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VOL. V No. 4

FEBRUARY 1969

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EDITORIAL

A Dutchman who has written on Zoroastrianism, would certainly be an interesting person to meet. Thinking thus, a steady trickle of Parsis streamed in to hear Mr. D. J. Bemmelen's lectures held in Bombay last month.

At one of his discourses he stated emphatically that Zarathushtra's message was relevant only in those ancient days and lacked spiritual content. That Zoroastrianism still lives and has profoundly influenced other religions over the centuries, presents a complete refutation of Mr. Bemmelen's theory. The Prophet's teachings contain something of perennial value, and enables man to attain the pinnacle of spirituality. He further stated that there was a constant struggle between Ahura Mazda and Angra Mainyu and referred to gods and goddesses in the teachings of the Prophet. This is preposterous and distorts the pristine monotheistic religion of the Prophet of Iran. These views colour his book "The Religion and Ethics of Zoroastrianism," which is yet in manuscript form. In this book he has described from the point of view of Dr. Rudolf Steiner according to which the Prophet was one of the great initiates of mankind.

At present Mr. Bemmelen is visiting various places in India — Pondicherry, Calcutta, Patna, Gaya, Varanasi — he will go to them all. There he will converse with heads of different religions, and we hope, will realise and appreciate the depth of these faiths, before pouring his ideas into printer's ink.

The Editor regrets delay in producing this issue due to disturbances in the city and shift of the Machinery.

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WE PARSIS

Need Some Introspection.

JEHANGIR M. RANINA, (Advocate).

Parsi is a peculiar name. It has earned world fame. It is a peculiar race and today it presents a peculiar face. The history of the Parsis in Iran is thousands of years old and full of glory. Even after the Parsis came to India thirteen hundred years ago they made history. They have been pioneers in several walks of life and provided political leaders to the Indian National Congress which ultimately won freedom. But no community can live long on past glory. Like all Communities the Parsis have their own problems. They are wide and varied and are becoming more and more acute with all-round increasing difficulties the world over. It is heartening to note that 'Parsiana; though in the infancy of its career, places Parsi problems before the Community with admirable accuracy and impartiality. Inspired by its example I venture to take up some space in one of its numbers.

By nature easygoing and pleasureloving, we Parsis are carrying on without much concern about our problems which are assuming serious proportion, and are complaisantly oblivious of changing times and approaching difficult circumstances. Coming into close contact with Europeans we have been more westernised than desirable and the unfortunate part is that in a generality of cases we have imbibed more western vices than virtues. The craze for modern living has given

rise to wrong ideas and mistaken views of the values of life. It is time we woke up and took a stock of ourselves. In the life of all individuals and groups a time always comes when some kind of introspection is needed, some **bird's eyerview** of past deeds and accounting of debit and credit sides. This would reveal our true present position and enable us to formulate plans for the future progress and prosperity of our Community.

The first very important problem facing our Community is that our number is unfortunately progressively decreasing. The following Census figures will convince us of this.

In 1941 the number of Parsis in India was 1,14, 890

in 1951 the number of Parsis in India was 1,11,000 and

in 1961 the number of Parsis in India was 1,00,687.

The 1961 Report further notes 893 births as against 1078 deaths. This is a serious state of things and Parsis should take whatever steps that are possible to prevent this slow but sure disappearance of the Community in course of time if this decrease is not checked.

The main reasons for this state of affairs are migration of Parsis out of India, intermarriages and marriage at an advanced age. During the last several decades a large number of Indians have gone

and settled in foreign countries like U. K., U. S. A. and the middle east. Parsis are now following their example. This is unfortunate. It is apprehended that in the above places Parsis would lose their identity and faith in a generation or two. We can send our religious literature and our Priests for occasional visits to deliver lectures, discuss problems and perform Navjot and marriage ceremonies to places, where fairly large number of Parsis settle. We should also encourage contact of those Parsis with the Parsis in India and find brides and bridegrooms for such foreign residents so that our race may be preserved. Intermarriages present a tough problem. We have ample opportunities for our young girls and boys to come in close contact with the youth of other communities. All communities dislike intermarriages and prefer marriage with their own members. Amongst certain Hindus they are particular about marrying in their caste. Our Parsi boys take too long to finish their final academic or technical education and settle in life, and they start with small beginnings. That is one reason for lesser number of children when Parsis marry at a late age. Formidable as these social and economic problems are it would be to the advantage of the Community if parents take care to marry their children in the early twenties. As regards migration it may be mentioned that it would be advantageous if our young men instead of going to U. K. and Canada went to Iran where they would preserve their identity and faith more than in other countries. If young men with high academic or technical qualifications so desire they would, I am sure, receive necessary guidance from the author.

Another serious situation is that out of about a lac of Parsis in India seventy thousand reside in one place, Bombay. This is fraught with danger as in times of calamities like earthquake, epidemic or war almost the whole community is in danger of being wiped out. We should make proper plans and arrange for settling Parsis in the mofussil like Gujarat and other places. A large number of Parsis have lost their liquor trade and a number of Parsi farmers have lost their lands owing to new regulations that the land belongs to the tiller. The Community has done nothing to succour them and settle them in other trades or industries. We have got brains, resources and money but no organised planning. Our friend Mr. Jehangirji F. Shroff has made an excellent suggestion to start a Zoroastrian Financial Corporation. This can be of immense help to our Community. Shall we wake up?

The most important matter is the attitude of the average Parsi towards his religion. Faith in religion is of the utmost importance. When our forefathers came to India from Iran they hardly brought with them any religious literature. Be it is said to the credit of the Parsis of those days, and especially our Athornan class, that they memorised our prayers and ceremonies and handed them down from generation to generation thus keeping alive the torch of Zoroastrianism. But with the passage of time and coming in contact with people of other religions Parsis imbibed non-Zoroastrian beliefs, superstition and customs contrary to the principles of the Zoroastrian religion. This was a period of darkness. But in the nineteenth cen-

tury when some Parsis like the late Mr. K. R. Cama went to England they were surprised to find books written in several European languages about Zoroastrianism. Europeans had formulated a grammar also for the Avestan language. That was the beginning of the school of philology which later produced amongst Parsis, scholars of international repute. In 1851 some of the leading Parsis founded the Rahnumae Mazdayasnan Sabha. Its first President was Mr. Naoroji Fardoonji, a leading citizen of Bombay, and its first Hon. Secretary was no other man than Mr. (later Dr.) Dadabhoy Naoroji. The main aim of the Sabha was and is to dissuade Parsis from superstitious and un-Zoroastrian beliefs and to present to them the teachings of Prophet Zarathushtra in their original and pure form. This Sabha is still going strong and almost every Wednesday lectures on religious, social and communal subjects are delivered by scholars and every Friday classes are being conducted when our Avesta and Gatha prayers are explained. All these activities which are held at the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute, Apollo Street, are free. Parsis would do well to take advantage of these facilities, especially parents, so that they can explain to their children the beauties of our ancient religion and be able to satisfy their rational inquiries. It is said that our younger generation is becoming increasingly indifferent to religious matters. Children learn more from example than by precept. The home atmosphere which existed fifty years ago is no longer there. Formerly even religious ceremonies were performed at home. At some places the Mobed

used to come daily to recite prayers. Now-a-days only in a few houses even parents pray daily. Children have greater freedom to mix with other people. They are not made aware of the basic principles of our religion so that they can argue with others and strengthen their faith in their own religion. Even parents know so little of it. We have small books which parents and the young can read with profit but no effort is made to bring them to their notice. Mrs. Perin Lalkaka's Pictorial Life of Zarathushtra is an excellent introduction to Zoroastrianism. Every Parsi home should have one. Some planned effort is needed.

