

# موقف المجوس في الدراسات الإسلامية: تحليل استناداً إلى القرآن والروايات

محمد آل باقر<sup>١</sup>، و علي رئيسي<sup>٢</sup>

١. الكاتب الرئيسي، استاذ مدعو، گروه تفسیر، جامعة المصطفى العالمية، بريد إلكتروني: [Malbagher2016@gmail.com](mailto:Malbagher2016@gmail.com)  
٢. گروه معارف اسلامی، دانشکده علوم انسانی، دانشگاه هرمزگان، بندرعباس، ایران، بريد إلكتروني: [a.raeisi@hormozgan.ac.ir](mailto:a.raeisi@hormozgan.ac.ir)

## الملخص

تتناول هذه الدراسة، بالاعتماد على المنهج التحليلي الاستقرائي، موقف "المجوس" من منظور النصوص الإسلامية. وبالاستناد إلى الآية ١٧ من سورة الحج التي تذكر المجوس إلى جانب ديانات كاليهود والصابئين والنصارى، فإن السؤال المحوري للمقال هو: "هل يُعدّ المجوس من جملة الأديان السماوية (أهل الكتاب)؟" وفي الإجابة عن هذا السؤال، ثمة خلاف بين علماء المسلمين؛ ففريق يعدّهم ديناً سماوياً، وفريق آخر ينكر ذلك، فيما يكتفي فريق ثالث، بتبني موقف احتياطي، بتطبيق الأحكام الفقهية المشابهة لأهل الكتاب (كأخذ الجزية) عليهم فقط.

وقد توصل هذا البحث، من خلال جمع وتحليل أهم الأدلة النقلية، ولا سيما الشواهد القرآنية والروايات التفسيرية من المؤيدين والمعارضين، إلى نتيجة مفادها أنه يمكن الجزم بوجود دين أصيل باسم "المجوس" كان له نبي وكتاب سماوي ولكنه تعرض للتحريف. وفي مرحلة لاحقة، ظهر "زرادشت" مدعي النبوة وعارضاً كتاباً جديداً (الأفستا)؛ ورغم ارتكازه على الأسس الفكرية للمجوسية، إلا أنه لا يُعتبر إحياءاً للدين السابق. وعليه، يمكن اعتبار الزرادشتية فرعاً متأخراً و متميزاً عن المجوسية، كانت هي نفسها منشأ فرق كالمانوية والمزدكية. والخلاصة النهائية للبحث هي توضيح التمايز بين "المجوس" كدين سماوي محرّف و"الزرادشتية" كحركة دينية ذات هوية مستقلة.

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## المقدمة

يتناول هذا البحث مكانة وحقيقة "المجوس" كواحدة من الفرق المذكورة في القرآن الكريم. والمشكلة الرئيسية للبحث هي تحديد ماهية دين المجوس والإجابة على السؤال التالي: هل يُعد المجوس من الديانات السماوية وصاحب كتاب سماوي أم لا؟ وهذا السؤال تكتسب أهميته من ذكر اسم المجوس في الآية ١٧ من سورة الحج إلى جانب ديانات معترف بها مثل اليهود والنصارى والصابئين: (إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالصَّابِئِينَ وَالنَّصَارَى وَالْمَجُوسَ وَالَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ). وهذا السياق الظاهري أدى إلى ظهور خلاف تاريخي بين علماء الإسلام. فاستناداً إلى هذه الآية وبعض الروايات، عدت جماعة المجوس من جملة أهل الكتاب وأصحاب شريعة سماوية، بينما اعتبرهم آخرون - بالاعتماد على شواهد تاريخية وعقائدية - مشركين أو أتباعاً لدين محرف وغير سماوي. وهدف هذا البحث هو تشریح هذه المشكلة والوصول إلى رؤية أوضح بناءً على القرآن، والروايات التفسيرية للفريقين (الشيعة وأهل السنة)، وآراء علماء الإسلام. والسؤال الرئيسي للبحث هو: "ما حقيقة المجوس من منظور القرآن والروايات؟" وأسئلته الفرعية تتناول أدلة كل من وجهات النظر المؤيدة والمعارضة لسماوية هذا الدين، وكذلك وضعهم الاحتباسي في الأحكام الشرعية. ويتضمن نطاق الدراسة التحليل المفاهيمي لكلمة مجوس، والدراسة التاريخية لنشأتها وتطورها، وكذلك التدقيق في الآيات القرآنية والروايات الواردة عبر الشيعة وأهل السنة في هذا المجال.

## المنهجية

هذا البحث من نوع الدراسات الأساسية-النظرية الذي تم باستخدام "المنهج الاستقرائي التحليلي". تصميم البحث قائم على الدراسات المكتبية وتحليل النص. (Textual Analysis) المجتمع الإحصائي للبحث يشمل المصادر التفسيرية والروائية والتاريخية والفقهية الرئيسية والأولية للمدرستين الشيعية والسنية التي تناولت موضوع المجوس. وقد أُجري أخذ العينات بطريقة هادفة وبتحديد أشهر الكتب التفسيرية والحديثية والفقهية وأوثقها من كلا الطرفين. وكانت أداة جمع البيانات هي التطبيق والاستخراج المباشر للمواد من هذه النصوص. ولتحقيق صدق البيانات الروائية، ومع طبيعة البحث، تم استخدام المعايير الشائعة في دراسة الأحاديث (صحة السند والمتن) في كل مدرسة، وفي مواضع الاختلاف، تم إجراء مقارنة وتحليل مقارن للآراء. وأما طريقة تحليل

البيانات فهي تحليل المحتوى النوعي والاستدلال التحليلي. وفي هذه الطريقة، وبعد جمع البيانات من مصادر مختلفة، تم استخراج المفاهيم الأساسية مثل "أهل الكتاب"، و"النبوة"، و"التحريف"، و"اللاحق"، و"الشرك". ثم تم تصنيف أدلة وشواهد كل وجهة نظر (مؤيدي ومعارضى سماوية دين المجوس)، وخضعت حجج كل منها للنقد والفحص التحليلي. ومرحلة تنفيذ البحث كانت كما يلي: أولاً، جمع ومراجعة المصادر ذات الصلة؛ ثانياً، استخراج وتعريف المصطلحات الأساسية مثل المجوس، زرادشت، الأوستا؛ ثالثاً، تصنيف وعرض أدلة وروايات كل وجهة نظر موجودة؛ رابعاً، تحليل ونقد هذه الأدلة؛ وأخيراً، الخلاصة النهائية بناءً على الشواهد الأقوى.

## النتائج

يمكن عرض نتائج هذا البحث في عدة محاور أساسية وفي إجابة على الأسئلة الفرعية. أولاً، في تعريف المصطلحات، إن "المجوس" عنوان أطلق في الأصل على قوم "ماد" ودين أقدم من زرادشت، لكنه أُطلق لاحقاً على أتباع زرادشت أيضاً. وزرادشت شخصية يعرف بأنه مؤسس الديانة الزرادشتية (أو بالاصطلاح الشائع، المجوسية) وكتابهم المقدس اسمه "الأوستا" الذي ضاع جزء كبير منه. وفي الإجابة على أدلة مؤيدي سماوية المجوس، تظهر النتائج أن الاستدلال بمجرد ذكر اسم المجوس إلى جانب الديانات الأخرى في آية القرآن ليس دليلاً قاطعاً على سماويته، لأن سياق الآية يتعلق بالحشر والفصل في الخصومة يوم القيامة بين جميع المجموعات. وكذلك، فمحاولة اعتبار زرادشت هو النبي إبراهيم عليه السلام بالاستناد إلى تشابهات قليلة في السيرة، تفتقر إلى سند تاريخي وروائي معتبر. ومن جهة أخرى، فإن بعض الروايات المنقولة عن أهل البيت عليهم السلام - مثل الرواية الطويلة للإمام علي عليه السلام في جواب الأشعث بن قيس - تشير صراحة إلى أن للمجوس نبياً وكتاباً سماوياً، لكن بسبب ذنب كبير (زواج بالمحارم من قبل ملكهم وتبريره) سُلب منهم الكتاب والعلم. ورويت روايات أخرى عن المعصومين عليهم السلام تؤكد على وجود نبي وكتاب للمجوس قبل التحريف. في المقابل، ترى وجهة نظر معارضي السماوية أن المجوس يعبدون النار والشمس والقمر أو يعتقدون بالثنوية (أهورامزدا وأهرمن) وتعد زرادشت مدعيًا كاذبًا للنبوة. وقد عرفتهم بعض روايات أهل السنة بعيدة النار والشمس والقمر. لكن الدراسات تظهر أن تقديس النار عندهم ربما كان رمزاً للنور الإلهي وأن التحريف حدث في عصور لاحقة. وأخيراً، توجد وجهة نظر ثالثة وإن كانت لا تعد المجوس أصحاب كتاب في الأصل، إلا أنها تلحقهم بأهل الكتاب في بعض الأحكام الفقهية مثل

