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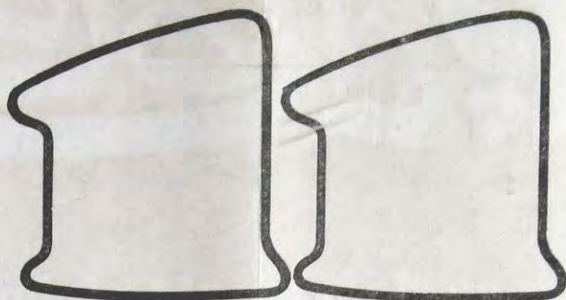


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EDITORIAL

During recent months we had lively discussions and sickening criticism over Vultures, our scavengers promoting cleanliness, which as a tenet of Zoroastrianism is Godliness in action. Messrs Dhalla, Jassawala and Karai quoted herein and other writers preceding them in The Times of India, Parsiana and Jame-Jamshed have refuted the scandalous insinuations about vultures polluting the vicinity with pickings of human flesh and bone. By authoritative sources of ornithologists quoted by them these authors have proved to the hilt that vultures cannot carry anything on flight. Such reckless assaults on customs and practices are blatant lies to be treated hereafter with silent contempt. That is all it needs and deserves. A vulture shall remain the signature of our culture of give in life and give in death. We therefore now close correspondence on Vultures.

Mr. Sam N. Doctor B.Sc., is our new discovery. He has in him the germ of erudition which the community must exploit to its advantage. It is a pity that we have few writers possessing his painstaking habit of collecting facts with accuracy and presenting them in an interesting way as he has done herein in his article on Zoroastrian Erchotology.

I have repeatedly requested and again requested and over and over again requested people to write something. Few people realise their latent capacity to write. But there is some deep-rooted diffidence in our people. They fear criticism at every stage and back out from attempting to write — This is the thing which makes our religion blank, insipid and unimaginative and gives handle to babblers to talk only on Dokhma, Vultures and fat fed to fire and such other non-flattering aspects to the exclusion of the instinctive and the deeper sentimental religious, philosophical and psychological knowledge. Ervad Framroze Bode came and Ervad Framroze Bode is gone with the wind. Kaiser-i-Hind gives his programme of lectures to be delivered in America. Subjects consist mysticism, comparative Psychology Eastern and Western, Comparative Religions East and West and Ancient Religions of the Middle East.

Mr. Nairiyosang Dhalla of London describes Ervad Bode as one erudite and cultured and knows the teachings of Prophet Zoroaster (I suppose, as a monopoly with a capital M). During all

his long stay in and around Bombay with a high-faluten bombastic and pompous programme of lectures reserved for abroad what erudition did he pour out to his co-religionists in Bombay? He only talked of vultures and vulgarities as if they were the end all and the be all of our faith and devotion. There is always a dark cloud in Heavens. How much better he could have scored if he had coupled Zoroastrian religious tenets and doctrines with mysticism, psychology, para-psychology and religions of the Middle East and explained them to his audience? It is this negative phase of his erudition at home that people (like me) have resented. I harbour no ill-will against him. I went to his house on Sunday prior to his departure to wish a happy send off. Ervad and Mrs. Bode received me very nicely — only at the end he could not contain himself and remarked that I was keeping bad company (meaning Jashan Committee and allied groups). If Ervad Sahib had himself kept good company and not caught the tail of the buffaloes (બેસના પૂઢડાં પકડ્યાં ન હોત તો) there would have been no tale of woes. Really all arms were open to receive him and to forgive and forget.

Mr. Nairyosang Dhalla is sore about my taking no notice of his letter from London in which he had stated that one of my brothers Jimmy Warden had also performed a (so called) marriage ceremony of a Parsi girl to an Englishman in London. Does not Mr. Dhalla know that Ervad Bode professes to be and poses as High Priest (which incidentally he never was beyond a Panthaky decorated with Shawl). What is my brother? Know it that he is of my clan — seven times washed in water remains a behdin (સાત વાણીએ ધોયેલાં બહેદીન) What significance does Mr. Dhalla attach to marriage by unauthorised person? It is nothing more than an evening party's play. With all the fun fare about them such marriages are not registerable and not countenanced by law of the land. Why should I bother about them and make any comments? This way Mr. Dhalla may drag me to comment on the Registrar of Civil Marriages, who does all sorts of inter-marriages. But he is the Officer of the Law and his stamp is valid for all purposes. Mr. Dhalla is too intelligent not to appreciate the differences in the respective cases.

