



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):

Subject of the Lesson:

Yasna 30.4-Reward vs Consequence

Background Knowledge for the Teacher:

Yasna 30.4

Transliterated Text:

*atcâ hyat tâ hêm mainyû
jasaêtem paourvîm dazdê
gaêmçâ ajyâitîmçâ
ýathâcâ anghat apêmem anghush
acishtô dregvatãm
at ashâunê vahishtem manô.*

(The Gathas: Yasna 30.4)

By Dr. Jafarey

Now, when the two mentalities
first got together,
they created "life" and "not-living."
Until the end of existence,
the worst mind shall be for the wrongful,
and the best mind shall be for the righteous.

By Dinshaw J. Irani

And when these Twin Spirits came together at first,
They established Life and the Denial of life,
And so shall it be till the world will last.
The worst Existence shall be the lot of the followers of
Evil,
And the Best-Mental-State shall be the reward of the
followers of Good.



Vocabulary:

Mainyû - mind

Gaêmchâ - life

achishtô⁷⁴ dregvatãm manô - the worst mind amongst the wicked

ashâunê vahisstem manô - best mind of the righteous

Learning target

From the beginning there have been two mental phenomena (Mainyu or mentalities) that determine the two paths of life: right and wrong in thoughts, words, and deeds. The wise chooses the right but the unwise chooses the wrong and goes astray.

One of the two (mentalities, mental phenomena) generates a good productive Life whereas the other generates a damaging bad existence.

The followers of untruth will receive the dark state of mind (inner torment, hell), and the followers of truth shall enjoy bright mind and happiness (inner peace, heaven).

This situation shall continue forever.

Lesson for students:

The philosophical thought is that when one creates the good and evil in their mind all the actions that follow are directly influenced by these man-made value systems. So, if the first step is to recognize the existence of this human creation, the second step would be to take responsibility for the actions that follow. In reality the cascade of events driven by our thoughts shape our lives.

For instance: There was a massive civil unrest that occurred in the USA in 2020 while people were simultaneously struggling with the terrible Covid19 pandemic. The civil unrest accompanied by huge demonstrations was due to police brutality and systemic racism that had deep roots in the American society. Peaceful demonstrations to bring about change were a noble act across the world viewed as the right thing to do. To demonstrate and voice one's opinion is a human right issue; however, the way it's done requires wise decisions, so it does not devalue the cause. There had to be thoughtful planning, precautions to take, goals to achieve and challenges to overcome while protecting public health and safety. For the good to overcome the bad, and for the right to replace wrong many laws and norms had to change.



Many had to re-evaluate their value system and history would show what impact that event had long term. Racism is among the evil notions that forms in people's mind generation after generation in many parts of this universe and to break the cycle requires knowledge, empathy, and great devotion. There are people who are resistant to change and rather be among the passive population that doesn't speak up or stand up against cruelty and injustice because it's a difficult task to undertake.

Any task we take big or small starts with a thought and there's where we start creating good or evil as the end result.

Activity for Students:

- 1: Would you speak up or be part of a demonstration against injustice? Why?
- 2: In what situation you consider yourself justified to go against the norm?
- 3: How would you express yourself against Racism? What is racism?
- 4: If you have good thoughts, does it guarantee good actions?
- 5: Is it ok to have bad thoughts? Why?
- 6: What does this mean "felt the feeling but choose the behavior"

Take away lesson:

There is a fine line between what we think about and how it transcends into the right or wrong action. It all starts in our mind and it's an active process. Collectively these thoughts and actions comprise our being. The society that we live in runs on a value system and we are all part of it. To be harmonious with our society we must learn and comply with the norm of that society; however, We must also realize that values change and we should be part of the progressive mass that can bring about changes in the right directions for this existence to be better. After All humans are the master decision makers.

Sources:

1. The Gathas Our Guide Translated by AA Jafarey
2. Hymns of Zarathustra Translated by DJ Irani

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