أخذ الجزية وعدم الإجبار على الإسلام بسبب "شبهة الكتاب" وأيضاً بسبب أمر النبي صلى الله عليه وآله - "سُنُوا بِهِمْ سُنَّةَ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ" - وهذه الرؤية لها قوة خاصة في الفقه الإمامي، وقد أكد عليها فقهاء كبار مثل الشيخ الطوسي. وعليه، تشير النتائج إلى أن الأدلة الأقوى تدل على وجود دين سماوي بنبي وكتاب للمجوس في الماضي، لكن هذا الدين تعرض لتحريف عميق وشخصية زرادشت كمحي أو مدعٍ للنبوة لاحقاً موضع شك. وفي العصر الحاضر، الفرقة الوحيدة المتبقية من المجوس هي الزرادشتيون الذين طبقاً للرأي المشهور في فقه الشيعة، لهم من حيث الحكم الشرعي شبهة كتاب ويلحقون بأهل الكتاب في بعض الأحكام.

### الخاتمة

يتوصل هذا البحث من خلال دراسة آيات القرآن والروايات التفسيرية وآراء علماء الإسلام إلى هذه النتيجة العامة: أن "المجوس" كان في الأصل ديناً له نبي وكتاب سماوي. والشواهد الروائية المعتبرة، خاصة من طريق أهل البيت عليهم السلام، تؤكد هذا الأمر. لكن هذا الدين بسبب انحرافات عميقة وذنوب كبيرة من قبل أتباعه (مثل نشر الزواج بالمحارم)، وقع تحت الغضب الإلهي، وضاع كتابه تقريباً، وتحرفت تعاليمه. والشخصية التاريخية زرادشت كمؤسس للدين الزرادشتي، لم تكن النبي الأصلي لهذا الدين، بل قد يكون مدعياً للنبوة أو مصلحاً بينهم. والاعتقاد بالثنوية (إله الخير والشر) وكذلك تقديس النار، من علامات تحريف هذا الدين. ومن الناحية الفقهية والتطبيقية، وبالاستناد إلى الروايات، فإن المجوس (واليوم الزرادشتيين) بسبب "شبهة الكتاب"، يلحقون بأهل الكتاب في بعض الأحكام مثل دفع الجزية وعدم الإجبار على قبول الإسلام. وهذه الرؤية، المقبولة أكثر في الفقه الإمامي، تنظم الجانب العملي والتعاملي للإسلام مع هذا المجتمع. ومن محدوديات هذا البحث يمكن الإشارة إلى سعة المباحث التاريخية والكلامية ذات الصلة، وكذلك الاختلاف في أسانيد بعض الروايات مما يتطلب بحثاً أكثر تخصصاً في كل من تلك المجالات. وللبحوث المستقبلية، يُقترح إجراء دراسة أعمق على النصوص المتبقية من الدين الزرادشتي (الأوستا) وإجراء مقارنة تطبيقية لمفاهيمه مع تعاليم الديانات الإبراهيمية. وكذلك، يمكن للبحث في المسار التاريخي لتطور الرؤى الفقهية حول المجوس والدراسة الميدانية حول معتقدات وممارسات الزرادشتيين المعاصرين أن يثري النقاش.

# Majus in the Quran, Interpretive Narratives, and Scholarly Opinions

Muhammad Al-Baqir<sup>1</sup> , and Ali Raisi<sup>2</sup> 

1. Corresponding Author, International Office of the Scientific Associations of the Islamic Seminary of Qom, Qom, Iran. Email: [abb.karimi.1998@gmail.com](mailto:abb.karimi.1998@gmail.com)
2. Al-Mustafa International University, Qom, Iran. Email: [rezaee.quran@gmail.com](mailto:rezaee.quran@gmail.com)

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## ABSTRACT

Allah the Almighty said: (Indeed, those who have believed and those who were Jews and the Sabians and the Christians and the Magians and those who associated with Allah – Allah will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection. Indeed Allah is, over all things, Witness) (Al-Hajj 22:17). The term "Majus" is mentioned conjoined with the People of the Book, the followers of divine religions (attributed to prophets and divine scriptures) such as the Jews, Sabians, and Christians. The question is, are the Majus considered among the divine religions or not? scholars have disagreement on this. Some considered the Majus a divine religion, others denied that, and some refrained from stating an opinion, contenting themselves with applying a legal ruling that they are assimilated to the People of the Book. Therefore, including them in some rulings that apply to the People of the Book, such as not fighting them and being satisfied with taking the jizyah from them, and matters related to blood money. Since this research is connected to the Quran, narratives, history, and jurisprudence, it attempts to present the most important mentioned evidence and indicators, focusing on the Quran and interpretive narratives from both schools.

This research relies on the inductive-analytical method. Consequently, a clear vision emerges: through the mentioned verse and the existing evidence and narratives, it is understood that there was a religion named Majus, and they had a prophet who was martyred. Gradually, it was distorted, and later a person named Zarathustra claimed prophethood and built his religion upon the foundation of Majus. Later, his hymns and sayings became a book named "Avesta." However, Zarathustra did not claim he came to revive Magianism, and the Majus later developed various sects and religions such as Mazdakism, Manichaeism, and others. Thus, Zoroastrianism can be considered one of the sects and peoples of the Majus, but Zoroastrianism came with a new prophet and a new book, different from the original prophet and book that belonged to the Majus.

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## Introduction

It is clear that the People of the Book hold an important and distinguished status in the religious concept. This has been researched in the Quran, narratives, history, theology, and jurisprudence. Since the mention of the Majus is aligned with the People of the Book, debate and disagreement have arisen among scholars regarding whether to consider the Majus among the People of the Book who have a prophet and a divine book, or that they are not People of the Book and have no prophet, but rather a false claimant to prophethood. In this study, we seek to reach the truth about the Majus in light of Quranic verses and narratives.

## Research Importance and Precedents

No independent book was found on the subject of the Majus in the Quran and narratives. As for what pertains to the Majus in general, what has been written includes:

- Zarathustra and the Zoroastrian Religion, by Faris Uthman.
- The Zoroastrian Religion, by Nuri Ismail.
- Zarathustra the Sage, by Hamid Abd al-Qadir.
- The Distortion of the Zoroastrians to the Zoroastrian Religion in the Islamic Era, by Dr. Khaled Kabir Alal.
- The Myth of Revelation, Prophethood, and Monotheism in the Zoroastrian Religion, by Dr. Khaled Kabir Alal.

The research necessity lies in the fact that Islam cares about the rights of minorities, and that the Magian or Zoroastrian religion has thousands of followers in various countries in the contemporary era. Due to their explicit mention in the Quran alongside other religions, and because the Quran and Hadiths clarify much of the ambiguity, the topic has been researched from these two angles.

## Primary and Secondary Research Questions

The **primary question** that the research aims to answer is: What is the reality of the Majus from the perspective of the Quran and narratives?

Naturally, several **secondary questions** branch out from the primary question, forming the scientific content of the research:

1. What is the evidence and indicators for considering the Majus a divine religion?
2. What is the evidence and indicators for considering the Majus a non-divine, fabricated religion?
3. What is the evidence and indicators for considering the Majus assimilated to the People of the Book?

### Research Hypotheses or Outcomes

1. There is specific evidence and indicators from the Quran and narratives proving the existence of a prophet and a book for the Majus.
2. There are attempts to gather evidence considering Zarathustra as the prophet of the Majus, thus considering it a divine religion.
3. There is evidence and indicators considering those ascribed to the Majus as assimilated to the People of the Book due to a semblance [of scripture].

**Research Method:** Inductive-analytical. Relied on libraries and the internet for gathering information, along with analyzing and describing the topics.

**Research Limitations:** This topic falls within historical, theological, Quranic, narrative, and jurisprudential studies.