Experiences and performances of Rosemary Brown of Balham, London, are included in this issue as a significant example of recent days proving the much discussed problem of the possibilities of communication between the embodied and the disembodied human beings. Her capriccioso must be very carefully considered. There is

truth in it Automatic writing, but with the touch of a medium, has been tried out by me with convincing success. Many years ago Mr. Pestonji Mahaluxmiwala bereaved of his son Dhunjishah became keenly interested in spiritualism and communication and wrote extensively in Jame Jamshed. Dhunjishaw was my school classmate when he died as a pre-matric class pupil. He was my particularly good friend and I followed Pestonji's writings. Pestonji made a good collection of books on the subject. Many years after Mr. Pestonji's death I came by his library and purchased it. After the death of my wife Naju and my brother Hirjibhoy (1954) my interest in the subject was aroused afresh. I am happy to find a world of truth in it and happier still to know from the departed loved ones themselves that it is real happiness on both sides to be able to establish contact as both sides are eager for it and await it anxiously and pleasurably. I have not come by any spook or spoke to disturb equanimity on either side. If we constantly fear crooks we cannot step out of the house but once we do we find no crook in the streets. Even if one is there he goes his own way and we go our own.

Some scientists have reported their posthumous contact with Einstein in solving some intricate problems of advance mathematics. I have solved some of my distressing problems through the other-worldly aid and delivered a lecture of one and a half hours before Bombay Psychiatrist Society. They listened to me with rapt attention and no one passed any adverse opinion on my mental health, then or thereafter.

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'Zoroastrian Eschatology'

by

SAM N. DOCTOR, B.Sc.

By 'Eschatology' is meant the doctrine of the Last things, the Final things, as death & life hereafter, Resurrection, the Final Consummation of the world, etc.

Zoroaster (Zarathushtra) was the first prophet to expound a well-defined ethical & spiritual eschatology.

Broadly speaking, man is made up of two component parts, the physical body and the soul. According to Zoroastrianism, the former at the close of life on earth, perishes or is returned to the elements; while the latter continues its existence in the spiritual world. The Pahlavi 'Dinkard' affirms in clear terms the immortality of the soul: "Be it known that the duration of the soul is everlasting".

"Nowhere does the belief in the future life after death stand out more prominently, nowhere are the ideas respecting it expressed more decidedly and carried out in all their details more fully, than among the Avestan people. Here the doctrine of immortality and of compensating justice in the next world forms a fundamental of the whole system.... For who in that age would have fixed his choice upon a new religion, if the hope of a better life after death had not been held out to him as the reward of all troubles & hardships to be endured for its sake?" (Dr. W. Geiger in 'Civilization of the Eastern Iranians in ancient times'.)

Zarathushtra, in the Gathas (Yasna 45-10), says that Mazda "through His Divine Law (Asha) and His Good Mind (Vohu Manah, Vohuman or Bahman) and under His Sovereign Power (Khshathra) has assigned to man Perfection (Haurvatat or Khurdad) and Immortality (Ameretat or Ameredad). May He grant us in this life the Desire for Perfection & the Desire for Immortality" (Bode & Nanavutty's free translation of the Gathas). Thus, the prophet here invokes Mazda in all His spiritual attributes (in later times collectively termed as the 'Ameshaspands') and beseeches Mazda to grant him & his followers the desire for immortality.

Zarathushtra, however, did not infuse his eschatology with metaphysical theories & speculations, the characteristic features of the later philosophical systems that grew out of India & its neighbours. In Zarathushtra's system there was no reincarnation, no nirvana or moksha, no metempsychosis & such other speculative doctrines. Buddhism, for instance, had denied the existence of a Supreme Being and a future state, and taught Nirvana or absorption in the World Soul. However, some scholars like Dasturji Dabu see allusions to reincarnation in the Avesta. (Vide 'Message of Zarathushtra').

Not even the Hebrews or Jews had developed a consistent eschatology until after the period of the Exile (Babylonian Captivity of the Jews, c. 539 B.C.) when they came into direct contact with the Persians and borrowed from them several Zoroastrian eschatological doctrines & ideas such as the concept of Satan, ideas regarding Immortality, Resurrection & the Final Judgment, Angelology & Demonology. King Cyrus gave orders that the great temple at Jerusalem be rebuilt and that the Jews "be returned from captivity to their own city". Darius, the successor of Cyrus commanded that the decree of Cyrus be carried into effect. The Jews were then liberated and the great event of restoration of the temple was consummated. Cyrus is therefore called 'God's Shepherd' and the 'Anointed of the Lord' in the Bible (Old Testament : Isaiah 44-28, Ezra 1, & c). Even Jesus was destined to be born in a land or nation rebuilt by Cyrus the Great. Thus observes Prof. L. H. Mills in his 'Our Own Religion in Ancient Persia' : "If God was anywhere present in any human event, He was active at the taking of Babylon, even when regarded as an external circumstance. ... Had Cyrus failed there, where could our Post-Exilic Judaism and our pre-Christianity have been now as historical facts ? ". Thus from Judaism, Zoroastrian influence & ideas passed on to Christianity and thence to Islam.

