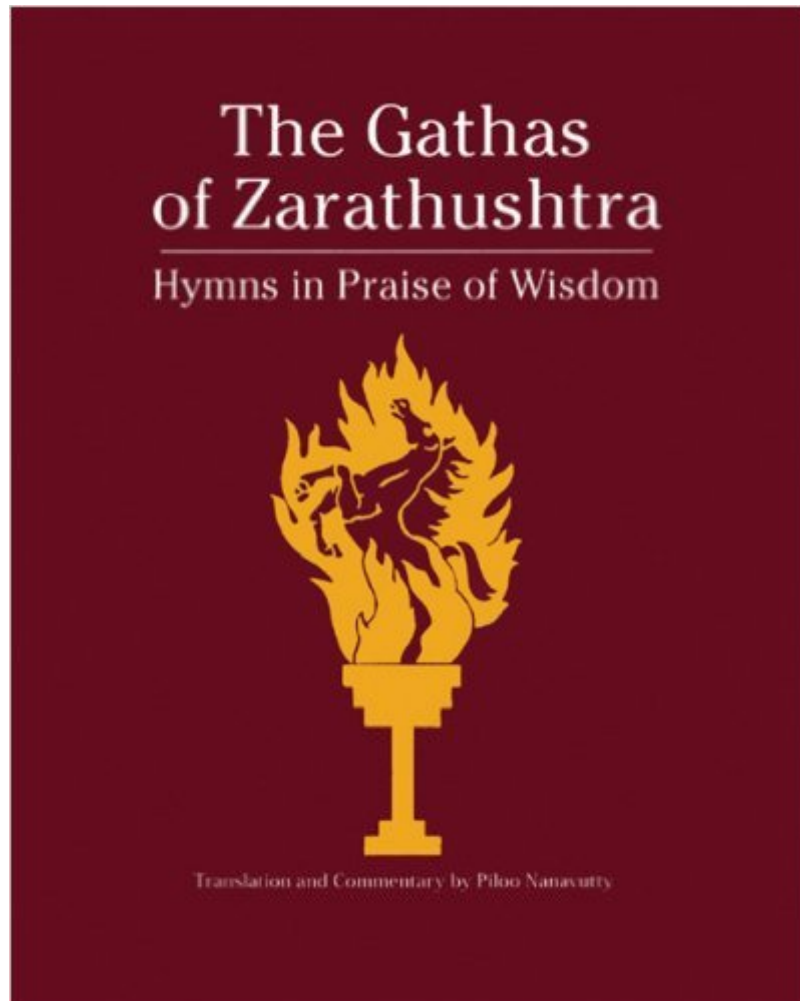


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The Gathas Of Zarathushtra: Hymns In Praise Of Wisdom



Synopsis

The words of Zarathushtra, Prophet of Ancient Iran, have come down to us across the centuries through the Gathas, 17 hymns which he composed and which embody the core of his faith. For the first time ever, these hymns are published with commentary and relevant illustrated material to explain the text. For the first time too, the background provided by the Story of Creation is examined with the help of a page from an unpublished manuscript at the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris. Vedic parallels are emphasized to aid comparative studies of these two ancient Aryan traditions. An ideal book for laypersons and scholars alike, this is a must for every Parsi home, libraries and researchers working on Zoroastrian tradition.

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Customer Reviews

The last two reviewers, while I respect their opinions, were a bit too harsh. This book is very good for what it is intended to be, an introduction for younger Zoroastrians who speak English and live outside of Iran and India to their faith. Frankly, there is virtually NOTHING on this ancient faith in English...period. (Do a search on .com and you will see there is almost nothing, including no good affordable comprehensive hardback translation of the Zend Avesta in English...only a paperback reprint of Max Mueller's dated work.) For someone curious about this wonderful faith, this little book really is the best introduction you can currently find. The book is also very respectfully in tone. You don't have to agree with everything the author says. Frankly, since Zoroastrian studies are practically NIHL, people of this faith should be thankful someone tried to present what it is all about

