



JOURNAL OF TALES

Volume 1 Issue 3 September 2023



A Publication by Phoenix Feather Books & Curios
www.PhoenixFeatherBooks.com

Founded by April Lynn Downey

Welcome to Journal of Tales

Journal of Tales is a free, quarterly publication dedicated to history, mythology, world cultures, and art. Please feel free to share this publication! Email "subscribe" to JournalOfTales@gmail.com to receive our quarterly issues.

Journal of Tales also produces fascinating videos on YouTube!

www.YouTube.com/AprilLynnDowney

Let the Journey Begin!



Stereograph by F.G. Weller, 1877

A note about copyrights: The photography, art, activity sheets, articles, and videos produced by Journal of Tales and Phoenix Feather Books & Curios were created by April Lynn Downey, founder, and are copyrighted by her and may not be edited, published, or sold. All other artwork, publications, etc. in the journal are under the public domain and/or are properly attributed.



PHOENIX FEATHER

BOOKS & CURIOS

Used & Antique Books - Vintage Prints - Curios – Photography – History Inspired Gifts

www.PhoenixFeatherBooks.com



New Vintage Print Items, Perfect For
Back To School Students & Teachers – Notebooks, Posters,
Bookmarks, & More!

Now through September 30, use promo code **BACKTOSCHOOL**

For **20% off** orders \$25.00 and more!



Educational Resource Highlights:

~ **World History Encyclopedia:** <https://www.worldhistory.org/>

A "non-profit organization publishing the world's most-read history encyclopedia."

~ **The Religious Studies Project:** <https://www.religiousstudiesproject.com/>

"Exploring contemporary issues in the academic study of religion through podcasts. The Religious Studies Project is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organization devoted to producing engaging and accessible resources for the contemporary study of religion."

~ **Cogito:** <https://www.youtube.com/@CogitoEdu>

Excellent YouTube channel filled with animated videos about history & religion. Good for kids and adults.

Table of Contents

The Journal	4
The Hungry Ghost Festival	4
Brief Introduction to Zoroastrianism.....	7
Kukur Tihar - Tibetan Festival for Dogs.....	11
The Archives.....	15
Typus Gramatic - 1503	15
Kashf al-Ghummah fi Nafa al-Ummah - The Important Stars Among the Multitude of the Heavens - 1733	16
Education - Transylvania, Louisiana - 1939	17
The Museum	18
Manuscript Case	18
Polish Coat.....	19
Egyptian Tag	20
Grizzly Bear Mask.....	21
The Gallery	22
Salzburg, Austria.....	22
Activities	29
Vintage Mardi Gras Costume - Coloring Page	29
"Storing Up Manna" Stained Glass - Coloring Page.....	30
Aztec Word Search.....	31

The Journal

The Hungry Ghost Festival

The 7th month of the Chinese lunar calendar is a time in Buddhist, Taoist, and Chinese folk religious traditions when the veils between spiritual dimensions fade and ghosts may cross the borders into the earthly realm. In 2023, Ghost Month is from August 16 - September 14 on the Gregorian calendar. During this month, traditions and specific practices can vary regionally, but often include music and theater performances and the offering of food to the dead. The most significant day is on the 15th of the month - on which is celebrated the Hungry Ghost Festival. (South China celebrates on the 14th day.) Taoists also call it Zhongyuan Festival and Buddhists call it Yulanpen Festival.

One of the traditions is to make money, clothes, and other objects out of joss wood and then burn them as offerings to the spirits. Music and theater performances during the celebration are loud and festive as ghosts are attracted to the commotion. Afterwards, lanterns are placed on water and outside of houses to guide the ghosts back home.

In one account of the Chinese Chieh Tsu ("Receiving Ancestor Festival") in the book *The Folklore of World Holidays*, a person from the Chinese Yunnan Province described how their family celebrated the festival. They described how the head of the family would take food and drink offerings out to the street, invite their departed ancestors into their home, and show them deep reverence by bowing down, with their head on the ground (a practice called *kowtow*). The offerings would then be placed on a decorated table with chairs left empty for the spirits. The table would have incense and red candles on it with symbolic green and red paper clothing hung on the wall over it. Tiny sedan chairs made of paper flowers were also crafted. The ancestors would be celebrated for three days and then the paper clothing, the tiny chairs, and gold-silver paper money were taken out onto the street and burned. The ancestors were then told to leave and kowtow'ed three times. Lanterns would then be lit on a lake.