With these observations regarding Immortality & Zoroastrian influence we now turn to other eschatological doctrines such as the Individual Judgment of the soul after death; Heaven, hell & purgatory;

Final Resurrection & Universal Judgment; the Final Renovation of the World; & **the Messianic doctrine of the advents of Saoshyants or saviour prophets.** Our sources of information on these will be, first, the Gathas (the oldest extant Avestan writings which have come down from the prophet himself), then, other Avestan scriptures such as the Vendidad, Yashts, etc., and finally the much later Pahlavi writings such as the Dinkard, the Bundahishna, the Arda Viraf-Nameh, etc.

To begin with : What happens to the soul immediately after death ? The Gathas are silent as to the immediate state, but in the later Avesta we come across a detailed account of the soul's journey to the other world. The journey does not begin immediately after death. The soul hovers around the dead body for three days & nights after death. During this period the soul experiences immense joy if it has treaded the path of Asha (righteousness) during life, and anxiously longs for the rewards of heaven. On the other hand, the soul of one who is wicked, sits near the skull and "clamours in bewilderment & confusion about the terrible lot that awaits it, and experiences unlimited suffering" (Yashts 22 & 24, Vendidad 19). The recital of a single Ashem Vohu, pronounced by a man at the last moments of his life, we are told, is worth the entire zone inhabited by man Yt. 21-14, 15 (Dr. Dhalla in 'History of Zoroastrianism').

At the end of the third night the soul of the righteous feels as if it is brought amidst plants & scents. A cool scented wind blowing from the south greets the

soul. The soul of the wicked, on the other hand, feels as if it is brought amidst snow and stench, and inhales the foul-scented wind blowing from the northern regions (abodes of the evil spirits). Then again, from amidst the breeze appears the 'Daena' or the dead man's own 'Religious Conscience', personified. Thus it seems to the soul as if "his own conscience were advancing to him in the shape of a maiden, fair, bright, beautiful of body, noble. The wicked soul also confronts his Conscience, but in the shape of the most ugly & filthy old hag. The two damsels, one beautiful and the other ugly & stinking, are the personifications of the good or evil deeds of man.

The soul then (on the dawn of the fourth day) starts on its journey to the 'Chinvad Bridge'. This bridge is called in the Avesta, '**Chinvato peretu**'. The word has been rendered variously by scholars as the **Bridge of Judgment, Bridge of Longing, Bridge of the Separator**. (The last seems to be an etymologically correct rendering, for '**Chinvat**' literally means '**of the dividing one**'). The 'Dregvants' or the followers of 'druj' (the Lie), who destroy the paths of Asha (Truth) by their evil tongues & deeds, and whose existence according to the Gathas (Yasna 49-11) will be in Hell or Drujo-Demana, shall tremble at the Bridge of Judgment (Yasnas 51-13).

There is distribution or dispensation of rewards & punishments (retributions after death in accordance with "**the deeds done in the body**"). This is the **Individual Judgment**. There is also to be the **Last Judgment** at the time of the consumation

of the world "**when all mankind will be called into account.**" This event will be followed by the **Final Renovation or Regeneration of the world** ('Frashokereti) when there will be a spiritual renewal.

The Individual Judgment takes place on the third day (or rather on the dawn following the third night) after death, and an account of the journey of the soul across the **Chinvad Bridge and the consequent judgment on the third day is to be found in the Vendidad (19-27 et seq)**, a more amplified version of this account is given in the Pahlavi Hadokht Nask. The Angel Sraosha (Sarosh) is believed to lead the soul upto the Chinvaad Bridge, and hence most of the prayers recited upto the dawn of the fourth day are addressed to this yazad or angel "**with the express purpose of gaining his favour for the soul of the dead**" (Dastur Sheriar in his paper on Funeral Ceremonies in J. J. Madressa Jubilee Volume). "**The soul now stands at the Individual Judgment in the presence of one or more heavenly assessors before whom the life accounts is rendered. The good and evil deeds are weighed in the balance. Next comes the crossing of the Chinvaad Bridge.**"

The scenic features of the judgment of the soul at Chinvaat Bridge are further developed and embellished in the later Pahlavi writings. Th Pahlavi Bundahishn and Dadistan-i-Dinik give vivid descriptions of the Chinvaad Bridge. The bridge has two sides, a broad one and a narrow one. It presents its broad side when approached by the soul of the righteous, thus allowing easy passage; but continues to stand edgewise and presents a razor-

like edge when approached by the wicked soul. **Allusions to this narrow path are also to be found in Islamic literature.**

The idea of a bridge that departed souls have to cross to enter into the world beyond is also to be found in other religious systems of antiquity, e.g. we come across it **in the Rig Veda** and in the religions of **the Greeks & other Indo-European races.** **The concept of the Chinvad Bridge has astronomical origins. Originally the idea of the bridge was suggested by the Milky Way** which bears evident resemblance to the Chinvad Bridge, the northern and southern ends of which (according to the Pahlavi Bundahishna) lie on two summits of the Elburz mountain. Zoroaster retained the imagery but infused it with a profound ethical and spiritual significance. all his own.