The picture of Parsis' attitude to religion would not be complete without considering the state of affairs in our Fire Temples. It is a place of prayer, worship and meditation. Are these possible in our Fire Temples? What do we see? We have daily experience that Zoroastrians though devout indulge in prayers in such loud tones as to disturb their neighbours. This is more so on festive occasions. How are prayer, concentration and meditation possible in such a noisy atmosphere? Look at our ceremonies performed at Muktaf time. At intervals of six feet groups of Priests sit and about twenty of them would pray at the same time in very loud tones reducing the hall not to a quiet prayer room but a fish market. What impression can this create on the mind of our younger generation? Do Parsis think that by going through this unbearable babble they are discharging a religious duty? We do not run down the value

of ceremonies but let them be performed in a calm atmosphere where we can follow what is prayed and which would inspire the right kind of love and respect for religion. It will be asked how can this be done? The reply is that religion cannot be sacrificed at the altar of economic exigencies. If we know that the present system is not right we can devise a better one so that the ceremonies would create the right spiritual atmosphere and not end merely by paying the bills of panthakies. Parsis ought to give serious thought to considerations like these which are vital to our religion.

Another important exhibition of paucity of consistency amongst us is that we Parsis celebrate as many as three New Years in a year. Not only this but we celebrate thrice a year the birth and death of our Prophet. This is the result of wrong calculations in the past and it is never a sin to correct past mistakes. Bogies are drawn across the horizon by saying that Shehenshahi and Kadimi Fire Temples cannot be changed to the right dates. That this is a myth will become apparent when it is brought to the notice of Parsis, which perhaps they do not know, that our **Iran Shah Fire Temple** which is now at Udvarda and which we hold in the highest respect, **was consecrated by Dastur Naryosangh Dhaval according to Fasali rites and Fasali calculations.** Years later in ignorance and owing to incorrect calculations it turned Shaheshahi and at that time nothing came in the way. Now if we correct the mistake and adopt the right calculation no religion can find fault with truth. What the Parsi community badly needs is sanity.

Besides sanity the greatest need of our community is unity. In India Parsis are spread out in distant places. Recently, many have gone to reside in foreign countries. At the First World Zoroastrian Congress which was held at Tehran in 1960 a resolution was passed recommending the formation of a World Zoroastrian Body. And as a preliminary step it was recommended that first, Central Zoroastrian Organisations should be formed countrywise in each country where a good number of Zoroastrians reside. Iran has already formed an All Iran Zoroastrian Anjuman. In London the Zoroastrian Association for all Europe is already in existence for many years. In Canada a similar Body has been formed. It is essential that in India Parsis should have a permanent All India Central Organisation. At the second World Zoroastrian Congress held in Bombay in 1964 this recommendation was made and it is heartening that the Parsi Panchayet of Bombay has taken a lead in this matter and appointed a Main Committee which has already prepared a draft Constitution of the Federation of all the Anjuman of India who choose to join. This will benefit the Community a great deal in future. The Community will have a Central Body with constitutional authority to speak and make representations on behalf of the whole Parsi Community. This will be a great step forward in the right direction.

Let it be said again Parsis need Sanity and Unity.

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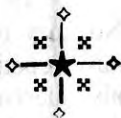
The legal and commercial world of Bombay have lost one of their ablest colleagues and one of their most reliable advisers, respectively. In 1921 he was enrolled as a solicitor and joined Messrs. Wadia Gandhi & Co. and by sheer persistently studious habits acquired vast knowledge of law and came into the notice of seniors, who entrusted him with important clients—amongst them the House of Tatas. In 1953 he joined Messrs. Mulla & Mulla (and Craigie Blunt and Cairo), wherein he ended his career and life as its partner high up. He was the solicitor to the House of Tatas, Air India, Indian Airlines Corporation, B. O. A. C., The Central Bank of India, First National City Bank, The Turf Club and several other big concerns.

He was Legal Adviser to many big foreign concerns established in India like International Finance Corporation, G. E. C., Dorr Oliver, Otis Allport, Corn products, Carter Wallace and others.

Due to his wide experience and deep understanding of law and letters he was invited on the Board of Directors of Tata Iron and Steel Co., Tata Power, The Central Bank of India, Ceat Tyres, Asian Corporation, etc.

He was an Honorary Legal Advisor to India Cancer Society and was readily helpful to several other public institutions rendering humanistic services.

Parsiana deeply regrets his death as one of its esteemed subscribers & extends its sympathies to the bereaved members of his family for his suddenly leaving them by the last short illness of the foul-disease of Coronary Thrombosis, which so often sweeps away men at the top of their career as professionals, executives and leaders of man. May his soul rest in peace.



Ten Questions for Appraising my Faith as a mature Religion

by

DASTOOR N. D. MINOCHER-HOMJI

6. Yes, it is integrating. Integrating the individual to the society; but it is not functioning for integration as it should, because Religion is isolated from the daily life of the individual and even that of the society, except perhaps for the Agiary anniversaries for the Jashan ceremonies. Heads of Religion and the Elders responsible for the welfare of the community, should work out a Project, in which Religion is revealed both as a dynamic factor and as an integrating force. Gahambar festivals can be good occasions for the young and the old to meet together, so that the community can weld its solidarity.

7. Yes, it is socially effective, only sporadically, and not systematically. If religion is made socially effective, the sense of the Community would be stronger and the incidents of young men and women going out of the Zoroastrian fold, on emotional grounds, would be fewer. Some learned priests, well versed in Psychology and Psychiatry and Sociology may be entrusted with the work of counselling the young, both boys and girls, in their period of transition from adolescence to adulthood. The youngsters are left to their destiny, when there is an onrush of emotional problems. The youngsters must be so educated as to face the emotional problems with calm and judgment.

8. Yes, it demonstrates humility. No Zoroastrian believes that he is the chosen one of God and that his religion only embodies the whole truth. Zarathushtra taught, by both precept and example, humility, in spite of the great Mission entrusted to him. He sings, in Yasna 28.1:

"With bended kness and hands outstretched,

I yearn for the Priceless Boons from Ahura Mazda".

It is interesting to note its parallel in the Bhagvad Gita, where humility, search for the Higher meaning of life and service of suffering humanity, are the 3 means of attaining spiritual height.

