

Zoroastrian Light Shrine

A Study in Sacred Geometry, Symbolic Systems, and Interactive Design

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Abstract

The Zoroastrian Light Shrine is a contemporary contemplative structure designed to integrate sacred geometry, symbolic systems, and experiential architecture into a unified teaching environment. Constructed within the forested setting of the Vedanta Retreat in Scappoose, Oregon, the shrine serves as both a physical space and an instructional framework for exploring the Zoroastrian principle of *Asha*—truth, order, and alignment—through direct experience.

Rather than replicating traditional Zoroastrian fire temples, the shrine reinterprets the sacred fire as focused solar light. This light enters through a precisely defined pyramid glass skylight at the apex of the roof and converges upon a central altar, symbolizing the transmission of higher order into the material world.

The shrine serves as a vibrant setting that blends architecture, the natural environment, and ongoing participation from people to promote harmony and unity. Its design integrates core tenets of Zoroastrian thought—such as Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds—into both the physical layout and the experiential pathway of the participant. The structure incorporates recurring numerical patterns—including 3, 7, 9, 18, and 72—alongside golden ratio proportions and heptagonal geometry. By incorporating these elements throughout the spatial arrangement and overall design, it creates a space condition where a higher sense of order is achieved. While the structure implies an intriguing link between form, environment, and consciousness, it serves as a starting point for further investigation rather than offering definitive scientific proof.

This white paper documents the design principles, mathematical relationships, symbolic foundations, and experiential intent of the shrine, offering a foundation for further study into how built environments may support human alignment with higher order.

1 Introduction

In today's world, meaning is often fragmented, as science, spirituality, and personal experience are treated as separate and often disconnected domains. Ancient traditions, by contrast, frequently encoded knowledge simultaneously through symbol, structure, and lived practice, creating a more integrated understanding of reality.

The purpose of the Zoroastrian Light Shrine was to integrate these aspects into a single, cohesive system. Drawing from Zoroastrian philosophy, sacred geometry, science, engineering, and selected principles found in other traditional systems, the structure functions both as a physical space and as an embedded framework of relationships.

The goal is not to repeat history, but to express lasting principles in a way that people can experience and use in daily life.

2 Purpose and Intent

The goals behind the design of the Zoroastrian Light Shrine were as follows:

2.1 To create a meditative and contemplative space

The shrine provides a quiet, grounded environment where individuals can step away from distraction and engage in reflection, stillness, and focused awareness within a natural setting.

2.2 To express core Zoroastrian principles through physical form

Fundamental ideas like *Good Thoughts*, *Good Words*, *Good Deeds* are not only represented symbolically; they are integrated into the very fabric of the structure, inviting participants to engage with these principles in a hands-on, experiential way.

2.3 To integrate symbolism directly into the architecture

The design incorporates geometric forms, directional alignments, and inscriptions so that meaning is not separate from the structure, but inherent within it.

2.4 Reimagining the sacred fire as concentrated sunlight representing the Amesha Spentas

The altar has a seven-sided heptagonal shape, symbolizing the seven attributes of the Amesha Spentas. This setup represents the movement of light, which is seen as the ordering principles of the Amesha Spentas, from the higher realm (*Menog*) down into the physical realm (*Getig*), where it becomes accessible for direct experience. This approach preserves the symbolic essence of fire while adapting it to a forest

environment in a practical and sustainable way. Rather than using a conventional flame, sunlight enters through a pyramid-shaped skylight at the top and shines directly onto the central altar.

2.5 To bridge traditional wisdom with modern understanding

The shrine draws from ancient Zoroastrian and Magi traditions while integrating perspectives from science and engineering, creating a structure that can be understood across both traditional and contemporary frameworks.

Beyond symbolic reference, the design is organized through recurring geometric relationships and ordered sequences that shape how the space is experienced. Movement, orientation, and focal points are arranged to reflect progression rather than static form, allowing the participant to engage with the structure as an unfolding process rather than a fixed object.

These patterns are not unique to a single tradition, but appear across multiple systems of knowledge, some of which have historically been transmitted through oral teaching rather than formal documentation. While not presented here as definitive historical claims, the recurrence of similar numerical, geometric, and transformational structures suggests the possibility of a shared underlying framework expressed in different forms across time.

2.6 To create a design that is simple, reproducible, and scalable

Materials and construction methods were intentionally selected to allow the structure to be replicated in other locations without requiring specialized resources.

2.7 To create a structure that is environmentally conscious

The main framework was built using Western Red Cedar, which was obtained from reclaimed logs and milled to fit the necessary specifications. Reverence for nature is central to Zoroastrian tradition, with trees considered holy. Western red cedar also holds cultural and spiritual significance to the indigenous peoples of this region. A member of the local indigenous community officially blessed the shrine.

2.8 To maintain openness and accessibility

The shrine is designed as an open structure without enclosing walls, removing any physical separation between the interior space and the surrounding natural environment. This openness allows light, air, sound, and landscape to remain continuous with the structure itself.

Rather than creating a boundary between inside and outside, the shrine invites any visitor to enter, sit, and engage in a meditative experience. The absence of enclosure

reflects the intention that space be directly accessible and experienced as part of the natural world, rather than set apart from it.

2.9 To provide an educational and experiential framework

Through inscriptions, symbolic elements, and spatial orientation, the shrine functions as a teaching structure that encourages reflection, understanding, and personal application of its underlying principles.

The shrine is situated within a forest environment, allowing nature itself to become an integral part of the experience. Light, sound, and natural surroundings interact with the structure, reinforcing its contemplative and integrative intent.

3 Architectural System — From Ground to Apex

The Zoroastrian Light Shrine is organized as a vertically integrated structure, designed from the ground upward to create a continuous relationship between foundation, form, and light.

