



The World After Death from the Point of View of Zoroastrianism and Islam Based on the Pahlavī texts and Quran

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ABSTRACT

Most religious traditions anticipate the end of the world. According to these traditions, the story of creation and the beginning of time occurred in a very distant past, and many narratives have been told about it. In contrast to the story of creation, there are narratives of doomsday and the end of the world, the timing of which is very close and imminent. At that time, the world will lose its current system, confusion and panic will engulf the entire world, and the wheel of creation will cease to move. Subsequently, the beginning of creation will take place as it should be done in perfection, and humans will be held accountable for their actions, reaching their original state based on the deeds they have performed. This research seeks to identify and examine the differences and similarities between the two religions by comparing their views on the world after death, which is one of the most fundamental rites of passage in both religions.

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Introduction

One of the most important religious issues in most religions is the issue of resurrection and the life after death. There are many differences among religions in this regard. “The knowledge of resurrection is one of the most complex and profound forms of knowledge that only a few sages of the past have been able to grasp its truths. The more that philosophers put forth their efforts in explaining monotheism and purifying the essence of the Divine and His works from shortcomings, the more their thoughts have been unable to comprehend the stations and realms of resurrection, because they did not seek the illumination of wisdom from the teachings of the Last Prophet. Consequently, Ibn Sīnā, despite his scientific prominence, acknowledged his inability to rationally prove the bodily resurrection and remained perplexed regarding the resurrection of humanity; in these matters, he limited himself to relying solely on religious texts” (Mullā Ṣadrā, 1989, p. 179). The remarkable point in studying the issues of resurrection is that although it is possible to rationally examine some of its issues, such as proving the origin of human immortality or the possibility and necessity of resurrection, most of the issues related to it are researchable only using the narrative method; that is, by using the holy scriptures, and the inconsistency in the scriptures has made it difficult to discuss resurrection (Mullā Ṣadrā, 2007, p. 279). In this article, we try to examine the issue of resurrection and the world after death on the basis of the scriptures of both Zoroastrians and Islam. The reason for choosing these two religions is the significant number of similarities in this regard. To reach this stage, we have to dedicate a part of this research to describe the beginning of the world, as reports of the end of the world are based on some reports of the beginning of the world. In other words, the understanding of many accounts about resurrection depends on explaining the beginning of creation. Therefore, we will primarily describe the accounts related to the beginning of the world in two religions in brief.

Cosmology of Zoroastrian Religion

The Beginning of Creation and the Place of Ahūrā Mazdā

The story of creation in the Zoroastrian religion is structured in such a way that, in the eternal and beginning-less moment, Ahūrā Mazdā exists in absolute light, while Ahrīman (the Demon) resides in absolute darkness. Ahūrā Mazdā is both the beginning and the end of existence and serves as the judge of the actions of the world's people. In opposition to Ahūrā Mazdā, there is Ahrīman, who is mentioned in *Gāhān* as a Mēnōg which is in conflict and incompatibility with Sepand Mēnōg (Dādagī, 2023).

In non-*Gāhān* reports, the world has three parts. The High world which belongs to Ahūrā Mazdā, the world of darkness or the underworld, which is for Ahrīman, and the space between these two worlds which, in Pahlavi literature, is called "*Tōhīgī*" and is Vacuum (*Khala'*) (Dādagī, 2023).

Since Ahūrā Mazdā knew about the Ahrīman's existence and his attack on the light, he sought to neutralize this Ahrīman's action. “He created those creations in Numinous (spiritual state) that was necessary with that tool, in high position. For three thousand years, the creations stood in a state of Numinous that were mindless, motionless and impregnable creatures” (Dādagī, 2023, p. 34). At the beginning of the second millennium, a light has been sent to the

world of darkness. Ahrīman, who due to his ignorance was not aware of the existence of Ahūrā Mazdā, got up from the base and went to see the light. When he saw Ahūrā Mazdā and his light, he attacked it, trying to destroy it out of jealousy; but he couldn't. Therefore, when he saw that he couldn't handle it, he returned to the dark world to plan an attack and make a victory for himself (Dādagī, 2023). Therefore, he created a demon like Kamāle Divān, Xrafastarān, and all the evils to fight against Ahūrā Mazdā. The demons, each of whom was Mēnōg, faced one of the good creations of Ahūrā Mazdā (Amuzigar, 2007, part II).