### Explanation and Definition of Basic and Related Terms

#### 1. *Majus* (المجوس)

Magians (Al-Majusiyyah) is a sect and Majusi is attributed to it, while its plural is Majus. Abu Ali al-Nahwi said: "Majus and Yahud (Jews) are definite like Yahudi and Yahud, Majusi and Majus, so they were pluralized according to the pattern of Shu'ayrah and Sha'ir. Then the plural was made definite with alif and lam (the definite article). Were it not for that, it would not be permissible for the definite article to enter upon them because they are already definite. He said: They are feminine, so they were treated in their speech like two tribes, and were not made like al-hayyayn in declension." He recited from Imru' al-Qays: "Ahari urika barqan habba wahna, ka-nari Majus tasta'iru isti'ara" (Shall I show you lightning that flashed and then faded, like the fire of the Magians, blazing up and then dying down?) (Al-Jawhari, n.d., Vol. 3, p. 977).

A man "tamajjas" means he became one of them. And "majjasahu" ghayruhu means someone else made him one of them. In the hadith: "fa-abawahu yumajjisanihi" (so his parents make him a Magian) (Al-Jawhari, n.d., Vol. 3, p. 977).

It is said: Al-Majus is the plural of Majusi, and it is Arabized. Its origin is "Minghush." He was a man with small ears and was the first to adopt the Magian religion and call people to it, so the Arabs Arabized it (Al-Azhari, 2001, Vol. 10, p. 317).

Before the appearance of Zarathustra, that is, before the rule of the Medes, the non-Aryan inhabitants of Iran had a religion called "the religion of the Magi." The word "Magh" or "Magush" in Old Persian means servant (Tofighi, 2012, p. 56).

When the word "Magush" entered the Arabic language, it was Arabized to "Majus" and applied to the followers of the Zoroastrian religion. Their leaders and clergy were called "Mogh," from which the word "Mowbad" (Magian priest) was derived (Al-Makarim al-Shirazi, 2005, Vol. 10, p. 303). However, originally it was not a title for the followers of Zarathustra. It is now established that "Majus" was a title for the Medes who existed before Zarathustra. The word "Majus" appears in the Avesta referring to the enemies of Zarathustra. However, since the Medes were known as "Magush" in the lands of the Arabs and the Levant, the followers of Zarathustra were also called "Majus" (Al-Mufid, 1993, p. 134, footnote).

## *2. Zarathustra (زرادشت)*

Zoroastrianism, known as Magianism, is an ancient Iranian religion or Asian religious philosophy. It was the official religion of the Achaemenid, Parthian, and Sassanian empires (Uthman, n.d., p. 6).

The religion is attributed to its founder Zarathustra and is considered one of the oldest monotheistic religions in the world, appearing in Persia 3500 years ago (Uthman, n.d., p. 6). It has been said that Zarathustra lived between the 15th and 11th centuries BCE (World Arabic Encyclopedia, 1999).

His name and epithet appear in the Avesta as Zarathushtra, sometimes Zaraushttra, son of Pourushaspa, son of Haneghat Asia, who belongs to the Spitaman family (Avesta, Yasna 35.5), and his lineage ends with the Haechataspa tribe. His mother is Dughdhova (Dughdohu) daughter of Frahim, Dugho in Pahlavi (Al-Jalabi, 1952, p. 13), and the Arabs called her "Dughd" (Al-Shahristani, n.d., Vol. 1, p. 236).

It has been pronounced in many forms, such as Zardasht, Zaradasht, Zarathust, Zartasht, Zaratasht, Zarushtra, and Zurushttra. But in general, they agree with the Pahlavi reading where the name is pronounced with an open 't' (ta'). Islamic writings follow what the name settled upon in Pahlavi convention, pronouncing the name with an open 't' (Al-Mas'udi, 1984, Vol. 2, p. 127; Al-Shahristani, n.d., Vol. 1, p. 236). Interpretations of the meaning of his name have varied; some interpreted it as the owner of yellow camels (Zar – yellow, Ushtra – camel), and others as the one with the upright tongue (Zara – tongue, Dashta – upright, correct) (Farroukh, 1980, p. 48).

### 3. Avesta (أفستا)

Avesta: the origin reality and derivation of this word seems to be of unknown. It is most likely taken from the Aryan root *Vid* or *Veda* meaning knowledge or science of the unknown. This is supported by what is in the book of sciences, past news, and what is to come (Al-Wafi, n.d., p. 140).

Nothing remains of the Avesta revealed to Zarathushtra except the *Gathas*, which are considered today the oldest and most sacred of his books. Moreover, they have a special status among the Magians, as they consider them from the words of Zarathushtra in his original language. However, modern research has proven the impossibility of its connection to Zarathushtra, like the rest of the books of the Avesta. All that distinguishes it is the antiquity of its texts; indeed, it is among the oldest Zoroastrian texts. Therefore, its verses are recited in special Magian ceremonies according to specific rituals (Al-Wafi, n.d., p. 142).

As for the remaining books, they have become extinct, and nothing remains of them. The Avesta existing today contains only one complete book from the books that were collected, compiled, and translated in the Sassanian era, which is the book of Vendidad, which has remained largely intact since its compilation (Al-Wafi, n.d., p. 142; Durant, 1988, p. 440).

The Avesta circulated in our time among the Magians in India and Iran is an incomplete part of the version compiled in the Sassanian days. It is the only part carried by the Persian Zoroastrians in their first migration after the Islamic conquest to India (Al-Tabataba'i, 1971, Vol. 14, p. 358).

The contents of the book are divided topically into five sections: Vendidad, Visparad, Yasna, Yashts (or Yashtan), and Khordeh Avesta (Al-Wafi, n.d., p. 142; Durant, 1988, p. 440).

#### 4. Ahura Mazda and Ahriman (أهورا مزدا وأهريمان)

The purpose of bringing the term Ahura Mazda and the term Ahriman together is their very close connection, and separating them through a single clarifying study suffices for the purpose.

Ahura Mazda, as a god, existed before Zarathustra, as he was known to the Persians, especially, in the west and south of the Iranian plateau. It is said: This name appears in Achaemenid inscriptions. Ahura is a name derived from the name of the god Asura, the god of covenant and law, one of the gods of the Aryan people of India and Iran. It is composed of two terms: Ahura, meaning the great or the mighty, and Mazda, meaning the wise or the intelligent. Thus, the meaning of Ahura Mazda is: the great and wise god, or the mighty intelligent god, but he is known as the Lord of Wisdom (Uthman, n.d., pp. 84-85; Ismail, 1999, pp. 35-36). It is said: It is composed of three words in order: *Ahu*, *Ra*, and *Mazda*, meaning: I am, existent, and creator (Abd al-Qadir, 2006, p. 80). His name appears in the Avesta compounded (Ahura Mazda) or in the form of Ahura alone, and sometimes Mazda alone (Avesta, Yasna 35.5).

His description came in the Khordeh Avesta as follows: ((I begin with the name and praise of He who was, is, and shall always be, the Great, Knowing, Just, Teacher, Protector, Enlightener, Good, and Bestower God.)) (Avesta, Khordeh Avesta). ((We worship and praise the Good God who created humans as the best of all worldly creatures through speech, statement, mind, intellect, and justice...)) (Avesta, Khordeh Avesta).

And in the Yasna it says:

((That we sacrifice ourselves for the sake of Ahura Mazda, who is Himself the best truth, We know Him from ourselves, We think of Him from ourselves.)) (Avesta, Yasna 35.5).

((When we attain Your vision through the heart's telescope, O Ahura, You are the beginning and You are the end, You are the only one renewed through worship, You are the Good Spirit, and You are the true Creator of truth and uprightness, You are the just Arranger of the universe's affairs, therefore I have given You a place in my sight.)) (Avesta, Yasna 35.5).

Ahura Mazda occupies the first place in the *Gathas* hymns that Zarathustra used to recite aloud, mentioning His attributes and powers, to urge people to worship Him and abandon the worship of the other gods, who do not rival Him nor possess His supernatural powers and attributes, and are not true gods but mere idols, or demi-gods created by priests and sorcerers to deceive people. Thus, Zarathustra transferred humanity from the idea of a local, tangible god to the worship of an abstract God existing everywhere and at all times (Al-Raghib al-Isfahani, 2006, Vol. 1, p. 595).

The dualism of the Magians lies in their belief in the two origins of the world: light and darkness (Al-Raghib al-Isfahani, 2006, Vol. 1, p. 595).