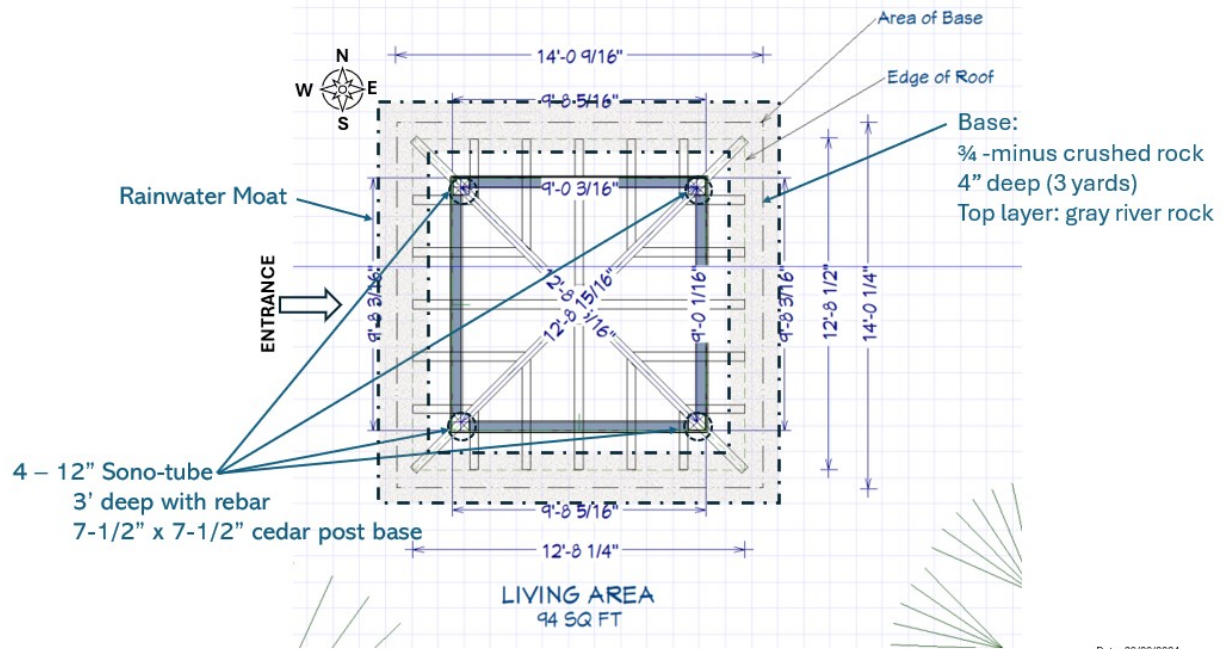
3.1 Base and Foundation

The structure begins with a grounded base designed for both stability and environmental integration. The foundation consists of four reinforced concrete footings, each 12 inches in diameter and extending 3 feet into the earth. These footings are reinforced with rebar and positioned in a square layout with 9-foot spacing between each point. See figures 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 below.

Surrounding the base is approximately 2,300 pounds of crushed rock and river rock, forming a stable and permeable ground layer. Encircling this base is a brick-lined water channel arranged in a square geometry, establishing a relationship between the solid structure and the dynamic presence of water. This interaction introduces a foundational balance between stability and flow at the ground level.

The shrine is precisely aligned along the cardinal directions, with entry from the west and orientation toward the east. This alignment mirrors the movement of the sun and establishes a symbolic transition from darkness into light.

Zoroastrian Shrine Excavation Plan



Date: 09/09/2024
 Created By: Louis DesPrez

Figure 3.1.1

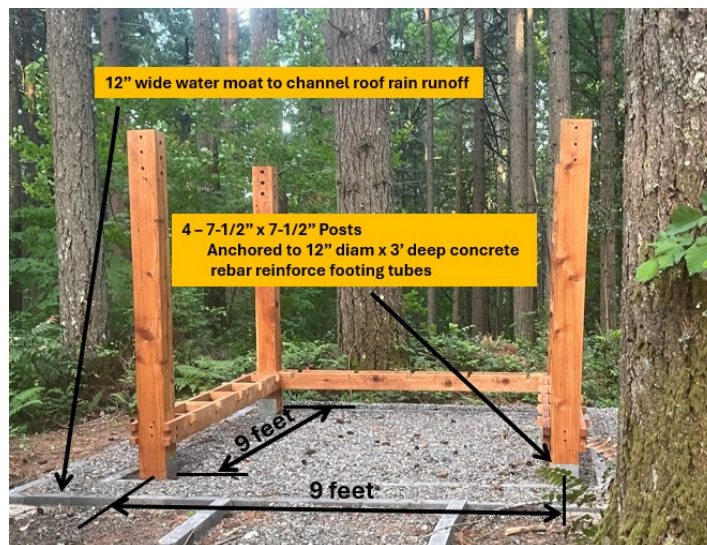


Figure 3.1.2

3.2 Structural Frame and Seating System

Rising from the foundation are four primary structural posts constructed from 7.5" × 7.5" Western Red Cedar. These posts serve as the main loadbearing elements of the structure and define the spatial boundaries of the shrine.