Whereas in the Gathas Sraosha alone figures as a judge, in the later period Sraosh acts as a co-assessor with Yazads Mithra (Meher) and Rashnu who all combine to make up a heavenly tribunal for the judgment of the dead. (Vide Dr. Dhalla in 'History of Zoroastrianism'). The Pahlavi literature includes more spiritual or celestial beings (Yazatas) among the tribunal that sits in judgment at 'The Bridge'. Ahura Mazda, Sraosha (Obedience), Meher (Truth) & Rashnu (Justice) are also accompanied by Arshat (Right), Fravashi (Guardian Spirit) and Daena (Religious Conscience). Numerous questions are addressed to the soul, questions that defy evasion. To the Yazata Rashnu is entrusted the task of weighing the deeds of the soul in a balance. The Pahlavi 'Minoikherad' tells us that after the deeds are carefully considered and thus weighed,

the Yazats pass their impartial & inexorable judgment, and Ahura Mazda "gives His final decision & sanction."

After the pronouncement of judgment on Chinvad Bridge, the soul of the righteous is greeted with the words "Welcome, enter the everlasting joy of Heaven", but the soul of the wicked hears "Depart from us into the deep abyss of darkness (Hell)". The righteous cross over the bridge on the ascent, into heaven; but the wicked soul fails to cross over the bridge. It falls from the lower end of the bridge, head foremost, into Hell and is **precipitated into that particular grade which is suitable to its wickedness (Dadistan-i-Dinik 20-3, 4).**

The Islamic doctrine of the Arch of Al-Sirat was derived from the Bridge of the Separator.

The Zoroastrians perform a strange ceremony on the dead body prior to its disposal. This is the 'Sagdid' in which a **dog is employed which bears certain special marks.** "He must be four-eyed (i.e. bearing two spots near the eyes) and must be of yellow colour or white with yellow ears". The dog is led towards the deceased, so that his eyes (gaze) may fall on the corpse. To this glance of the dog is ascribed the power of "scaring away the Evil Being". **The dogs on earth employed in the 'Sagdid' are the prototypes of the spiritual dogs in heaven.** The explanation of the practice is to be sought in the "belief of the existence of the two dogs at the Chinvad Bridge whose duty is to guide the souls of the departed to heaven" (Vendidad). Then again, the practice seems to stem from a common Indo-Iranian source, for, as Mr. S. K. Hodiwala points out (Vide his paper entitled 'Jamshed in the Avesta & in the

Vedas'), mention is made of the two dogs of Yama (Avestan 'Yima'), the god of death, in the Rig Veda (X-14, 11), "the watchers four-eyed who look on men & guard the pathway". Yama in the Rig Veda appears in his three-fold character, viz., as a man, in which state he is identical with Yima (Jamshid) of the Avesta; as the god of death; and finally as an astronomical constellation with sister Yami (Vide ibid).

The Vendidad (X-2) enjoins the recitation of short passages from the Gathas (the first Gatha) on the death of man.

These passages constitute the 'Geha-Sarna' of the early or Avestan times. This was subsequently elaborated into the Seventh Ha of the same (Ahunavad) Gatha; and still later, in the Pahlavi times, originated the practice of getting the Vendidad itself recited. (Vide 'Iranian Studies' by Dastur Cursetji Pavry). The prayer of Seraosh comes next in importance to the Geha-Sarna amongst the ceremonials connected with the dead. This prayer is offered to Sarosh who is associated with the guidance of the souls of the dead in the days immediately following death.



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Ornithology Explodes the False Charges of Vultures Flying With Their Pickings

300 YEAR OLD TOWER DID NOT ENDANGER SOCIETY DURING THE FATAL PLAGUE

by

HOMI B. DHALLA M.A.

The advocates of the electric crematorium are now using the Towers of Silence as a launching pad for their weak-kneed arguments against our sensible mode of disposing the dead. As a last-ditch stand these men began a campaign of collecting signatures of non-Parsis on payment, to show that the Towers are a nuisance—this indicates the level they have stooped to.

