

➤ **Introduction:**

on the beginning of this term paper I am going to tell that what is Zoroastrianism religion. who exactly they are? Where have they come from? what's the purpose of their migration? I have no intention in this paper to tell the other religious matters. I will give the actual image of the Zoroastrians so that it will understand by you what's the actual life of the Zoroastrians. About 4000 years ago this religion was discovered in the 7th century AD. The actual name of the parsi religion is 'Zoroastrianism'. It is believed that this is the most ancient religion of the world and called monotheistic religion.

Zoroaster was the prophet of this religion. It is said that he has some divine visions on the age of thirty. He was from Iran; Zoroaster was also the founder of this religion. When he moved from Iran to Persia, he gives the teaching of this religion to people. Zoroaster believes in one god. The name of the God was AHURA MAZDA. Due to his message the king of Persia and his son after his father accept this religion and, in the meantime, there were more people in this religion. They made fire temple in their areas. They did their prayers in these temples. They were also fire worshiper. They believe fire is good sign and very useful to them. They believe that fire give them warmth and peace.

Now it is time to tell you that after the Arab invasion in Persia they leave their country and move from there because the Muslims were forcing them to change their religion. When this Muslim conquest happened there many Zoroastrian accepted Islam and those who did not accept Islam, they leave their country and migrate to India. Those who migrated to India and lived there they are called the parses. I will discuss in this term paper with the help of books I found on internet and with some other websites that they have the material which I want. I will also tell in this paper when parses migrate to India. After they

leave their country and homeland, how they manage themselves for living in the other religion people.

On the very first it is very difficult for them and after some time they do what the Hindus want to do. The parses were known for rich people and when they move to India, they did good work on the upper level and did best in economy of the India. They make many fire temples in India for their prayers and they also make Tower of silence that was known for their dead ones because the parses did not bury their dead and also, they did not fire them up like the Hindus do. In the parses religion they believe fire, water and soil are good signs to them and the dead body is disgusting for them that's the only reason they did not bury their dead and made many towers of silence.

➤ **History:**

The Parsi community is generally a religious community of "Indo-Iranian descent.

The parses who were fundamentally very much conscious about their religion they often call themselves "Aryan" (1) Like the Hindus and Brahmins are stronger in their religion and they are much united in their duties of the religion. Their Zoroastrian religion like Hinduism is a "form of polytheism" on this base they were united in their rituals, rites, custom, their faith, believe and habits.¹

Every religion has its own perspective and consciousness they have different customs, believes, habits, norms and many social activities. Religion is nothing but "a reflection in which earthly forces assume unearthly forms"² . As a result, in every religion derives maintenance for their religion and for its social cohesiveness, directly

¹ Gould, K. H. (1972). Parses and Urban Demography: Some Research Possibilities. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 345-352.

² http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/63840/10/10_chapter%205.pdf

from its religious fundamentals. "Zoroastrianism fosters a feeling of social solidarity by virtue of its fundamental command" needs no explanation. As such, a discussion of the characteristic features of the Parsi community inevitably leads to a discussion of both the supremacy of Zoroastrian religion and the related virtues of Parsi society. The homeland of the Zoroastrians was Persia, their roots in the Persian empire and they shaped the entire Persia with their religion.³

Persian empire was known by the mighty Persian empire and have the vast territory. Persian empire was the state religion of the three major dynasties. "Cyrus the Great, founder of the Achaemenid Persian Empire", was a devout Zoroastrian. At that time Cyrus was very honest and competent ruler or you will say that he was tolerant ruler who allowed every non-Iranian that they will practice their own religion, your safety in his hand or they will protect them. Cyrus allowed them to do their duties and social activities. He ruled by the Zoroastrian law of "Asha" (truth and righteousness) but didn't impose Zoroastrianism on the people of Persia territories.⁴

The beliefs of Zoroastrianism religion were spread across world through trading. In Asia via the Silk Road, and a network of trading routes that spread from China to the Middle East and into Europe.