Integrated into this framework are three benches positioned along the north, south, and east sides, providing seating for up to nine individuals. Each bench is constructed using a laminated configuration consisting of two 7" cedar planks with a 2" mahogany center strip, forming a 7:2:7 ratio. This layered construction provides both structural integrity and a repeating proportional relationship within the design. See figure 3.2.1 below:

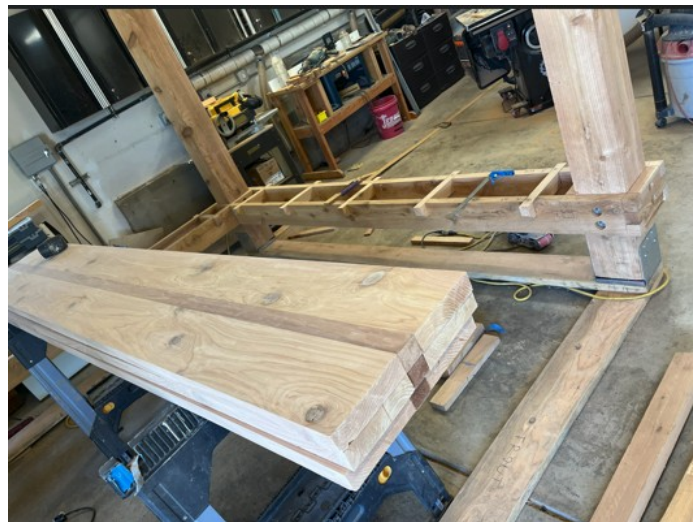


Figure 3.2.1

Above the seating level, 2-by-15-foot cedar panels span between the structural posts. These panels serve both structural and symbolic functions, incorporating carved elements and inscriptions drawn from Zoroastrian tradition. At the western entry, the Faravahar provides an immediate point of orientation and meaning. On the east panel, the phrase “Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds” is carved into the surface. See Figure 3.2.2 below; Figure 3.2.3 provides an interpretive diagram of the Faravahar.

The Faravahar may be understood as a symbolic representation of moral and spiritual orientation. Its wings are commonly associated with good thoughts, good words, and good deeds, while the lower elements suggest the consequences of misalignment and the need for correction. In this reading, the symbol does not present perfection as a static condition; rather, it points to an ongoing process of discernment, adjustment, and realignment.

Rather than treating error as failure, the symbol suggests an ongoing process of correction and realignment. This closely parallels adaptive systems in engineering, in which outcomes are continually compared with intended results and adjusted accordingly. In a similar sense, the Aramaic concepts of sin and repentance may be understood as missing the mark and changing one's mind.



Figure 3.2.2

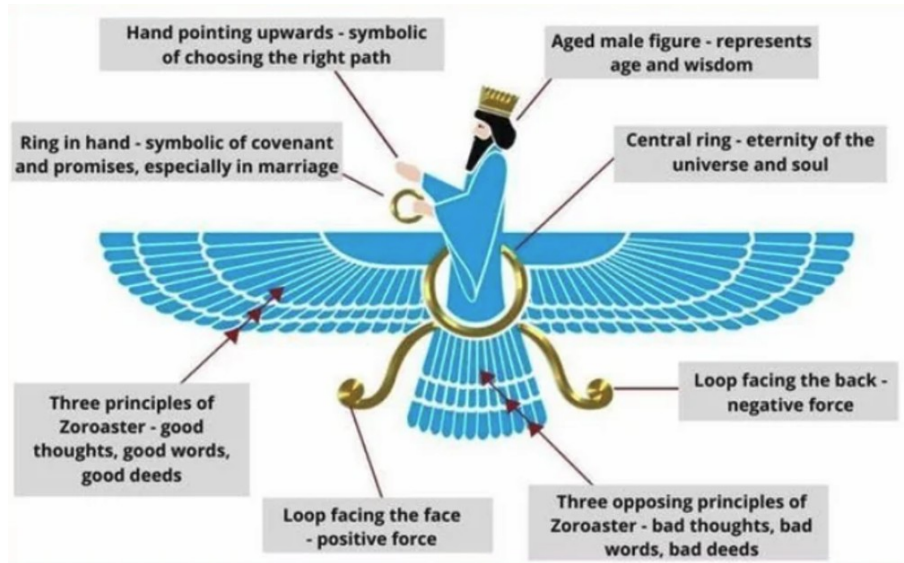


Figure 3.2.3

Additional inscriptions reinforce this instructional framework. Facing east, the visitor encounters “Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds.” Looking back toward the western entrance, one sees the phrase “Happiness comes to those who bring happiness to others.” Together, these teachings are presented not as rules to obey, but as dispositions to cultivate through practice.



Figure 3.2.4



Figure 3.2.5

The north and south panels are inscribed with passages from *Ashem Vohu*, one of the most revered prayers in the Zoroastrian tradition. Two of its central terms, *Asha* and

Ushta, do not translate neatly into modern English. Their meaning is best approached through interpretation and contemplation rather than through a single fixed equivalent.

Asha may be understood as the underlying order that governs the cosmos and gives things their proper form and relation. It is often rendered as truth, right order, or cosmic order, and may be compared—cautiously—to the modern idea of lawful structure in the physical universe.

Ushta may be understood as radiant joy, fulfilled well-being, or inner illumination. Because both *Asha* and *Ushta* exceed simple translation, the shrine presents them as words to reflect upon as much as concepts to define. In this way, their meaning is approached through experience as well as language.

Facing north, the first half of *Ashem Vohu* is carved into a large plank. It presents the nature of *Asha*:

aṣəm vohū vahištəm astī uštā astī

This may be interpreted as:

Asha is good; it is best; it is radiant happiness.



Figure 3.2.6

Facing south, the second half of *Ashem Vohu* is carved into a large plank. It expresses the individual's relationship to *Asha*:

uštā ahmāi hiiat aṣāi vahištāi aṣəm

This may be interpreted as:

Radiant happiness comes to the one who lives in accordance with the best right order.



Figure 3.2.7

Aligned to the cardinal directions, the shrine uses orientation as part of its symbolic structure. Entry from the west and movement toward the east evoke a transition from darkness to illumination, while the inscriptions and Faravahar integrate this directional order into the visitor's experience.

