

Excerpt from Zoroastrian Myth of the End

By: [Massoume Price](#)

https://www.iranchamber.com/religions/articles/zoroastrian_myth_end.php

Within Zoroastrianism there are two paths to the end, the end of the individual and the end of the world. The two are related in terms of judgement, individual (soul only) and universal (body and soul after resurrection). The individual is judged based on his or her actions and ends in hell or heaven accordingly. However there is a **universal judgement that will decide the fate of the world at the end.**

The Zoroastrians believe that the **history of the world lasts for 12000 years, with four distinct periods. In the first period good and evil are separated, in the second the good world is invaded by the evil and the third is when the fight between the two forces intensify. In the final period evil is defeated and goodness prevails.** The final period is thought to have started with the birth of Zoroaster and still continues. In this last 3000 years **Zoroastrians expect three saviours to come at 1000-year intervals.** The first one is called Aushedar, 'the developer of righteousness'. He is to be **born from a virgin and is also an offspring of Zoroaster himself** whose seed has been preserved in a lake and when the 15 year old virgin baths in the lake she is impregnated and the first saviour is born.

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The second saviour is called Aushedar-mah and is born the same way. The sun will stand still for 20 days this time and renovation will last for six years and more harmful creatures will perish. The original paradise like and perfect state of the world as it was at the beginning will draw closer. Men stop eating meat, become vegetarian and will only drink water. However this is **not the end of the Evil, he will reappear in form of Azhi Dahaka** (Zahak in Shahnameh) **a monster who was earlier defeated and imprisoned** on top of Mount Demavand by the hero Thraetaona (Thahmoureth). **The monster will escape, invade the world and will smite the sacred elements, fire, water and vegetation. Another hero Keresapa (Jamshid) will rid the world from this one and power of evil will be further reduced. However Azhi manages to escape.**

At the third and final stage, **the last saviour Soshyant is conceived the same way and eventually will defeat all the forces of evil. The perfect state of the world arrives with death, disease and all forces of evil and disorder to be defeated forever. Soshyant raises the dead** from the spot where life had departed from them. All people will be lead to the place of judgment where they will see their good and bad deeds. **The wicked will go back to the hell and the good to heaven for three days and three nights.** The last judgement of the individual was only concerned with the soul, while the universal judgement is concerned with both body and soul and involves resurrection of the body. Humans as whole beings are put through several tests like **passing through molten metal.**

The hot metal has already flowed over the earth and purified the earth and has returned it to a perfect and unified state. The **stream of molten metal will sweep over all men and makes them pure and uniform too.** The gift of immortality will be conferred when Soshyant, acting as a priest, celebrates the final sacrifice with the last animal (the ox) to die in the service of man. >From the fat of the ox and the mythical White Hom (Haoma a sacred mix used in ceremonies) from the cosmic ocean the elixir of immortality will be prepared. Ahriman and Azhi, will run into Hell to escape and the molten metal will destroy Hell and Azhi. Ahriman becomes impotent and annihilated. With the earth leveled and humans restored to their ideal unity of body and soul the whole creation will be once more the perfect combination of spirit and matter that God intended it to be.

Zoroastrians do not call this the end of the world but name it renovation. Because it is from this time that all good, all knowing and Ahura Mazda, the Lord of Wisdom will succeed.