



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

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. Teacher to develop worksheets related to
 - Key qualities of Ahura Mazda;
 - Match the 101 names to their meanings;
 - *Match the opposite* - for the qualities of good vs. evil.
2. Matching game with 101 names - word to meaning
3. Use Props (Masks – like the sun to represent Ahura Mazda)
4. Books related to stories about who/what is God
5. Game good vs. evil;
6. Pictorial representations of Ahura Mazda's world

Vocabulary:

Ahura Mazda; God; Lord of Wisdom; Dadarji; *Ba name Khodae; Khshnaothra Ahurahe Mazdao*; Ahura Mazda Khodae

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?
2. Discuss qualities of Ahura Mazda: All Knowing; Totally Good; Creator; Best Friend; Parent (Caregiver); Happy; Immortal / Cannot die; Very powerful
3. How do you talk to Ahura Mazda? - Prayers
4. What does Ahura Mazda look like?

Activity for Students:

- Game - Qualities of Ahura Mazda - divide class into 2 groups; assign a quality of Ahura Mazda to each child in one group and the opposite quality to each child in another group; The teacher calls out the quality of Ahura Mazda and the child assigned that quality and the child representing the opposite quality run to the center to pick up a ball; Whoever gets there first, wins the round. (like the game Dog and the Bone)
- Worksheets as mentioned in Teacher Materials section
- Role play with masks - *If you were Ahura Mazda ...*
- Songs



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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