



## THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE AVESTA AND ITS PATH TO HUMAN PERFECTION

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**Abstract:** This article explores the concept of human perfection in the philosophy of the Avesta, one of the most significant ancient Eastern texts. Rooted in Zoroastrian teachings, the Avesta emphasizes principles such as goodness, truth, justice, reason, and moral purity as the foundation for achieving spiritual and ethical completeness. These ideals are analyzed in light of both historical context and their relevance in the modern world.

**Keywords:** Avesta, Zoroastrianism, perfection, truth, justice, goodness, Asha, moral values, ancient philosophy, humanism.

Eastern philosophy has long focused on the spiritual and moral growth of the individual. Among the earliest sources of this thought is the Avesta, the sacred text of Zoroastrianism. The teachings of the prophet Zoroaster (Zarathustra) laid a foundation for a dualistic worldview where good and evil are in constant opposition, and humans must choose the path of righteousness to reach perfection. Far beyond being merely a religious scripture, the Avesta is a philosophical, legal, ethical, and cultural monument. It offers profound insights into the structure of the universe, the role of humans, moral responsibility, and the purpose of life. Central to Zoroastrian doctrine is the "triple path to perfection" — good thoughts, good words, and good deeds — which remains highly relevant today.

**Structure and Philosophical Significance of the Avesta.** The Avesta consists of several parts, including Yasna, Visperad, Vendidad, and Yashts. The most philosophically significant are the Gathas, believed to have been composed by Zoroaster himself. These hymns focus on the cosmic struggle between good (Ahura Mazda) and evil (Angra Mainyu), highlighting the human being as an active participant in this conflict.

This dualistic worldview underscores the moral weight of human choice. Perfection, in this framework, is not achieved passively but through conscious ethical action and spiritual discipline.

### The Threefold Path to Perfection

The cornerstone of Avestan ethics lies in three interrelated principles:

#### 1. Good Thoughts (Humata)

This refers to the purity of one's mind and intentions. According to the Avesta, one's inner thought process must align with truth, reason, and a desire to do good.

#### 2. Good Words (Hukhta)

Speech is seen as a mirror of the soul. Falsehood, slander, and deceit are condemned. The use of truthful and kind words is emphasized as a means of upholding social harmony and spiritual purity.

#### 3. Good Deeds (Hvarshta)

Good thoughts and words are meaningless without action. Acts of kindness, charity, justice, hard work, and care for the environment are seen as essential to a righteous life.

These three values are inseparable and must work in harmony to guide a person toward spiritual enlightenment and ethical maturity.

The Concept of Asha. A central notion in Zoroastrian philosophy is Asha, which can be translated as truth, order, righteousness, and universal law. It represents the cosmic principle that maintains harmony in the universe. All things must align with Asha to be considered just and good.

Through Asha, humans:

- Distinguish truth from falsehood
- Live in harmony with nature
- Accept social responsibility
- Uphold moral integrity

In essence, Asha is the ultimate standard of human perfection. Living in accordance with Asha leads to personal and societal balance.

Human Responsibility and Social Ethics in the Avesta.

The Avesta does not view the human being as an isolated entity, but rather as a responsible member of the greater society and universe. Therefore, individual actions have moral, social, and even cosmic consequences. The text encourages:

- Helping the poor and needy
- Maintaining the environment
- Pursuing education
- Working honestly
- Ensuring fairness and equality
- Raising morally conscious children

These elements show that Zoroastrianism is not merely a spiritual tradition but a complete ethical and philosophical system for individual and societal development.

Relevance of Avestan Philosophy in the Modern World

In today's world, challenges such as environmental crises, moral degradation, social fragmentation, and misinformation are pushing humanity to seek guidance from ancient wisdom. The Avesta's ethical triad — good thoughts, good words, and good deeds — remains a powerful formula for addressing contemporary problems.

Moreover, Avestan philosophy supports the core ideas of sustainable development by:

- Promoting ecological balance
- Fostering social justice
- Encouraging intellectual and moral growth
- Advocating for peace and coexistence

Its emphasis on moral choice, active engagement in life, and commitment to truth makes the Avesta a valuable source of philosophical and ethical inspiration for the 21st century.

### Conclusion

The Avesta stands as a beacon of ancient wisdom, calling humanity to strive for perfection through virtue, truth, and justice. It transcends the bounds of religion and offers a timeless moral compass rooted in universal values. By studying the teachings of Zoroastrianism, modern individuals — especially the youth and intellectuals — can find a path toward integrity, inner peace, and spiritual maturity. The ancient call of the Avesta still

resonates: to live with pure thoughts, speak with honesty, and act with righteousness. Indeed, the Avesta is a guiding light on the path to human perfection.

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