9. Yes, it was growing, when the Religion flourished under the protecting wings of the Iranian Empire. Due to historical accident, the Parsees have withdrawn their activities, like the tortoise that withdraws its limbs under its amourlike shell for safety and self-preservation. But it can never be said to be stunted: the Parsees have proved themselves by virtue of their benevolent living, the 'high-quality' people, in India. The religion does not believe in asceticism, but in the living of active virtues. In the daily rounds of life we see with humility and pride, some Parsees at the top of industrial and business concerns. Not only individuals, but families have made a mark in the life of the country, e.g. The Tatas, the Wadias, the Petits, the Godrejs and others.

10. Yes, it is creative. Being a primary religion, it is also creative and not repetitive. Systems of philosophy can be derived from the holy Gathas. Being one of the oldest religions, if not the oldest, it had nothing to imitate. Zarathushtra was an original thinker and so has called his teachings 'Unheard of before'.

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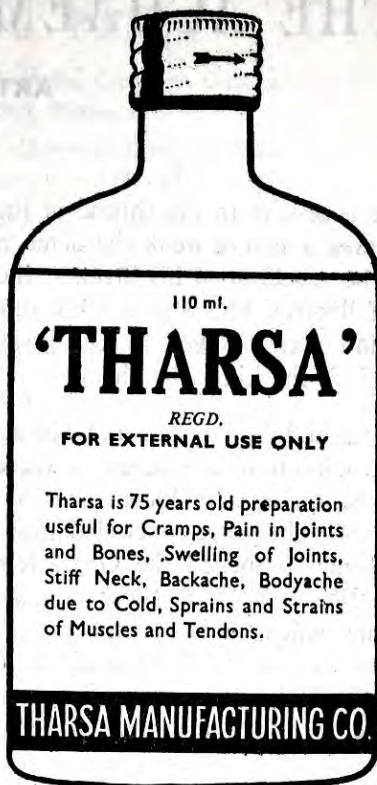
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(465-424 B.C.)

The accession to the throne of the son of Xerxes, a man of weak character, began with the rebellion of his brother, the satrap of Bactria. This was quickly suppressed, and was followed by the assassination of all the king's brothers.

Sparta and Athens declared war against Persia. Cytium was besieged; a successful naval action was conducted near Salamis in Cyprus. The peace concluded after these operations compelled the Great King to relinquish his hold on those Greek cities of Ionia which were members of the League. Persian soldiers could no longer cross the Halys. This was a new and serious setback for the Empire, which, however, once again used its gold to provoke a conflict between Sparta and Athens.

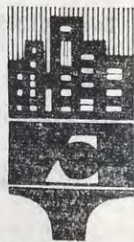
At Babylon, Artaxerxes followed in the main the policy of his fathers, and although the priests of Bel-Marduk were allowed to carry on their cult, the occupation of the country by the Iranian element was actively encouraged. The college of the Magi also grew in importance there.

Continuing the policy of Cyrus and Darius, Artaxerxes gave Ezra permission to return to Jerusalem with 1500 Jewish families formerly exiled. He remained friendly towards the Jewish community on condition that its responsible leaders continued to be loyal to the Persian throne. In 445 B.C. the temple and walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt and the high priest was proclaimed ruler of Jerusalem and Judaea.

Artaxerxes never led his troops in person. Towards the end of his life he even lost interest in Greek affairs, although they were of vital importance for the prestige of the Empire. Slowly, almost imperceptibly, the work of Darius was breaking up. Nevertheless, the reign of Artaxerxes witnessed an extension of cultural relations between Persia and Greece which explains certain changes in the art of his age. Greek historians and men of science travelled in Egypt, Babylonia and Iran, and acquired an increased knowledge of the history, religions, and sciences of the East. It was the age in which Herodotus wrote his History.

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ધર્મશિક્ષક : કામા અથૌરનાન ઈન્સ્ટીટ્યુટ, અંધેરી.

ભાગ ૧ લો.

“ગંજેશાયગાંન” એક કેતાબનું નામ છે જે કેતાબ ઇરાનના પાદશાહ નૌશીરવાન આદેલના વઝીર લખી હતી તે વઝીરનું નામ “બુર્જેગ મહેર બુખ્તગાંન” હતું. આ કેતાબનું નામ, “ગંજેશાયગાંન” = શકિતવાન હોલત, = પાંચેદાર ખખનો. કયો ખખનો અમર રહેશે તે આપત ઉપર આ એક કામતી કેતાબ બુર્જેગ મહેર બુખ્તગાંને લખી છે.

નૌશીરવાન આદેલનું સ્વપ્ન.

ઇરાનનો પાદશાહ નૌશીરવાન આદેલ છતાં સદીમાં તખ્ત ઉપર બેઠો અને થોડી મુદતમાં પાદશાહ નૌશીરવાને એક “બુઆય” = સ્વપ્ન બેઠું જે સ્વપ્નની તાસીર = ખુલાશો દરયારીઆ પાસે માંગ્યો. પણ કોઈ પણ તે બુઆયનો ખુલાસો આપી શક્યો નહીં માટે આખા ઇરાનમાં વાત જાહેર થઈ કે પાદશાહ નૌશીરવાનના બુઆયનો ખુલાશો જે કોઈ દાનવ મરદ આપશે તેણે પાદશાહ મોટો ખેતાબ એનાયત કરશે. ત્યારે ઇરાનમાં “મરવ” શહેરની એક જરથોસ્તી મદ્રેસામાં ચંચલ વિદ્યાર્થી જેનું નામ “બુર્જેગ મહેર બોખ્તગાંન” હતું તેને પાદશાહ નૌશીરવાન આદેલ આગળ સ્વપ્નનો ખુલાશો આપવા માટે લાવવામાં આવ્યો. આ ચંચલ વિદ્યાર્થી બુર્જેગ મહેરે સ્વપ્નની તાસીર વિષે પોતાની ડોશયારીથી વીદવતા ભર્યો જવાબ આપ્યો. તેમજ અનેક વિદવાનોએ પુછેલા બીકટ સવાલોના સચોટ જવાબો આપ્યા. પાદશાહ નૌશીરવાન આદેલ ઘણાજ ખુશ થઈ ગયો અને બુર્જેગ મહેરને પોતાના સત્રાહકાર વઝીર તરીકે નેમ્યો.

ગંજેશાયગાંનમાં લખેલી નસીહતો બે ભાગમાં પ્રગટ થશે. આ પહેલા ભાગમાં Moral Precepts-યાને નૈતિક નિયમો દર્શાવ્યા છે. ભાગ બીજો Practical Injunctions યાને વ્યવહાર આદર્શ ફરમાનોના છે જે એક Moral Code છે.

“ગંજેશાયગાંન કેતાબ રચવાનું કારણ.”

ઉપત્રી કેતાબ ગંજેશાયગાંન રચવાનું મુળ કારણ ઇરાનના પાદશાહો, હાકિમો, અમીરો, ઉમરાવોને આજે

દુનિયાની અંદર પાંચેદાર અને નાપાંચેદાર હોલત કઈ છે? “અમર ખખનો” કયો છે, તે વીધેની સમજણ આપવા માટે પહેલવી ભાષામાં રચી હતી.