At the end of the third millennium, Ahrīman reached the boundary of enlightenment and threatened Ahūrā Mazdā with destruction (Rashed Muhassil, 2006). “Then Ahūrā Mazdā said ‘O Ahrīman give assistance to my creatures and praise them so that, as its reward, you become deathless, inexhaustible and incorruptible’. ... Ahrīman said, ‘I will not go to your creations and I will not help them. Rather, I will make you and your creatures die eternally’” (Rashed Muhassil, 2006). “Then, after making the pact, Ahūrā Mazdā sings the prayer of truth (Ahūnavar) and because of that, Ahrīman falls unconscious in the darkness for three thousand years” (Rashed Muhassil, 2006, p. 35). “In this three-thousand-year opportunity, Ahūrā Mazdā created the material world so that he has prepared a limited and suitable arena for the battle against the devil in advance” (Rashed Muhassil, 2006, p. 32). Ahūrā Mazdā started the creation of world in this three-thousand-year opportunity (Amuzigar, 2007, part II). After spending three thousand years, Ahrīman started his attack with the encouragement of other demons. The Mēnōg gods fought with Ahrīman and his creations for ninety days and nights to throw them into hell (Dādagī, 2023). In this way, the two initial Mēnōg, Ahūrā Mazdā started and Ahrīman, founded life and death. A foundation that will last until the end of time (*Gāhān*, Hāt 30).

Human Place

“Ahūrā Mazdā took the origin of creation from fire. It was fire that Ahūrā Mazdā created it from thought. Ahūrā Mazdā first created a material body from fire, and then from its head the sky, from its feet the earth, from it tears the water, from its hair the plants, from its right hand the cow, and from its left hand He created Kayūmars” (Dādagī, 2023, p. 39). In *Bondaheshn*, the purpose of creating pious people, both men and women, is to destroy and disable Ahrīman (Dādagī, 2023).

Zoroastrianism Eschatology

Death

The word “mahraka” in Avesta means “death.” This description is also used for the Demon Aposh (Ushidari, 1992). According to *Vandīdād*, “death is the separation of the spirit from the body, as it is the separation of two main components from each other” (Purdavud, 2024, vol. 4). There are many verses of the *Avesta* about the fate of man in the world after death and resurrection, from which we can deduce the belief in the immortality of the soul; because if the soul is destroyed along with the body at death, the discussion about the fate of man after death and punishment and reward will be futile (MirFakhrayi, 2007).

The Fate of Spirit

Sadūsh

In the Zoroastrian scriptures, aside from the portions of the Avesta (Hādokht Nask, Vishtāsp-Yasht, Vandīdād), a clear picture is not provided about the fate of the spirit after death. However, in the Pahlavi sources (Dādstān Dīnī, Mīnūyi Khirad, Bondaheshn, Ardāvīrāfnāmeḥ, Rivīyati Omīd Ashvahishtān), a relatively complete description is available.

When death occurs, the spirit does not leave the body immediately but remains with the body for three nights (Dādagī, 2023). In Pahlavi texts, after death and transition from this world to another, a person becomes like a baby in need of the intense attention of a kind mother; otherwise, the newly arrived spirit in the other world will fall into the hands of Ahrīman and the devils (Purdavud, 2024). After these three nights, the souls of pure and pious individuals would differ from the souls of wicked individuals (MirFakhrayī, 2007).

The Fate of the Spirits of Righteous and Wicked People

In these three nights after death, the spirit of the pious feels as happy as all the living beings (MirFakhrayī, 2007). When the three nights are over, on the way, three figures come to welcome them. Then, the spirit of a pious person goes four steps up: in the first step, it reaches the base of "good thought." In the second step, it reaches the base of "good speech." In the third step, it reaches the base of "good deed." In the last step, it enters the beginning-less light (MirFakhrayī, 2007).