3.3 Central Altar

At the center of the structure is the primary focal element: a raised altar positioned directly beneath the apex opening.

The altar is formed from a circular base approximately 21 inches in diameter, which has been geometrically transformed into a seven-sided polygon.

The altar originated geometrically as a circle which was subsequently transformed into a heptagon through equal angular division. Each of the seven faces contains one of the Amesha Spentas inscribed in its original Avestan form:

Spenta Mainyu, Vohu Manah, Asha Vahishta, Khshathra Vairya, Spenta Armaiti, Haurvatat, and Ameretat

For example, figure 3.3.1 shows the *Khshathra Vaya* side:



Figure 3.3.1

The top surface of the altar features a burned fire symbol, representing the presence of sacred fire as an active principle. The seven-sided geometry serves as both a symbolic and structural expression of ordered differentiation, with each face representing a distinct aspect of a unified whole. The altar symbolizes sacred fire through light rather than combustion.

Altar with the seven Amesha Spentas



Figure 3.3.2

The altar functions simultaneously as the symbolic center, geometric center, experiential center, and point of light convergence within the shrine.

The seven faces of the altar are inscribed with the Amesha Spentas in their original Avestan form. Rather than being arranged as isolated attributes, they are organized as a continuous sevenfold cycle surrounding the altar. This arrangement emphasizes relationship, balance, and interaction among the various aspects rather than hierarchy.

At the center of the shrine, the altar serves as the meeting point between light, geometry, symbolism, and human experience. Sunlight entering through the apex skylight is directed toward the altar, creating a visual and symbolic connection between the higher ordering principles represented by the Amesha Spentas and their expression within the physical world.

The altar became the primary organizing element from which many of the shrine's geometric, symbolic, and experiential relationships emerged. Its sevenfold form provided the foundation for subsequent exploration of cyclic structure, harmonic relationships, and transformational systems discussed later in this paper.

3.4 Roof Structure and Apex Light System

The roof consists of four equal planes set at approximately 51.8 degrees—an angle associated with golden-ratio geometry and broadly comparable to that of the Great Pyramid of Giza. The rafters converge at a central 18-by-18-inch opening that admits light. With a perimeter of 72 inches, this opening also carries symbolic significance in Zoroastrian tradition: 72 recalls the 72 sections of the *Yasna*, the principal liturgical text, and the 72 threads of the sacred *kusti*. In addition, both 18 and 72 reduce numerically to 9, echoing the 9-foot spacing of the support beams.

The relationship between the roof angle and golden-ratio geometry depends on how the angle is defined. A brief derivation and note on measurement conventions are provided in the appendix.

At the apex, this opening is covered by a pyramidal glass skylight framed in white oak and copper. The skylight protects the interior from the elements while allowing natural light to enter. Sunlight passing through it falls onto the central altar, creating a vertical axis that connects the apex, the interior, and the ground below. This alignment strengthens the relationship between light, structure, and focal point.

The beams supporting the roof also carry symbolic meaning. As one enters from the west, a carved Faravahar symbol appears overhead. Inside, inscriptions include “Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds” and passages from *Ashem Vohu*, creating a spatial arrangement in which direction and meaning are intertwined. These elements further integrate symbolism into the structural framework.

Together, these layers—from foundation to apex—form a continuous system in which structure, symbolism, and experience are unified. The progression from earth to light is both physical and conceptual, guiding the participant through an ordered spatial experience.

3.5 Menog, Getig, and the Sevenfold Expression of Asha

A central concept in the shrine's design is the relationship between unity and manifestation. Figure 3.5.1 presents a symbolic framework informed by Zoroastrian concepts including Ahura Mazda, *Menog*, *Getig*, Spenta Mainyu, and the Amesha Spentas.

At the highest level of this framework is Ahura Mazda, understood here as the ultimate source of wisdom, truth, and order. From this source proceeds *Menog*, the non-material domain of potential, pattern, and higher order. In this reading, *Menog* names the realm in which principles exist prior to material expression.

Within this framework, Spenta Mainyu functions as the creative and ordering principle through which divine order becomes active. Rather than being treated as an isolated entity, it is presented as the dynamic means by which the qualities associated with the Amesha Spentas become operative.

The six Amesha Spentas may be understood as differentiated aspects of a unified order. Together with Spenta Mainyu, they form a sevenfold pattern representing complementary expressions of wisdom, truth, devotion, right action, wholeness, and continuity. These qualities are not treated as separate in practice, but as interrelated aspects of a coherent whole.

The physical design of the shrine reflects this symbolic progression. Light enters through the apex skylight at the highest point of the structure, establishing a descending axis that links sky, light, altar, and earth. In symbolic terms, this movement may be read as a transition from unity into manifestation—from Ahura Mazda, through *Menog*, and into the material realm of *Getig*.

Positioned directly beneath the skylight is the seven-sided altar. Each face is inscribed with one of the Amesha Spentas, creating a physical analogue to the sevenfold structure shown in Figure 3.5.1. As sunlight passes through the glass pyramid and falls upon the altar, the geometry of the shrine reinforces the relationship among source, ordering principle, and differentiated expression.

The shrine therefore functions as more than a built enclosure. It also serves as a symbolic model through which the movement from unity into multiplicity can be contemplated without losing sight of the coherence of the whole. Through light, geometry, and spatial organization, the visitor is invited to consider the relationship between higher order, lived experience, and the principles represented by the Amesha Spentas.

This model is not intended as a rigid theological claim, but as a contemplative framework through which relationships among unity, order, and manifestation may be explored.

3.6 Zoroastrian Cosmology

Figure 3.6.1 presents the cosmological framework that informs the shrine's symbolic organization. In this reading, the diagram describes a movement from undivided source into structured manifestation: from Ahura Mazda as the originating principle, through *Menog* as the non-material domain, into the ordering activity of Spenta Mainyu and the differentiated expressions of the Amesha Spentas, and finally into the material realm of *Getig*.