ઉપલા પુસ્તકમાં જણાવવા પ્રમાણે આજે દુનિયાને લગતી સઘળી વસ્તુ અથવા હોલત વગર પાંચેદારીની = સદા નહીં રહેનારી અને ફેરફાર થવા ભોગ છે, તે છતાંથી તે વગર ભરોસાની અને ફેરફાર થનારી હોલત ખોદાએતાલાની બક્ષેશ વગર માણસને મલતી નથી. પણ તે ખાવીદની તરફથી, ખુદાતાલાની રહેમ જે માણસ ઉપર તેની બક્ષેશ મુકર થયેલી હોય છે તેણેજ મને છે તેમજ તે માણસ સર્વથી મોટો દરજ્જો ભોગવે છે અને ચઢતે દરજ્જેના કામો કરે છે, તેમજ પાદશાહી ભોગવે છે, અને કીરતીવાન થાય છે છતાં દાનાવ-પરૂષ, સમજે છે કે એ સઘળું આ દુનિયામાં છોડી જવાનું છે તે “નેકા”નો ખખનો, યાને ગંજેશાયગાંન = શકિતવાન હોલત તેજ છે જે અશોઈ = સત્યથી પવિત્ર નેક કામો કર્યે અને તે નેક કામોનો ખખનો “નેકા”, ભલાઈ, સાથે લઈ જવાની છે.

ગંજેશાયગાંન નામનાં “પહેલવી” પુસ્તકનું લખાણ સવાલ જવાબના આકારમાં છે.

નોંધ : આપણે ટુંકમાં આ પુસ્તક ઉપર એક ઉડતી નજર નાખી જે અમુક ઉત્તમ સવાલો અને તેના જવાબો છે તે ઉપર એક નજર કરીશું.

“ગંજેશાયગાંન” પુસ્તકની શરૂઆત કરતાં બુર્જેગ મહેરબોખ્તગાંન લખે છે

પાક ખોદાતાલાની અને મીનો યઝદોની મદદથી પાદશાહ નૌશીરવાનના હોકમથી અને ફરમાસથી હું “બુખ્ત”નો બેટો બુર્જેગમહેર ઇરાન દેશના તેમજ દુનિયાના પાદશાહો હાકિમો, અમીર ઉમરાવો જે ઉમદા નેક કામો કરવા ઈચ્છતા હોય તે માનવીઓ માટે સારી સમજ મલવત સલાહ આપવા આ પુસ્તક રચ્યું છે. તેનું નામ “ગંજેશાયગાંન” = શકિતવાન હોલતનું આપ્યું છે.

સવાલ-કયું આદમી ઘણું બખ્તાવર છે? જવાબ-જે ઘણું યુનાહ વગરનું હોય છે તે.

સ. ઘણુ ગુનાહ વગરનું આદમી કયું ?

જ. જે આદમી યજ્ઞોની આરાધના અને યજ્ઞોના તરીકાની મારફતે સત્ય જીંદગી ગુળરે અને દેવોના તરીકાથી દુર રહે તે.

સ. યજ્ઞોનો તરીકો કયો છે ? અને દેવોનો તરીકો કયો છે ?

જ. ભલાઈ એ યજ્ઞોનો તરીકો છે, અને ખુરાઈ એ દેવોનો તરીકો છે.

સ. ભલાઈ સાથી છે ? અને ખુરાઈ સાથી છે ?

જ. હુમત, હુખત, હવરસ્ત એ ત્રણ તરીકાથી ભલાઈ છે અને દુશમત, દુખુહુખત અને દુજહવરસ્ત, એ ત્રણ તરીકાથી ખુરાઈ છે.

સ. હુમત, હુખત, હવરસ્ત, એટલે શું ? દુશમત, દુખુહુખત, દુજહવરસ્ત, એટલે શું ?

જ. પ્રમાણિક વિચારવું, સત્ય વચન બોલવા, નેકાના કામ કરવા તે હુમત, હુખત, હવરસ્ત, છે અને અપ્રમાણિક વિચારવું ખરાબ વચન બોલવા, શેતાનના કામો કરવા તે, દુશમત, દુખુહુખત, દુજહવરસ્ત છે.

સ. ભલાઈને સારૂ વધારે પુરતુ શું ?

જ. જે માનવી વધારે હડાપણવાળું હોય તે. (હડાપણ)

સ. વધારે હડાપણવાળું માણસ કેવું હોય છે.

જ. જે તત્ત્વ = શરીર તે રવાનને, = આત્માને પીછાણે તે.

સ. તત્ત્વ = શરીર અને રવાન = આત્માનો શત્રુ કોણ ?

જ. તત્ત્વ = શરીરનો શત્રુ દુશ્મન તે બીમારી, તેમજ રવાન = આત્માનો શત્રુ તે નીચે જણાવેલા ૧૦ દુરગુણો.

(૧) લોભ, (૨) મોહતાજ, (૩) ગુસ્સો, (૪) અદેખાઈ, (૫) ચક્રુનમ, (૬) હવસ, (૭) વેર, (૮) આલસાઈ, (૯) અથરામણી, (૧૦) યુગલી વીગેરે.

સ. ઉપલા દુરગુણો કેવા પ્રકારના જીવમો ગુળરનારા છે ?

જ. (૧) લોભ, માણસને ઘણું અસંતોષી રાખનાર, અને રખાવનાર છે. (૨) મોહતાજ, માણસને દુઃખ પેડોચાડનાર છે. (૩) ગુસ્સો, માણસને ખુરાઈ તરફ લઈ જાય છે. (૪) અદેખાઈ, માણસને બીજાનું દેખી નહીં શકે અને ખરાબામા રખાવે છે. (૫) ચક્રુનમ, માણસને જગડાખોર બનાવે છે. (૬) હવસ, માણસને આપ મતલબી, પોતાની મતલબ પુરી કરનાર, શરીર તથા રવાનને નુકશાન પેડોચાડનાર છે. (૭) વેર, માણસને

ભયંકર, માયા વગરનું, બનાવે છે. (૮) આલસાઈ, માણસને સુસ્તીવાળું બનાવે છે. (૯) અથરામણી, માણસને ખરી બાબતથી દુર રાખનાર, ડગાઈ કરાવનાર છે. (૧૦) યુગલી, માણસને નાલાયક બનાવે છે.

સ. ઉપલા દુરગુણોથી બચવા માટેનો ઉપાય શું ?

જ. ઉપલા દુરગુણોથી બચવા માટે માણસોને મદદ મલકા માટે આશનીદેહખેરદ = જાતી હડાપણ અને ગમોશો શ્રુતેખેરદ, = કાને સાંભળેલું જ્ઞાન. સારો સ્વભાવ. સંતોષ, દીન = ધર્મનો અભ્યાસ, વીદવાન માણસોની સાચી સલાહ, વીગેરે માણસોને દુરગુણોથી બચવા માટે ચેતવે છે.