It is said in this regard: Zoroastrianism believes in the existence of a universal power they call Ahura Mazda or the God of Good, versus the opposing power known to them as the Great Spirit of Evil or Ahriman. These two powers live throughout history in fierce conflict between them, ending at the end of time when good overcomes evil and the ground is prepared for the ascendancy of the word of Ahura Mazda (Nas, 1993, p. 318).

Ibn Ashur says in his interpretation: "As for the Magians, they are the people of a religion that affirms two gods: a god for good and a god for evil, and they are the people of Persia. Then they branched into sects that revert to these two origins. The oldest Magian sect was founded by (Gayomart), who is the first king of Persia in ancient times believed to be before the time of Abraham (peace be upon him), and therefore he is

also titled (Jahanshah), meaning king of the earth. However, that is not precisely determined in a scientific manner. The era of (Gayomart) was called (Zurvan), meaning eternity. So the origin of Magianism were the people of the religion called: Zurvanism, which affirms two gods: (Yazdan) and (Ahriman). They said: Yazdan was alone in eternal existence, and he was luminous, and he remained so for nine thousand and ninety years. Then a thought occurred to him: if an adversary were to appear to him, how would the matter be? From this thought a new dark being arose called (Ahriman), the god of darkness, inherently evil and harmful. To this, Abu al-'Ala' al-Ma'arri alluded in his saying:

قَالَ أَنَا سُبَّاطِلُ زَعْمُهُمْ \* فَرَاقِبُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تَزْعَمُنْ  
فَكَرَّ يَزْدَانُ عَلَى غَيَّةٍ \* فَصَيَّحَ مِنْ تَفْكِيرِهِ أَهْرَمَنْ

(People said, false is their claim \* So fear Allah and do not claim. Yazdan thought unexpectedly \* So from his thought Ahriman was cast.) Then disagreement and eternal warfare occurred between (Ahriman) and (Yazdan). Then sects arose upon this religion, designated with titles, closely related in doctrines, the most famous of which is the sect of (Zarathustra) who appeared in the sixth century before the birth of Christ, and through him Magianism became famous. The god of good was named (Ahura Mazda) or (Ormazd) or (Hormuz), and the god of evil was named (Ahriman). The god of good was made light, and the god of evil darkness. Then he called people to worship fire as it is a manifestation of the god of good, which is light" (Ibn Ashur, 1984, Vol. 17, p. 162; Vol. 23, p. 94; Vol. 30, p. 542).

### 1. Majus as a Divine Religion

The most important presented evidence, indicators, and statements considering the Majus a monotheistic religion and it is from Allah (SWT), will be discuss as follow:

#### *A. They are followers of the primordial religion (Al-Hanifiyyah)*

If the Zoroastrian religion is considered part of the Majus according to the evidence, some researchers like Muhammad 'Ala al-Din Mansur (who is among the "Quranists") and Muhammad Husayn Rajabi Dawani (a researcher in Islamic history) attempt to consider Zarathustra

as the same as the Prophet of Allah, Abraham (peace be upon him), that is, the both are one and same person. Below, some of their evidence is presented briefly with criticism and analysis:

- Historical evidence such as the proximity of the place and time of the appearance and mission of Zarathustra and Abraham the Friend (peace be upon him) does not prove the unity of both personalities, because the number of claimants to prophethood, disciples of prophets, their opponents, and the prophets themselves was so numerous that we cannot judge that based merely on temporal or spatial proximity.

- Attempting to find similarities in the lifestyle of both in some aspects and details, such as seclusion from family and contemplation of creation. This is also common among thousands of sages, righteous individuals, and prophets. And just as similarities can be gathered between them, we can also find many differences between their lives. Also, the lineage of Zarathustra completely differs from the lineage of Abraham the Friend (peace be upon him), and the story of Zarathustra's death completely differs from the death of Abraham the Friend (peace be upon him), who died without being killed, but regarding Zarathustra, it is reported that he was killed during a war between two states (Al-Tha'alibi, 1900, p. 262; Al-Mas'udi, 1984, Vol. 1, p. 254).

- Relying on miracles attributed to Zarathustra resembling some miracles of Abraham the Friend (peace be upon him). The authenticity of attributing them is doubted due to the lack of authenticity or reliability of their sources compared to the consecutively transmitted, established miracles in the Noble Quran, Torah, and Gospel. The existence of these acts and supernatural events in the religions does not prove their congruence.

- Attempting to consider the verse: (Indeed, those who have believed and those who were Jews and the Sabians and the Christians and the Magians and those who associated with Allah – Allah will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection. Indeed Allah is, over all things, Witness) (Al-Hajj 22:17), as praise for the Majus merely because their name comes with the rest of the People of the Book is merely appreciation or conjecture not based on any evidence.

- The existence of some similar teachings and customs between the teachings of the People of the Book like Jews, Christians, and Muslims, and what is mentioned in the Avesta, such as the mention of Paradise, Hell, angels, the unseen and visible worlds, a promised personality at the end of time, and the prohibition of idols and intoxicants, does not prove that the teachings attributed to Zarathustra are the same as the law of Abraham (peace be upon him). Rather, many teachings of scriptural and non-scriptural religions and sages like Mani, Mazdak, and Buddha resemble each other. Since there is a possibility that Zarathustra was a sage and not a prophet, and that these teachings existing in the current Avesta are taken from the teachings of Jews, Christians, and Muslims, the argument based merely on possibility and the existence of some similarities is invalidated. As it is said, if possibility correct, the argument is nullified (Refer to Muhammad 'Ala al-Din Mansur's article titled "Between Ibrahim and Zarathustra" on the website [www.ahl-alquran.com](http://www.ahl-alquran.com), and the report of the meeting of the "Young Researchers Base" news agency with Muhammad Husayn Rajabi Dawani titled "Zarathustra, a Divine Religion or a False Creed?" in Persian).

If we review the narratives, we see a vast difference between the teachings of the Majus and the teachings of the prophets (peace be upon them). It is narrated that an irreligious asked Abu 'Abdillah (peace be upon him) about the Majus. He said: "So inform me about the Majus, were they closer to correctness in their era or the Arabs?" He (peace be upon him) said: "The Arabs in the pre-Islamic period were closer to the primordial religion (Al-Hanifiyyah) than the Majus, because Majus disbelieved in all the prophets, denied their books, rejected their proofs, and did not adopt anything from their practices and traditions. And Kay-Khosrow, the king of the Majus in the first era, killed three hundred prophets. The Majus did not perform the major ritual ablution (ghusl) after sexual impurity, while the Arabs did perform it, and ghusl is from the pure laws of the Hanifiyyah. The Majus did not practice circumcision, and it is from the practices of the prophets, and the first to do it was Abraham, the Friend of Allah. The Majus did not wash their dead nor shroud them, while the Arabs did that. The Majus threw the dead in deserts and burial niches, while the Arabs buried them in their

graves and placed them in niches, and such is the practice upon the messengers. Indeed, the first for whom a grave was dug was Adam, the father of mankind, and a niche was made for him. The Majus had intercourse with mothers and married daughters and sisters, while the Arabs forbade that. The Majus denied the Sacred House of Allah and called it the house of Satan, while the Arabs used to perform pilgrimage to it, honor it, and say it is the house of our Lord. And they affirmed the Torah and the Gospel and asked the People of the Book and accepted from them. The Arabs were in all respects closer to the primordial religion than the Majus." He said: "They argued for marrying sisters, that, it is a practice from Adam." He (peace be upon him) said: "Then what is their argument for intercourse with daughters and mothers, when Adam forbade that, and so did Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and all the prophets, and everything that came from Allah (glorified and exalted be He)?" (Al-Tabrisi, n.d., Vol. 2, p. 346).

If the existence of similarity in a religion or belief with the divine religions were considered evidence for considering the people of that belief among the People of the Book, this evidence would be stronger or more applicable to the polytheists of the pre-Islamic period than to the Majus and Zoroastrianism.

### *B. Zoroastrianism is a sect among them*

The naming "Zoroastrianism" may have preceded the naming "Magianism," but this does not change the reality of unity between them or that one is a sect of the other. Therefore, Al-Sayyid al-Mar'ashi said: "I say: What appears from trace statements of historians is that the name Majus occurred for this group; they became famous by it after this man (Zarathustra). Before him, they were called Zarathustrians, Persians, Azaris, Khuris, Yazdanis, Ahrimanis, and others. Each naming has a basis: Zarathustrians attributed to Zarathustra, Persians to the land of Persia, Azaris to 'Adhar' meaning fire due to their orientation towards it, Khuris to 'Khur' meaning the sun, Yazdanis to Yazdan meaning light due to their belief in it, and Ahriman attributed to 'Ahriman' meaning darkness due to their belief in it" (Al-Mar'ashi al-Najafi, n.d., Vol. 1, pp. 388-389).