Hollow Charge

The charge is that the vultures drop their pickings in the vicinity. This hollow charge has evidently been engineered by the fanatic proponents of the electric crematorium who have been bending over backwards to ram this system down the throat of the community.

Ornithology or the scientific study of birds has proved that vultures after having eaten are unable to fly or carry off their prey.

Habits of Vultures

A. Rutgers, a renowned ornithologist while commenting on the habits of the vultures states that, "They gorge them-

selves to bursting point and then have to sit and wait for quite a long time before they are capable of returning to their perch." (Birds of Asia, text by A. Rutgers, Methuen & Co., London, 1969, p. 74). This is one of the latest publications on ornithology.

I. Gibbons, is of the opinion that, "when he has stuffed himself to bursting point, the Lammergeir or Lamb vulture slowly digests his food in drowsy, torpid state. Weighed down by his meal, the bird has to remain quite still for a long time." (The Private Lives of Animals Series — Animals of Mountain and Valley, Frederick Warne & Co., London, 1969, p. 59.) This is another latest work.

Chamber's Encyclopaedia, while describing the bird states, "In all the Vultures the head and neck are more or less bare, **the beak is long and curved only at the tip**; the legs and feet are large and powerful, but **the toes and claws are relatively weak**. They are thus well adapted for walking and feeding on the ground, but **are unable to carry off their prey**." (Vol. X, 1928).

HISTORY OF TOWERS

The hollow argument further collapses like a house of cards when we impartially examine the history of the Towers. **The first Tower was built exactly 300 years ago by Modi Hirji Vatcha at Malabar Hill.** (cf. Parsi Prakash, Vol. I, p. 17). **The Tower is its own silent testimonial — it still stands solidly. Time has not ravaged it. Decay has not claimed it.**

A fact of capital importance which completely knocks the bottom out of their argument is that from **November 1896 to July 1906, 15,744 bodies were placed in the Towers, out of which 2629 were victims of the plague** (cf. Parsi Prakash, Vol. 3, p. 605). **Had the birds deposited the plague infested flesh elsewhere, would not the plague have gained dire momentum?** The civic authorities would certainly have taken proper steps against our system to ensure the safety of the citizens of Bombay.

Moreover, a Resolution of the British Government speaks for itself, "so, with respect to existing places of exposure for the Parsee dead. The places of this nature now existing are not supposed to be injurious to the public health."

Quite Harmless

An opinion which is very germane to our discussion is that of Mr. E. C. K. Ollivant, Municipal Commissioner for the City of Bombay, who in a speech delivered at a meeting of the Municipal Corporation said, "These Towers had, as an established fact, proved quite harmless to the city, and there was no cause of complaint against their position on the score of sanitation or other similar grounds."

Is it not very surprising that after 300 years the advocates of the electric crematorium, having ulterior motives, have suddenly discovered that these birds are committing a nuisance? **Have these birds altered their habits overnight to suit their mendacious aspersions?** **This small band of reformists have once again exposed themselves in the eyes of the community, proving conclusively, that all they say lacks the stamp of authority.**

Courtesy Jame-Jamshed

What More Eminent Ornithologists Have To Say?

by

C. M. JASSAWALLA (Poona)

The Editor,
The Jam-e-Jamshed,
Sir,

Against the Vulture recently, a lot of things have been said about this scavenger which according to its habits, it is not able to do or perform.

To say blatantly that birds are birds and may pick, carry and drop things anywhere is preposterous. Birds are birds no doubt, however, their habits are different. Food, ways, rearing and feeding the young differ from species to species. The size, weight and build of a bird has much to do with its feeding habits.

Eagle, hawk and falcon will swoop on its prey be it dead or alive and carry it away in its talons or beak. The vulture feeds on the ground and on carrion. The other scavengers keep at a respectable distance to be away from harm's way when a congregation of vultures is feeding.

In a limited place like the Tower of Silence, even its own kind has to wait its turn and may just keep on waiting and trying as the rapacious ones by then have left the corpse bone-dry in Nature's own way of quick and clean disposal.

What Ornithologists of the eminence of Salim Ali and the late Hugh Whistler have to say about the vulture will help one to understand the bird better. Some of those staying in the close vicinity of the towers of silence in Bombay have maligned this bird for its carrion carrying habits. They will see how far their statements are from truth.

Salim Ali :—

“Vultures live entirely on carrion, their feet and claws being ill-adapted for striking down and lifting prey like eagles and falcons do. They are invaluable scavengers and of greatest benefit in keeping the surroundings clean and sanitary. The speed and thoroughness with which a gathering of vultures will dispose of a bullock or other large animal is astonishing. A carcass which would otherwise rot and befoul the air is disposed of in incredible short time. The birds gorge themselves so full that they are often quite unable to lift themselves off the ground. After this they are usually obliged to settle on nearby trees or on the ground, giving time for digestion to lighten their load.”