The shrine mirrors this cosmology through a vertical and spatial sequence. The apex opening and skylight mark the highest point of entry, where light descends into the structure. Beneath this point sits the seven-sided altar, whose seven faces correspond to the Amesha Spentas. In this arrangement, the altar does not function merely as an object placed within the shrine; it serves as the primary site at which cosmological differentiation is made visible.

This correspondence is reinforced by the shrine's directional order. Entry from the west and movement toward the east create a progression that is not only architectural but cosmological. The visitor moves inward beneath the carved Faravahar and inscriptions, toward the altar and the descending axis of light, enacting a passage from outer orientation toward a more ordered center. In this sense, the shrine presents cosmology not only as an abstract diagram but as an experience structured in space.

The value of this framework lies in the way it allows the shrine to be read simultaneously as structure, symbol, and contemplative model. The cosmological diagram does not function here as a rigid doctrinal scheme, but as an interpretive lens through which relationships among source, order, manifestation, and human participation can be explored. Figure 3.6.1 provides the visual basis for this reading.

Zoroastrian Cosmology

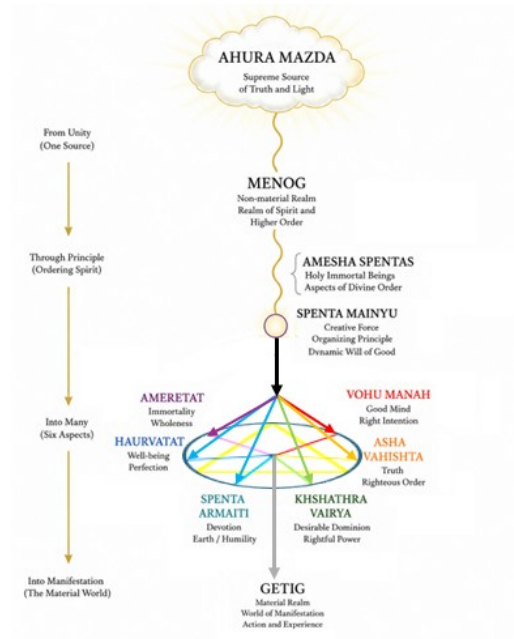


Figure 3.6.1

3.7 Geometry, Numbers, and Light

The geometry of the shrine emerged from the interaction of several recurring mathematical themes: the sevenfold division of the circle, the Golden Ratio (ϕ), and the complementary angular relationships that appear throughout the structure.

3.7.1 The Sevenfold Division

At the center of the shrine is a seven-sided altar representing the seven Amesha Spentas. The geometry begins with the division of a circle into seven equal sectors:

$$360^\circ \div 7 = 51.428571^\circ$$

This angle became one of the foundational geometric relationships of the shrine. The value is notable not only because it defines the geometry of a regular heptagon, but because it contains the repeating numerical sequence:

51.428571428571...

The same cyclic pattern appears in the fraction:

$1 \div 7 = 0.142857142857...$

The sequence **1, 4, 2, 8, 5, 7** repeats indefinitely and corresponds directly to the progression represented by the Law of Seven within the enneagram tradition. In this interpretation, the sequence describes a pattern of relationships rather than a simple numerical progression.

Unlike a linear sequence, each position is connected to two others through a repeating cycle. The resulting geometry forms a network of interactions that repeatedly return to its point of origin while passing through every stage of the cycle.

This observation became particularly interesting when the same sevenfold geometry was applied to the Amesha Spentas. Rather than viewing the seven aspects as isolated attributes, the Law of Seven suggests the possibility that they may also be understood as participants in a dynamic system of relationships and mutual influence.

The sevenfold division therefore became more than a method of constructing the altar. It became a framework through which geometry, symbolism, and transformation could be explored simultaneously.

3.7.2 The Golden Ratio

A second organizing principle within the shrine is the Golden Ratio, represented by the Greek letter phi (ϕ):

$$\phi = (1 + \sqrt{5}) / 2 \approx 1.618$$

Its inverse is:

$$1/\phi \approx 0.618$$

One of the remarkable properties of phi is that:

$$1/\phi = \phi - 1$$

This allows the same proportional relationship to appear repeatedly across different scales.

From phi emerge two complementary angles:

38.17° and 51.83°

These angles sum to ninety degrees and appear throughout classical geometry, logarithmic spirals, natural growth patterns, and architectural forms.

3.7.3 Convergence of Seven and Phi

An unexpected correspondence appears when the sevenfold division of the circle is compared to the golden-ratio complement.

Sevenfold angle:

$360^\circ \div 7 \approx 51.428571^\circ$

Golden-ratio complement:

51.83°

The difference between these values is less than one-half degree.

The sevenfold angle emerged first during the design of the altar. After dividing the circle into seven equal sectors, the resulting value of 51.428571 degrees became a recurring reference throughout the design process. The repeating numerical sequence contained within the value further reinforced its significance as both a geometric and symbolic relationship.

As the roof geometry evolved, an effort was made to incorporate this angular relationship into the overall structure. The completed roof was ultimately constructed at approximately 51.5 degrees, placing it remarkably close to the theoretical heptagonal value of 51.428571 degrees.

At a later stage of analysis, it became apparent that this same angular region also lies very near the complementary golden-ratio angle of 51.83 degrees. Thus, two independent mathematical relationships—the sevenfold division of the circle and the geometry associated with phi—converge within nearly the same range of angles.

Whether this correspondence represents coincidence, geometric convergence, or the manifestation of deeper proportional relationships remains open to interpretation. Regardless of interpretation, the result is a striking connection between the sevenfold geometry of the altar, the architecture of the roof, and the proportional relationships associated with phi.