Then the Majus divided into sects after they were been one, for instance, the Babakiyyah, followers of Babak, also called Al-Hurramiyyah (Ibn al-Nadim, n.d., p. 480), and the Mazdakiyyah, followers of the ancient Mazdak, who commanded them to indulge in pleasures, devote themselves to lusts, and abandon dominance and independence of some over others. They had sharing in spouses and family; one of them would not prevent another from his spouse, and other such things attributed to them by Ibn al-Nadim (Ibn al-Nadim, n.d., p. 479). Then Mazdak the Second, son of Fayruz, appeared, and King Anushirvan killed him and his companions (Ibn al-Nadim, n.d., p. 479). Among the sects of the Majus is the Fariduniyyah, followers of Faridun, who innovated worships and spread ways, and a large group followed him (Ibn al-Nadim, n.d., p. 483). Abu Muslim sent Shabib ibn Dih and 'Abdullah ibn Sa'id to him, and they killed him. Ibn al-Nadim said: "And upon his doctrine in Khorasan is a group to this time" (Ibn al-Nadim, n.d., p. 483). Dispelling a misconception: Some authors counted Manichaeism, the followers of the famous painter-prophet Mani, among the Majus. What appears from Ibn al-Nadim is contrary to that, and that he innovated a special method, and some authors thought it branched from Christianity (Refer to: Ibn al-Nadim, n.d., p. 456).

Ibn Khaldun divided the Majus into eight sects: Gayomartiyyah, Zurwaniyyah, Zarathustriyyah, Thanawiyyah, Manichaeism, Mazdakiyyah, Baysaniyyah, Fariduniyyah, and mentioned the differences between them (Ibn Khaldun, 1988, Vol. 2, p. 182 ff.).

It is said the Majus are a community following the teachings of Zarathustra. Al-Razi says in his interpretation: "The Majus are the followers of Zarathustra, and Zarathustra only came after the coming of Moses (peace be upon him)" (Al-Razi, 2000, Vol. 14, p. 199).

It is mentioned in the World Arabic Encyclopedia: "The sage Zarathustra, who lived between the 15th and 11th centuries BCE, introduced modifications to the Magian creed of the Persians, which relies – as in their book Zend Avesta – on the existence of two deities, Ahura Mazda (god of good) and Ahriman (god of evil). The teachings of Zarathustra are found in the book Gathas (the hymns), which is part of a religious book called Avesta" (World Arabic Encyclopedia, 1999).

In a narrative, an irreligious asked Abu 'Abdillah (peace be upon him), he said: "So what is the story of Mani?" He (peace be upon him) said: "An investigator who took some of Magianism and mixed it with some of Christianity, so he erred in both religions and did not hit upon a single doctrine of them. He claimed that the world was managed by two gods: light and darkness, and that light is under siege by darkness, as we narrated from him. So the Christians declared him false, and the Magians accepted him" (Al-Tabrisi, n.d., Vol. 2, pp. 345-346). Based on this narrative, Manichaeism is considered one of the sects of Magianism.

### *C. They had a prophet and a book*

Among the necessities of proving that the Majus is a divine religion is proving that the Majus had a prophet sent by Allah (SWT) and a divine book. Is this prophet and book the same as the prophet and book of the Majus from Zoroastrianism and other associated sects?! Below, interpretive narratives and others and the opinions of scholars in proving or negating this topic will be mentioned.

In the books *Al-Tawhid* and *Al-Amali* with a chain to Al-Asbagh ibn Nubatah from the Commander of the Faithful (peace be upon him), there is a long hadith in which the Amir Muhmineen (peace be upon him) said: "Ask me before you lose me." Al-Ash'ath ibn Qays stood up to him and said: "O Commander of the Faithful, how is the jizyah taken from the Majus when no book was revealed to them and no prophet was sent to them?" He said: "Yes, O Ash'ath, Allah did reveal to them a book and sent to them a messenger, until they had a king who got drunk one night and called his daughter to his bed and committed (incest) with her. When he woke up in the morning, his people heard about it and gathered at his door and said: 'O King, you have defiled our religion and destroyed it, so come out so we may purify you and establish the legal punishment upon you.' He said to them: 'Gather and hear my speech. If there is a way out for me from what I have committed, otherwise you may do as you wish.' They gathered, and he said to them: 'Do you know that Allah did not create a creation more honorable to Him than our father Adam and our mother Eve?' They said: 'You have spoken

truthfully, O King.' He said: 'Did He not marry His sons to His daughters and His daughters to His sons?' They said: 'You have spoken truthfully; this is the religion.' So they covenanted upon that, and Allah erased the knowledge that was in their breasts and lifted the book from them. So they are the disbelievers who enter the Fire without reckoning, and the hypocrites are in a worse state than them.' Al-Ash'ath said: 'By Allah, I have never heard an answer like this, and by Allah I will never return to something like it ever'" (Al-Saduq, n.d., *Al-Tawhid*, p. 306; *Al-Amali*, p. 343).

It can be said that the king meant by the Commander of the Faithful (peace be upon him) according to the narrative is Cambyses. Herodotus narrated a story about him that agrees with what the Imam (peace be upon him) said regarding his assumption of marrying the sister, as the Persians did not marry their sisters before him, but differs in the manner in which he legitimized sister marriage for them. He says about him in history: "Cambyses was infatuated with love for one of his sisters and wanted to marry her, something not preceded. So he summoned the royal judges and asked them: 'Is there a law that permits a brother to marry his sister if he desires that?' These judges were chosen from Persians and remained in their positions until the end of their lives unless some injustice was proven from them. They were interpreters of the laws and claim judges, and all interests ended at their council. When Cambyses asked them, they replied him with an answer that secured them from danger without harming the side of justice. They said: 'There is no law that permits a brother to marry his sister, but there is a law that permits the king of the Persians to do what he wants.' With this answer, they did not invalidate the judgment of the law, while they were afraid of Cambyses. And so as not to expose themselves to destruction by prohibiting him, they found another law permitting the king to marry his sister as he desired. Upon this answer, Cambyses married the one he loved. After a short time, he took another wife from his sisters, the youngest of them. She is the one who went with him to Egypt and he killed her there" (Herodotus, 2001, p. 208).

In a narrative from Al-Mufaddal ibn 'Umar from Abu 'Abdillah (peace be upon him): "I said: 'O my master, how many are the creeds (mila)?" He (peace be upon him) said: 'Four, and they are the revealed laws.' Al-Mufaddal said: 'I said: O my master, the Majus, why were they called Majus?' He (peace be upon him) said: 'Because they "tamajjasu" (became Magian) in Syriac, and they falsely attributed to Adam (peace be upon him) and Seth (peace be upon him) – who is Hibatullah (the gift of Allah) – that they permitted for them the marriage of mothers, sisters, daughters, aunts, paternal aunts, and the prohibited women, and that they commanded them to pray towards the sun wherever it stood in the sky, and they did not set a time for their prayer. Indeed, it is fabricating lies against Allah (glorified and exalted be He) and against Adam and Seth (peace be upon them)" (Al-Hilli, n.d., pp. 437-438).

There is a narrative that informs that this incident occurred in the time of the People of the Ditch (Ashab al-Ukhdu) (Al-Shabistari, 2010, p. 115), mentioned in the Quran in Surat al-Buruj, verses 4-8. It is: One of the kings of the Majus got drunk one day and had intercourse with his mother and sister. When he sobered up from his drunkenness, he regretted what he had committed, so he announced to his subjects that what he had done with his mother and sister was a legitimate and acceptable act. Many opposed him, so he ordered the killing of his opponents and throwing them into ditches of fire dug for them (Al-Shabistari, 2010, p. 115). It is said: The believing People of the Ditch, who were thrown into trenches of fire, are three groups: a group in Yemen, another in Syria, and a third in the land of Persia (Al-Shabistari, 2010, p. 115).