Hugh Whistler :—

“A vulture descends lower to verify existence of a carcass and finally descends to the ground nearby with a peculiar tearing rush that unmistakably indicates

food. Vulture follows vulture, as they patrol with a lively interest in each other's movements, the circle of interest widening like the ripples of a stone thrown into water. Settled on the ground the vultures run clumsily on foot and the jostling striving mass of vultures gradually devour everything but the largest bones. Gorged they sit around on the ground, or with great difficulties rise into surrounding trees, till digestion allows them to wing a heavy way to the resting place, and there they sit and mediate until returning hunger again sends them on patrol.”

It is not understood what misconception called the vulture a Sacred bird. It is just a very useful one, without which there would be much disease and death, especially in places lacking sanitation. **Being so useful a scavenger, it is protected by law.**

I, who stay in the direct line of flight of the vultures from the Towers of Silence to the hillock near by a dwelling in Poona, where they came to bask, have had a chance to study their flight, mode of eating and habits. **A vulture when in flight, carries its feet in line with the body and from beak to tail is one straight line.** At the time of alighting, the feet are held straight down and the claws kept open. **This bird in flight cannot carry dead or live things. A vulture has to take a running start to be airborne.**

Those who persist in their opinion of the ill-doings of the vulture in spite of what the ornithologists say, do so with a motive. The stigma the vulture carries,

being so closely associated with 'death' and looking so repulsive, gives a leverage to some to attempt to overthrow the Towers from the present site in Bombay.

The Trustees of the Parsi Panchayat of Bombay, could perhaps enlighten the public on the outcome of the suit filed in Bombay and referred to in the Forum of 31-5-1970, of The Times of India, by Mr. Adi F. Doctor in his rejoinder to the article by Mr. Ravindranath. In this suit the Vultures were stated as offenders. An ornithologist, from abroad, was pitted against the complainants to give expert opinion on the habits of the vulture. He proved to the satisfaction of the court, that in flight a vulture cannot carry dead or living thing. The Panchayat won the case and the Towers retained the grounds.

CORRESPONDENCE ON VULTURES

To,
The Editor, "PARSIANA"
Sir,

In this century, in its second or third decade (I do not remember the exact year) a foreigner residing in a bungalow at Malabar Hill in the vicinity of the Towers of Silence wrote a letter to the "Times of India". His allegation was that a bird perched on a tree in his compound "dropped clean" a piece of human flesh (or bone? I am not quite sure) The stink was in the tail-end of the effusions. The stink was in the tail-end like that of some reptiles. This uncorroborated effusion met the fate it deserved.

Another incident happened at about the same period. In an issue of the well-known English Magazine "The Wide World" a writer alleged that in Bombay he somehow managed to plunge into the bottom of a Tower situated in the vast grounds of several towers. How he managed to evade the vigilance of the watch-

man and how he entered the compound he did not mention, but added that he was pulled out of the pit with the help of a rope! This cock-and-bull story startled the community and "JAME" did its best to expose the fallacy of this wild allegation. This time the Bori Bunder Oracle did its duty well. After it had made a close scrutiny of the whole compound it re-affirmed that no Tower existed at the site mentioned in the letter. The then Editor of the "The Wide World" Magazine, on his attention being drawn, wrote a few lines of regret at publication of the wild story. I do not remember the exact words used in the story but only its purport is given above.

Non-Parsi writer has made strictures against the present mode under the guise of "obscurantism" and its lie was nailed to the counter by a Parsi tenant residing in the same building. That such baseless allegations were made in the distant past when foreigners bore the "Whiteman's burden" is perhaps understandable. But these days in "Our Own Raj" crackpots should rush to the press without realising its consequence is reprehensible, much more so when some of our own co-religionists without study of the Zoroastrian lore rush to the press. Foreign scholars and savants who view our tradition dispassionately agree with one voice on the deep sense underlying them. But there are always "enemies in the camp" in political or social spheres.

I advise such misguided persons to remember the Biblical expression "Why beholdest thou the mote in the brother's eyes when there is beam in thine own".

A. M. KARAI

Ex-Assistant Editor-Bombay Chronicle,
Tata Mills Colony, Bldg No. 4 (2/9)
Elphinstone Rd — Bombay 12.

(Correspondence on Vultures is now closed)

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Rosemary Brown on her Piano

Communication with the spirits of the departed has always been considered an interesting though somewhat useless past-time. Talks with the spirits of dead celebrities are reported to have yielded curious information about their life on our sinful earth. It is said that they answer the most risqué questions with astonishing candour. They have nothing to lose, after all. They cannot be prosecuted for libel or false evidence.