According to *Hādokht Nask*, during these three nights and days, the spirit of the sinner wanders in fear and panic next to the body. The spirit feels pain and unhappiness and mourns in these three nights as much as all the unpleasant things it has experienced in its entire life (MirFakhrayī, 2007). In the first night, due to "bad thoughts," in the second night, due to "bad speech," and in the third night, due to "bad actions," the individual is highly disturbed and confused. If the spirit of the evil-doing person is not completely immersed in sin, a certain amount has been given to him due to meritorious deeds, it is because the spirit can tolerate those three nights to some extent (Amuzigar, 2023).

Chīnūt Bridge

"Chīnūt Bridge" has been taken to mean the judgment bridge and the separating bridge. "Chīnūt Bridge" has been mentioned four times in *Gāhān* (Purdavud, 2024, vol. 1). In Pahlavi texts, crossing this bridge is mentioned as a belief that every Zoroastrian should have faith in (Ji Dastoor & Jamasb Asana, 2011). This bridge is located on hell, with one side of leading to heaven (*Rivāyati Pahlavī*, 1988; Dādagī, 2023).

Individual Judgment

According to Zoroastrian documents, the judgment of people on the Day of Resurrection will be done twice: individual judgment and general judgment. Individual judgment takes place after the death of a person and their entry into the world after death on Chīnūt Bridge. On this bridge, a court has been formed to judge people's psyche. In *Mīnūyi Khirad*, three gods, Mehr (the Sun), Soroush (an angel equal to Gabriel in Islam), and Rashan (an angel who manage affairs), are introduced as judges who judge people's good and bad deeds using a scale, so that

it doesn't deviate as much as a needle and it works the same for everyone. Good people pass through it easily and reach Heaven, but the souls of sinners and criminals will fall into Hell if they try to pass through it (Amuzigar, 2023).

The Spirit without a Body in the World After Death

Considering the book, *Matn-hāyi Pahlavī*, it becomes clear that in the Zoroastrian religion, in life after death until resurrection, only the spirit is present and there is no mention of the body. In other words, the spirit continues its life without a body in the world after death until the resurrection comes. Then, on that day, the body and spirit are present together. Researchers of Zoroastrianism have also stated that the spirit is present alone in the court of individual judgment as well as punishment and reward in the world after death (Boyce, 1997; Hinnells, 1989).

When the spirits have been subjected to individual judgment, the place of each is determined. If a person's good deeds are more than their bad deeds, they will go to heaven, and if their bad deeds outweigh their good ones, they will go to hell. If their good and bad deeds are equal, they will be sent to Hamīstagān (Amuzigar, 2007). This division into heaven, hell, and Hamīstagān will only continue until the day of resurrection, as in the Zoroastrian resurrection there is no mention of Hamīstagān (Molé, 1993).

The Hell

The general concept of hell exists in *Matn-hāyi Pahlavī*. When an evildoer dies, in the first step, they enter the "dushmat" or the first floor of hell (meaning bad thoughts). In the second step, they enter the place of "dushukhat" or the second floor of hell (meaning bad speech). In the third step, they enter the place of "dushvaresht" (meaning bad deed) which is the third floor of hell, and finally, they reach the fourth floor or endless darkness and the bottom of the hell. Then, the spirit of the wicked man who had entered there before them welcomes them and inquires about that dangerous and terrifying path. After that, he presents them with a poisonous stew to eat (Amuzigar, 2023).

The most important point is that, according to Zoroastrians, when the soul goes to the "pād-afra" house, it has not gone to its eternal and original place; rather, its punishment is for correction and is never eternal. The spirit will suffer for some time until the final restoration of the world, at which point evil will be completely destroyed, and the spirits of all will continue their lives in a favorable manner (Amuzigar, 2007).