Bijou, Mister. "Ghost Festival, China." Ancient History Encyclopedia. Ancient History Encyclopedia, 30 Oct 2014.



Yoshiiku, Utagawa. "Toriyama Akinari Terutada with Ghost; (The Lavender Chapter)."

In the Chinese Hupeh Province, a story was related in which Buddhist monks and Taoist priests would throw little rolls in the air for the spirits. Children would also try to catch them as treats as well.

In Taiwan, this day is known as "opening of the gates of Hell". For the next 15 days, ghosts in purgatory are released and their suffering is decreased by banquets and incense offered to them. The deity Ch'eng Huang and his official court watch over the event to help insure the safety of mortals. Figures of Fan and Hsieh, guardians of the gates of Hell, are placed around the city as another means of protection.

In Vietman, this day is known as Trung Nguyen (Wandering Souls Day) and is the second largest festival of the year. Condemned souls are released from Hell and their sins may be absolved through prayer during the 15th day through the 30th. Food is offered on family alters for ancestors and in pagodas and other public places for souls without living relatives. Like during the Chieh Tsu, money and paper clothes are also burned as well.

Written by April Lynn Downey



Kuniyoshi, Utagawa. "Scene from a Ghost Story: The Okazaki Cat Demon."

Sources:

Bijou, Mister. "Ghost Festival, China." Ancient History Encyclopedia. Ancient History Encyclopedia, 30 Oct 2014. <https://www.ancient.eu/image/3212/>

"Chinese Calendar 2020, September." Projeraia. <https://www.prokerala.com/general/calendar/chinesecalendar.php?year=2020&month=9&sb=1>

"Ghost Festival." Anyday Guide. <https://anydayguide.com/calendar/243>

Guo, Sally. "Hungry Ghost Festival (Ghost Month 2023)" <https://www.chinatravel.com/culture/hungry-ghost-festival>

Kuniyoshi, Utagawa. "Scene from a Ghost Story: The Okazaki Cat Demon." The Metropolitan Museum of Art. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/45282>

MacDonald, Margaret Read, Editor. The Folklore of World Holidays, First Edition. Gale Research Inc., 1992.

Yoshiiku, Utagawa. "Toriyama Akinari Terutada with Ghost; (The Lavender Chapter)." The Metropolitan Museum of Art. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/45280>

Brief Introduction to Zoroastrianism

Nothing seems to govern as much devotion as religion and its invocation of emotion can be both awe-inspiring and terrible. Across the world, through untold millennia, human beings have looked to the skies and within themselves to find answers to questions such as "where did we come from?", "what we are meant to do?", and "why things are the way they are?". The resulting religions have taken on many diverse ideas and structures. Studying these religions can provide a tremendous insight into not only history but the nature of humanity itself.

This article provides a brief introduction to the Zoroastrianism religion, with which its beginnings date back to at least early Judaism, if not long before, and yet still lives on today. Its followers are small in number, yet it remains present and continues to stir an ancient fervor in the hearts of its people.

A BRIEF HISTORY

Zoroastrianism is an ancient religion which began in Persia. Most scholars place the founding prophet, Zarathustra (or, Zoroaster in Greek), to about the sixth century B.C.E, but some believe he may have lived at an earlier date, possibly 1400-1000 B.C.E. Zoroastrian scriptures are call the Avesta and were in their canonical fixed state by 325 C.E., but there are other Zoroastrian literary works which speak of scriptures lost during the conquest of Alexander the Great. Ahura Mazda, the God of Zoroastrianism, was worshipped by the Achaemenid kings of the Persian Empire, including the illustrious and powerful Cyrus the Great. Ahura Mazda was represented by the winged sun disc. After the Greek conquest by Alexander the Great, Zoroastrianism revived itself in the Parthians and then under the Sassanids. The Sassanid period (651-224 B.C.E) of Iran introduced Zoroastrianism as the official religion of the Persian people. Zoroastrianism was the state religion from the 3rd century C.E. until the Muslim invaders of the 7th century C.E came.