3.7.4 Roof and Skylight Geometry

The roof and skylight reveal two complementary perspectives of the same proportional system.

The overall roof pitch was constructed at approximately 51.4 degrees. This angle closely matches both the sevenfold division of the circle (51.43°) and the golden-ratio complement (51.83°).

At the apex of the roof is a pyramidal skylight formed by four triangular glass panels. When each panel is viewed orthogonally—as a flat geometric figure—the triangular geometry produces angles that fall within the 38-to-39-degree range. These values closely approximate the complementary golden-ratio angle of 38.17 degrees.

Thus, the same structure can be understood from two different viewpoints:

- Viewed from the ground, the roof expresses the approximately 51-degree family of angles.
- Viewed within the geometry of the glass itself, the skylight expresses the complementary 38-degree family of angles.

These two perspectives are mathematically linked. Together they form the complementary pair associated with the Golden Ratio:

$$38.17^\circ + 51.83^\circ = 90^\circ$$

3.7.5 Expansion and Contraction

The Golden Ratio may be viewed through two reciprocal relationships:

$$\phi \approx 1.618$$

$$1/\phi \approx 0.618$$

One describes proportional expansion and growth. The other describes proportional contraction and return. Both represent the same geometric relationship viewed from opposite directions.

The roof may therefore be interpreted as expressing two complementary movements simultaneously. From one perspective the geometry appears to expand outward into space. From another it appears to contract toward a central point of convergence.

This convergence is made visible through the pyramidal skylight. The four glass planes direct attention toward a single point at the center of the structure, where a suspended crystal occupies the geometric focus of the roof.

3.7.6 Geometry as a Language

The shrine employs a small set of recurring mathematical relationships rather than a collection of isolated symbolic references.

The sevenfold division of the circle, the proportional relationships of phi, the recurring 38-degree and 51-degree angle families, the seventy-two-inch perimeter of the skylight opening, the nine-foot structural spacing, and the sevenfold altar geometry all participate in a common geometric language.

Together these relationships create coherence between structure, light, scale, and attention. The result is a space in which geometry becomes not merely a method of construction, but a medium through which meaning is expressed.

The discovery that the same sevenfold geometry could accommodate both the Amesha Spenta arrangement and the Law of Three and Law of Seven described by Gurdjieff and Bennett added an additional layer of interpretation. While no claim of direct historical equivalence is made, the resulting correspondences suggest that distinct symbolic systems may converge upon similar geometric structures when attempting to describe order, transformation, and conscious participation in reality.

Within the shrine, these relationships are expressed not only through abstract concepts, but through physical form. The altar, roof, skylight, crystal, and axis of light become interconnected expressions of a common geometric language, linking mathematics, symbolism, architecture, and experience.

An intriguing feature of both the sevenfold division and the Golden Ratio is that neither can be fully expressed by a finite sequence of digits. Their decimal expansions continue indefinitely, revealing patterns that unfold without termination.

Mathematically, these values are exact and well-defined. Yet their numerical representations suggest something dynamic rather than static. Instead of appearing as fixed quantities, they reveal themselves through recurring or continuously unfolding relationships.

The fraction $1/7$ generates the endlessly repeating sequence 0.142857142857..., while the Golden Ratio produces the non-repeating progression 1.618033988749...

In both cases, the number can be understood not just as a quantity but as a pattern. It is exact and well defined, even though its decimal expression continues indefinitely. This quality helps explain the lasting interest these numbers have attracted in mathematics, geometry, music, architecture, and symbolic systems.

3.8 The Law of Three, the Law of Seven, and the Sevenfold Structure of the Amesha Spentas

During the development of the seven-sided altar, an unexpected set of geometric correspondences emerged between the arrangement of the Amesha Spentas and the symbolic framework known as the Law of Three and the Law of Seven, described by G.I. Gurdjieff, expanded by J.G. Bennett and later Russel A. Smith extended it to a diatonic structure. The figure 3.8.1 below captures these ideas. The actual shrine altar was superimposed on the law of three and law of seven enneagram as published by J. G. Bennett..