Some scholars said that Zoroastrianism helped to shape the major Abrahamic religions like Judaism, Christianity and our mighty the Islam through the influence of the Persian Empire. The beliefs of Zoroastrians was that they said they follow one god the one and only single God and they have the concept of Heaven and hell by which who did good things in this world they will have the permission to enter the heaven and those who did the wrong things they will go to hell and they also believe the day

³ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Zarathustra>

⁴ <https://www.google.com/search?q=prophet+zoroaster&source>

of judgment the final day of this world, the day of questions and answers of everybody who is living in this world they have to be answer for their deeds. They may have given teachings of there of the Zoroastrian religion to Jewish community of Babylonia, where people from the Kingdom of Judea had been living in captivity for decades. When Cyrus conquered Babylon in 539 B.C., he forces the Babylonian Jews. Many returned home to Jerusalem, where they come from. Over the next decade, Zoroastrianism would dominate two subsequent Persian dynasties the Parthian and Sassanian Empires until the Muslim conquest of Persia in the seventh century A.D held.⁵

Muslim conquest was happened in Persia between 633 and 651 A.D. Muslims was the destroyer of the Sassanian empire they fell in this conquest after the fall of Sassanian empire the Muslims collect heavy Texas from Zoroastrians and force them to change their religion. Many of the Zoroastrians change their religion and convert to Muslim and those who did not change their religion they fled to India. Those who fled to India they were called parsees. The parsees migrate to India in two waves first they arrive Makhan coat through boats and some were maybe on walk. After Makhan coat they move to Gujrat. When they arrive on the soil of Gujrat at that time there was a king of Gujrat Raja Jedi. The parses request to Raja of Gujrat that they are here to live on your soil please give us some land for living. First the king of Gujrat refuse and said we are full in this land and your religion is also change. Raja give an example of Milk and said to one of his Servant that bring me full jag of Milk and said this jug is full of milk if we add more the milk will come out of the jug. some scholar said who reply to

⁵ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Zarathustra>

the king was a parsi priest and he replies to king if we put some sugar in the jug the milk did not come out of the jug.

After all this situation the king of Gujrat accepted parses and give order of living them and also give them some land with their people. Another group of immigrants from Persia came to India and settled in the western part of the subcontinent. The parses in many strength they come to India but after they came here they have to live with the Hindus customs , they have to change their perspective of life , they have to change their dresses and also the language for trading their original language was Zend Iranian, they have to live with the different people and with the different religion and also they have the restrictions of the cow that they will not kill the cow because in the Hindu religion cow is the mother of Hindus and they did much respect of cow. (2)

At the same time when they were facing these problems, they forget their own language, and the knowledge of their old religious books. But at that time one thing they did carefully was that they save some books they brought with them and some religious things and to the large extent they have priests preserved understanding of them as they were thought from father to son, and the Priests also know there mother language.⁶

Some scholars said when parsi fled to India there was no women with them. In their religion they did not marriage to any person of the other religion but here with the situation they must do the intermarriages for their population. They follow the customs of other religion, but they know two things that they have one God and the man should marry but one wife. It is true they continue to repeat prayers in the old Zend language, but they did not understand the words of that language. But they have

⁶ History of the Parses: Including Their Manners, Customs, Religion ..., Volume 2

few presets they very well know the old language of their religion it was good for them.

The parses did make progress in the India and make their fire temples and tower of silence, there are 50 towers of silence in Mumbai and 100 in all over the country and fire temple. The parses strength in India about 60,000. They make more progress in the economy of India the parses were very rich minorities at that time not even in India but also in Pakistan.