By 2013, there were less than 20,000 still in Iran and, as a minority, they struggle with oppression; however, they do receive better treatment now than in the past 14 centuries and are allowed to participate in social taboos that Muslims are not allowed to, such as dancing and drinking alcohol. Zoroastrians were involved with the Constitutional movement in the early 20th century, were represented in the first Parliament, and acknowledged as part of Iran's heritage, yet still mostly they are marginalized and oppressed. In ancient times, Zoroastrians held high positions in the court. However, today Zoroastrians face opposition in the workforce and are often blocked by a "glass ceiling". In recent times, Zoroastrians are not forced into Islam, but many convert because of the possible social advantages and the loss of state support for the Zoroastrian priesthood, and that mixed marriages require children to be raised as Muslims. Zoroastrianism is possibly facing extinction.

Although still experiencing "localized persecution of non-Muslims by members of the Muslim majority", the rural Zoroastrians in Iran experienced an increase in prosperity in the 20th century. (Foltz, 2011) Their rising social status influenced the practice of their religion, including focusing less on ritual. "Many Iranian Zoroastrians no longer even wear the *sedreh-koshti*, the sacred cord and undershirt which since ancient times have defined Zoroastrian identity and been a precondition for participation in religious rituals." (Foltz, 2011) However, this change did not occur in Zoroastrian communities in South Asia. Interestingly, there is a growing Zoroastrian population in the United States. There is also a large percentage of Zoroastrians in India.

PRIMARY BELIEFS

Zoroaster (Zarathustra) grew up in a religion which had many gods, called *daevas*. Some of these gods seem to correspond to the gods (the *devas*) of the Vedic Indians and there are even possible linguistic and thematic connections between the part of the Zoroastrian scriptures called the Gathas and the Vedic Rig Vedas scriptures. Zoroaster departed from his native polytheism and created a new religion which worships one God, Ahura Mazda (also called Ormazd), and religious practice is defined by "good thoughts, words, and deeds". Zoroastrians believe there are two opposing forces in the world: the good spirit *Spenta Mainyu* (life, order, perfection, health, happiness, etc.) and the evil spirit *Angra Mainya* (chaos, imperfection, disease, sorrow, destruction, etc.) This dualism is a foundational aspect of Zoroastrianism, and a major focus of the religion is the battle between Ahura Mazda and Ahriman (a being that could be considered the Zoroastrian version of the Devil or Satan). A person's good and bad deeds will determine whether they will go to the Kingdom of Light (parallel to Heaven) or a House of the Lie (parallel to Hell). However, they believe eventually *Spenta Mainyu* will overcome all evil and even those in the House of the Lie will be redeemed. This end of time era is called the Frashokereti (the "refreshment") and "all of creation is resurrected into perfected immortality". (Fisher, 2008, p. 234)

EXAMPLES OF RITUALS

As with most religions, the practice of the Zoroastrian religion is complex with many aspects and rituals. Water and fire are both used to represent ritual purification, something of great importance to Zoroastrians. Fire is an especially important aspect in the religion and represents

God. Priests tend to perpetual fires that burn in fire temples. These sacred fires are "fed" sacrifices of haoma (a sacred liquor), bread, and milk at least five times a day.

Nature is very respected, and children are raised to not pollute it. In order not to pollute the earth, dead bodies are placed in the open air inside of a *dakhma* ("tower of death") for vultures to eat. Death anniversaries are observed and the eternal principle and guide (the fravashi) of the deceased is invoked.

One of the key rituals in Zoroastrianism is the tying of the sacred cord which is made of 72 threads presenting the 72 chapters of the text of Yasna (the principle act of worship). This is a rite of passage ceremony, after which a pre-teen boy will be considered a man and will wear the cord for the rest of his life, except for bathing and sleeping. The cord is repeatedly untied and tied again during prayers. There is also a daily ritual of tying a sacred cord (*kusti*) around the mid-section for both male and females, done five times per day.