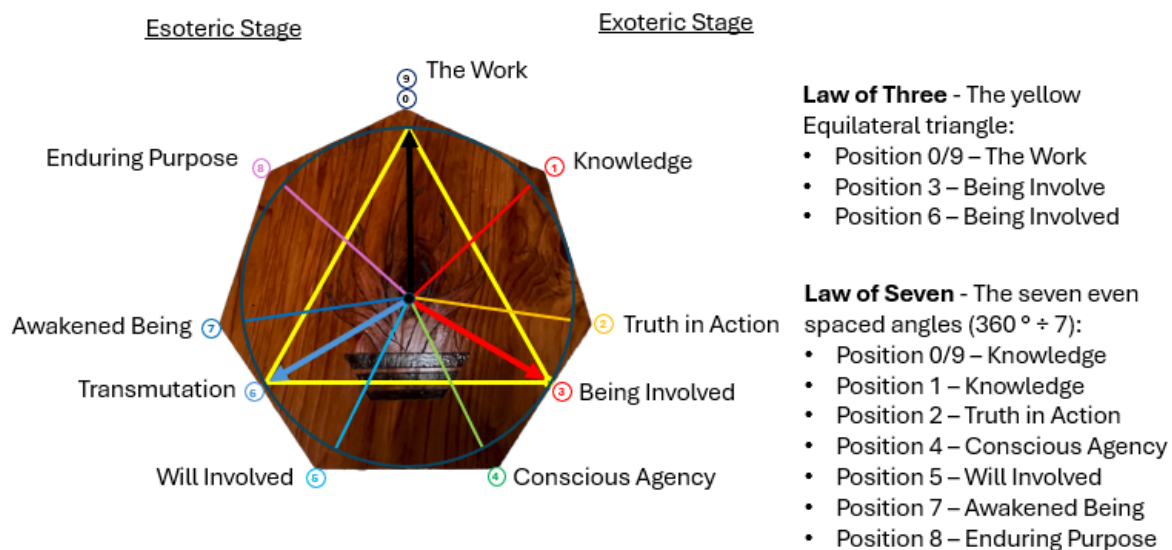


Figure 3.8.1

The altar was originally conceived as a geometric and symbolic representation of the seven Amesha Spentas arranged upon a heptagonal form. The primary intention was to provide a physical expression of the sevenfold order described within Zoroastrian tradition. As the geometry of the altar was explored more deeply, it became apparent that the seven positions could also accommodate the triangular and cyclic patterns associated with the Law of Three and the Law of Seven.

3.8.1 The Law of Three

Within the Gurdjieff tradition, the Law of Three is represented by the triangular relationship connecting positions 9, 3, and 6. These three positions are traditionally associated with the interacting forces necessary for creation, transformation, and development.

When superimposed upon the altar geometry (figure 3.8.2), a set of symbolic correspondences emerged.

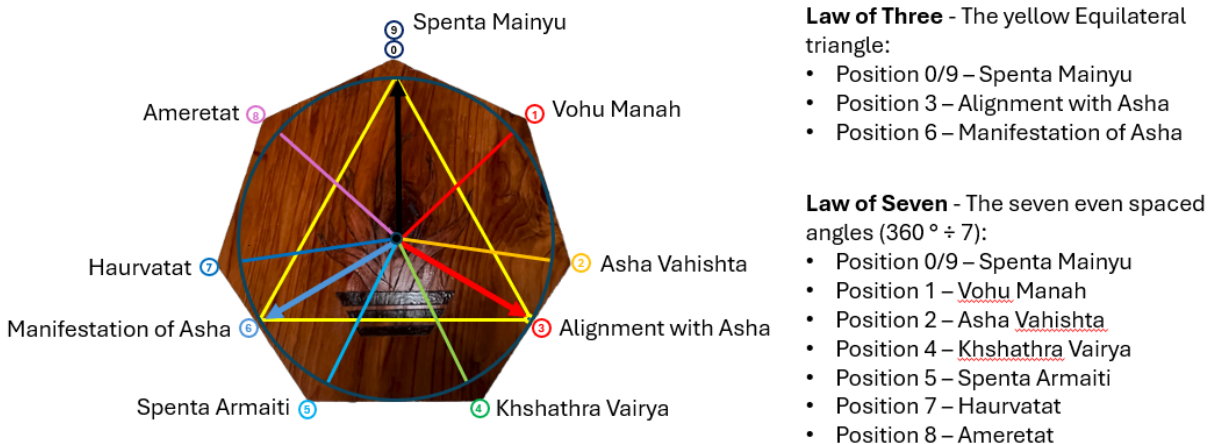


Figure 3.8.2

Position 9 occupies the apex of the altar and corresponds naturally to Spenta Mainyu, the creative and organizing principle through which the six Amesha Spentas become differentiated expressions of divine order. In Bennett's interpretation, this position is referred to as "The Work." Within the present framework, it may be understood as the originating impulse through which unity becomes manifestation.

Position 3 was interpreted as Alignment with Asha, representing the conscious orientation of thought, action, and intention toward truth and right order. This position parallels Bennett's concept of "Being Involved," emphasizing active participation in the process of transformation.

Position 6 was interpreted as Manifestation of Asha, representing the movement beyond personal concerns toward participation in a larger and more universal order. This position parallels Bennett's concept of transformation and self-transcendence.

Together, these three points form a transformational triangle linking source, participation, and integration. Whether viewed through a Zoroastrian or Gurdjieff lens, the resulting geometry suggests a recurring relationship between creative impulse, conscious participation, and expanded realization.

3.8.2 The Law of Seven

A second pattern emerges through the Law of Seven, represented by the repeating sequence:

1 → 4 → 2 → 8 → 5 → 7 → 1 → 4 → 2 → 8 → 5 → 7

This sequence arises directly from the mathematical properties of the fraction:

$$1 \div 7 = 0.142857142857...$$

Unlike a simple progression around the perimeter of the circle, the sequence repeatedly jumps across the geometry, connecting positions that would otherwise appear unrelated. The result is a dynamic network of relationships embedded within the sevenfold structure (figure 3.8.3).

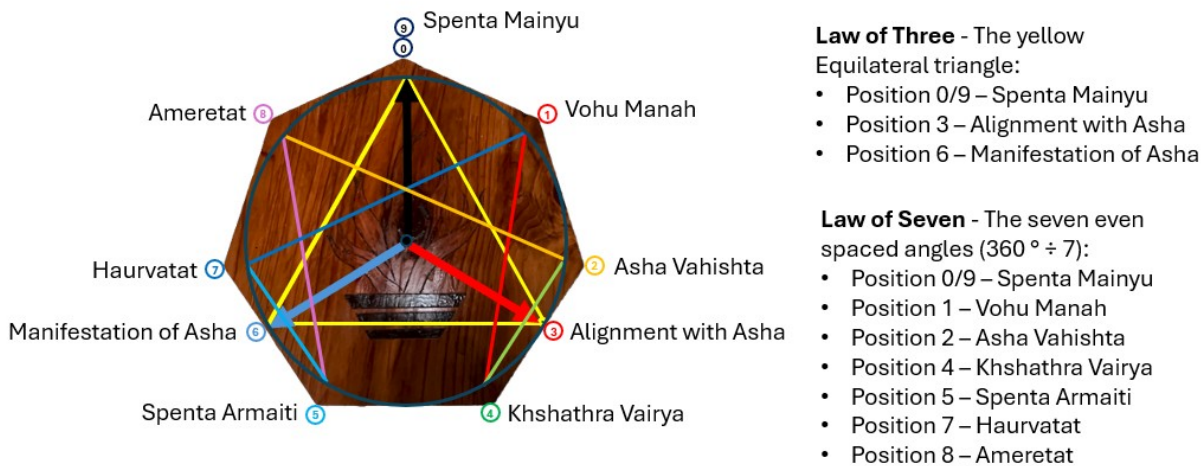


Figure 3.8.3

One of the most intriguing aspects of this pattern is that it invites consideration of the relationships between the Amesha Spentas rather than viewing them solely as individual qualities.

