



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): Lesson 4

Subject of the Lesson: Zal's Visit with Mehrab, King of Kabul

Background Knowledge for the Teacher:

After Zal's accession, Zal promised himself to make a round of his kingdom and set out upon the road with his soldiers. It was from Zabol that Zal began his journey to Kabul. Zal came to a place where a camp was set up. The king of Kabul was Mehrab, a man possessed of power and wealth. He was the descendant of Zahhak and paid yearly tribute to Sam since he was unequal to opposing him in battle. Mehrab met with Zal at the camp site and invited Zal to his Palace, but Zal couldn't accept the invitation as King Manuchehr, who was the King of Iran, would have been very upset. Mehrab understood why Zal couldn't accept his invitation.

Sindokht, a wise and affectionate wife of Mehrab and the most beautiful girl in the kingdom, Rudaba, the daughter of Mehrab and Sindokht, asked Mehrab about Zal. "What kind of man, is that white-headed son of Sam? Are his thoughts of the throne on the nest? Does he possess the qualities of civilized beings and display the manner of a man of birth?" Mehrab answered, "There does not exist in the whole world a warrior-hero who can follow where Zal leads. He has the heart of a lion and an elephant's strength. For generosity, he is as bounteous as the Nile. His hair is white, which only cavilers could select as a blemish. His white hair is indeed a mark of beauty, by which he may win people's affection."

Rudaba heard the words and blushed until her cheeks flamed as red as pomegranate. Rudaba had five servants who were always in her attendance. Rudaba told these wise girls that her heart was filled with passion for Zal and in her sleep at night her thinking of him never ceased. Their answer was, "He is a creature that was raised by a bird in the mountains. In every company people point a finger at him and say that no human being was ever born old of his mother." Rudaba said, "Let people call him old man or young boy, he is the happiness of my heart and soul." The girls were now fully aware of Rudaba's secret and declared themselves her bonds women who loved her dearly and were her devoted servants.

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 will answer True and False questions about the story.

Sources:

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

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