



## 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):** 5

**Subject of the Lesson:** Bahman Delivers a Message

### Background Knowledge for the Teacher:

Brahman dressed himself in cloth of gold, placed a princely crown on his head and set out from encampment. A proud young man on a splendid horse, he made his way toward the River Hirmand. As soon as a lookout saw him, he shouted out to his companion in Zabulistan, "A fine warrior on a black horse is coming our way". As soon as Zal heard this, he rode to the lookout post. Zal introduced himself and welcomed Bahman. Bahman asked to see Rostam and Zal informed him that Rostam is out hunting with Faramarz, Zavareh and a few friends. Bahman decided to go where Rostam went hunting.

When Bahman reached the hunting ground, he saw a mighty warrior, a man massive as the cliff of Bisotun, who had uprooted a tree and was using it as a spit on which to roast a wild deer, which he handled as easily as if it weighed no more than an ant. Close to a stream and a clump of trees, Rakhsh stood cropping grass. Bahman said, "This is either Rostam or the sun itself". No one has ever seen such a man in all the world or heard of his like among the ancient heroes. I fear that Esfandiyar will be no match for him and will flinch from him in battle. If Rostam gets the better of Esfandiyar in combat, he will be able to conquer all of Iran".

Slowly Bahman approached where Rostam and his hunting companion were resting. Rostam asked for his name and Bahman replied, "I am Esfandiyar's son, chief of the Persians; I am Bahman. Rostam immediately embraced him and apologized for his tardy welcome. Together they made their way back to Rostam's camp and when Bahman had sat down, he greeted Rostam formally and conveyed to him the greetings of the king and his nobility. Then he went on: "Esfandiyar has come here and picked camp by the River Hirmand, as the king ordered him to. If you will hear me out, I will bring you a message from him." Rostam offered the prince to eat and then to hear the message. Bahman was astonished by Rostam's capacity for food and drinks as he was by his massive body, arms and shoulders. When they had finished their meal, the two heroes rode together for a while and Bahman told Rostam the details of Esfandiyar's message.

After hearing Esfandiyar's message, Rostam said to Bahman to take his answer back to Esfandiyar. "Great, lionhearted warrior, any man who is wise considers the realities of a situation. A man like you who's rich, brave and successful in war, who has authority and a good name among other chieftains, should not give his heart to malice and suspicion. You and I should act justly toward one



another; we should fear God and not make evil welcome. Words that have no meaning are like a tree without leaves or scent, and if your heart's given over to greed and ambition, you would toil long and hard and see no profit for your pains. When a nobleman speaks, he should weigh his words well and avoid idle talk. I've always been happy to hear you praised, to hear people say that no mother ever bore a son like you, that you surpass your ancestors in bravery, chivalry and wisdom. I praise God for your glory, and I have always longed to set eyes on you, to see for myself your splendor and graciousness. I welcome your arrival, and I ask that we sit together and drink to the king's health. I'll come to you alone without my men and listen to what the king has commanded. I'll bring you the charters past kings from Kay Qobad to Kay Khosrow have granted my family and I'll make known to you the pains I've suffered, the difficulties I have endured, the good I've done for the past princes, from ancient times up to the present day. If the reward for all I have undergone is to be led in chains, would that I had never been born, or that once born I had soon died. Don't provoke me into a fight, because fighting with me will be a trivial matter: no man has ever seen fetters on my ankles and no savage lion has ever made me give ground. Act as a king; don't let yourself be guided by devils and demons. Be a man, drive anger and malice out of your heart and don't see the world through a young man's eyes. May God keep you happy and prosperous. Cross the river and honor my house with your presence, don't refuse to see someone who offers you, his allegiance."

### **Lesson for students:**

The teacher will use the information in the "Background Knowledge for the Teacher" section to go over the story. After reading the first story to the students, the students can work on the activity listed below.

### **Activity for Students:**

After reading, students will have a discussion of what they think Rostam's speech means. Students will also discuss the lesson/moral of this section of the story. They can also discuss where the characters might have made changes to their actions to change the events of 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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