It is mentioned in some works mentioning the life of the Prophet of Allah, Jeremiah (peace be upon him), that: "The most sincere and believing of people to him was his Yemeni disciple Baruch son of Neria the scribe, and Zarathustra studied under him. Then Zarathustra did an act that angered his teacher, so he supplicated against him and he became leprous. At that point, he left his teacher and invented the religion of Magianism or the Zoroastrian religion" (Al-Shabistari, 2010, p. 76). There is a saying that Zarathustra – the teacher of Magianism – was among his disciples (Ibn Khaldun, 1988, Vol. 2, p. 189).

Abu 'Abdillah (peace be upon him) was asked about the Majus: Did they have a prophet? He said: Yes. Has the letter of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) not reached you the people of Mecca: 'Accept Islam or I will wage war against you'? So they wrote to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family): 'Take the jizyah from us and leave us upon the worship of idols.' The Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) wrote to them: 'I do not take jizyah except from the People of the Book.' So they wrote to him – intending thereby to disprove him –: 'You claimed that you do not take jizyah except from the People of the Book, then you took jizyah from the Magians of Hajar.' So he (peace be upon him and his family) wrote to them: 'The Majus had a prophet whom they killed and a book which they burned. Their prophet came to them with their book on twelve thousand cowhides'" (Al-Kulayni, 1984, Vol. 3, p. 568).

Ibn Humayd narrated in his interpretation regarding Surat al-Buruj with a sound chain from Ibn Abza: "When Allah the Exalted defeated the people of Al-Isfidhar, they dispersed. Then 'Umar ibn al-Khattab came to them, and they gathered and said: 'With what rulings do you proceed regarding the Majus, for they are not People of the Book, nor are they polytheists from the Arab polytheists? So proceed with them the rulings that were applied to the People of the Book or the polytheists?' 'Ali ibn Abi Talib said: 'Rather, they are People of the Book'" (Ibn Hazm, n.d., Vol. 9, p. 449).

Some Sunni scholars hold that the Majus are from the People of the Book. Some of them will be elucidate below:

Ibn Hazm says: "As for the Majus, they acknowledge and affirm that their book which contains their religion was burned by Alexander when he killed Darius son of Darius, and that two-thirds and more of it were lost, and that less than a third remained, and that the laws were in what was lost. Since this is the description of their religion, the saying about it has completely collapsed due to the loss of its majority. And Allah the Exalted does not task anyone with what He does not undertake to preserve until it reaches him. And in a book of theirs named Khudhay, which they greatly venerate, that King Anushirvan prevented the learning of their religion in any of the lands except in Ardashir-

Khwarrah and Fash only. Before him, it was only learned in Istakhr, and it was not permitted except for specific people. Their book that remained after Alexander burned it is twenty-three volumes, so they have twenty-three herbad (priests), each herbad has a volume he does not go beyond. And the mobad mobadan (chief priest) oversees all those volumes. What is like this is guaranteed to be altered and distorted, and any transmission like this is invalid and does not necessitate certainty of its authenticity... added to what is in their books, without belief in which their religion is not correct, of apparent falsehood... and any book in which falsehood is written is invalid, fabricated, not from Allah (glorified and exalted be He). So the corruption of the religion of the Majus became apparent like the corruption of the religion of the Jews and Christians, exactly alike" (Ibn Hazm, n.d., *Al-Fasl*, Vol. 1, p. 116).

Al-Tabari mentions in his interpretation: "Ya'qub narrated to me, he said: Hisham narrated to us from Al-Mughirah from Al-Sha'bi who said: The Majus entered with the People of the Book in this verse (وَأَنْ أَحْكَمَ وَأَنْ أَجْزَلَ) (and judge between them by what Allah has revealed) (Al-Ma'idah 5:49)" (Al-Tabari, 1995, Vol. 6, p. 177).

Below are presented the opinions of some Shi'a scholars.

Al-Halabi says: "Disbelievers are of four types: Scriptuaries, and they are the Jews, Christians, and Majus" (Al-Halabi, 1983, p. 245).

Shaykh Ja'far al-Subhani says in his reply to a question: Are the Majus from the People of the Book or not? "The apparent meaning of the Noble Book is that they are among them.

Allah (glorified and exalted be He) says: (إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَالنَّصَارَى وَالْمَجُوسَ وَالَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ)

(Al-Hajj 22:17). For He placed the Majus in contrast to (والذين أشركوا)

(and those who associated with Allah). This is evidence that they are not from them. It is known that the disbeliever is either a polytheist or a Scriptuary, and there is no third except rarely – they are those who said (مَا هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا يُهْلِكُنَا إِلَّا الدَّهْرُ) (There is not but our worldly life; we die and live, and nothing destroys us except time) (Al-Jathiyah 45:23), who do not believe in any of the unseen worlds. They

were, relative to the two groups, very few, and for that reason the Quran did not consider them. And it is supported by narratives, even if their chains are not pure, but their multitude is suitable for support" (Al-Subhani, n.d., Vol. 1, p. 463). He begins by mentioning the narratives that state they had a book and a prophet, which we have touched upon in this section.

Al-'Allamah al-Tehrani says in interpreting the verse: "Six differing groups in belief, the sixth being 'those who associated with Allah,' which implies that the other five are not polytheists at all. They may be saved if they were righteous, whichever of the five they were. And as supports it: (إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَى وَالصَّابِئِينَ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ) (Indeed, those who have believed and those who were Jews and the Christians and the Sabians – whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and does righteousness – will have their reward with their Lord, and no fear will there be concerning them, nor will they grieve) (Al-Baqarah 2:62). For it made the reward conditional upon the believers among them and others, so they are not from the polytheists. And here 'Allah will judge between them' because among them are polytheists – 'and those who associated with Allah' – a distinction in recompense matching their distinction in beliefs" (Al-Sadiqi al-Tehrani, 1985, Vol. 20, p. 37).

Our jurists consider the Jews, Christians, and Majus as People of the Book. When they discuss the impurity of the People of the Book, they make it specific to these three. As in the book *Al-Taharah* by Al-Sayyid al-Khoei, he said: "Then, if we establish the impurity of the People of the Book based on the preceding narrations and the consensus of the companions, it is specifically for the Jews, Christians, and Majus..." (Al-Khoei, 1989, Vol. 2, p. 57).

Some narratives mention the name of their prophet as Dammasab or Dammast (Al-Saduq, n.d., *Man La Yahduruhu al-Faqih*, Vol. 2, p. 53) and the name of their book with slight differences in letters: Jamasp (Al-Saduq, n.d., *Man La Yahduruhu al-Faqih*, Vol. 4, p. 122), or Jamas (Al-Tusi, n.d., *Al-Istibsar*, Vol. 4, p. 269), or Jamast or Jamasp (Al-Tusi, n.d., *Tahdhib al-Ahkam*, Vol. 6, p. 175).

In a narrative, a heretic asked Abu 'Abdillah (peace be upon him) about the Majus: "Did Allah send to them a prophet? For I find they have precise books, eloquent admonitions, sufficient proverbs; they acknowledge reward and punishment, and they have laws they act upon." He (peace be upon him) said: "There is no nation except that a warner passed among them. A prophet was sent to them with a book from Allah, but they denied him and rejected his book." He said: "Who is he? For people claim he is Khalid ibn Sinan?" He (peace be upon him) said: "Khalid was a Bedouin Arab; he was not a prophet. That is just something people say." He said: "Zarathustra?" He (peace be upon him) said: "Zarathustra came to them with a charm (Zamzama) and claimed prophethood. A group among them believed in him, and a group rejected him, so they expelled him, and wild beasts ate him in a wilderness of the land" (Al-Tabrisi, n.d., Vol. 2, p. 346).

It appears from this narrative and others that this Zarathustra was a claimant to prophethood and not a prophet, and that the prophet of the Majus is Dammast (or Dammasab according to differences in copies) as in some narratives.

Based on this, Al-Fakhr al-Razi says in his interpretation: "The difference arising due to the prophets (peace be upon them). Its division is that it is said: Those who affirm a voluntary agent either acknowledge the existence of prophets or do not acknowledge that. Then they are either followers of one who was truly a prophet or of one who falsely claimed prophethood. As for the followers of the prophets (peace be upon them), they are the Muslims, Jews, and Christians, and another group between the Jews and Christians, they are the Sabians. As for the followers of the false claimant, they are the Majus. As for those who deny the prophets absolutely, they are the idol and graven image worshippers, and they are named polytheists. The Brahmins, despite their different classes, are included among them" (Al-Razi, 2000, Vol. 23, p. 212).

