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YATKAR-I-ZARIRAN  
OR  
MEMOIRS OF ZARIR

TAKEN FROM THE SACRED BOOKS AND EARLY  
LITERATURE OF THE EAST, VOLUME VII: ANCIENT  
PERSIA

BY  
CHARLES F. HORNE

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# YATKAR-I-ZARIRAN OR MEMOIRS OF ZARIR

## IN THE NAME OF THE CREATOR AUHARMAZD

By the name of the Creator Auharmazd and by the good omen of good creation, may there be good health and long life to all men good and righteous workers, and especially to him for whom this book is written.

1. This book, which is called the Yatkari-Zariran, was written at that time when King Vishtasp with his sons, and brothers, family-chiefs, and equals accepted from Auharmazd this holy religion of the Mazdayasnians.

2. Then Arjasp, the King of the Khyaonas, had the startling news that King Vishtasp had, with his sons, brothers, and family-chiefs and equals, accepted from Auharmazd this holy religion of the Mazdayasnians.

3. Thereby he was much distressed.

4. He sent forward, to the country of Iran, Vidarafsh the sorcerer, and Namkhvast of Hazar, with two myriads of chosen soldiers of good horsemanship.

5. Then Jamasp, the leader of the leading men, immediately entered and said to King Vishtasp, "From Arjasp, the King of the Khyaonas, have come two messengers, than whom there is nobody more handsome in the whole country of the Khyaonas.

6. "One of them is Vidarafsh, and the other Namkhvast of Hazar. They have with them two myriads of chosen troops. They hold a letter in their hands and say, 'Let us go in before King Vishtasp.'"

7. King Vishtasp said, " Allow them to come in before me."

8. Then they went in and paid homage to King Vishtasp and gave the letter.

9. Aprahim, the chief of the scribes, got up on his feet and read the letter aloud.

10. And in the letter it was thus written: "I have heard that your Majesty has accepted from Auharmazd the pure Mazdayasnian religion. If you will not think of it, great harm and unhappiness may result to us from that religion.

11. "But if it please your Majesty, and you give up this pure religion, and be of the same religion with us, then we will pay homage to you as a king and then we will give you, from year to year, plenty of gold, plenty of silver, and plenty of good horses and the sovereignty of many places.

12. "But if you will not give up this religion and will not be of the same religion with us, then we will come to attack you. We will eat the green corn of your country and burn the dry, and we will capture the quadrupeds and the bipeds of your country, and we will order you to be placed in heavy chains and distress."

13. Then when King Vishtasp heard these words he was much afflicted.

14. Afterward when that brave commander of the army, the hero Zarir, saw that King Vishtasp was terrified he at once went in before him.

15. He said to King Vishtasp, "If it please your Majesty I will dictate a reply to this letter."

16. King Vishtasp ordered: "Make a reply to the letter."

17. And that brave Commander of the army, the hero Zarir, thus dictated a reply to the letter: "Greetings from King Vishtasp, the King of Iran, to Arjasp, the King of the Khyasnas.

18. "Firstly, we will not give up this holy religion and will not be of the same religion with you. We have accepted this holy religion from Auharmazd, and we will not give it up, and we will drink next month the drink of immortality {*i.e.*, "by the end of next month we will be perfect Zoroastrians."} without you.

19. "There in the field of Hutosh-i-Razur and in Murv of Zartusht, where there are neither high mountains nor deep caverns, on open plains or deserts, horses and footmen will solve the question of our difference.

20. "You come from there, so that we may proceed from here and you see us and we will see you. {We will march against each other and stand face to face to fight.}

21. "Then we will show you how the demons are beaten at the hands of angels."

22. Aprahim, the chief of the scribes, finished the letter, and Vindarfsh the sorcerer, and Namkhvast of Hazar received it and made salutations to King Vishtasp and went away.

23. Then King Vishtasp gave an order to his brother Zarir that ordered a fire to be kindled on a lofty hill in high mountains.

24. "Inform the city and inform our good troops that with the exception of the priests who consecrate water and the fire-temples and take care of them as their servants, nobody, from the age of 10 to the age of 80, should stay in his house.

25. "They must act in this way that they should come to the court of King Vishtasp within two months. If they will not come within two months, then when they do come they need not bring the gallows with them. We will order them to be put to gallows there in their own country."