Paradise

In *Matn-hāyi Pahlavī*, heaven is interpreted using various titles such as eternal abode, the place of reward for the righteous, the best life or the best world. After three days and nights of death, the spirit of a benevolent person appears to them as fifteen-year-old and very beautiful maidens, guided by their conscience or religion. First, they pass the three levels of heaven, which are "Humat," "Hukhat," and "Huvaresht" (good thoughts, good speech, good deeds), and enter the house of numinous and infinite light which is the highest level of heaven and the place of Ahūrā Mazdā and Amshāspandān (the immortal saints). Then, they are given a cup of heavenly stew, that is, "Zaremayah," spring oil, to rejoice and enjoy (Amuzigar, 2007).

When, after the death of pious individuals, their souls depart from their bodies, a beautiful, well-made, strong, and well-bred maiden will graciously take them, accompanied by two wise dogs and adorned with a golden crown; she embodies prosperity, artistry, and a celestial spirit (*Rivāyati Pahlavī*, 1988).

Hamīstagān

In *Matn-hāyi Pahlavī*, “*Hamīstagān*” refers to a person whose good and bad deeds are equal; they will reside in a middle place (Duchesne–Guillemin, 1996). The *Bondaheshn* mentions that, “if their sins and rewards are equal, then they will be given to ‘*Hamīstagān*’” It describes *Hamīstagān* as a place similar to the world, where everyone will be assigned according to their rewards (Dādagī, 2023, p. 131).

The Final Judgment and Passing the Eternal Test

In *Avesta*, the divine judgment is called (*varangha*) while in *Pahlavi* it is called “*var*” (Ushidari, 1992). The final and general judgment takes place after the “resurrection” and “*tan e pasin*” (last body). It is explained that, finally, at the end of the “nine thousand years of the world” era, the last promised Zoroastrian who is called “*sūshyant*” will appear and setup the resurrection. In this resurrection, the spirits of the dead return to their re-formed bodies, and they all appear in a public judgment session before the justice of *Ahūrā Mazdā*. This time, both sinners and virtuous individuals will enter hell and heaven with their bodies. This physical torment lasts only three days, but it is so intense that it feels like a thousand years to the sinners. After the three days, a burning flood of molten metals will flow, and both the pious and the sinners will pass through this flood. For sinners, passing through the flood of metals is extremely painful, while for the virtuous, this flood is referred to as the “eternal test,” also known as “*var e īzadī*” (the divine judgment). During this process, sinners are cleansed of their sins, and from that point on, the righteous and sinners are no longer distinguished from each other; all are equal. The only difference is that the happiness of the pious is far greater than that of the sinners who have been cleansed through punishment (Bagheri, 2006).

After the *īzadī* test, with the assistance of good souls and *Ahūran* beings who carry out the acts of resurrection, *Ahūrā Mazdā* defeats and destroys *Ahrīman* in the final battle. With the destruction of *Ahrīman* and his instruments, the world created by *Ahūrā* remains pure. Then, “the *Farashgard*” (lit. the early perfection) takes place (Dādagī, 2023).

According to these details, it is clear that the changes occurring at the end of the world do not alter the fundamental nature of the world. What causes unhappiness in existence will change; however, enjoyable experiences retain their significance (Bagheri, 2006).

The Beginning of Creation from the Islamic Perspective

God Being Creator

From the point of view of Islam, Allah created the world and manages it. The earth, the sky, and the entire material world were created by “Allah,” the only owner of the world. “To God belongs all that is in the heavens and in the earth, and God encompasses everything” (Qur’an 4: 126). According to the Qur’an, God is omnipotent and nothing is beyond his power

(Qur'an 2: 20). God created all creatures without a partner to help Him and He governs them. (Qur'an 10: 31).

The Place of Human Being

According to the Qur'ān, the most important creature of God since the beginning of creation is human. In the Qur'ān, human is considered the best of creatures (Qur'an 17: 70). In God's sight, the creation of human is extremely important; Because the knowledge of the resurrection depends on the knowledge of the human being. The difference on the resurrection is caused by the difference on the truth of the human being (Mullā Ṣadrā, 2007). In the Islamic anthropology, human being consists of spirit and body. "And [remember] when thy Lord said to the angels, 'See, I am creating a mortal of a clay of mud molded. When I have shaped him, and breathed My spirit in him, fall you down, bowing before him!' (Qur'an 15: 28-29). Considering this statement, it is clear that human is composed of body and spirit, and by combining these two, this worldly truth of human is characterized.