Ibn Ashur says in his interpretation of the verse (Al-Hajj 22:17): "He added, in this verse, the mention of the Majus and the polytheists, because the two preceding verses were in the context of clarifying the virtue of monotheism and faith in Allah and the Last Day in every time

and in every nation. The mention of the Majus and polytheists was increased in this surah because this verse is presented to clarify referring judgment between the people of religions to Allah. The Majus and polytheists are not from those who believe in Allah and the Last Day... As for the Majus, they are the people of a religion that affirms two gods: a god for good and a god for evil, and they are the people of Persia" (Ibn Ashur, 1984, Vol. 17, p. 161).

#### *D. The Companions of the Ditch (أصحاب الرّس)*

It may be said that the Majus are the Companions of the Ditch (Ashab al-Rass) mentioned in this narrative: It is narrated from the Commander of the Faithful 'Ali (peace be upon him) that he said regarding the Companions of the Ditch: "They were a people who worshipped a pine tree called Shah-Dirakht. Japheth son of Noah planted it on the edge of a spring called Rushab, which had gushed forth for Noah (peace be upon him) after the flood. They were only called Companions of the Ditch because they buried their prophet in the earth, and that was after Solomon son of David (peace be upon him). They had twelve villages on the bank of a river called Al-Rass in the lands of the East, and by them that river was named. There was no river on earth at that time more abundant, sweeter, stronger, nor with more villages or more populous than it. One was called Aban, the second Adhar, the third Day, the fourth Bahman, the fifth Isfandiyar, the sixth Parvardin, the seventh Ardibihisht, the eighth Ardadh, the ninth Murdad, the tenth Tir, the eleventh Mehr, and the twelfth Shahriyar. The greatest of their cities was Isfandiyar, which their king would reside in. He was named Tarkudh ibn Ghabur ibn Yarsh ibn Sazan ibn Nimrud ibn Kan'an, the Pharaoh of Abraham (peace be upon him)... and they would light fires in it with firewood... The Persians only named their months Abanmah, Adharmah, etc., derived from the names of those villages, due to the saying of their people to each other: 'This is the feast of such-and-such village.'... Allah (glorified and exalted be He) sent to them a prophet from the Children of Israel, from the descendants of Judah son of Jacob. He remained among them a long time calling them to the worship of Allah (glorified and exalted be He) and the recognition of His Lordship, but they would not follow him... They agreed to kill him.

So they took long, wide-mouthed pipes of lead, then they inserted them into the depth of the spring up to the top of the water, one above another like tubes, and they drained the water from them. Then they dug in its depth from the earth a deep well with a narrow entrance, and they put their prophet in it and sealed its mouth with a huge rock. Then they removed the pipes from the water and said: 'We hope now that our gods will be pleased with us since they see we have killed the one who used to fall upon them and prevent from their worship, and we buried him beneath their greatest one so that they may be avenged of him and their light and radiance may return to us as it was.' They remained for most of their day hearing the moaning of their prophet (peace be upon him) while he was saying: 'My Lord, You see the tightness of my place and the severity of my distress, so have mercy on the weakness of my strength and the lack of my means, and hasten the taking of my soul, and do not delay answering my supplication' until he died (peace be upon him)... Then He did not leave them on that feast of theirs except with a violent, intensely red wind, so they were bewildered by it, terrified of it, and huddled together. Then the earth beneath them became burning sulfur, and a dark, black cloud overshadowed them and descended upon them like a dome of blazing embers, and their bodies melted as lead melts in fire" (Ibn Babawayh, 1966, Vol. 2, pp. 40-43; *Uyun Akhbar al-Rida*, Vol. 1, pp. 205-208).

The existence of some indicators in this narrative, such as that this prophet and his people were from the East, meaning they may be from the land where Magianism appeared, and the names of their months that match the Magian months, and in terms of the time period that falls within the bounds of the appearance of Magianism. And the narrative "they had a prophet whom they killed" does not necessarily indicate that this prophet was from their tribe or clan; rather, its apparent meaning may be understood that Allah (glorified and exalted be He) sent to them a prophet who was present among them. But in any case, the complete application of this narrative to prove that this mentioned prophet is the prophet of the Majus and issuing a definitive judgment based on it requires effort, and these indicators present in the narrative do not exceed mere possibilities that cannot be decisively established, especially with the existence of stronger possibilities and evidence.

## 2. Majus is Not a Divine Religion

Below is the presented evidence and indicators indicating or suggesting that the Majus is not a divine religion:

### A. *They are worshippers of fire, sun, and moon*

Are the Majus monotheists who worship Allah (SWT), or do they associate partners with Allah in His management? Here, evidences and statements are presented from those who said they are worshippers of fire, sun, and moon, and from those who denied that and considered it a fabrication.

It is narrated in a report transmitted by 'Abd al-Razzaq, 'Abd ibn Humayd, Ibn Jarir, and Ibn Abi Hatim from Qatadah (may Allah be pleased with him) regarding His saying (إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا) (Al-Hajj 22:17), he said: "The Sabians are a people who worship angels, pray towards the qiblah, and recite the Zabur (Psalms). And the Magians are worshippers of the sun, moon, and fires" (Al-Tabari, 1995, Vol. 17, p. 97; Al-San'ani, 1989, Vol. 2, p. 34).

Therefore, it has been said that: "The Magians are those who worship the sun, moon, and fires." This statement forms most Sunni interpretations, such as the interpretation of Muqatil ibn Sulayman (Muqatil ibn Sulayman, 2003, Vol. 3, p. 120) and the interpretations that came after it.

As for Al-Tabari in his interpretation of the verse (Al-Hajj 22:17), he has another expression despite mentioning this narrative. He says: "The Magians are those who venerated fires and served them" (Al-Tabari, 1995, Vol. 17, p. 97).

It is not mentioned in the narratives of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) that the Majus worship fire or the sun and moon. Rather, this statement is mentioned in Sunni narrative sources, and this statement is not a narration from the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) but attributed to Qatadah, who is considered from the *Tabi'un* (successors). He did not attribute this statement to the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family), so this statement not authentic. Rather, it may be an opinion distinguished by Qatadah and those who said his saying from the interpreters.

Scholars have divided regarding the issue of the Magians' veneration of fire into two groups. One group considered it mere veneration and seeking blessings without considering it a god worshipped besides Allah. They said regarding Zoroastrianism: "The Zoroastrians did not worship fire as a god, but rather it was taken as a tangible, material symbol for the god Ahura Mazda... Fire holds a distinguished status in ancient Aryan beliefs; in their view, it is the purest of elements, all life and movement, representing the divine light that spreads good upon the earth" (Uthman, n.d., pp. 29, 122-123). "And after fire became worship, the fire festivals also took a social form with a touch of formal religion. For example, the Adhargashn festival (Fire Day) is celebrated indoors at the beginning of winter, like seasonal festivals. They light great fires in their homes and continuously worship and glorify Allah, then they gather to eat. They claim that all of that is to repel the cold and dryness occurring in winter, and that the spread of its heat repels the evils of harm from plants" (Nada, 1954, p. 264). "And with fire entering the creed as a direction for worship and as a tangible symbol for Allah the Exalted in His majesty" (Al-Shafi' al-Mahi, 2000, p. 73). It is said that the Zoroastrians who migrated to India in the city of Bombay and its suburbs have several temples there that maintain a continuously burning fire. Therefore, the local inhabitants call them 'fire worshippers' despite their strong denial of that, and despite the denial of most of the religious texts specific to Zoroastrianism of that [according to his statement]. But their care for the fire and keeping its flame ablaze and using it in their celebrations prompted the Indians to attach the name fire worshippers to them" (Uthman, n.d., p. 131). Among the interpreters who support this view are Al-'Allamah al-Tabataba'i (Al-Tabataba'i, 1971, Vol. 14, p. 358) and Shaykh Makarim al-Shirazi (Al-Makarim al-Shirazi, 2005, Vol. 10, p. 303).

Another group considered them fire worshippers (Al-Tayyib, 1999, Vol. 9, p. 279), but after distortion occurred in later centuries, they said: "After fire was a symbol of Ahura Mazda, it was called in later eras the daughter of Ahura Mazda" (Uthman, n.d., p. 131). Among the most important supplications recited before the fire among them: "We sanctify you, O Fire, O daughter of Ahura Mazda" (Avesta, Yasna 6.18).