સ. માણસોમાં સારો ગુણ શાથી છે ?

જ. જ્ઞાન, હડાપણ, બુધ્ધીથી સારો ગુણ કેળવાય છે.

સ. જ્ઞાન, હડાપણ, બુધ્ધી કેવું સુખ આપે છે ?

જ. જ્ઞાન, બુધ્ધી, હડાપણ, માણસને ધારતી વગરનું, પાપ વગરનું અને દુઃખ વગરનું બનાવે છે.

સ. માણસમાં અક્કલ સારી કે દાનાઈ ?

જ. અક્કલ, કામની સમજ મેલવવા માટે છે અને દાનાઈ-એ કામને પસંદ કરવા સારૂ સદગુણ છે.

સ. ભક્તો સ્વભાવ કયો ?

જ. નમનતાઈ અને શીરીન જખાન = મીઠી જખાન.

સ. સારી આદત કઈ ?

જ. ખુદાના હર્શણ માટે ખાહેશ રાખવી તે.

સ. સારો તરીકો કયો ?

જ. ભલાઈને લગતો.

સ. વધારે સારી ઇચ્છા કઈ ?

જ. ગુનાહ વગર જીવવાની.

સ. સારો સવાબ કયો ?

જ. સંતોષી હોલત અને સખાવત કરવી.

સ. સારૂ કામ કયું ?

જ. દીન = ધર્મને યાદ રાખવાનું.

સ. સારી દાનાઈ કઈ ?

જ. માણસ પોતાને સારે માગે ચલાવે અને આત્મા ને મુક્તી અપાવે તે સારી દાનાઈ કહેવાય.

સ. માણસને ઇજગત શાથી છે ?

જ. સારી દોસ્તીથી, સંતોષીથી.

સ. વધારે નામદારી શામાં છે ?

જ. ઉદયોગી જીંદગીમાં છે.

સ. માણસનો જીવીમ દુસ્મન કોણ ?

જ. તેણી જુરી કરણી.

સ. માણસ માટે કેલવણી સારી છે કે આદત સારી છે ?

જ. કેળવણી માણસને ચડતે દરજ્જાનું બનાવે છે. સારી આદત માણસને સારા સ્વભાવ, (ખવાસ)વાળું બનાવે છે. કેળવણી માનવીને સુધારે છે. સારો સ્વભાવ આત્માની સંભાળ રાખે છે.

સ. સારી ચક્કલ, સારો ખવાસ, સારા ગુણો શું ધરાવે છે ?

જ. જે માનવીમાં ચક્કલ છે તેણે વખાસજી નથી. જેણીમાં સારા ગુણો છે તેણે ગરવ નથી. જેણીમાં તક, શક્તિ છે તેણે અથરામણી નથી. જેણીમાં ભલો ખવાસ છે. તેણે વેર નથી. જેણીમાં સજીનો ગુણ દોલત છે તેણે કાંઈની એખ શાધવી નથી. જેણીમાં સારો ખવાસ છે તેણે જખીલી નથી. જેણીમાં સાર તમીજ છે તેણે નુકશાની નથી. જેણીમાં સચ્ચાઈ છે તેણે કાંઈનું જીર કરવું નથી. જેણીમાં બડેરતને લગતી ઉમેદ છે તેણે નેક કામ કરવાની આલસાઈ નથી. જેણીમાં સખાવતનો ગુણ છે તેણે ખખીલી નથી. જેણીમાં સારી દરવેશી છે તેણે અધીરાઈ નથી જેણીમાં પોતાની તનદેરાસતીની જાલવણી છે. તેણે આજીવીપણું = દુઃખ નથી. જેણીમાં ખોદાની તાખેદારી છે તેણે દગાઈ કરવી નથી. જેણીમાં ખોદાનો ડર છે તેણે બેપરવાઈ નથી. જેણે સારી સંગત છે તેણે કામ ખોદા પસંદ છે. જેણીમાં એકદીલી છે તેણી પાસે જીદાઈ નથી. જેણે ધંધો છે તેણે આલસાઈ નથી. જેણે ઉદયોગ છે તેણે અદેખાઈ નથી જેણીમાં દાનાઈ છે તેણીમાં દુરગુણો નથી.

સ. માણસને જે કાંઈ વસ્તુ મળે છે તે ભાગ્યથી મળે છે કે કરણીથી ?

જ. જેમ શરીર અને જીવ છે તેમજ ભાગ્ય અને કરણી બોડાયલા છે. જેમ જીવ વગર શરીર નકામું છે તેમ કરણી અને ભાગ્ય સાથે છે.

સ. ભાગ્ય એટલે શું ? અને કરણી એટલે શું ?

જ. ખાસ કરીને માણસને જે કાંઈ વસ્તુ મળે છે તે તેણી ભાગ્યથી છે, ભાગ્ય કરણીનું ફળ છે.

સ. આએ દુન્યાની દોલત કેવા પ્રકારણી છે ?

જ. જેમ ઉગમાં માણસો સારી યા માઠી વસ્તુ જોય છે પણ ઉગમાંથી જાગૃત થતાં કાંઈ પણ વસ્તુ હોતી નથી તેજ મીસાલ દુનિયાની દોલત છોડી જવાની છે.

સ. આએ દુન્યામાં વધારે જીજરોગી ધરાવનારો શખસ કોણ છે ?

જ. હીન્મતવાન, બંદગીખોર, ફતેહ કરનારો, સવાબની ઈચ્છાવાલો, પાદશાહી ખવાસનો, નમનતાઈવાલો વી.

સ. લાયક પાદશાહ કયો ?

જ. દુઃખની વખતે દુનિયાને મદદ કરનાર.

સ. નીચમિત ચાલ કઈ ?

જ. સેતારાની ચાલ નીચમિત છે.

સ. શોધી કહાડવા જોગ માણસ કયું ?

જ. ધણી અનુભવવાળું માણસ.

સ. આએ દુન્યામાં વધારે ખુશ કરનાર કોણ ?

જ. લાએકીવાલું ફરજંદ અને ખારીદની મરજી મુજબ ચાલનારી ચારત.

સ. વધારે ચડતે દરજ્જાનું કોણ ?

જ. મોહતાજ વગરનું, લોભ વગરનું જે પરોપકારી કામ કરે તે, સ્વાર્થ વગરનું ધનસાન.

સ. ધણું દુઃખી માણસ કોણ ?

જ. જે માણસ તવંગર હાય અને તેણે હહાપણવાલું ફરજંદ નહીં હાય તથા જે માણસ લાયકીવાલું હાય તેણે ત્યાં ધણું નાલાયક તથા ઇજા દેનાર ફરજંદ હાય તે માણસ ધણો દુઃખી કહેવાય.

સ. કયો માણસ વધારે ગમગીન હોય ?