It's quite another matter when the spirits indulge in predictions. In fact, one would be well advised to steer clear of them. The dead — especially those who departed this life a long time ago like Julius Caesar or Alexander the Great — are hopelessly behind the times. Not having modern media of information or computers at their disposal, they are liable to make mistakes in their analyses

and give the wrong counsel. It is hardly likely that Julius Caesar, for instance, could recommend suitable candidates for the Italian Centre-Left government, and Alexander the Great certainly cannot help the Athens Colonels restore the greatness of Greece. And so no one expects any real use or, say, practical help from the spirits.

It's a pity, of course. Some of the great died in their prime. They could have gone on creating more and more masterpieces but, instead, they have gone to the other world where there are neither the stimuli nor the conditions for creative endeavour. A poet, for instance, won't find ordinary notepaper or a goose-quill there, nor can a composer get a supply of music paper and a piano.

Nevertheless, the living have at last made a step towards using the creative capacity of dead geniuses. History will rightly record that the credit for this and the glory, naturally, belong to Great Britain.

The step, of course, required quite a bit of preparation. For decades the job was tackled not only by expert tabletappers but even by such eminent Victorian researchers as Crookes, Lodge and Wallace. To prove that he had had personal contact with the other world, Crookes had himself photographed arm-in-arm with a young, petty medium who had long been dead. Later there came into existence the Society for Psychical Research which studied prophetic dreams, evil presentiments and mysterious visions. And in 1927 Duke University set up the world's first "parapsychological" laboratory to put such investigations on a firm scientific basis. British occultists are working hard in our day too.

At long last success came. Not to the university laboratory or the Society for Psychical Research, it is true, but to a modest flat in Laitwood Road in Balham, one of London's poorer suburbs, where lives Rosemary Brown, a middle-aged housewife who likes to tinkle on the piano while waiting for the milk to boil.

This Rosemary Brown has established close contact with the great composers of the past, and definitely to the advantage of mankind. The first to appear to her, she told **Time magazine** (July 6), was Liszt. One day in 1964, when she was playing the piano to relax from cooking,

she suddenly felt that she had lost control of her hands. She looked up and there was the great composer, "hawk nose, white hair, black gown and all", guiding her fingers over the keys.

On his next appearance Liszt brought Mozart along and then Bach. After that there were Schubert, Chopin, Brahms and Grieg. And even Beethoven. They didn't come just to entertain Rosemary. They chose to use her as a sort of stenographer to give people new, truly posthumous rhapsodies, fugues and waltzes. And symphonies, if things went well. Rosemary laid in a supply of music paper, and things started rolling. Here is how Mrs. Brown describes them:

"Liszt controls my hands for a few bars at a time, and then I write the music down. Chopin tells me the notes at the piano and pushes my hands onto the right keys; if it is a song, Schubert tries to sing it — but he hasn't got a very good voice. Beethoven and Bach prefer to have me seated at the table with pencil and paper; then they give me the key, the timing, the left hand and the right hand."

Eventually, Rosemary attracted the attention of the well-known British musicians Michael Tippett and Hepzibah Menuhin. Sir George Trevelyan, grandson of the famous historian, and music experts George and Mary Firth set up a fund to permit Rosemary to give up her house-keeping and devote herself entirely to the great composers from the other world.

Rosemary naturally agreed to devote herself to this noble cause. She affirms that she has already copied down eight

works by Liszt, three by Chopin and one masterpiece each by Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, Grieg and Debussy.

There have been press conferences and articles and reports in newspapers and magazines about Rosemary's amazing performance. By far not all believe in her collaboration with Liszt and his colleagues, it is true, but, then, Copernicus wasn't believed at first either!

To prove that she really maintains creative contacts with the great composers of yore, Rosemary says Liszt often accompanies her on her shopping trips and once even checked up on the price of bananas. Debussy, she affirms, would be called a "hippie" today and has told her that he does much more painting than music. Chopin is a TV addict but disapproves of much that appears on the BBC. And Beethoven, much to Mrs. Brown's surprise, isn't at all crabby.

There are different opinions about the classical works copied by Rosemary. Some grant that they may have been

written by Liszt or Beethoven in a nodding moment. Others call them highly-skilled parodies. "Some of the music is awful, but some is marvellous," says British composer Richard Rodney Bennett. However it may be, Philips Records have put out a collection of Rosemary's works (the contract has brought her £3,000) and the BBC has asked her to make a television appearance. And the immortal posthumous works may soon resound in concert halls throughout the world.

Grateful mankind will inscribe in letters of gold in its history the wonderful achievements of Rosemary Brown. Think of the vistas this Englishwoman has opened to human progress. For the great painters, writers and scholars of the past may want to emulate the composers' example and flood the world with new Sistine Madonnas, King Lear's and Archimedean laws.