God ordered the angels –that Iblis (Satan) was among them for a while - to prostrate to Adam, all of them prostrated except Iblis who disobeyed. He became arrogant and, as God says, he became one of the disbelievers" (Qur'an 15: 28-29).

Iblis said: "Respite me till the day they shall be raised" (Qur'an 7: 14). God said: "Thou art among the ones that are respited" (Qur'an 7: 15) "until the day of the known time" (Qur'an 38: 81). Iblis said: "Now, for Thy perverting me, I shall surely sit in ambush for them on Thy straight path; then I shall come on them from before them and from behind them, from their right hands and their left hands; Thou wilt not find most of them Thankful" (Qur'an 7: 16-7), "excepting those Thy servants among them that are devoted" (Qur'an 15: 40). God, in contrast, promised that "I shall assuredly fill Gehenna with thee, and with whosoever of them follows thee, all together" (Qur'an 38: 85). The most important point in eschatology and the fate of man was made at this moment and Iblis became the greatest enemy of man. In the Islamic worldview, man, as one of the most wonderful creatures of God, pursues a goal according to divine wisdom and was not created in vain.

Death in Islam

In the Qur'an, death means "wafāt," not "fawt," because "fawt" means decline and destruction, but "wafāt" means "totally taking and completely taking possession of a truth and transferring it to another abode." This is done by the angels of "wafāt" (Javādī Āmulī, 2012, Vol. 5, p. 181). The expression "Tawaffī" (lit. to take completely) has been used about twelve times in the Qur'ān about death. As lexicographers have stated, "Wafā" originally means perfection, and in this way, "Tawfaffī" means "complete receipt" (Rāghib Iṣfahānī, 1991). According to the Qur'an, a person starts a new journey by moving to the other house and reaches his final destination. "Upon that day unto thy Lord shall be the driving" (Qur'an 75: 30).

The Fate of the Spirits of Good and Bad People

At the time of death, for virtuous people, divine angels descend and the Prophet and their leaders appear before them, saying: "rejoice in Paradise that you were promised. We are your

friends in the present life and in the world to come; therein you shall have all that your souls desire, all that you call for” (Qur’an 41: 30-31). “Whom the angels take while they are goodly, saying, 'Peace be on you! Enter Paradise for that you were doing” (Qur’an 16: 32).

In the Qur’an, there are many references about the status after death for unbelievers and sinners. “If thou coldest only see when the angels take the unbelievers, beating their faces and their backs: 'Taste the chastisement of the burning” (Qur’an 8: 50). It is due to the fact that they followed the path that causes God's anger and did not follow the path of God's pleasure. God also erased their actions and invalidated them. In Sūrah al-An‘ām (no. 6), the Qur’an mentions a group of people who, unlike good people, will face harsh treatment from the angels at the moment of death, and they are the ones who lie to God and see themselves in a position they do not deserve and rely on it. They do not obey the words of the Prophet and the words of God, and they do not strain: “If thou coldest only see when the evildoers are in the agonies of death, and the angels are stretching out their hands. (Qur’an 6: 93).

Purgatory

The term “barzakh” is literally defined as a barrier between two things (Ibn Manzūr, 1988). This word is used three times in the Qur’ān and in two verses it is used in the same literal meaning (Qur’an 25: 53; 55: 19-20; 23: 99-100). Sometimes, the world of purgatory is referred to as the world of the grave. Imām al-Ṣādiq (AS) was asked, according to the *Tafsīr Nūr al-Thaqalayn*, what is Purgatory? He introduced it as the interval between death and the time of resurrection (Ḥuwayzī, 1994, vol. 3). From verse 100 of Sūrah al-Mu‘minūn (no. 23), it is understood that the period of purgatory is limited, from death to resurrection. As a result, life in purgatory is the life in the world of the grave; a world between death and doomsday, in which people are either blessed or tormented, until the doomsday comes. Humans are punished and rewarded in the world of purgatory depending on the deeds they have done in this world. The spirits of those who deserve divine reward enter the purgatory heaven and enjoy divine blessings (Qur’an 16: 32; 3: 169). “Al-jannah” (paradise) in these verses is the paradise of purgatory and not the afterlife (Ṭabāṭabā’ī, 2009, Vol. 17, p. 79).