જ. એક લાયકીવાલું આદમી હાય તેણી ઉપર નાલાયક માણસ ફાવી જાય તથા એક વીદવાન માણસ હાય તેની ઉપર કમજુદ્ધીવાલું આદમી હોકમ ચલાવનાર હોય, તેમજ એક ભણ માણસ હાય તેની ઉપર જુરા ધનસાનની હકુમત હોય તેવા માણસો વધારે ગમગીન રહે છે.

સ. કયું માણસ ઘણી ખશ્તેશને લાયકનું હાય છે.

જ. જે નેક તરીકાવાળું, પરેઝગાર, અને નેકાની ઉમેદવાળું ખેડુનાઈ માણસ.

સ. આએ દુન્યામાં આદમી વધારે લાયક શાથી થઈ શકે ?

જ. જ્યાં વેર તનદરેસ્તી હોય ત્યાં વેર ખોદાના પરોપકારી કામમાં ધ્યાન આપે, અને આત્માની ઉન્નતી કરે, બંદગી કર્યા કરે તો તે લાયકાવાલું આદમી બને.

સ. માણસોએ આએ દુન્યામાં શાને સારૂ ધણા આતુર રહેવું ?

જ. વગર સ્વથિ લોકોનું ભલું કરવાની ઇચ્છાને માટે આતુર રહેવું.

સ. માણસોએ આએ દુન્યામાં ધણી ફીકર શાની રાખવી બેઘએ ?

જ. ખરાબ વખતની, ખુરા કામોની, ઠગારા મીત્રની, તથા દયા વગરના દુશ્મનની હકુમત માટે ફીકર રાખવી પડે છે.

સ. આદમીઓથી ફીકર વગર કેમ રહેવાય છે ?

જ. સારા વખતની, નેક કામની, સાચા મીત્રની, રહેમદીલ, ઇનસારી, હમદીન સરદાર હકુમત સત્યથી ચલાવે ત્યારે.

સ. સારો દોસ્ત કયો ?

જ. જે સંકટની અંદર મદદ કરનાર, દુઃખના વખતમાં આસરો આપનાર હોય તે સાચો મીત્ર છે.

સ. ધણો ચાહવા બેગ કોણ ?

જ. જે માણસ ધણી નમનતાઈ ભરેલો, વધારે ઇજાજત આપનારો અને મીઠાસ ભરેલું બોલનારો હોય તેણે ચાહવે બેઘએ.

સ. છેવટે શું કામ આવશે ? શું કાયમ રહેશે ?

જ. સવાખના કામો, દયા, પરોપકાર, સખાવત, સચ્ચાઈ વી.

સ. ધણું સારું શું ?

જ. ભલા માણસ સાથનો સંબંધ.

સ. વધારે ફાયદાકારક શું ?

જ. વીદવાનો સાથની દોસ્તી.

સ. વધારે ભરોશો રાખવા બેગ શું ?

જ. સાચા માણસનો બેલ.

સ. વધારે કાંમતી શું ?

જ. વીદવાનો તથા ભલા લોકોનો ખ્યાર = મોહબત.

સ. વધારે ચલકાત આપનાર શું ?

જ. વીદવાનોના સાચા કામો.

સ. વધારે પ્રમાણીક શું ?

જ. સંતોષી માણસની ઇચ્છા.

સ. ધણું ખુશખોદાર શું ?

જ. નેકીના કામો, નેકનામી.

સ. ધણું માન ભરેલું શું ?

જ. માખાપ અને ઉસ્તાદનો હોકમ.

સ. દરેક આદમી જ્યારે (૧૫) વરસની ઉંમરનું થાય ત્યારે

તેણે બનવું બેઘએ કે હુ કોણ છું ? કોણની સાથે સંબંધ રાખું છું ? ક્યાંથી આવ્યો છું ? પાછો ક્યા જવાનો છું ? હુ કોણની ખુનયાદનો છું ? કોણના વંશનો છું ? હું યાને (આત્મા) મીનોઈ જેહાનમાંથી આવ્યો છું ? કે આ દુન્યામાંથી. હુ અહુરમઝદનો ખેશી છું કે એહરેમનનો ? હું યઝદાનો ખેશી છું કે દેવેનો ? હું ભલાઓનો ખેશી છું કે ખુરાઓનો ? હુ આદમી છું કે હેવાન છું ? મારે લગતો તરીકો કયો છે ? મારી દીન = ધર્મ કયો છે ? મારો દોસ્ત કોણ છે ? મારો દુશ્મન કોણ છે ? નેકી કોણથી બદી કોણથી છે ? રોશની અને અંધાર શાથી છે ? ખુશખોદ કોણથી છે ? બદખોદ કોણથી છે ? ઇનસાફ કોણથી છે ? જુલમ કોણથી છે ? દયા કોણથી છે ?

જ. માનવીમાં રહેલો આત્મા તે પરમાત્માની રોશનીનું ચેક કારણ છે. આત્મા મીનોઈ જેહાનથી આવ્યો છે. આત્મા ખુદાનો ખેશી છે. હુ યઝદનો ખેશી છું. હું ભલાઓનો સાથી છું હું આદમી છું. મારી ખુરી કરણી તે મારો દુશ્મન છે. મારો તરીકો અશોધનો છે. મારી દીન જરથોસ્તી છે. મારો સાચો દોસ્ત મારું અંત કરણ છે ભલાઓથી નેકી, ખુરાઓથી બદી. ખુદાની કરામતથી જ રોશની અને અંધાર છે. સત્ય વચન અને ચારીત્રવાન પુરૂષ ખુશખો આપે છે. જુદું વચન અને બદચાલનો આદમી બદખોઈ આપે છે. ખુદાના કાયદાથી ઇનસાફ મલશે. ખુરા કાર્યોથી જુલમ પામશું પરવરદેગારથી દયા મલશે.

(સાધન)

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(સ્થાપી ૧૮૬૦)

રતનજી જેહાંગીર

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The Amesha-Spentas and the Yazatas in the Gathas: XXXI:

by

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“By following the path of Real Truth alone shall one live the life of Unfettered Existence, drink the nectar of Divine Knowledge and inhale the fragrance of Perpetual Bliss !”

“SPENTA MAINYU VAHISHTACHA MANANGHA HACHA ASHT SHYA-
OTHANACHA VACHANGHACHA
AHMAI DAN HAURVATA AMERETATA MAZDAO KHSATHRA
ARMAITI AHURO !” Yasna 47.1.

“Unto those that are inspired by the Holy Spirit, shall the Best Mind awaken through deeds and words of Righteousness; And the gifts of Perfection and Immortality shall Ahura Mazda shower on those that are full of Divine Dispassion and Devotion !”



The AMESHA-SPENTAS AND THE YAZATAS IN THE GATHAS are differently interpreted by various scholars. Some make them out to be Supernatural Beings. Others explain them as the Presiding Deities over natural objects. Still others insist that they are the various Attributes of God. A final explanation is that they are the Stages and Virtues that lead us to a condition of God-Realization.

