

Fury in the Gathas

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FURY is defined as “intense, disordered, and often destructive rage” and that it “is an overmastering destructive rage that can verge on madness” (Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary). Let us see what the Sublime Songs of Asho Zarathushtra say. The word *aeshma* ‘fury’ is used seven times in the Gathas. Here is each occurrence:

1. The Soul of the Living World lamented to You:
“Why did You create me? Who fashioned me this way?
I am oppressed by fury, rapine, outrage, and aggression.
I have no one to rehabilitate me other than
You. Lead me to true civilization.”
Song 2-1 (Yasna 29.1)
2. Then the Creator of the Living World asked Righteousness:
“Who is Your leader of the World,
who can offer her civilization,
nourishment, and strength?
Whom do you wish to be her lord;
one who shall repel the fury of the wrongful?”
Song 2.2 (Y 29.2)
3. Between these two,
the seekers of false gods did not decide correctly,
because delusion came to them in their deliberations.
Therefore, they chose the worst mind,
rushed in fury,
and afflicted the human existence.
Song 3.6 (Y 30.6)
4. How could false gods be good rulers?
I ask this because those who indulge in lust,
with which the mumbling priests, particularly the sacrificing Usigs (a famous family),
have delivered the world to fury,
and the princes, in their stubbornness, have forced it to lament,
and do not reward it through righteousness so as to promote a settled life.
Song 9.0 (Y 44.20)
5. Put down fury, check violence, you who wish to strengthen
the promotion of good mind through righteousness,
because a progressive man is associated with this.
God, his associates are in Your abode.
Song 13.7 (Y 48.7)

6. Now, they shall be the benefactors of the lands
who follow the satisfaction of good mind,
and base their actions through righteousness on Your teachings, Wise One.
They indeed have been made to fight fury.
Song 13.12 (Y 48.12)
7. Those who, through their evil intellect,
promote fury and cruelty with their tongues
are but drones among productive people.
Their evil deeds have not been defeated by good deeds.
It is they who created false gods,
which forms the religion of the wrongful.
Song 14. 4 (49.4)

The overall picture one gets is that fury is destructive not only to mankind but the entire living world. When one chooses the bad mentality, one rushes in fury and afflicts others. Despotic social and religious leaders are the main persons who, taken by fury in their words and deeds, bring harm and destruction. And Zarathushtra advises us all to “Put down fury, check violence, you who wish to strengthen the promotion of good mind through righteousness, because a progressive man is associated with this.” One, who controls his/her fury, is a universal benefactor.

Zarathushtra wants those who cannot control their fury to be rehabilitated in order to use their mind and not to fly in fury because it always boomerangs. They are the final loser. Absence of fury puts an end to violence in thought, word and deed. It brings “civilization, nourishment, and strength” to the world. No fury means consideration, cool-mindedness, logic, rationality, peace, prosperity, and radiant happiness to all. Rationality wins over rashness.
