

The Angel of Rain and the Deev (Devil) of Drought

A Zoroastrian Story from Ancient Persia

Hormozd (Ahura Mazda): Lord of Wisdom that created the world and goodness

Ahriman: The Hostile Spirit, the creator of all that was bad

Tishtar: Appointed the Angel of rain by Ahura Mazda (Hormozd)

Apush: Deev (Devil) of Drought

Eyzad (Yazata) "Those Worthy of Worship": A type of metaphysical being. Every good force and deed has their own Eyzad.

Sea of Farakhkart: Caspian Sea

The star Tishtar was the Angel of Rain. As soon as Hormozd (Ahura Mazda) had rested from his creation, he appointed Tishtar to irrigate the world by taking rain from the clouds to drench the land, refresh the plants, open the flowers, fill the rivers with water and make the springs flow and all the Aryan lands prosperous and flourishing.

When Ahriman Badnahad, who was the enemy of good, happiness, and life, saw the goodness of Hormozd's world he became jealous and mad. Angry, he rose and appointed Apush, the Deev of Drought, to blow a hot wind to dry the lands and wilt the flowers and drain the rivers and springs.

Then the star Tishtar, the Angel of Rain, rose in the sky and began to help Hormozd. First, he transformed himself to a youth 15 years old, of tall stature and powerful body, with large eyes and a radiant face. For ten days and nights he flew in the sky and rain poured from the clouds.

Then he transformed himself into a powerful bull with gold horns, and for ten days and nights he flew in the heavens and rain poured from the clouds.

The third time, Tishtar transformed himself into a beautiful white horse with golden ears and a bridle inset with gold, and for ten days and nights he flew in the sky and rained poured from the clouds. Each of the raindrops was the size of a goblet. The water came up to the height of a man and enveloped the land from top to bottom. All the injured and poisoned animals fled to holes in the ground and perished.

Afterward, a divine wind from Hormozd began to blow and it drove the water to the farthest point on the land. From this water comes the Sea of Farakhkart.

But the corpses of the animals remained in the land and the ground became poisoned. To wash the entire land clean, Tishtar again descended in the form of a beautiful white horse with golden ears, long hooves, and a bridle inlaid with gold next to the Sea of Farakhkart.

The deev got angry and descended next to the sea in the form of a black horse with no mane, a docked tail, and torn ears.

The two horses fought (intermingled), and for three days and nights they tested their strength. But in the end, the Angel of Rain was defeated and Apush threw him a thousand paces from the Sea of Farakhkart. Drought and thirst prevailed over the world.

Tishtar, the Angel of Rain, became frightened and wailed before Hormozd "Woe is me! Woe upon the waters and plants of the earth! Woe upon the peoples! Why haven't people learned from me and why do they not worship/praise me so that from their praise I might gain strength and battle the Deev of Drought? Ay Hormozd, Ay creator of the world, help me and give me strength so that I might irrigate the world!"

Hormozd helped Tishtar and gave him the strength of ten horses and ten camels and ten cows and ten rivers. With such strength he came down next to the Sea of Farakhkart. Apush, the Deev of Drought, a black horse with no mane, a docked tail, and torn ears began the battle.

Near the middle of the day Tishtar prevailed and he conquered the Deev of Drought and drove him a thousand paces from the sea. Afterwards, Tishtar brought forth a yell of joy and victory, "Ay Hormozd, how good it is! Ay! Blessings to you plants and water on the earth, blessings to the land of the Aryans. Now the streams shall be filled with water and will flow towards the meadows and farms."

Then Tishtar again descended to the Sea of Farakhart in the shape of a beautiful white, golden eared horse. The sea boiled, and from the center of the water a wave was roused and roiled and dashed. Mist rose from the mountain in the center of the sea and clouds came into being. A south wind began to blow and the mist and clouds were driven forward and rain and hail were taken in the direction of the farms and homes of seven countries.

The Deev of Drought got another deev named Sepeenckar to help and once again rushed to battle Tishtar. Tishtar beat a club on their heads. From the striking of this Club of Fire a spark drew forth, and from this spark Sepeenckar was vanquished and a long thunder arose.

Then Tishtar brought down rain for ten days and nights. The poisons that had remained in the dirt from the bodies of the animals mixed with the water and formed the salt that went to the sea.

After three days, a divine wind arose and took the waters to the ends of the earth and from this water three large and twenty-three small seas, two grand springs and two wide rivers were formed.

Translation by Larry Klein