26. Then this news reached all men of the fine cavalry. They came to the court of King Vishtasp with their brave soldiers. They blew their trumpets, played upon their flutes, and sounded their drums.

27. They formed themselves into a riding caravan. The elephant-keepers went with their elephants, the keepers of the beasts of burden went with their beasts, and the carriage- drivers went with their carriages.

28. In that cavalcade there were many spears of heroes like Rustem, many quivers full of arrows, and many beautiful coats of mail, and many coats of mail with four folds.

29. The caravan of the country of Iran was such that its din went up to heavens and the noise of the moving swords went up to hell.

30. On the road where they passed they dug up the way so much that owing to the dust the river stopped from flowing with its water to such an extent that it was not possible to drink the water for one month.

31. For fifty days it was not clear, and birds did not find any resting-place, except when they sat on the heads of horses, on the points of spears, or on a mountain with lofty summit. Owing to the dust and smoke, night and day could not be distinguished.

32. Then King Vishtasp gave an order to his brother Zarir that said: "Prepare a camp so that Iran {All the marching Iranians.} may encamp, so that we may know whether it is night or day."

33. Then Zarir came out of the road of march and pitched a camp, and the Iranians went to camp, and the dust cloud settled down. Then the stars and the moon appeared clear in the heavens.

34. Afterward 300 iron pegs were struck, with which 300 asses were tied. On the two sides of every ass were 300 golden bells.

35. Then Vishtasp sat on the Kyanian throne and called before him his minister Jamasp, the foreteller, and said: "I know that you, Jamasp, are wise and foreseeing and versed in knowing the stars.

36. "Thou knowest this also, that when it rains for ten days, how many drops fall over the earth and how many drops fall over drops.

37. "Thou knowest also which trees will bloom; which will bloom during the time of the day, and which during that of night, and which at noon time.

38. "Thou also knowest which breeze contains moisture and which does not contain it.

39. "Thou also knowest this, that in the constellation of the dragon the month {Or the moon.} will be in such a way. Then tell me in the battle of Vishtasp which of my sons and brothers will live and which will die?"

40. Jamasp Baetash said: "I wish I was not born from my mother, or that if I was born I had, through my luck, died a long time before, or

that I had met with an accident and had fallen into the sea, so that your Majesty would not have asked me this question. But since you have asked me I do not like that I may say anything but the truth.

41. "If it please your Majesty, your dagger may take my life. So take an oath by the name of the glory of Auharmazd, the Mazdayasnian religion, and the life of your brother Zarir.--Rub three times for Dravasp your sharp and shining sword and arrow made of the jaw-bone, and say, 'I will not strike you, I will not kill you, I will not place you in the position of defending yourself with a shield, so that speak out what will be the result of the battle of Vishtasp.'"

42. Then King Vishtasp said: "I swear by the name of the glory of Auharmazd, the Mazdayasnian religion, and the life of my brother Zarir, that I will not strike you, I will not kill you, and also I will not place you in the position of defending yourself with a shield."

43. Then Jamasp Baetash said: "If it please your Majesty, you may order this large army of the country of Iran to stay at the distance of a quick arrow-shot from the priest of the king."

44. Then King Vishtasp ordered that the large army of the country of Iran should stay at the distance of a swift arrow-shot from the exalted priest of Vishtasp.

45. Then Jamasp Baetash said: "Fortunate is he who is not born of his mother, or if born dies immediately, or to whom the measure of long duration has not reached.

46. "In a month's time, when brave men will fight with brave men, and heroes with heroes, many sons with mothers will be without fathers, and many fathers will be without sons, and many brothers will be without brothers, and many wives with husbands will be without husbands.

47. " Many Iranian horsemen would come who would walk in toward the camp of the enemy happy and pompously. They would like to shed the blood of the King of Khyaonas, but they would not find it.

48. "Fortunate is that man who does not see the following persons: the magician Bidarafsh, when he comes and excites the battle and works



destruction and kills the brave commander Zarir who is your brother, and snatches away from him his horse, the black iron-hoofed horse of Zarir; and that Namkhvast of Hazar who comes and excites the battle and works destruction and kills that Pat-khosrob who is a righteous man among the Mazdayasnians and who is your brother, and snatches away from him his horse also, the horse with golden handle; and that Namkhvast of Hazar who comes and excites the battle and works destruction and kills that Farsh-havard who is your son and who, since he was born, lives in the district of the fortress of Kaiba, and who is dearer to you than your other children.