When British came to India and after they rule in India gave the parsees greater newspaper on side of Bombay and a considerable impetus to the development of these papers. They give also greater attention to their religion. In the meantime, a controversy about the calendar in the religion. A priest of Persia was found on his arrival in India and tell the parses of India that the Persian and Indian parsi calendar did not correspond. The parsi of India had added one month to the year every hundred and twenty years, to make up the solar and leap year. This said the Persian priest was wrong as there was no sanctions in their religious books. After this controversy happed a bitter controversy arose and that was the time this religion was split into sets.⁷

⁷ <https://www.factsninja.com/parsis-the-paradox-of-a-very-successful-but-vanishing-community.html>

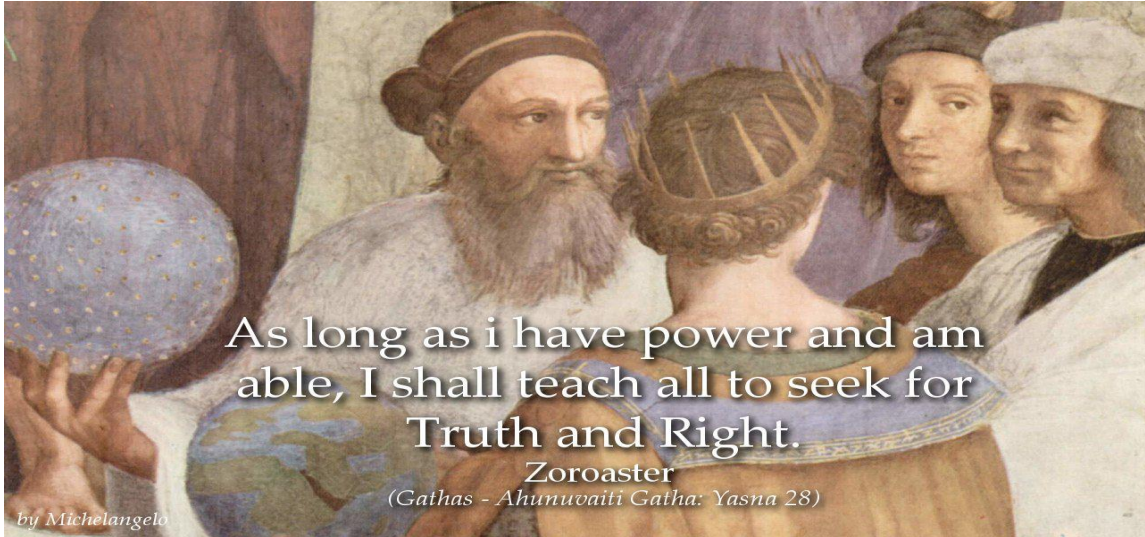
➤ **Prophet Zoroaster:**

Zoroaster, also known as Zarathustra. Zoroaster was an ancient Iranian prophet, religious reformer and spiritual leader who founded Zoroastrianism. The birthplace of (3) the Zoroaster is still unknown, but some scholar says he was from Iran Airyanem Vaejah and also a good speaker.⁸



It is stated that Zoroaster had some divine visions. Zoroaster believe in one God, he also believes in hell and heaven and on the last day, the day of judgement. Some scholar stated that when he was in Iran he preach this religion in Iran but after this his own people were against him then he leave Iran and move to Persia there he give his teachings to Persian people and the king also. Over some time, Zoroastrianism was the vast religion in the Persian empire. Some of their people said that Zoroaster lived in this world more than 1500 years.

⁸ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zoroaster>



As long as i have power and am able, I shall teach all to seek for Truth and Right.

Zoroaster

(Gathas - Ahunuvaiti Gatha: Yasna 28)

by Michelangelo



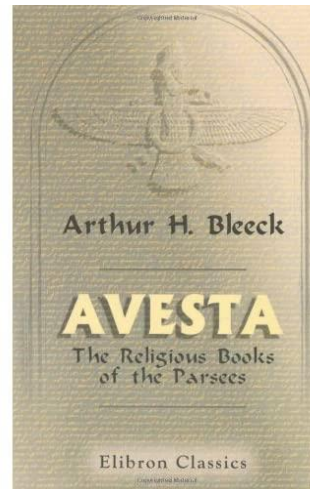
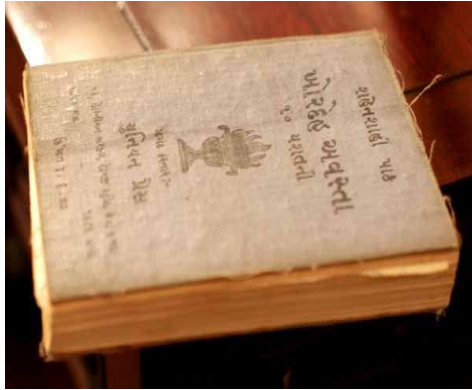
Doing good to others is not a duty. It is a joy, for it increases your own health and happiness.