Unless the Amesha-Spentas and the Yazatas are correctly interpreted, it is very difficult, or rather impossible to understand the real import and message of the Gathas, which form the most ancient and important part of the Yasna. The Gathas are the oldest section of the entire Avesta and embody the original and genuine

Teachings of the Holy Prophet Zarathushtra, as disclosed by his own sacred lips, and by those of his immediate and most intimate band of devoted disciples. There is no trace of any interpolations in the extant chapters of these Gathas. The Yasna, which is the most important part of the Avesta, comprises seventy-two chapters, called the Has, and of these, the Gatha Ahunavaiti is formed of Has 28 to 34, the Gatha Ushtavaiti is formed of Has 43 to 46, the Gatha Spenta-Armaiti is formed of Has 47 to 50, the Gatha Vohu-Khshathra is formed of Ha 51, and finally, the Gatha Vahishtoishiti is formed of Ha 53. Thus, between them, the five Gathas just enumerated comprise 17 of the 72 chapters of the Yasna.

The Gathas alone are the true, unadulterated and inspired utterances of the Holy Prophet Zarathushtra, and they bear the same relation to the Yasna that the Gita of Shri Krishna bears to the Mahabharata. The rest of the Avesta is the work of later composers, some of them very far from the times, teachings and spirit of the Prophet. Gathas are offered to the devotee as the Elixir of Life. This perhaps illustrates the foremost and magnificent importance of the Gathas, which is the fountainhead of all spiritual knowledge, in as much as Holy Zarathushtra was the first and the greatest Prophet of all mankind, who brought to the world a Universal Revelation that has inspired the minds of all the later Prophets, and greatly influenced their Religious Teachings. When the importance of the Gathas is thus made manifest, realization dawns of the paramount necessity of correctly interpreting the Amesha-Spentas and the Yazatas that are embodied in them, for they are inseparably associated with each other and the **Gathas consistently refer to them throughout their contents, but terms Amesha-Spentas and Yazatas are nowhere to be found in the Gathas.**

If the Amesha-Spentas and the Yazatas are accepted as Super-natural Beings, and are regarded as the Arch-angels and the Angels, as the Later Avesta, especially the Yashts do, they at once assume the high office of being the intermediaries between man and his God. This condition is intolerable to the Prophet, who knows no other whom he may worship but Ahura-Mazda, the Most-Adorable-One alone. All the others he repudiates with all his

might, mind and heart. He declares quite emphatically that all those that worship the Daevas, (and the Yazatas are nothing else but the Daevas under another name) are themselves Daevas in this life, and will continue to be so in the life to come. The Mazda-Yasnis are only those that worship Ahura-Mazda alone. They bend their knees to, open up their hearts to, and sing the songs of praise to **no other than Him Alone Whom they know and love as Ahura (the Lord of Spirit) — Mazda (the Lord of Matter).**

As presiding Deities over natural objects, the Amesha-Spentas and the Yazatas presume chieftainship over the different elements in the Universe. Ahura-Mazda is quite competent to run by Himself the Universe which He Himself has created, now sustains, and is quite capable of destroying and renovating at His Sweet Will, which He does upon His Own well-regulated Laws, without requiring subsidiary gods. A belief in such minor gods is nothing short of rank Polytheism, which is quite contrary to the tenets of Holy Zarathushtra, the most resolute Monotheist in the entire lustrous galaxy of the Prophets.

To accept the Amesha-Spentas and the Yazatas as the various Attributes of God only makes sense when these Attributes lead man upto Him. It is quite reasonable to accept that such virtues do exist in God, but unless they help man in a definite way, they become quite purposeless. The mere knowledge that such Divine Attributes inhere in God serves no helpful purpose. God may possess all the virtues man is capable of comprehending, and

more besides, but unless they affect him directly and help him substantially, these Attributes might as well not exist in Him, for all that man may care.

It is only when the Amesha-Spentas and the Yazatas are explained as the Stages and the Virtues that lead man upto God-Realization and grant him the Final-Fulfilment, that they serve the most useful and beneficial purpose. Only as Human Attributes do they become most intelligible and useful. It is only when human beings acquire for themselves such Virtue by passing through those Stages that they become worthy of emulation. The knowledge that man can, by his will and effort achieve these sublime Attributes is vastly more important, useful and beneficent than to merely know that they inhere in God. **It is an infinitely greater achievement and virtue to be God-like, rather than merely to know what God is like. Holy Zarathushtra does not praise the Attributes of Ahura-Mazda, as much as he prays to Ahura-Mazda to grant him and his followers those Attributes and Virtues.**

The word **Amesha** means the same as Amrita and Amara, all of which mean the Immortal Ones. They are regarded as the **Immortal Laws** for the reason that they are **Eternal, Inviolable, Unalterable and Indispensable. They constitute the Eternal Vertues of Zarathushtra's sublime Teachings. Amesha-Spentas are derived from the negating 'A' prefixed to 'Mesha' meaning death, and 'Spentas' meaning the benevolent ones.** Thus, they mean the deathless or the Immortal Holy Ones. Similarly, Yazatas mean those that are most worthy

of adoration. They are the most longed-for Virtues for which the human heart hungers. Thus, the Amesha-Spentas and the Yazatas are the different Stages and the Virtues which Zarathushtra taught his followers to long and work for, acquiring which, they would achieve perfection in Existence, Knowledge and Bliss.

Excluding Ahura-Mazda Himself, Who is regarded as the Chief of the Amesha-Spentas, the Amesha-Spentas are six in number. The number of Yazatas is legion, out of which only a few have come to us through the ages. Out of these few ones that have come down to us, only a very few make their apperan in the Gathas. We shall now try to understand them as Zarathushtra implied them to be understood.

The first step on the Moral Ladder is Asha, denoting Righteousness. The whole structure of Zarathushtra's teaching rests securely upon the solid foundation of Asha. He alone who is morally awakened will be aware of the importance of Asha. The morally blind will never be able to perceive it. Man alone is capable of realising the import of Asha by virtue of his power of discrimination. Morality is the special province of man, and it is not within the sense of the brute to understand and distinguish the right from the wrong. The greatest and most unsurpassable precepts of Holy Zarathushtra are his dicta and these three have their very being in purity of thoughts, words and deeds, Asha. Asha is the fundamental lesson that man has got to learn. It is when man starts to lead the life of Righteousness that he first awakens to the Higher Life. The

Law of Karma operates because of Asha. The entire Universe moves upon its course because of it. Man creates his own destiny by the operation of it. He meets his rewards or retributions as the fruits born of Asha. It enables him to move towards God-realization, and opens the spiritual life before him. Because of the absolute necessity of leading a moral life, Holy Zarathushtra makes it the first condition whereby man will advance into the realms of Higher Spirituality.

When man shall walk upon the path of Asha. Vohu Manah, the Good-and-Loving-Mind shall awaken in him. Vohu Manah shall unerringly point out the right course to him. It is the small voice of conscience that will not be stilled. It is the awakening of the mind to a vaster horizon. When the Vohu Manah shall develop into the Vahishtem Manah, the Universal Mind, man shall have awakened to a life of Universal Sympathy. Then, he shall no longer regard the world from his own personal view-point, but shall regard it with an unselfish and all-embracing love. He shall have ceased to look at the world from his limited vision and learn to look at it with the eyes of God.