Ṣirāṭ Bridge

“Ṣirāṭ” literally means the way, and its meaning is determined by what is added to it. Ṣirāṭ Bridge here means a bridge, according to some narrations, that is built over hell (Qumī, 1999, vol. 2, p. 70). There is no verse in the Qur’an that clearly mentions the Ṣirāṭ in the doomsday, but under some verses (Qur’an 37: 24; 89: 14; 19: 71-72) there are narrations directly referring to this bridge (Kulaynī, 1986, vol. 2). How to pass this bridge in the Hereafter depends on the level to which a person performs God's servitude or attachment to the world and the obedience of carnal moods in the world. Therefore, it is said that this bridge “is thinner than a strand of hair and sharper than a sword; some pass through it like lightning, while other passing through it in a different way. Some also slip and fall into hell.”

Al-jannah (Paradise)

The word “al-jannah” in Arabic comes from the root of “jinn” which means to cover. It means

the garden or orchard whose ground remains hidden from view due to the high density of trees or flowers. Ibn Faris writes about this: “the letters j and n (jin) are the root, and that means cover and covering. “al-jannah” is a garden with trees covering (the earth) by their leaves” (Al-Rāzī, 1989).

The Holy Qur’an has dedicated many verses to describe the face and characteristics of heaven and its inhabitants. “The likeness of Paradise, that is promised to the Godfearing: beneath its rivers flow, its produce is eternal, and its shade. That is the requital of the godfearing; and the requital of the unbelievers is the Fire!” (Qur’an 13: 35). “This is the similitude of Paradise which the Godfearing have been promised: therein are rivers of water installing, rivers of milk unchanging in flavor, and rivers of wine, a delight to the drinkers, rivers, too, of honey purified; and therein for them is every fruit, and forgiveness from their Lord (Qur’an 47: 15).

Al-jahannam (the Hell)

According to the verses in the Qur’an, we come to the point that hell is nothing but the reward of human actions. These kinds of existential punishments are a matter of coercion that is imposed on humans by themselves and they ignite it (Qur’an 27: 90). “Excepting those on whom thy Lord has mercy. To that end He created them, and perfectly is fulfilled the word of thy Lord: 'I shall assuredly fill Gehenna with jinn and men all together” (Qur’an 11: 119). This verse also shows that humans themselves light the fire which burns them, and God also presides over the burning fire and moving hell. And reaching hell is the worst of all. The Holy Qur’an describes some of the attributes of Hell as follows: “But the evildoer’s dwell forever in the chastisement of Gehenna. That is not abated for them and therein they are sore confounded. We never wronged them, but they themselves did the wrong. And they shall call, 'O Malik, (say:) Your Lord took our lives. He replied: You have to stay. We brought you the truth, but most of you were averse to the truth” (Qur’an 43: 74-8). “Surely those who disbelieve in Our signs, we shall certainly roast them at a Fire; as often as their skins are wholly burned, we shall give them in exchange other skins, that they may taste the chastisement. Surely God is All-mighty, All-wise” (Qur’an 4:56).

A‘rāf

“A‘rāf” is the plural of “‘urf” and means the height of the mountain and horse's mane (Ibn Manzūr, 1988). In some Qur’anic Exegeses, A‘rāf are the high places (Javādī Āmulī, 2012, vol. 28). This position is mentioned in the Qur’an in Sūrah al-A‘rāf (no. 7), verses 46 to 49. A‘rāf in this verse refers to the upper parts of the veil that is a barrier between heaven and hell, in such a way that the people of A‘rāf see the people of heaven and the people of hell there (Ṭabāṭabā‘ī, 2009, vol. 8).