DENOMINATIONS

There are relatively few divisions among Zoroastrians, but there is one reform movement. Traditionally, the "Avestan language used in formal worship and in the traditional main prayers of the faithful is largely unknown to some priests and to most laypersons. Thus, Zoroastrians typically have had little knowledge of what their scriptures actually 'teach'". (Van Voorst, 2011, p. 196) However, at the end of the nineteenth century, influenced by Western religion and European scholarship, some sought to change this tradition. They began to focus on moral teachings rather than rituals and believe only the Gathas (part of the Avesta scriptures) is authentic.

RELIGIOSITY

The religiosity of Zoroastrianism is a little difficult to assess because participation is more subjective since the main form of worship is "good thoughts, words, and deeds". Obviously, this criteria for worship are hard to measure. Additionally, early Zoroastrian worship did not include going to a temple so there could be a question as to how much attending a temple service should be considered in measuring religiosity. Perhaps a different way to measure religiosity for Zoroastrianism could be to take into account individuals' feelings about their life as it relates to Zoroastrian goals. For example, some of their goals are serenity, healthy and holistic living, honesty, and independence. These are things in which people can report as to whether they feel they are achieving these goals. This obviously has some academic weakness to it in that the measures are subjective, but they are important aspects not to be overlooked. A religion's success (or lack of success) at accomplishing its goals is both fascinating and illuminating.

Today, conversion is allowed by the Zoroastrian faith, but Muslim law, which rules in Iran, prohibits proselytizing. The Parsi communities in and from India, tend to be less open to converts. Although the reason is not completely known for sure, some believe it may stem from the original prohibition of Zoroastrians proselytizing the native Indian population. There has been in recent times a new surge of people in the United States converting to Zoroastrianism, possibly up to 3 million, but in Iran these "re-verts" typically are either not discussed or are claimed to not

be "real Zoroastrians". Despite this, conversion, emigration, and intermarriage are increasing Zoroastrian numbers in the United States, Canada, and Australia.

POSSIBLE CONNECTIONS

It is interesting to note that Zoroastrianism may have had an influence on Judaism. Before the Persian period, no biblical literature gave names to angels or demons; it was only after Zoroastrian influence that these were incorporated into Judaism. The Greek conquest of the Persian empire and Judea also had an influence on Judaism. But after 100 CE, to get rid of these outside influences, most of the texts affected by the Persians and Greeks were not allowed in the Tanakh (the canonized Hebrew Bible). However, these influences still managed to remain at least in part and concepts of an "end of time cosmic battle between good and evil" and hierarchies of angels and demons linger in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. (Harris, 2011, p. 227) Concepts of immortal souls, good and bad being rewarded and punished in the afterlife, and the physical resurrection of the dead were all new to Judaism after its exposure to Zoroastrianism. The term "kingdom of God" is mentioned in the Gathas which is also a major theme of Jewish scriptures. The Jewish belief that after death the soul hovers above the body for three days also has a counterpart in Zoroastrianism.

To hear a rendition of the Zoroastrianism creation story, please check out my latest YouTube video on my channel at: www.youtube.com/AprilLynnDowney

Written by April Lynn Downey

Sources:

Barrick, W. D. (2012) "The kingdom of God in the Old Testament". The Master's Seminary Journal, 23(3), 173-192.

Duchesne-Guillemin, Jacques. (2020) "Zoroastrianism." The Encyclopedia Britannica.

Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Zoroastrianism>

Eduljee, K.E. (n.d.) Zoroastrian worship. Zoroastrian Heritage. Retrieved from

<http://www.heritageinstitute.com/zoroastrianism/worship/index.htm>

Eduljee, K.E. (n.d.) Zoroastrianism. Zoroastrian Heritage. Retrieved from

<http://www.heritageinstitute.com/zoroastrianism/>

Fisher, M. P. Living Religions, Seventh Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

Foltz, R. (2011). "Zoroastrians in Iran: What Future in the Homeland?" The Middle East Journal, 65(1), 73-84. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/849618891?accountid=8289>

Harris, S. L. (2011). Understanding the Bible, 8th Edition. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

History. (n.d.) diversiton.com. Retrieved from

<http://www.diversiton.com/religion/main/judaism/history.asp>

Johnstone, R.L. (2007). Religion in Society: A Sociology of Religion, 8th Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

McKay, J. P., Hill, B. D., Buckler, J., Ebrey, P. B., Beck, R. B., Wiesner-Hanks, M. E. (2009). A History of World Societies. Boston, MA: Bedford / St. Martin's.

