



## **5 Starter Facts About Zoroastrianism**

- 1) Zoroastrianism (also called Mazdayasna) is the oldest practiced monotheistic religion, with ~190,000 adherents worldwide and ~11,000 in the United States.
- 2) Zoroastrianism was named after the prophet Zarathushtra (known to the Greeks as Zoroaster) whose teachings 3,000-3,500 years ago in modern-day Iran became the foundation of the religion. Zoroaster unified the nomadic tribes of the region with his revelations at the age of 30.
- 3) The sacred text is the Avesta, also called Zend-avesta, indicating that it is Zoroaster's interpretation of ancient text. Legend dictates the original volume of manuscripts was destroyed when Alexander the Great conquered Persia.
- 4) A central, but often misunderstood, belief of Zoroastrianism is the conflict between good and evil, with good eventually vanquishing evil. There are two ways this comes into play: within the universe or cosmically, and internally or morally, providing the context that one cannot be understood without the other (i.e. Cosmic: life/death, day/night; Moral: happiness/sadness, truth/deception).
- 5) Because it was the dominant world religion during the Persian empires, Zoroastrianism significantly influenced other religions, including Judaism, Christianity and Islam. It was a major world religion at the time of Jesus.

Learn more at:

[www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/zoroastrian/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/zoroastrian/)

[www.avesta.org/zfaq.html](http://www.avesta.org/zfaq.html)

[www.britannica.com/topic/Zoroastrianism](http://www.britannica.com/topic/Zoroastrianism)

*These five points are not meant to be comprehensive or authoritative. We hope they encourage you to explore this spirituality more deeply and seek out members of this community to learn about their beliefs in action. In understanding our differences we will better understand our common humanity.*

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