

## Marriage Bond in Avesta

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The objects of the marriage bond were purely religious, tending to the success of piety and virtue in this world. The Sasanians honored "the mother of many children, of many sons, of many bold talented sons." (Visp. Yasht I. 5) The Greek historians say that a mother received from the king valuable awards for her help.

Briefly, in the Sasanian Empire, there were three considerations by which the duty of marriage was enforced:

- i. Respect to the Ahura Mazda; for it was incumbent on every one to leave behind him those who should continue to discharge his religious obligations.
- ii. Obligation to the State; since by generating descendants, its continuance was provided.
- iii. A regard for their own race and lineage to discharge the duties to the departed,"

Also to increase the race

1. "Male children," "a, troop of male children," and "the purity of one's soul/" are blessings of equal merit in the Avesta (see, Yasht. VIII. 15.)
2. The gift of sons is as good as the gift of a sovereignty, or of bliss in heaven. (Yt. X. 65.) Bright children and a direct line of descendants, are bestowed upon pious women by Haoma. (Yasna. IX. 22.) Hence the Avesta declares that "the married man is far above him who is unmarried; he who has a settled home is far above him who has none; he who has children is far above him who has no offspring." (Vendidad. IV. 47.) One of the benedictions which Zarathushtra pronounced upon King Vishtaspa is: "May you (i.e., King Vishtaspa and Queen Hutaosa) procreate ten male sons resembling yourselves in their bodily constitution. May three of them follow the vocation of the priest, three the tactics of the warrior, and three agriculture. May one of them follow ways of Jamaspa (i.e., turn out a sage) that you may be assisted with his most felicitous wisdom for ever and ever/" (Yasht Frag. XXIV. 3.)