Safa, M., & Ahmadi, H. (2011). "A Sociological Approach to the Concept of God Amongst Iranian Youth." *Hervormde Teologiese Studies*, 67(3), D1-D12. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/878046383?accountid=8289>

Van Voorst, R. E. (2011). *Anthology of World Scriptures*. Boston, MA: Wadsworth.

Kukur Tihar – Tibetan Festival for Dogs

The Tihar festival in Nepal is a five day celebration, the second day of which is called Kukur Tihar and is dedicated to celebrating dogs, man's oldest and most loyal animal companion!

Tihar is The Festival of Lights and is also known as Diwali, Deepavali, and Divali. The festival is rooted in Hinduism; however, it was adopted by people in other religions as well, such as the Indian Sikhs who celebrate it as a strictly secular holiday. Indian Jains use it to celebrate the founder of Jainism, Lord Mahavira. Hindus also celebrate the holiday in various ways depending on their region. While most of India worships Lakshmi (the goddess of wealth) during the festival, in Bengal they worship Kali (goddess of death, time, and feminine energy).

In Nepal, dogs are given the royal treatment on Kukur Tihar - they are worshipped and given delicious food and garlands.



A dog being honored on Kukur Tihar (Photo by Ritesh Man Tamrakar on Flickr.com)



The Bhaktapur Temple in Nepal. (Image in the public domain.)

Sources:

"Kukur Tihar, the festival of dogs, being celebrated." www.msn.com

MacDonald, Margaret Read, Editor. *The Folklore of World Holidays, First Edition*. Gale Research Inc., 1992.

Mikkelin Paiva - St. Michael's Day – Finland



An ancient manuscript illustration depicting St. Michael. (Image from the public domain.)

In Finland, the first Sunday of October is a special celebration called Mikkelin Paiva, or St. Michael's Day. St. Michael's Day is celebrated throughout the world in honor of the archangel Michael in Christianity. Some countries celebrate it on September 29 and others on November 8; however, in Finland it is celebrated on the first Sunday of October. It is also known as Michaelmas. St. Michael the Archangel is thought to protect the church from evil and his festival is also associated with the start of a new business year, the autumn equinox, and the changing of seasons. Goose is a traditional dish for the festival and in times past a goose could be used as rent payment during this time. Ginger is another traditional food for this holiday. In Finland, autumn is called "ruska" and some of the produce associated with harvesting at this time are mushrooms, raspberries, bilberries, lingonberries, and cloudberries.

Michaelmas absorbed the ancient pagan Finnish festival of Kekri (also spelled Keyri or Käyri). Kekri was a harvest festival that was celebrated independently by farmers after they brought in the last of their harvest. "Kekri" was also the name of the spirits thought to help farmers

with their work. A feast was prepared for the Kekri and left for them to enjoy. The day brought much feasting, dancing, and singing. In the 20th century, it also adopted modern Halloween traditions that came from America such as costumes and sweets.

According to the Viaporin Kekri website, "The main character of the festival was a Kekri Buck, a young man dressed in a goat like costume. He would roam around the village at night asking for offerings and giving a promise of fertility for land and cattle for the next year's harvest in return." In 2015, Viaporin Kekri revived Kekri at the Suomenlinna Sea Fortress and it is now an annual event.



The Kekri man of the Niemela croft in the Seurasaari museum, 1915. (Photo sourced from Kansanperinne-blogi on Wikicommons)

Sources:

"Kekri." The Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Kekri>

MacDonald, Margaret Read, Editor. The Folklore of World Holidays, First Edition. Gale Research Inc., 1992.