~ Zoroaster

AZ QUOTES

AZ QUOTES

➤ **Sacred literature of Zoroastrians:**



The holy book of Zoroastrians was AVESTA (Zend Avesta). It was written in the ancient anvestan language. It was the collection of books that was written in period of time by different authors and compose this book with their beliefs, symbols, there worships and their religious matters. Among Zoroastrians the most ancient texts were 5 Gathas and it is stated that it has 17 chapters that was written by Zoroaster himself. But after some time, there are some changes in their holy book because of their long time period. Now we have some sort of prayers and portions of this book. The Avesta is divided into the following main divisions.

- **The Yasna**
- **The Khorda Avesta**
- **The Visperad**
- **The Vendidad**
- **The Yashts,**
- **The Sirozas**
- **The Niyeshas**
- **The Fragments**

➤ **The Yasna:**

The first one is Yasna it is the most important division of Avesta, in this division there are 72 sections called Ha-iti or Ha. It consists of verses performed by Yasna's during their prayers and sacrificial rituals. The most important and old part of Yasna are Gathas these Gathas are consisting of 17 chapters and written by the prophet himself in old anvestan language. "The chapters are believed to be shrouded in an ambiguous and mysterious symbolism and demands a deeper understanding of the scripture in order to realize their correct meaning and intent" (4). furthermore they deal with the conversation Zoroaster had with his God Ahura Mazda, the revelations he had received, the tenets of the religion to be followed by the believers, the various aspects of spiritual and material creation, and the importance of making a choice between good and evil. The five Gathas are following below

- i. Ahunavaiti Gatha (Y28, Y29, Y30, Y31, Y32, Y33, Y34)
- ii. Ushtavaiti Gatha (Y43, Y44, Y45, Y46)
- iii. Spentamainyush Gatha (Y47, Y48, Y49, Y50)
- iv. Vohukhshathra Gatha (Y51)
- v. Vahishtoishti Gatha

➤ **The Khorda Avesta:**

This is the second division of Avesta it consists of their common prayers and short prayers. It consists of five Ghas or prayers that they were doing on daily basis. nine Niyashis or litanies and 11 frequently used short prayers including the most sacred

mantra, Ahunwar, it was stated that was recited by Ahura Mazda Himself before the beginning of creation.

➤ **The Visperad:**

In this third division of the Avesta, it is the supplementary collection prayers consist of 23 or 24 chapters. In these prayers they honor their God Ahura Mazda for creation of this world, and they perform festival in this time, it is said that they did 6 times in the year.

➤ **The Vendidad:**

The forth and the main part of the division is consist of their daily life routine like how they will cut their hairs, nails, punishments for wrong deeds, cleansing of ritual objects, dealing with corpses, expiation of sins, burning of dead matter, funerals, unlawful sex, and there all activities they perform in their life. (4)

➤ **The Yashts:**

In this fifth division it consists of twenty-one hymns of praise and offered to Ahura Mazda, the guardian angels, moon, stars, sun, the seven archangels, and the earth.

➤ **The Sirozas:**

The Sirozas means 30 days contain dedications or invocations for the 30 divinities each presiding over a day of the month these are the days in which the select day for their rituals. (4)

➤ **The Niyeshas:**

This division consist of the litanies addressed various begins like moon, sun, version of water, Mithra and fire.