At this stage, man shall have learned to distinguish the right from the wrong, but it is really not enough to merely know the right path, but the power and the dispassion must be there in order to pursue the right in spite of the obstructions of the selfish self. Khshathrem is that Divine Power which enables him to pursue that which is right, because it is right, and for no other purpose or end. Quite often, Vohu Manah points out the right way,

but the moral courage to adopt that course is sadly lacking. Khshathrem supplies that essential need. It supplies the strength of character that is vital in order to overcome the temptations that stand in the path of right duty. **It enables man to overcome the fear of uncertainty,** and to act with valour, secure in the belief that right triumphs because of its inherent rectitude, and for no other reason.

This leads us to the next Amesha-Spen-ta, Armaiti, Devotion. Armaiti supplies us with the Faith in the Higher Powers. Those devotees that are full of Faith in God are secure in His Might. Devotion is most essential through the times of trials and vexations. Without it man would not rise up when he stumbles and falls. The man lacking in Armaiti is an arrogant brute that can only learn through the lesson of the whip. When all appears to be dark all around us, when despair holds us in its merciless grip, when no other source of relief appears before us, it is Armaiti, absolute Devotion, absolute Faith, which extends its loving hands towards us, and lifting us up from the mires of despair, restores us once more to a life of hope and security.

When man shall have reached so far into the realms of spiritual life, Ahura-Mazda shall be pleased to confer **Haurvatat, Perfection, upon him. It is the ideal as well as the reward. It descends upon the dedicated life.** The fruits of Haurvatat are a long and healthy life, coupled with prosperity and spiritual growth. The man of Haurvatat resides in the realms of Bliss, supremely confident in the absolute Justice of God, and in the final triumph of

Good over Evil. Haurvatat kills the beast within man and raises him to angelic sublimity. He who is favoured with Haurvatat is the one that has known and conquered himself.

Ameretat is the final crowning and glory of man. It implies deathlessness and Immortality. It is God-realization in action. It does not merely mean a survival after death, but an active participation in the Master-Plan of God. It is the merger of the individual soul into the Higher Universal Self. The merger of the dew-drop into the deathless Ocean of Bliss. In Ameretat, not a vestige of the ego remains, for the lover has come face to face with the Beloved, and the Veil has been lifted.

Sraosha is the first in the rank of the Yazatas. It is the voice of **Intuition** that answers to the call of **Obedience**. Sraosha only comes to him who has awakened to the life of Vohu Manah. He alone shall be guided by intuition who has developed the Universally Good and Loving Mind. Only he who loves God shall come face to face with Him, for Sraosha shines through the illuminated Conscience, and points the way to Him. Sraosha is the infallible monitor that answers from deep within to the inquiry of the spiritually developed Mind. It is the voice of Sraosha that inspired Holy Zarathushtra to sing the Sacred Gathas.

Atar, the resplendant spark illumines from within. The Atar of Zarathushtra is not so much the external flame, as it is the fire burning deep within ourselves. It is as much the source of our lives as it is the vehicle of illumination. It is the essence within us that prompts us to be pure in

our thoughts, words and deeds. It is the outer expression of the inner-most reality planted within us by Ahura-Mazda Himself as a spark of the Universal Flame.

Ashi is the Piety that keeps us steadfast in our life of spiritual discipline. **A life of spirituality should be a life of constancy,** and he that does not sustain his efforts in treading the one and only path of righteousness, does not reach the journey's end. Ashi leads us to our destination through the shortest path. He that is full of Ashi is akin to the stranger on the road who traverses by the Light of God.

Airyaman is the **Spirit of Brotherhood** that is manifest between the followers of Zarathushtra. It is the bond that holds them together in deep and abiding sympathy. It is the strong though invisible circle of mutual love that keeps them united. Airyaman is indispensable to keep secure the fold of the Cherished Brotherhood of the Zarathushtrians.

Chisti is the **esoteric teaching of the Gathas** that raises one to the highest pinnacle of spiritual experience, which enables the lover to hold the Beloved in a spiritual embrace. It is the mystic emotion that raises the lowly worshipper. **It burns up all that is based in man in the fire of longing for the Beloved.** The spirit of Chisti transforms the individual soul into the Universal Spirit.

Daena is the **exoteric teaching** of the Gathas that **reveals the external application of its Laws.** It advocates a belief in perfect caste-equality, and the rejection of Polytheism and Iconolatry. It commends all acts of active virtue whilst condemning the wicked and the timid alike.

Geush Urvan is the **Soul of Creation**, symbolised as the Mother Cow. It is the sum total of all the individual souls in their collective form of the Universal Soul. When Humanity suffers, it sends up a joint appeal Heavenwards, and prays for a Deliverer. The various prophets have descended to Earth in answer to its call from time to time, throughout the ages, whenever irreligiousness prevailed. As Shri Krishna says in the Bhagavad-gita : "O! Arjuna, whenever there is a decline of Righteousness, and unrighteousness is in the ascendant, then do I manifest Myself in earthly form!" Similarly, Holy Zarathushtra too descended to Earth when Geush Urvan, the Soul of Creation, cried out for a Saviour.

Manthra-Spenta are the **Holy Inspired Utterances**, the Revelation, that the Prophet Zarathushtra brought to us from Ahura-Mazda. They are the Teachings of the Prophet. They show us the Way that is to be followed. Thus, the Gathas are the Manthra-Spenta of Holy Zarathushtra, for they are the Sacred Outpourings of the Enlightened One.

These are about the only Yazatas that appear in the Gathas, except for the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, the Waters, the Earth the Sky and the Air, which are all taken in their natural sense only, and are not interpreted there as any super-natural beings

In the Gathas neither the Amesha-Spentas nor the Yazatas appear as Supernatural Beings, or as Presiding Deities over natural objects. They are only presented as God-like Attributes and Virtues that are meant for human attainment. They are the Ideals to be kept ever before us, and their attainment is the main function of our Existence. For it has been said that Man is made in the image of God, and it is Man's Final Destiny that he shall at last be God-like when Renovation comes.

It is Zarathushtra's fervant prayer that man shall reach that goal, not in some distant future, but in the here and now. Accordingly, he lifts up his arms in pious supplication, and prays for the Bliss that Ahura-Mazda imparts to the Righteous:

"YE VAO, ASHA! UFYANI, MANAS-
CHA VOHU APAORVIM MAZDA-
MCH AHUREM
YAEIBYO KHASHATHREMCHA
AGHZHAONVANEM VAREDAITI
ARMAITISH, A-MOI RAFEDHRAI
ZAVENG JASATA !"

Yasna 28,3.

"Unto Thee, O! Asha, shall I weave my songs of praise, and unto Vohu-Manah and Mazda-Ahura, as I never did before, So that by Thy Boundless Grace may imperishable Khshathra and Armaiti rise within us,

O! Thou, come to us when we call, and grant us perfect Bliss !"

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