And in the statement attributed to Zarathustra: "We worship the Creator Ahura Mazda, the fire, son of Ahura Mazda" (Avesta, Yasna 16.4). And that Ahura Mazda has wives: "And we sanctify Your chosen wives, O Ahura Mazda" (Avesta, Yasna 38.1).

Based on this, it has been said: "The Zoroastrians worship fire; for them, it is a god and the son of the greater god Ahura. But the people hid this fact from others and pretended otherwise since the first Islamic centuries when they distorted their book, religion, and heritage. They did that by the influenced of Islam and Muslims, and to achieve religious and worldly gains" (Alal, 2014, p. 57).

Perhaps it can be said that the narratives of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) are silent regarding that the Majus worship fire or not, or it can be said that they did not worship fire in their time, and the distortion occurred after the era of the Imams (peace be upon them).

### *B. Assimilated to the People of the Book*

A group of those who said that the Majus is not a divine religion, but Allah assimilated them in terms of legal ruling to the People of the Book, considered the evidence for assimilation to be due to them not being People of the Book. Below two proofs were presented buttress their assimilated to the People of the Book, they are: the narrative: "Apply to them the practice of the People of the Book," and the ruling of permissibility of marriage and eating their slaughtered animals.

Apply to them the practice of the People of Book: Al-Hasan ibn 'Ali al-Washsha' narrated from Ahmad ibn 'Umar, he said: "I asked him about the saying of Allah (SWT): ( *ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِّنْكُمْ أَوْ آخِرَانِ مِّنْ* ) ( *غَيْرِكُمْ* ) (two just men from among you or two others from outside) (Al-Ma'idah 5:95). He said: 'The two from among you are two Muslims, and the two from outside you are from the People of the Book. If you do not find from the People of the Book, then from the Majus. Because the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) said: "Apply to them the practice of the People of the Book." This narrative related to when a man dies in a foreign land and does not find two Muslims to bear witness, then two men from the People of the Book'" (Al-Saduq, n.d., *Man La Yahduruhu al-Faqih*, Vol. 3, pp. 47-48). In the

interpretation of Al-'Ayyashi, the narrative is from Ibn al-Fudayl from Abi al-Hasan (peace be upon him) (Al-'Ayyashi, n.d., Vol. 1, p. 349).

The author of *Tafsir al-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir* comments on this narrative transmitted from the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) in their sources, saying: "i.e., in being satisfied with taking the jizyah from them without compelling them to Islam, as the polytheists are compelled to enter Islam. Magianism has a resemblance in origin to polytheism, but it differs from it by prohibiting the worship of stones and by having a book. So they resembled the People of the Book in that" (Ibn Ashur, 1984, Vol. 17, p. 163).

Al-Shafi'i, commenting on this narrative, said: "If he meant all polytheists other than the People of the Book, he would have said – and Allah knows best – 'Apply to all polytheists the practice of the People of the Book.' But when he said 'Apply to them,' he specifically designated them. And if he specifically designated them, then others are different, and none differ from them except those other than the People of the Book." It is mentioned in the footnote of the book: "Al-Shafi'i struggles with relate the hadith on treating the Majus with the treatment of the People of the Book in taking the jizyah only" (Al-Shafi'i, 1990, Vol. 4, p. 183).

Ibn 'Abd al-Barr said after mentioning ("Apply to them..."): "This is from the general speech intended as specific, because what is meant is the practice of the People of the Book in taking the jizyah only. And he used His saying 'the practice of the People of the Book' as proof that they are not People of the Book" (Al-Nawawi, n.d., p. 390).

Therefore, it is said regarding His saying ("Apply to them the practice of the People of the Book"): that is, take them according to their way, i.e., grant them security and take the jizyah from them. And 'Sunnah' means the way (Al-Nawawi, n.d., p. 391).

Shaykh al-Mufid says: "The jizyah is obligatory upon him... and the Majus, despite their differences... and it has been narrated from the Commander of the Faithful (prayers of Allah be upon him and his family) that he said: 'The Majus were only assimilated to the Jews and Christians regarding the jizyah and blood money because they had a book in the past'" (Al-Mufid, 1990, p. 270).

Shaykh al-Tusi says: "Disbelievers are of three kinds: People of the Book, and they are the Jews and Christians; it is permissible to let them remain upon their religion in exchange for paying the jizyah. And those who have a semblance of a book, they are the Majus; their ruling is the ruling of the People of the Book; they are left upon their religion in exchange for paying the jizyah. And those who have no book and no semblance of a book, and they are other than these three types, from the worshippers of idols, graven images, stars, and others; they are not left upon their religion in exchange for paying the jizyah" (Al-Tusi, n.d., *Al-Mabsut*, Vol. 2, p. 9).

Permissibility of marriage and eating their slaughtered animals: We see in some Sunni sources an addition in the text of the narrative that says "Apply to them the practice of the People of the Book," which is: "without eating their slaughtered animals and without marrying their women" (Al-Zuhri, 2001, Vol. 1, p. 263; Al-Ansari, n.d., p. 268). But Ibn Hajar comments on this, saying: "I have not found something like this. But 'Abd al-Razzaq and Ibn Shaybah narrated through the chain of Al-Hasan ibn Muhammad ibn Al-Hanafiyyah, uplifted to the Prophet (marfu'): 'A letter was written to the Magians of Hajar, presenting Islam to them. Whoever accepts Islam, it is accepted from him; and whoever does not accept Islam, the jizyah is imposed upon him, without marrying their women and without eating their slaughtered animals.' And Malik narrated from 'Abd al-Rahman ibn 'Awf, uplifted to the Prophet: 'Apply to them the practice of the People of the Book'" (Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, n.d., Vol. 2, p. 56). This may be understood that this addition statement not from the narrative but from the commentator's comment.

Regarding the opinion of the four Sunni schools, it is said: "A group has a semblance of a book, and these are the Majus who worship fire. The meaning of them having a semblance is that a book was revealed to their prophet – who is Zarathustra – and they distorted it and killed their prophet, so Allah lifted this book from among them. Therefore, it is not permissible to marry them by agreement of the four Imams. Dawud (al-Zahiri) differed and said it is permissible due to the semblance of the book" (Al-Jaziri, 1998, Vol. 4, p. 72).

Based on the foregoing, and the verses and narratives some of which we mentioned and upon which even the jurists of the Islamic schools relied, the Majus according to the Imami Shi'a are those who have a semblance of a heavenly book. Therefore, they considered them among the People of the Book in rulings.

Finally, Shaykh al-Tusi divides the groups of polytheists into three types and says about the third type: "The third type: those who have a semblance of a book, and they are the Majus. A group said they are People of the Book; they had a book then it was abrogated and lifted from among them. Others said: They never had a book originally. And the prohibition predominated. So it is said on both sayings: their blood is protected by paying the jizyah, and marrying them and their slaughtered animals are forbidden without disagreement" (Al-Tusi, n.d., *Al-Mabsut*, Vol. 4, p. 210).

### **Research Conclusion (Results and Findings)**

1. When studying the Majus throughout history, it means the sects and creeds attributed to them, such as Zurvanism, Manichaeism, Zoroastrianism, and others. But their sole existing referent in our current era is the Zoroastrians.

2. The attempt of some to prove that the Majus is a divine religion by bringing historical evidence through the existence of similarity between what is related to Zarathustra and Abraham (peace be upon him), and also relying on the single verse that mentioned the Majus alongside the divine religions, and the narratives stating that they had a book and a prophet, is nothing but reliance on probabilities and conjectures. Since there is much other evidence opposing their claim, which was touched upon when mentioning their statements, and at the very least, it cannot be judged and relied upon as established, definitive, and explicit evidence.

3. There are those who could not definitively assert that the Majus are not People of the Book, so they considered them assimilated in some rulings to the People of the Book, based on some narratives. They see the possibility of considering that where evidence and proof support it, and they are the narratives of the Infallible.

There are those who considered them a non-divine religion and not People of the Book, and that Zarathustra was a false claimant and a sage, not a prophet from Allah (glorified and exalted be He) as they claim, based on some statements, narratives, historical evidence, and texts present in their holy book "Avesta." Here, according to the narratives, the correctness of this evidence is supported, but it proves for the Majus a prophet other than Zarathustra and a book that originally did not reach the present era, though some of its teachings may exist in Zoroastrianism currently, since some of his teachings resemble the teachings of the prophets.

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