➤ **The Fragments:**

The fragments are known for the incomplete text that is not add or consider in the Avesta. There are 18 to 20 fragments they don't have the name or obscure. They mostly consist of their code of conduct, about religious worships, conversations of prophet with their God, and their practices.⁹

⁹ <https://www.hinduwebsite.com/zoroastrianism/literature.asp>

Hindu website is a very good website about different Religion and they have vast information

➤ **Symbols and Beliefs of Zoroastrians:**



➤ **Symbols of Zoroastrians:**

It is said that Faravahar is an ancient and most famous symbol of the Zoroastrian faith. It depicts a bearded man with one hand reaching forward. “He stands above a pair of wings that are outstretched from a circle representing eternity” (5). Another symbol of Zoroastrians is fire they consider fire as a purifying powers, warmth and light they also consider fire as a good sign. It is said that the water and soil they consider as a good thing. There is one more symbol of Zoroastrians the evergreen cypress tree as a symbol of eternal life.

➤ **Beliefs of Zoroastrians:**

Zoroastrians believes in on one God , heaven and hell, they also believe on the last day of this world they called that day the day of judgement, they believe in evil and good spirts, they believe in the divinity of creation, they also believe in the spiritual nature of the world, Zoroastrians believe in polytheism, they believe in the goodness of the humanity, they also believe in some elements like water, fire, and soil, they

believe in the afterlife, Zoroastrians believe in traditions of prophets, they believe in sin and exception of sins, in the efficacy of sacrificial rituals, they have the concept of efficacy of sacred chants and they believe on the importance of righteousness.

➤ **Are the Parses and the Zoroastrians same?**

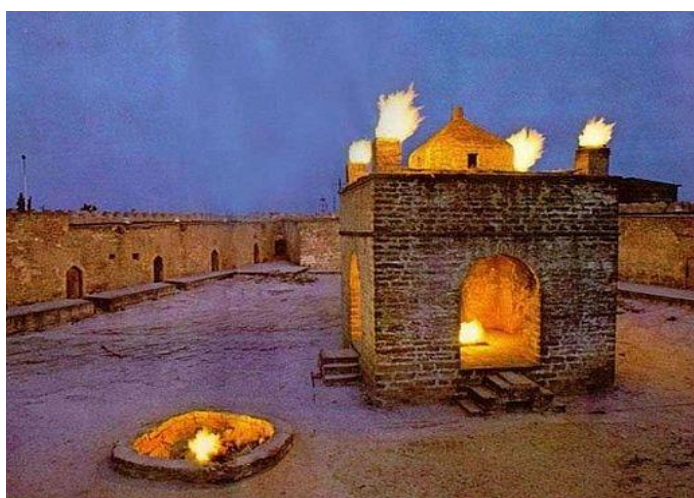
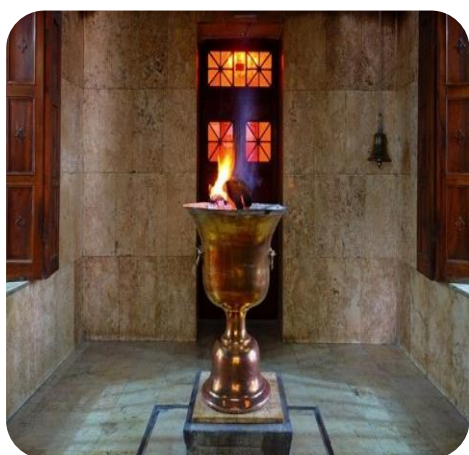
It is stated that the parses are consider the sub section of the huge Zoroastrians community. Parses are referred to those who fled to India during the Arab invasion of Persia in 636–651 AD. The main difference in the Zoroastrians of India and the Zoroastrians of Iran is geographical and these two evolve themselves in their own ways and accept the other religion traditions.

➤ **Languages of parses:**

When first wave of parses come to India, they spoke their anvestan language also known as Zend. It is stated that there were two version of the language, old anvestan language, and the younger anvestan language. Old anvestan language is smiler in grammar and lexicon to Vedic Sanskrit which is known the Indo-Iranian language. The modern age of parses is now speaking Hindi, English, Gujrati, Urdu and Marathi but almost forgot their own old anvestan language.