49. "Out of your sons and brothers twenty-three will be killed."

50. Then when King Vishtasp heard these words, he fell down upon the ground from his exalted throne.

51. He took a knife in his left hand and a sword in his right hand and caught hold of Jamasp tightly and said: "You magician, deceitful slave! you are not right, since your mother was a sorceress and your father a liar.

52. "If I had not taken an oath by the name of the glory of God and the religion of the Mazdayasnians and the life of my brother Zarir, these words would not have been spoken by you. Then I would have cut your head with these two weapons, the sword and the knife, and thrown it upon the ground."

53. Then Jamasp said: "May it please your Majesty, get up from the ground and sit again on the Kyanian throne, because what I have predicted to happen shall happen at the time when it should happen!"

54. King Vishtasp did not get up and did not look up again.

55. Then the brave general, powerful Zarir, came and said: "May it please your Majesty, get up from the ground and sit again on the Kyanian throne, because in a month I will go and kill fifteen myriad Khyaonas with my own strength."

56. King Vishtasp did not get up and did not look up again.

57. Then Patkhushro, the righteous man among the Mazdayasnians, came and said: "May it please your Majesty, get up from the ground and sit again on the Kyanian throne, because in a month's time I will go and kill fourteen myriad Khyaonas with my own strength."

58. King Vishtasp did not get up and did not look up again.

59. Then Farsh-havard, the son of King Vishtasp, came and said: "May it please your Majesty, get up from the ground and sit again on the Kyanian throne, because in a month's time I will go and kill thirteen myriad Khyaonas with my own strength."

60. King Vishtasp did not get up and did not look up again.

61. Then the hero, the powerful Spendadad, went and said: "May it please your Majesty, get up from the ground and sit again on the Kyanian throne, because in a month's time I will go, and I swear by the name of the glory of Auharmazd, the Mazdayasnian religion, and the life of your Majesty that I will not let any Khyaona go alive from that battle."

62. At last King Vishtasp got up and sat again on the Kyanian throne and called Jamasp Baetash before him and said: "If it is to happen in the way which you have said, then I would order a fortress to be made of copper, and I would order the railings of the gate of that fortress to be made of iron, and I would order my sons and brothers and family-chiefs to go and remain in that fortress. Then it is possible that they will not fall into the hands of the enemy."

63. Jamasp Baetash said: "If you will order a fort to be made of copper, and if you will also order the railings of the gate to be made of iron, and if you, King Kae Vishtasp, will order your sons and brothers and the family-chiefs of your happy country to remain in that fort, then how will you be able to keep off from your country so many of those enemies?"

64. "How will that brave general, strong Zarir, your brother, go and kill fifteen myriad Khyaonas? And how will that Patkhushro, the righteous among the Mazdayasnians, go and kill fourteen myriad Khyaonas? And how will Farsh-havard, thy son, go and kill thirteen myriad Khyaonas?"

65. King Vishtasp said: "Now how many Khyaonas will come at first and, when they have once come, how many will die and how many will return?"

66. Jamasp Baetash said: "One hundred and thirty-one myriad Khyaonas will come at first, and when they have once come nobody will return alive except one who is Arjasp, the King of the Khyaonas.

67. "The hero Spendadad will catch him also. He will cut his one hand, one leg, and one ear, he will burn his one eye with fire, and he will send him off back to his country on an ass whose tail is cut, and will say, 'Go and tell your countrymen what you have seen from my hand.'"

68. Then King Kae Vishtasp said: "Although the sons and brothers and family-chiefs of myself, who am King Kae Vishtasp, and those of Hutoosh, who is like a sister to me and who is my wife, and from whom about thirty sons and daughters are born to me, are to be killed, I will not forsake this holy Mazdayasnian religion, since I have received it from Auharmazd."

69. Then King Vishtasp sat on the summit of a hill. He had with him the strength of twelve times twelve myriad men. Arjasp, the King of the Khyaonas, sat on the summit of a hill. His strength was twelve myriad myriads.