with the goal of teaching young believers and curious outsiders. (Note:I'm not a Zoroastrian, I'm a Buddhist, but I grew up having some good friends who are Zoroastrians, and I have therefore always been interested in the history of Persia.) Part of the problem stems from the fact that Zoroastrianism has never actively sought converts...therefore it lacks the ability to present itself as a viable world religion (which is a shame because it's a beautiful faith that has been mercilessly persecuted in Iran.) This book was the first, and right now the only attempt to try and present a basic introduction to Zoroastrianism. It is aimed mainly at Zoroastrians who live OUTSIDE of Iran and India. (Yes, there are quite a few, in fact where I live in California, there are a lot of Zoroastrians.) For someone interested in a basic, respectful introduction to this beautiful ancient faith, I can think of no better book than this one. As for the negative scholarly arguments presented by other reviewers, consider this...unless you can read ancient Persian script...you are sunk. There are virtually no good studies of the Gathas or the Zend Avesta currently in print in English. Zoroastrians kids in the USA have virtually nothing to study unless they go on line. The only reason I didn't give this little book a five is that it is a small book, and left some subjects uncovered (I would have liked to see some information of Anahita and Mithra and maybe some of the daily prayers in it.) My wife's mother was also a Buddhist, but she was studying Zoroastrianism before she passed away. She would have loved this little book.

There is one supreme God. We are responsible for our own actions and our own fate, following either good or bad -- in thoughts, words, and deeds. And more... the message is the same, and it's very interesting that Zoroastrianism is the oldest religion based on the ethical values of Truth and Justice. A rather short book (168 pages), but really good, and an easy read. It includes the translated Gathas (Hymns of Praise), as well as commentary. But the commentary is separated, so your read of the Gathas is uninterrupted. It also includes a nice introduction and history as to the social climate of the period. The footnotes are also good -- they notate parallels to the Vedas, special comments regarding specific translations (so you can make your own opinion to agree or disagree), and more. I found many parallels between Zoroaster and the others -- Christ, Buddha, Krishna, Muhammad. And this was written thousands of years earlier. We truly are all one with the One. If you are interested in Zoroaster, ancient religions, or have an open mind towards all religions telling the same message and want to expand your knowledge and understanding, then this is a good book to read!

Historical and cultural background, commentary, images, notes, and explanations make this an

eminently approachable resource for anyone interested in Zoroastrianism. I'm very much a newbie to the study of this world religion, yet very much aware of ways its dualism, apocalypticism, and high ethics have influenced post-exilic Judaism (though by definition "Judaism" *is* post-exilic...) and Christianity--especially Mark's gospel, the epistles of Paul and the deuterio-Pauline canon. From a neophyte's view, this book seems like an excellent introductory view into sacred texts of a people, words that define and describe their interactions with the divine, with one another, and with all creation. Back matter includes glossary, index, and brief bibliography for those of us who need to know more. The only shortcoming I discovered is not wanting to write my own marginalia into this beautifully formatted and produced edition! Since it isn't about the Hebrew Bible or New Covenant Scriptures I don't have the credentials to assess this book's contents, but whether you're a student of world religions, of culture, of anthropology, or love literature in general, I'll still suggest you consider adding this edition of the Gathas to your library.

Now this a good book for introducing children or young teens to the religion of zoroastrinism since it covers the basic beliefs and tenants of the religion. i dont recomend this book for older people since they will be looking for something more in depth but, children and younger readers will find it enlightening.

excellent!

All is well.

I would tend to agree with Pandolia on this. I do not have to read the book to sympathize with his views, because the problem lies with the "Parsis" of India - a contradiction in its own right. Parsi means Persian. The zoroastrians of India are just that - zoroastrians from India and nothing more. In order to interpret the Gathas, the most difficult subject in the study of ancient religious artifacts, requires at least a fundamental understanding of the Persian language since the language in the Gathas is grammatically the "root" from which the Avestan and later the Persian languages evolved. The zoroastrians of India do not have a clue about the prayers in the Avesta, one-third of which is written n Persian. We should leave the research in the Gathas to stalwarts like Mary Boyce.

One of the most worthless book on the the most difficult test of Zoroastriansim. The author lacks philopgy and lingusitic knowledge of the Old Avesta and vantage where even the brillaiant scholars

have little agreements. What she lacks , she made up im fanciful covere and fancifu;l pictures. I recommend that this book is not the woth the papers on which it is printed and had made trees cry

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