➤ **Where do the Parses go to pray?**

The parses perform their prayers in the fire temples. (“Dar-e mehr” in Persian or “Agiyari” in Gujarati). In Zoroastrianism the water and water were consider pure powers. It is stated that “The oldest remnants of what is believed to have been a fire temple were found on Mount Khajeh, near Lake Hamun in Sistan. They have been tentatively dated to the 3rd or 4th century BC”¹⁰. Now a days in India there are 50 fire temples in Mumbai and 100 in all over the country and some are also in the world. In Zoroastrians religion there is not allowed any non-Zoroastrian in those fire temples.



¹⁰ <https://www.factsninja.com/parsis-the-paradox-of-a-very-successful-but-vanishing-community.html>

➤ **Marriage concept of Parses:**

It is stated that parses are opposed to inter-religious marriages. In the Zoroastrian culture they don't think the marriage is civil duty but a religious duty. In this religion they did not marriage to any other person if they did this and after marriage, they had children the Zoroastrians never consider that the children were Zoroastrians.



The priest surely did these rituals when both were the parties have parsi religion. In this parsi religion there is no evidence of marriages to other religions but in the modern age when their population is decreasing day by day they had to marriage in other religion and now they are doing.

➤ **How do the Parses cremate the dead?**



In the parsi religion it is reported that they did not bury their dead bodies and the did not flow the body in the water and, they did not burn the body of their dead.

Zoroastrians believe that the fire, water, and soil are pure and much important for

them that is why they did not bury or burn them, but they have the tower of silence.

Parsi leave their dead bodies on this tower and believes that it will not be waste but the food of birds. In India the tower of silence is also known as 'Doongerwadi'.

In some places were parses are living like in Pakistan and in some parts of India they don't have the tower of silence and they must bury their dead in the soil in these situations.

➤ **Do the Parses circumcise?**

It is reported that in the parsi religion and in there sacred book and also in there believes there is no concept or there is no process of circumcise is telling or written anywhere in this religion so there is no need of circumcison in the Parsi culture.

➤ **Difference between the Parses and the Muslims:**

There is much difference in our religion and parsi religion but on the same time they have the concept of ours like they believe in one God, they believe in hell and heaven, and they believe on the last day the day of judgement so that's we believe and in Islam we believe in One God and Muhammad ﷺ is the last prophet of ALLAH and the messenger of ALLAH and The Quran viewed by Muslims as the words of Allah is one of the primary scriptures on Islam.

➤ **Parses in Pakistan:**

While the parsi community as in India and small number of parses in Pakistan. The Pakistani parsi community is held in Karachi the city of lights up until 1990s. It is stated that there are 1400 parses in Pakistan more in Karachi and others are in Lahore. Due to no jobs and work in Pakistan the younger parses of Pakistan migrate to USA and some in the Australia. Some parse moves back to India in order to marry there with their own religion.

➤ **Conclusion:**

At the end of this assignment called term paper I will now conclude this assignment by telling all the aspects of Zoroastrians religion. In this assignment I mostly surf the web and read some main pages of some Zoroastrians related books. I start this assignment with an introduction, in introduction I tell that how can I briefly explain this parsi religion. In this assignment after that I tell the history of Zoroastrians, when they were in Persia and when they migrate to India and why they pick this step.

Furthermore, I explain about their prophet Zoroaster and his teachings to people, then I discuss about the sacred literature of the Zoroastrians and their books and rules and, I explain their subdivisions of Avesta. So, we move further, and we discuss about their faiths, symbols, beliefs and there culture also. After that we discuss their languages when they were in Persia and when they were in India, then we relate their religion to our beloved religion Islam and discuss about the parses living in Pakistan and why they move in other

countries. In this assignment we also discuss why the Zoroastrians did not bury and burn their dead bodies and did they circumcise? I explain all main and important points of Zoroastrianism in this assignment that you will understand easily.

At the end I will leave a question, or you will say that I did not understand one thing in this parsi religion, as you see this religion has many rules and regulations. After everything they know about the what is good or what is bad or say that what is wrong and right, they also have the concept of sin and they believe in hell and heaven. I did not understand when they know everything about wrong and right then why they not understood that they must give some respect to their dead ones and buried them in the soil.