For example, the sequence connects Vohu Manah (Good Mind) with Khshathra Vairya (Desirable Dominion), suggesting a movement from right understanding toward effective action. Khshathra Vairya then connects to Asha Vahishta (Truth and Right Order), implying that agency and power must ultimately be guided by truth.

Similarly, the sequence links Spenta Armaiti (Devotion and Humility) with Haurvatat (Wholeness and Well-Being), suggesting that humility and devotion may serve as pathways toward integration, completeness and ultimately the manifestation of Asha.

The cycle ultimately reconnects Ameretat (Immortality and Enduring Purpose) with Vohu Manah, creating a closed loop in which completion returns to renewed understanding and beginning.

These interpretations are not intended as definitive meanings, but as examples of how the Law of Seven can be used as a framework for exploring relationships within the sevenfold structure.

3.8.3 Exoteric and Esoteric Perspectives

Bennett further distinguished between exoteric and esoteric stages of development. The exoteric side concerns participation in the world through knowledge, action, and responsibility. The esoteric side concerns inner transformation, integration, and realization.

When viewed through this lens, the seven positions suggest a progression that may be expressed symbolically as:

Knowledge → Truth in Action → Being Involved → Conscious Agency → Will Involved →
Transmutation → Awakened Being → Enduring Purpose

These stages are not intended as replacements for the Amesha Spentas, but as contemporary functional descriptions that appear to resonate with the sevenfold structure represented by the altar.

3.8.4 A Comparative Framework

No claim is made that Gurdjieff derived his teachings directly from Zoroastrian sources, nor that the two systems are historically identical. The comparison is presented for a different reason.

Both systems attempt to describe the movement from unity into multiplicity, the relationship between order and manifestation, and the transformation of human consciousness through participation in a larger reality. When represented geometrically, both systems produce recurring patterns involving triadic relationships, sevenfold organization, cyclic progression, and transformational development.

Whether these similarities represent historical transmission, independent discovery, or the recurrence of universal organizing principles remains an open question.

The purpose of this comparison is therefore not to establish equivalence, but to invite contemplation regarding the possibility that distinct symbolic traditions may converge upon similar geometric and transformational structures when attempting to describe the relationship between consciousness, order, and manifestation.

Within the shrine, these patterns find expression not only in ideas but in physical form. The seven-sided altar, positioned beneath the descending axis of light from the apex skylight, becomes a meeting point between geometry, symbolism, architecture, and experience. The resulting structure invites visitors to consider how unity becomes multiplicity, how order becomes manifestation, and how ancient symbolic systems may continue to reveal new relationships through contemplation and design.

4 Experiential Design

The shrine is designed to guide human awareness through three modes without explicit instruction. Facing inward toward the altar supports self-observation and inner awareness. Turning outward toward the surrounding forest shifts attention toward the environment and relational awareness. Looking upward through the apex introduces a sense of universal scale.

These three orientations—inner, outer, and universal—form a complete cycle of perception. The simplicity of the design allows individuals to move between these states naturally.

5 Resonance and Conceptual Model

The shrine was also conceived with the intention of exploring resonance. Its grounded structure, combined with human activity such as chanting, creates a setting in which environmental frequencies may play a role.

The Schumann resonances, a natural electromagnetic phenomenon of the Earth, served as an initial reference point for this exploration. Preliminary observations of vocal chanting suggest possible harmonic relationships, though this remains an open area for investigation.

The structure can be interpreted as a conceptual system in which earth, structure, light, and human input interact. This model is not presented as a verified physical system, but as a framework for future study.

6 Conclusion

The Zoroastrian Light Shrine represents an effort to bring together architecture, geometry, symbolism, and contemplation within a single integrated environment. It is simultaneously a physical structure, a symbolic framework, and an experiential space designed to encourage reflection upon the relationship between light, order, and human participation in the world.

Throughout the design process, recurring patterns emerged from the interaction of geometry, proportion, number, and symbolic tradition. The sevenfold structure of the Amesha Spentas, the geometry of the heptagon, the proportional relationships associated with phi, the movement of natural light, and the physical form of the shrine gradually revealed connections that were not always anticipated at the outset. These relationships became part of a larger exploration into how meaning can be expressed through structure and experience.

The shrine is not presented as proof of any single theory, nor does it claim definitive conclusions about the origins or interpretation of the symbolic systems discussed. Instead, it offers a

contemplative framework for exploring relationships among mathematics, architecture, nature, and consciousness.

At its center, the shrine is an invitation. Visitors may approach it through its geometry, its symbolism, its relationship to Zoroastrian tradition, or simply through the experience of sitting quietly beneath the axis of light. Each path offers a different perspective, yet all ultimately converge upon the same question: how might human beings bring themselves into greater alignment with truth, harmony, and the ordering principles represented by Asha?

In this sense, the shrine is both a completed structure and an ongoing inquiry—a place where geometry becomes a language, light becomes a teacher, and contemplation becomes a means of participation in a larger order.