

Zoroastrianism At a Glance



Zoroastrianism is one of the world's oldest monotheistic religions. It was founded by the Prophet **Zoroaster** (or Zarathustra) in ancient Iran approximately 3500 years ago.

For 1000 years Zoroastrianism was one of the most powerful religions in the world. It was the official religion of **Persia (Iran)** from 600 BCE to 650 CE.

It is now one of the world's smallest religions with around a quarter of a million **followers** worldwide. There are 4000 Zoroastrians living in Britain.

- Zoroastrians believe there is one **God** called Ahura Mazda (Wise Lord) and He created the world.
- Zoroastrians are not fire-worshippers, as some Westerners wrongly believe. Zoroastrians believe that the elements are pure and that fire represents God's light or wisdom.
- Ahura Mazda revealed the truth through the Prophet, Zoroaster.
- Zoroastrians traditionally pray several times a day.
- Zoroastrians worship communally in a **Fire Temple** or *Agiary*.
- The Zoroastrian book of Holy Scriptures is called The Avesta.
- The Avesta can be roughly split into two main sections:
 - The Avesta is the oldest and core part of the scriptures, which contains the Gathas. The Gathas are seventeen hymns thought to be composed by Zoroaster himself.
 - The Younger Avesta - commentaries to the older Avestan written in later years. It also contains myths, stories and details of ritual observances.
- Zoroastrians are roughly split into two groups:
 - The Iranians
 - The Parsis

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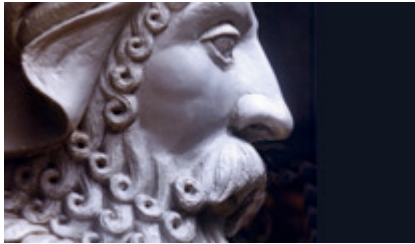
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Features



- **Worship**

Zoroastrian worship is not prescriptive. Its followers can choose whether they wish to pray and how.



- **Zoroaster**

Zoroaster was born in Northeast Iran or Southwest Afghanistan and founded Zoroastrianism in approximately 1200 BCE.