Perrotta, Andrew. "The Feast of St. Michael's." <https://www.feastofstmichael.com/>

Viaporin Kekri. <http://www.viaporinkekri.fi/>

Visit Finland. <https://www.visitfinland.com/>

The Archives

Typus Gramatic - 1503



From the Library of Congress: "Grammar represented as a woman with alphabet board and a key showing a youth the entrance to university building fill with students."

Kashf al-Ghummah fi Nafa al-Ummah – The Important Stars Among the Multitude of the Heavens - 1733



From the Library of Congress: "Timbuktu, founded around 1100 as a commercial center for trade across the Sahara Desert, was also an important seat of Islamic learning from the 14th

century onward. The libraries of Timbuktu contain many important manuscripts, in different styles of Arabic scripts, which were written and copied by Timbuktu's scribes and scholars. These works constitute the city's most famous and long-lasting contribution to Islamic and world civilization. This early 18th-century text was written to train scholars in the field of astronomy, a science that Islamic tradition traces back to Adam and to the prophet Idris. The author discusses, among many other aspects of astronomy, how to use the movements of the stars to calculate the beginning of the seasons. He also discusses how to cast horoscopes. The work includes a diagram representing the rotation of the heavens.

Education – Transylvania, Louisiana – 1939



From the Library of Congress. Photograph of mother teaching children in home of sharecropper, taken in 1939 by Russell Lee.

The Museum

Manuscript Case

Europe, 19th Century CE

Found at the Metropolitan Museum of Art



<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/471465>

Made of horn, bone, and silk, this manuscript case was designed in a Medieval style. Overall dimensions are 4-3/4" x 3-5/8" x 1-7/8".

Polish Coat

Poland, 19th Century CE

Found at The Penn Museum



<https://www.penn.museum/collections/object/348295>

Made of green cloth, red reverse; square collar turned back behind. 62.6" long x 50" wide.

Egyptian Tag

Egypt, 3000-2800 BCE

Found at the Penn Museum



<https://www.penn.museum/collections/object/233404>

An ancient Egyptian tag made of ivory and inscribed with hieroglyphs. This was found in the tomb of Djer in Abydos and his name is on the tag. This delicate piece is only 1.7" high.

Grizzly Bear Mask

Kwakwaka'wakw, Pacific North-West, 19th Century

Found at The Museum of Natural and Cultural History



<https://mnch.uoregon.edu/index.php/collections-galleries/native-american-masks-northwest-coast-and-alaska>

The Gallery

Salzburg, Austria

Beautiful and stunning Salzburg - the birthplace of Mozart and the setting for the Sound of Music! With its rich history, stunning architecture, and breathtaking natural beauty, Salzburg has earned its place as one of Europe's most enchanting cities. This picturesque city is renowned for its baroque old town, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Visitors to Salzburg can explore its charming streets, visit historic landmarks, and immerse themselves in a cultural and musical heritage that continues to resonate today.

Photography by April Lynn Downey















Activities

Vintage Mardi Gras Costume – Coloring Page

A fly costume for Mardi Gras - designed by the Krewe of Comus.



“Storing Up Manna” Stained Glass – Coloring Page

This stained-glass panel was created in the workshop of Friedrich Brunner, between 1497-1499. It was based on a design by Jan Pollack.



Aztec Word Search

W T E M P L E S A W T U I C R
P K U K M S M G Y A T L A T L
C R Q R E E A E L P V T T D K
O Q U D S R M C A Y U H K F Y
D M E Z O O J P R G P L Y U C
E G T Q A H B Y I I L H M Q A
X Z Z K M N H S O R F E S G C
T K A Y E N E Y I G E I Q P A
O A L U R S P G J D T Z C G O
J E C K I G U T E U I X I E J
E Q O A C O O Y B N K A K O C
O S A Z A G E V T O A D N U R
S A T T K G Z A U D B E H A R
C H L E S G M O N T E Z U M A
F L T C M T E C D J R R M P S

MONTEZUMA

MESOAMERICA

AZTEC

SACRIFICE

GLYPHS

EAGLE

OBSIDIAN

TEMPLES

QUETZALCOATL

ATLATL

CACAO

EMPIRE

CODEX