



FEZANA Age-Appropriate Lesson Plan

Subject Category (circle one): 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): 4

Subject of the Lesson: Zahhak’s Dream

Background Knowledge for the Teacher:

One night, as Zahhak lay sleeping, he dreamed a terrible dream, and woke with a shout so loud that the pillars of the palace shook. He dreamt that a warrior attacked him with a club. The top of the club looked like the head of a cow. He battered his head, tied his arms and legs together, and dragged him away into the mountains. Zahhak asked his wise men to interpret his dream. The wise men approached the king, clutching each other with fear. None of them dared speak until one, braver than the others, said, “All men die, O King, and your days too will end. A child has been born who will grow into a hero, as tall as a cypress tree. He will conquer you and drag you in chains from your palace. His name is Feridun.

Zahhak fell fainting from his throne when he heard this, and as he lay unconscious, the wise men slipped away. When he recovered, he screamed, “Find this child, this Feridun and bring him here to me.”

Lesson for students:

Teachers should begin the lesson by asking students what they remember about the previous story. If students do not remember anything, review some key points about it. The teacher will use the information in the “Background Knowledge for the Teacher” section to go over the next story in the Shahnameh. After reading the rest of the story to the students, the students can work on the activity listed below.

Activity for Students:

After reading the story, the students can draw a picture and write about a dream that they remember.

Sources:

- *Shahnameh: The Persian Book of Kings* retold by Elizabeth Laird
- *Shahnameh: The Epic of the Kings* by Abolqasem Ferdowsi (Translated by Reuben Levy)

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