70. Then the brave general, that powerful Zarir, fought the battle as hard as the angel Atar (fire), which, when it falls in a mountainous district and when also the wind helps him, works destruction. When he drew his sword forward he slew ten Khyaonas and when he withdrew it eleven Khyaonas. When he got hungry or thirsty he saw the blood of the Khyaonas and was satiated.

71. Then Arjasp, the King of the Khyaonas, saw from the summit of the hill, and said: "Who is there among you Khyaonas who would go and fight with Zarir and would kill him, the brave general, strong Zarir? So that I would give him for wife my daughter Zarstun, than whom there is no woman more beautiful in the whole country of the Khyaonas.

72. "I will make him the master of the whole country of the Khyaonas, because if Zarir were to remain alive up to night then it would not be long when not anybody out of us Khyaonas would remain alive."

73. Then the magician Vidarafsh got up on his feet, and said: "Get a horse saddled for me so that I may go."

74. They saddled the horse, and the magician Vidarafsh rode upon it. He took that weapon which was operated upon with magic in the hell by the demons through anger, and which was impregnated with the poison of the water of sin. He held it on in his hand and rushed into the battle and saw how bravely Zarir was fighting. He could not go before him in the front.

75. He quietly came running from behind and struck the weapon upon the back of Zarir below his waist-girdle and above his sacred thread and pierced it in his heart and threw him down upon the ground, and then the movement of bows and the din of brave men subsided.

76. Then King Vishtasp saw from the top of the hill, and said, "I think on good grounds that they have killed our Zarir, the general of Iran, because the movement of bows and the din of brave men do not come to us now.

77. "Who is there among you Iranians who would go and ask for revenge for Zarir so that I may give him in marriage that Homak who is my daughter, a more beautiful woman than whom there is none in the whole country of Iran?

78. "I will give him a residence in the mansion of Zarir and command in chief of Iran."

79. No good and great man gave a reply except that son of Zarir, a boy of about seven years of age. He got up on his feet and said: "Order a horse to be saddled for me so that I may go and see the war of Iran, and see the family-chief of Vishtasp, and whether that brave general, powerful Zarir, my father, is living or dead. I will tell your Majesty how matters stand."

80. Then King Vishtasp said: "You do not go because you are still a child, and you do not know how to act with caution in war, and your fingers are not rubbed with arrows.

81. "Perhaps the Khyasas would come and kill you because they have killed Zarir also. Then the Khyasas will take the credit of two names

that 'We have killed Zarir, the commander-in-chief of Iran, and we have killed his son Bastur.'"

82. Afterward Bastur secretly said to the master of the horse: "Vishtasp has ordered, 'Give to Bastur that horse on which sat Zarir, when he was a boy.'"

83. The master of the horse ordered the horse to be saddled, and Bastur sat over it, and he let go the horse and killed the enemy until he reached that place where he saw his brave father dead.

84. He did not wait long, and said, "Oh, increaser of the delight of my soul! why are you silent? Oh, brave man, decorated with precious amulets, why silent? Oh, why is thy fast horse silent?"

85. "When this was your wish that 'I may be allowed to fight with the Khyaonas,' how is it that you have fallen dead in our war like a man without a place or corner?"

86. "The winds have spoilt your crown, hair, and beard; the horses have crushed your clean body with their feet; the dust has covered your garment. But now what am I to do? because if I were to alight from the horse and if I were to hold yours, my father's head, into my sides, and if I were to remove the dust from thy garment, and then if I could not get up again on my horse expeditiously,

87. "Then perhaps the Khyaonas might come and kill me also as they killed you. Then they will take the credit of two names that 'We have killed Zarir, the commander-in-chief of Iran, and we have killed Bastur who is his son.'"

88. Afterward Bastur let go his horse and killed the enemy until he came before King Vishtasp, and said: "I had gone and I had seen well the battle fought by Iran and the officers of Vishtasp.

89. "I saw dead the brave general, powerful Zarir, who is my father. But if it please your Majesty, let me go so that I may go and ask revenge for my father."

90. Then Jamasp Baetash said: "Let this speaker go because he rests upon his luck and he will kill the enemy."

91. At last King Vishtasp ordered the horse to be saddled.

92. And Bastur sat over it. He (the King) gave him an arrow from his quiver and blessed him and said, "Take this quiver from me and go. May your every art of war be victorious. May you gain victory in all offensive and defensive battles. In return may you bring glory. For all days fetch your enemies dead.