Divine Court

According to some verses, only God is responsible for the reckoning of the actions of servants: "Truly, to Us is their return; then upon Us shall rest their reckoning” (Qur’an 88: 24-5); “Their account falls only upon my Lord, were you but aware” (Qur’an 26: 113). One of

the important topics in the audit of actions in the Qur'an is that all human actions are accounted for. The scope of this calculation is so wide that it includes even the intentions in human heart. "To God belongs all that is in the heavens and earth. Whether you disclose what is in your hearts or hide it, God shall make reckoning with you for it. He will forgive whom He will, and chastise whom He will; God is powerful over everything" (Qur'an 2: 284).

Moreover, the verses related to punishment and reward indicate this inclusion and spread. It is explicated in the Qur'an that the condition of all human beings is not the same when faced with divine reckoning. Some have an easy account and some difficult and bad ahead. Unbelievers have an adverse reckoning (Qur'an 13: 18).

Comparative and Analytical Studies

In the theological system of Zoroastrianism, Ahrīman's power equals Ahūra Mazdā's. By referring to non-Gāhān texts, this important point will be inferred that punishment is in no way attributed to Ahūra Mazdā. In this system, Ahūra Mazdā is in contrast to Ahrīman because he is fighting against Ahrīman and his creatures are under the control of Demons and Ahrīman's assistants. In this system, there are powers beyond the powers of creatures, especially humans, such as cold, hunger, etc., from which humans and other creatures will be freed only in the other world. The realization of the other world will come about only for the solace of Ahūra Mazdā and his creatures. Because the most important feature of Farashgard is the purity of man as the reduced world of this system of existence and the material world from any impurity. Everything is in the same course, and the Zoroastrian theological system gradually reaches its perfection (Amuzigar, 2007).

On the other hand, in the Islamic approach, with attention and focus on the Qur'anic verses, the worship of God necessitates the acceptance of God's servitude. God has the fundamental and central role in the system of existence. The entire universe revolves around this main core in its movement, and human being also plays an important role in this cycle. Everything that exists belongs to God and no creature engages in His power (Qur'an 4: 126; 5: 120; 9: 116; 10: 55). At the end of the system of existence, the material world will be destroyed to fulfill the purpose, which is fulfilled in the other world by rewarding and punishing the pillar of its existence, human. The approach of Islam has been on the necessity of worshipping God, so whatever according to this process will be rewarded and everything else will be punished.

There is nothing in the eschatology mentioned in Pahlavi texts, except for some general references, and dealing with the general issue of death. Therefore, the structure of eschatology in non-Gāhān texts, in most cases, cannot be considered the same as the general references of Gāhān. In Gāhān, you can't find a point about how actions are embodied, nor a material description of heaven and hell. As mentioned, in Zoroastrian thought, the Pahlavi texts are considered as interpretations of the Avesta, but there is a fundamental difference between the resurrection in the Avesta and the resurrection in the Pahlavi books. That is, in Gāhān, reward and punishment are both considered to be in the hands of Ahūra Mazdā; however, in the Pahlavi texts, only the reward is attributed to Ahūra Mazdā, while the punishment is sometimes attributed to Ahrīman and the devils (Amuzigar, 2023).

On the contrast, the structure of resurrection in the Qur'an is highly detailed and elaborate, and there is no need to explain the verses and refer to the hadiths in this context.

In *Gāhān* texts, what is mentioned about death is the attribution of death to Ahrīman (Ushidari, 1992), because death is considered one of the evils. At the end of the world and when the Ahrīman is destroyed, there will be no more death; Because there is no eviler. The ontology of death in Zoroastrian religion is such that death is the continuation of life in this world. According to *Gāhān* report, the life after death is like the life of this world and the spirit is with the body (Amuzigar, 2023).

Death, in the Qur'an, means taking the spirit from the body, which only God is able to do. Death in the Islamic religious system is neither evil nor good, rather it depends on people's actions. If someone is a sinner, pain and torment will cover them from the first moment of death, and if someone is a good person, they will go to their eternal abode without feeling any pain and torment (Javādī Āmulī, 2012).

