



FEZANA Age-Appropriate Lesson Plan

Subject Category (circle one): Parsi Religion/ Ceremony History Prayer Gathas
Comparative Religion Shahnameh

Age Group (circle one): PreK-K Grades 1-3 Grades 4-5 Grades 6-8 **Grades 9-12**

Lesson # (if applicable):

Subject of the Lesson: Ahura Mazda

Background Knowledge for the Teacher:

Introduction:

In Zoroastrianism, God is called Ahura Mazda which means Lord of Wisdom. Zoroastrians believe that there is only one God. Ahura Mazda is also referred to as Ohrmazd/ Hormazd and even *Ahura Mazda Khodae* as mentioned in the Avesta. Ahura Mazda also has 101 names that represent his many qualities and facets - from *Doa Nām Setāyashne* and *Hormazd Yasht* we get to know His names and attributes.

Ahura Mazda is seen as the Creator of all living things, including the seven creations that form the ethical and spiritual structure in Zoroastrianism. Hormazd Yasht *vīspa vohu mazdadhāta asha-chithra* "All-goodness originated from Asha, created by Mazda."

Ahura Mazda is all knowing; therefore, Ahura Mazda is known as the Lord of Wisdom; Wisdom guides us to stay on the path of Asha - Righteousness and Truth. Hormazd Yasht - *ahurō* "The Lord" and *chistish* "Wisdom".

In the Gāthās Zarathushtra refers to him as "all seeing" and "whom no one deceives" - Yasna 45.4 Last line *The ever seeing Ahura is never deceived*.

Ahura Mazda is the divine light and the source of all existence

Ahura Mazda is Omnipresent

Ahura Mazda is eternal; he has no beginning and no end

Ahura Mazda is totally good

Ahura Mazda is referenced in the Gathas and the Khordeh Avesta

Since Ahura Mazda is all knowing, he recognizes the existence of evil, also known as Ahriman/ Angra Mainyu;

The message of Ahura Mazda was brought to us by Zarathushtra

(Most of these attributes are from Hormazd Yasht)



Material for the teacher:

1. Books related to stories about who/what is God
2. Game: good vs. evil; Jeopardy questions on Ahura Mazda
3. Pictorial representations of Ahura Mazda's world

Vocabulary:

Ahura Mazda; Hormazd; Ohrmazd; God; Lord of Wisdom; Dadarji; *Ba name Khodae; Khshnaothra Ahurahe Mazdao*; Dadar Hormazd ni Madad; Spenta Mainyu; Anghra Mainyu; Gathas

Lesson for students:

1. Basic concept of Ahura Mazda
 - a. Who is God?
 - b. What do we call God in Zoroastrianism? Dadarji? (Dadar is *God* – ji is a respectful form of address in Gujarati)
 - c. What does Ahura Mazda (AM) mean - Lord of Wisdom? What is wisdom?
2. Discuss qualities of Ahura Mazda: All Knowing; Totally Good; Creator; Best Friend; Parent (Caregiver); Happy; Immortal / Cannot die; Very powerful
3. Many facets of Ahura Mazda - Where do you see AM?
4. Conversation with Ahura Mazda? - Prayers – particularly Hormazd Yasht
5. The nature of Ahura Mazda as conveyed in the Gathas - Provide simple verses from the Gathas that portray AM
6. Introduction to Ahriman (teacher's discretion)
7. Introduce concept of Jas me Avanghe Mazda - I am a worshipper of Mazda

Activity for Students:

1. Play games (qualities of Ahura Mazda)
2. Interactive discussions (large or small groups), sharing examples, encouraging students to speak
3. If you were a God, what would your name be? What would you look like? What are 3 qualities you would possess?
4. Quizzes
5. References to Ahura Mazda in the Khordeh Avesta – Hormuzd Yasht



Sources:

- <http://www.heritageinstitute.com/zoroastrianism/overview/index.htm#god>
- **FEZANA - The Zarathushti Religion - A Basic Text by Shahzadi and Mistree**

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