



## JĀMĀSPA

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**JĀMĀSPA** (GAv. Dəʾjāmāspa; Elam. Zamašba, Za-mišba; Arm. Zmsp; Gk. Zamaspes; Akk. Za-ma-as-pa-a'), name of an official at the court of Vištāspa and an early convert of Zarathushtra, who, in the tradition became widely known for his wisdom.

*Etymology.* There is no certain etymology of the name. It is a compound whose final member is *aspa-* “horse.” In metrical contexts (Y. 46.17; 51.18; Yt. 5.68), the name must be read as tetrasyllabic *jāma-aspa-* (cf. Ved. *rjrá-aśva-* proper noun; Mayrhofer, 1956, I, p. 121). A favored etymology of *jāma-* has been to compare it with OInd. *kṣāmáh-* “burnt, singed,” but Prakrit *jhāma-* points to IE \**dhgwh-eH-*, which one would expect to give Av. \**γžā/žγā* (Mayrhofer, 1979, p. 55; 1992, p. 430). Ilya Gershevitch (pp. 177 ff.) proposed “leading horses” to Parth. *žām-* “to lead,” while Martin Schwartz (1975, p. 10; idem, 1980, p. 203) seemed to favor “he who bridles horses,” in view of Arm. *cim* “bridle.”

*In the Avesta.* Jāmāspa is mentioned twice in the Gathas (q.v.) in close connection with his brother Frašaoštra and with Kavi Vištāspa. There is no reason to doubt that the two brothers, belonging to the Hvō.gva (YAv. Hvōva) family, were officials at the court of Vištāspa and were among Zarathustra’s early converts to whom he preached (Jackson, pp. 20-22, 76-77). Specifically, in *Yasna* 46.17 Zarathustra addresses Jāmāsp directly, commanding him “Go where I shall proclaim to you (pl.) praises in verse, not non-verse, O Jāmāspa the Hvōgvid!” (*yaθrā wə afšmānī sēnghānī nōiṭ anafšmaq̄m dəjāmāspā hwō.gwā ... wahnāng*). The fame that Jāmāspa enjoys in the later tradition as the wise vizier of Goštāsp is, perhaps, foreshadowed in *Yasna* 51.18, where Zarathustra



says of him: “He chooses through Aša, this insight (and) this power” (*tqm cistīm ... ašā wərəntē taṭ xšaθrəm*). In *Yašt* 5.68, Jāmāspa is among the many hero supplicants of Arədvī Sūrā Anāhita (see [ANĀHĪD](#)), where “he sacrificed to her, as he perceived the army of *dāeva*-worshiping liars approaching from afar in battle array” (*tqm yazata jāmāspō yaṭ spāδəm pairi.awāenaṭ dūrāṭ āyantəm rasmaoyō drwatqm dāewayasnanqm*). It is puzzling why he is placed at this point in the *Yašt*, in that one might expect, on the basis of the later royal epic tradition, that he would have been placed in the *Vīštāspa*, *Zairi.vairi*, *Arəjaṭ.aspa* (in Mid. Pers. and the *Šāh-nāma*: *Vīštāsp/Goštāsp*, Zarēr, Arjāsp; qq.v.) sequence of *Yašt* 5.108-18. Jāmāsp appears in the longer *frawarānā* (confession) of *Yasna* 12.7 in a dvandva compound with his brother (*frašaoštrā-jāmāspā*) immediately after *Vīštāspa*; and the dual formation is repeated in the *Vīštāsp Yašt* 11 (*frašaoštrāeibya jāmāspāeibya*). In the *fravaši* (q.v.) lists of *Yašt* 13, Jāmāsp’s *fravaši* is worshiped immediately after *Frašaoštra*’s (103), but at some distance from those of *Vīštāspa* (99-100) and *Zairi.vairi* (101), for the reason that they belonged to different families. In the late text, *Āfrīn ī Zardošt* 2 his name appears in two benedictions given by Zarathustra to *Vīštāspa*: “May you be just like Jāmāspa ... powerful like Jāmāspa (*āevaθa bavēhi yaθa jāmāspō ... amava yaθa jāmāspō*); and in the closely related *Vīštāsp Yašt* 3 there is a benediction that *Vīštāspa* have ten sons: three priests, three warriors and three agriculturalists, plus “one son of yours (like) Jāmāspa” (*zayānte tanukəhrpa dasa puθra θrāyō yaθa aθaurunō θrāyō yaθa raθāēštārahe θrāyō yaθa vāstryehe fšuyantō āeva te puθrō jāmāspō*). In contrast to his association with royal power, Jāmāsp was also thought to have exercised a priestly function, as seen in the passage from the N. 89: “He who strews the *barəsman* according to these (rules) as righteous Jāmāspa used to strew (it), is a *ratufriš*” (*yō anu āēšqm barəsma frastarənte yaθa ašawa jāmāspō frastarənāeta ratufriš*).

*In Pahlavi literature.* As an actor in the epic drama of the establishment of Zoroastrianism, Jāmāsp is remembered in *Dēnkard* (q.v.) together with Zarēr, Spandyād (Av. Spəntōδāta; *Šāh-nāma* Esfandiār, q.v.) and *Frašōštar*, as one of the first princes (*wāspuhragān*) to propagate the religion (*Dēnkard*, ed. Madan, p. 436.14-15) and as the one who received the teaching of Zarathustra (*zarduxšt-āmōg*; *ibid*, p. 437.14-20), which was written on ox-hides in Avestan and Zand, according to the familiar story (see Bailey, pp. 149 ff.). In the *Ayādgār ī Zarērān* (q.v.), he is featured prominently, as he is later in the *Šāh-nāma*, as the wise vizier (*bidaxš*, q.v.) of Kay *Wištāsp*, capable of foreseeing the outcome of the great battle with *Arjāsp* and ever ready to give counsel. His fame for wisdom



lent his name to a late Pahlavi compendium of lore, the *Ayādgār ī Zarērān*. The name was known in antiquity, appearing already as Zamašba on Persepolis tablets (Hallock, p. 722), later in Sasanid royal nomenclature (though not at Paikuli), and has remained a common name among Zoroastrians.

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