is declared by Berossus, the Chaldean priest, that Zoroaster was the founder of an Indian dynasty in Babylon 2,200 BC; while the later native traditions inform us that he was the son of Purushaspa, and a contemporary of Gushtasp, the father of Darius, which would bring him within 600 BC. Lastly, it is asserted by Bunsen that he was born at Bactria before the emigration of the Bactrians to the Indus, which took place, as the learned Egyptologist shows us, 3,784 BC. Among this host of contradictions, what conclusion can one come to? Evidently, there is but one hypothesis left: and that is that they are all wrong, the reason for it being the one I find in the secret traditions of the esoteric doctrine — namely, that there were several teachers of that name. Neither Plato nor Aristotle, so accurate in their statements, is likely to have transformed 200 years into 6,000. As to the generally accepted native tradition, which makes the great prophet a contemporary of Darius' father, it is absurd on the very face of it. Though the error is too palpable to need any elaborate confutation, I may say a few words in regard to it. The latest researches show that the Persian inscriptions point to Vistasp as the last of the line of Kaianian princes who ruled in Bactria, while the Assyrian conquest of that country took place in 1,200 BC. Now this alone would prove that Zoroaster lived twelve or thirteen hundred years BC, instead of the 600 assigned to him; and thus that he could not have been a contemporary of Darius Hystaspes, whose father was so carelessly and for such a length of time confounded in this connection with the

¹ [See "Desatir on the eye of the heart," in our Mystic Verse and Insights Series. — ED. PHIL.]

Vistasp who flourished six centuries earlier. If we add to this the historical discrepancy between the statement of Ammianus Marcellinus — which makes Darius crush the Magi and introduce the worship of Ahura-Mazdhā — and the inscription on the tomb of that king which states that he was “teacher and hierophant of Magianism”; and that other no less significant and very important fact that the Zoroastrian *Avesta* shows no signs of the knowledge by its writer or writers of either the Medes, the Persians, or the Assyrians, the ancient books of the Parsīs remaining silent upon and showing no acquaintance with any of the nations that are known to have dwelt in or near the Western parts of Iran — the date, 600 BC, accepted as the period in which the prophet is alleged to have flourished, becomes absolutely impossible.

It is therefore safe to come to the following conclusions:

- 1 That there were several (in all *seven*, say the Secret Records) *Ahuru-asters*, or spiritual teachers, of Ahura-Mazdhā, an office corrupted later into *Guru-asters* and *Zuru-asters* from “Zera-Ishtar,” the title of the Chaldean or Magian priests; and
- 2 That the last of them was Zaratusht of the *Desātīr*, the thirteenth of the prophets, and the seventh of that name. It was he who was the contemporary of Vistasp, the last of the Kaianian princes, and the compiler of *Vendidad*, the Commentaries upon which are lost, there remaining now but the dead letter.

Some of the facts given in the Secret Records, though to the exact scholar merely traditional, are very interesting. They are to the effect that there exists a certain hollow rock, full of tablets, in a gigantic cave bearing the name of Zarathushtra, under his Magian appellation, and that the tablets may yet be rescued someday. This cave, with its rock and tablets and its many inscriptions on the walls, is situated at the summit of one of the peaks of the Tien-Shan mountains far beyond their junction with the Belor Tagh, somewhere along their Eastern course. One of the half-pictorial and half-written prophecies and teachings attributed to Zaratusht himself, relates to that deluge which has transformed an inland sea into the dreary desert called Shamo or Gobi Desert. The esoteric key to the mysterious creeds flippantly called, at one time, the Sabaeen or Planetary Religion, at another, the Solar or Fire Worship, “hangs in that cave,” says the legend. In it the great Prophet is represented with a golden star on his heart and as belonging to that race of Antediluvian giants mentioned in the sacred books of both the Chaldeans and the Jews. It matters little whether this hypothesis be accepted or rejected. Since the rejection of it would not make the other more trustworthy, it was as well to mention it.

