

# האורווטט

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# Haurvatat

For events that occurred in the month that is named after the divinity, see Iranian reform movement and Movement of 15 Khordad.

**Haurvatat** (*haurvatāt*) is the Avestan language word for the Zoroastrian concept of “wholeness” or “perfection.” In post-Gathic Zoroastrianism, Haurvatat was the Amesha Spenta associated with water (*cf. apo*), prosperity, and health.

Etymologically, Avestan *haurvatat* derives from an Indo-Iranian root and is linguistically related to Vedic Sanskrit *sarvatāt* “intactness, perfection”. The Indo-Iranian root has in turn Indo-European origins. In Common Era Zoroastrian tradition, Haurvatat appears as Middle Persian *Hordad*, continuing in New Persian as *Khordad*. The Iranian civil calendar of 1925, which adopted Zoroastrian calendar month names, has *Khordad* as the name of the 3rd month of the year.

The Avestan language noun *haurvatat* is grammatically feminine and in scripture the divinity Haurvatat is a female entity. However, in tradition (K)Hordad was/is considered male; this development is attributed to the loss of grammatical gender in Middle Persian. In *Isis and Osiris* 46, Plutarch translates Haurvatat as Πλοῦτος *ploutos* “wealth, riches” and equates the divinity with extquotedblPlutus,” the Greek god of riches.

## 1 Scripture

### 1.1 Gathas

Like the other Amesha Spentas also, Haurvatat is already attested in the Gathas, the oldest texts of the Zoroastrianism and considered to have been composed by Zoroaster himself. And like most other principles, Haurvatat is not unambiguously an entity in those hymns. Unlike four of the other Amesha Spentas, Haurvatat does not have a standing epithet that in later Avesta texts becomes an element of her proper name.

Already in the Gathas, Haurvatat is closely allied with Ameretat, the Amesha Spenta of “Immortality”. Addressing Ahura Mazda in *Yasna* 34.11, the prophet Zoroaster exclaims that “both Wholeness and Immortality are for sustenance” in the Kingdom of God. In the same verse, as also in *Yasna* 45.10 and 51.7, parallels are drawn between Ameretat and Haurvatat on the one hand and “endurance and strength” on the other.

### 1.2 Younger Avesta

The relationship between Ameretat and Haurvatat is carries forward into the Younger Avesta (*Yasna* 1.2; 3.1; 4.1; 6.17; 7.26; 8.1 etc.; *Yasht* 1.15; 10.92). The Younger Avestan texts allude to their respective guardianships of plant life and water (comparable with the Gathic allusion to sustenance), but these identifications are only properly developed in later tradition (see below). These associations with also reflect the Zoroastrian cosmological model in which each of the Amesha Spentas is identified with one aspect of creation.

The antithetical counterpart of Haurvatat is demon (*daeua*) *Tarshna* “thirst,” while Ameretat’s is *Shud* “hunger.” Ameretat and Haurvatat are the only two Amesha Spentas who are not already assigned an antithetical counterpart in the Gathas. In the eschatological framework of *Yasht* 1.25, Ameretat and Haurvatat represent the reward of the righteous after death (*cf. Ashi* and *ashavan*). Haurvatat and Ameretat will destroy the demons of hunger and thirst at the final renovation of the world (*Yasht* 19.95-96).

Unlike Ameretat, Haurvatat has a *Yasht* consecrated to her (*Yasht* 4), and is invoked as the protector of the seasons and years (*Yasht* 4.0, *Siroza* 1.6, 2.6). In *Yasht* 4.1, Haurvatat is described as having been created by Ahura Mazda for “the help, joy, comfort, and pleasure of the *ashavan*.” The righteous can put demons to flight by invoking the name of Haurvatat (*Yasht* 4.2). In *Yasht* 4.4, Haurvatat is implored to give mankind the power to withstand the seductive attacks of the *Pairikas*, the devilish

sprites of Angra Mainyu.

## 2 Tradition

Through the association with plants and water, Ameretat (MP: *Amurdad*) and Haurvatat (MP: *Hordad*) are consequently identified with food and drink (*cf.* sustenance in the Gathas, above), and traditionally it was out of respect for these two Amesha Spentas (MP: *Ameshaspand*) that meals were to be taken in silence. In *Book of Arda Viraf* 23.6–8, the righteous Viraz sees a man punished in hell “for consuming Hordad and Amurdad while unlawfully chattering while he chewed.”

In the *Bundahishn*, a Zoroastrian account of creation completed in the 12th century, Ameretat and Haurvatat appear—together with Spenta Armaiti (MP: *Spendarmad*), the third female Amesha Spenta—on the left hand of Ahura Mazda (*Bundahishn* 26.8). Throughout Zoroastrian scripture and tradition, these three principles are most consistently identified with the creations that they represent: respectively plant life, water, and earth. In *Arda Viraf* 35.13, the three daughters of Zoroaster are described to be in the image of Armaiti, Ameretat, and Haurvatat.

In the hierarchy of *yazatas*, Haurvatat has as her assistants or cooperators (*hamkars*) three lesser *yazatas*: *Vata-Vayu* of the wind and atmosphere, *Manthra Spenta* of “bountiful spells” and the Fravashis, the hordes of guardian spirits.

In the day-name and month-name dedications of the Zoroastrian calendar (that makes the basis for the Jalali calendar), the sixth day of the month and third month of the year are named after Haurvatat/Hordad/Khordad/Xordad and are under her protection. The Iranian civil calendar of 1925 reinstated Zoroastrian month-name conventions and hence also has *Khordad* as the third month of the year, beginning at May 22 (21. in leap years). This calendar is thus the one with which western astrology is most accurately corresponding. Khordad confers exactly with Gemini, the passage of the sun through the ecliptical segment of 60 - 90 degrees from vernal equinox.

## 3 Religiosity

Haurvatat-Ameretat (Pahlavi *hrwd'd m'wr'd'd*) appears in Sogdian language texts as *hrwwt mrwwt*. A relationship to Armenian *hawrot mawrot* has been suggested but is not confirmed. According to Georges Vajda (*Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2.III:236-237), the angels Hārūt and Mārūt of Qur'an 2:96 derive their names from those of the Amesha Spentas.

## 4 Bibliography

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