In Zoroastrian narrations, reckoning people's accounts is dealt with in time periods. The first period begins right after the separation of the spirit from the body, and when the spirits of good people go to heaven and the spirits of sinners go to hell. In the final judgment, good and bad coexist. The Chīnūt Bridge is still in place in the present time (Gignoux, 2003). However, in Islamic hadiths, the final reckoning is postponed to the end of time and the occurrence of the Day of Resurrection. The existence of the Širāt Bridge in Islamic narrations is related to the time of resurrection.

In various verses, the Qur'an describes the punishment of hell and the punishment of sinners and those who disobey God's command, stating that the punishment for these individuals is to fall into the fire. The punishment of these people involves falling into the divine fire, the description of which is given in different verses of the Qur'an. However, in the *Gāhān* narrations and even in non-*Gāhān* texts, fire has never been introduced as a source or agent of punishment.

In Zoroastrian narrations, hell and torment are not eternal. After severe punishment in the final judgment, their sins are cleansed, allowing them to join Ahūrā Mazdā's abode of mercy (Dādagī, 2023). In contrast, in Islamic narrations, the punishment and reward of people in heaven and hell are eternal. Those who deserve eternal punishment, according to Islamic texts and the Qur'an, will spend divine punishment in hell forever.

In Zoroastrian texts, Ahrīman's attack on the world of goodness, the mixture of good and evil, and the rise of evils such as death brought about this eternal accident. It can be claimed that the foundation of Zoroastrian religion's eschatology is the defeat of Ahrīman, and the ultimate fate of man is aligned with this defeat (Dādagī, 2023). In *Gāhān*, the life after death is similar to the life in this world and the body is accompanied by the spirit (Purdavud, 2024, vol. 1). In contrast to this *Gāhān* reference, one of the most important sources of the Zoroastrianism eschatology is the book *Ardāvīrāfnāme*. In this book and other Zoroastrian texts, torment is placed on the spirit, and after the separation of the spirit from the body, the spirit moves towards hell or heaven, while the nature of rewards and punishments are all material (Gignoux, 2003). In the Islamic religion, according to existing narrations or related interpretations, after the

separation of the spirit from the body, the dead spirit is placed in an imaginal form similar to the body, and this imaginal form, which has also some material capabilities, is receptive of punishments and rewards prescribed for a person (Javādī Āmulī, 2012).

In *Gāhān*, the reward and punishment of the spirit are mentioned in general, but when this reward and punishment will be done, it is not mentioned. On the other hand, in the non-*Gāhān* texts, they have spoken in detail about the fate of the spirit after death. In the Qur'an, purgatory begins at the time of death and ends when the resurrection occurs, and the spirit of the dead is in a purgatory heaven and hell. The reward and punishment in purgatory is milder than the reward and punishment in resurrection (Javādī Āmulī, 2012). The important point in comparing these two religions in the post-death period is that in the Zoroastrian reports, the main reckoning for the spirits and passing the Chīnūt bridge occurs at this time (Gignoux, 2003), but in the Qur'anic report, the main audit is related to resurrection.

Conclusion

By explaining this detail and mentioning the intermediate view of the two religions of Islam and Zoroastrianism on the issue of death and the world after death, we will deal with the main examination of this issue between these two religions: the formal structure of the eschatology of these two religions can be considered similar to each other, but the general, conceptual and fundamental components of this structure have basic differences. The existence of commonalities and differences in the content of Zoroastrian resurrection and Islamic resurrection mainly revolves around the reward and punishment of human beings and the fate of the soul after death. These issues in Zoroastrian texts are contemporary with Abrahamic religions and were often written or revised around the time of the rise of Islam. For example, the book of DīnKard was written two to three centuries after the rise of Islam, and there is a strong possibility that it was composed under the influence of Islamic eschatological debates. As mentioned, the set of Zoroastrian beliefs, unlike Qur'anic beliefs, is not completely compatible with the concept of eternal accident, and there are some inconsistencies.

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