93. "And now you command the horse and the banner of these our soldiers of Iran and Arum, and always live long as a leader."

94. Then Bastur let his horse go and killed the enemy and fought the battle as bravely as Zarir, the commander-in-chief of Iran.

95. At last Arjasp, the King of the Khyaonas, saw from the summit of the hill, and said, "Who is he? Who is that brave Kyanian fellow there, who has a horse like that of a warrior and who keeps his saddle like a warrior and who fights as bravely as Zarir, the commander-in-chief of Iran?

96. "However, I think thus that he, of the lineage of Vishtasp, desires to take vengeance for Zarir.

97. "Who is there among you Khyaonas who will go and fight with that fellow and kill him? I will give to him in marriage Bashastun, my daughter, than whom there is no woman more beautiful in the whole country of Khyaona.

98. "And I will make him the master of the whole country of Khyaona, because if the fellow would remain alive until night then it would not be long when out of us Khyaonas nobody would remain alive."

99. Then Vidarafsh, the magician, got up on his feet and he said, "Get a horse saddled for me so that I may go."

100. They saddled the iron-hoofed horse, which was the horse of Zarir, and Vidarafsh, the magician, rode upon it. He took that weapon which was operated upon with magic in the hell by the demons through anger and which was impregnated with the poison of the water of sin. He held it on in his hand and rushed into the battle, and saw how

bravely Bastur was fighting. He could not go to him in the front, so quietly went forward from behind.

101. Bastur cast a glance and said, "Oh, wicked magician! come in front of my humble self, because I think that I do not know how to make my horse run fast under my thighs and I think that I do not know well to throw the arrow from the quiver. So come forward in the front of my humble self so that I may destroy thy sweet life as you did that of my father, the brave general Zarir."

102. And Vidarafsh, the magician, presumptuously proceeded farther and went forward before Bastur, and that black iron-hoofed horse of Zarir, when he heard the loud voice of Bastur, struck his four feet on the ground and raised nine hundred and ninety-nine cries.

103. And Vidarafsh drew his weapon and Bastur took it away in his hand.

104. Then the soul of Zarir shouted: "Throw away the weapon from your hand and take an arrow from your quiver and give a reply to the wicked man with that."

105. And Bastur threw away the weapon from his hand, and he took an arrow from his quiver and shot it at Vidarafsh at his heart, and it passed through his back and threw him upon the ground.

106. And he killed him. He took away from him that white boot covered with pearls and gold which Zarir kept together with him. He sat upon the horse of Zarir and held the bridle of his own horse in his hand, and then he let his horse go forward and killed the enemy till he came to that place where Geramik-kard, the son of Jamasp, had held the victorious banner in his teeth and fought with both his hands.

107. Geramik-kard and that great Iranian army, when they saw Bastur, all mourned for Zarir, and said, "Oh, young helper! why have you come to fight when you have not yet sufficiently rubbed your fingers with arrows, and when you still do not know the ways of caution to be observed in war?"

108. "Perhaps the Khyaonas may come and kill you as they have also killed Zarir. Then they will take the credit of two names that 'We have

killed Zarir, the commander-in-chief, and we have killed Bastur his son."

109. Then Bastur said: "O Geramik-kard, son of Jamasp, you carry victoriously this victorious banner. If I will go alive before King Vishtasp I will tell him how bravely you have fought."

110. Then Bastur rode forward and killed the enemy until he came to that place where the brave hero Spendadad was.

111. When Spendadad saw Bastur he left the large Iranian army with Bastur and himself went over the top of the hill and made an attack upon Arjasp with his twelve myriad soldiers and drove them down from the top of the hill to the plain below, and Spendadad thrust the work of further attack upon Geramik-kard. Geramik-kard carried an assault upon them and thrust the work upon Bastur. {The enemy were driven from place to place and killed.}

112. Thereupon it was not long before there was not left any person alive among them, except that one, Arjasp, the King of the Khyaonas.

113. The hero Spendadad caught him also. He cut one of his hands, one leg, one ear, and burned one of his eyes with fire and sent him off back to his country on an ass whose tail was cut.

114. He said: "Go and tell what you have seen from my --the hero Spendadad's--hand; otherwise how can the Khyaonas know what has happened on the day Farvardin, in the constellation of the dragon, in the war of Vishtasp?"