Courtesy — New Times No. 33
August 1970 (Moscow)

Note :CAPRICCIOSO is music composed on free styled unfettered rules of composition. It is capricious music jumping hither & thither like Caper (a goat) jumping on rocks. Music composed by her though directed by great musicians is unsystemmatic and capricious, even though brilliant in parts.

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Commander Nariman Hormusji Vaccha I. N. (Retired) B.A.

In the last issue of Parsiana we gave a hearty send-off to Mr. Sapur Desai. In this issue we give a cordial welcome to his worthy successor as Jt. Secretary of the Parsi Panchayat of Bombay.

Commander Vaccha took his B.A. degree of the Bombay University with History, Economics and Political Science and joined the Royal Indian Navy on 1st May 1941 as Sub-Lieutenant and gradually rose by dint of merit and superior executive qualities to the rank of Commander. From 1941 to 1946 he rose to be a Commanding Officer and held other similar posts of responsibility on the Naval Ships, getting the grovelling experience that Command

gives on high seas. He was taken over on the administration side of Admiral's Staff in Bombay and later the Naval Headquarters at Delhi, where he worked as Chief Staff Officer, Intelligence and Security Officer and Maintenance Command. He was appointed on International Commission on Supervision and Control for Vietnam and was Commanding Officer of the Naval Ships and Establishments with the Ministry of Defence. He was also a Commander in charge of National Cadet Corps of Bombay and Bihar—a job responsible for selection of suitable Cadets and their proper adequate training on which the discipline and the efficiency of the Defence Forces depend.

He retired from Indian Navy on 24th December 1964 after 24 years of efficient service rendered and merits collected which decorate his chest with Indian Independence Medal, Foreign Service Medal and other awards and Service decorations.

After retirement from Navy he was taken over by the Thakursey Group of Mills as an Establishment and Security Officer. He is also Conversant with National Productivity Council's Course orga-

sed by the Ministry of Defence which he finished in March 1965, a little after retirement from active duties.

His versatile experience, understanding of discipline and self-discipline, his immense bubbling energy and the ingrained habit of vigilance combined with gentle reserve and desire to serve his community will prove him another man of merit — a worthy successor to the office of the Secretary of the Parsi Punchayat. We welcome you confidently.



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Even though late we wish to pay tribute to the memory of a devout upstanding and deeply cultivated Zoroastrian Nadirsha Bapooji Chenoy. Through his unfailing generosity, the impeccable standards of his personal life and distinguished professional career and by his long and sincere service to his co-religionists, Nadirsha Chenoy fulfilled the true spirit of the teachings of our prophet Zoroaster, and lent dignity and lustre to the Parsi community of Hyderabad and Secunderabad.

Scion of the illustrious Chenoy family of Hyderabad, Nadirsha was born on the 21st June, 1882. He was educated at the celebrated Madrasa-e-Aliya, then (as its name implies) an exclusive school for the nobles of the State. He was a keen all-round sportsman and practically grew up in the saddle. A good shot and an accomplished rider he also represented his school and college at cricket and was the first President of the Hyderabad State Cricket Board later in life. He was keenly interested in Persian literature, and poetry in particular and cricket and Persian poetry remained his lasting interests. The disciplines and graces of both these were reflected in his strong sense of humour and fair play; in his scholarly and gracious personality. In the Hyderabad

State of those days there flourished a high standard of accomplishment in the classical Persian language and literature and Nadirsha's outstanding scholarship in Persian literature and Persian Zoroastrian History was widely acclaimed.

Nadirsha graduated in 1904 from the Deccan College, Poona. He went to Bombay to undertake studies in Law and was articled to Messrs. Nanu and Hormusjee, a flourishing firm of Solicitors, specialising in Company Law which remained his forte.

Returning to Hyderabad Nadirsha Chenoy set up his practice in 1906 and continued his legal career for the next fifty years. His name was synonymous with meticulous work, high professional standard and an abiding awareness of what was honourable and humane. Junior Members of the Bar remember his courtesy, his approachability and his gift for evoking warm friendship. He was twice offered a Judgeship of the High Court by the late Sir Akbar Hyderi, then Prime Minister of Hyderabad, but he preferred to continue his private practice.

With his legal acumen and specialisation in Company Law Nadirsha was among the early pioneers of Hyderabad's Industrial Development and was connec-

ted with many of the State's best known industries from their inception and served with distinction on the Boards of 18 Major Industrial Enterprises of Hyderabad State such as the Nizam Sugar Factory Limited, Singareni Collieries Company Limited, Vazir Sultan Tobacco Company Ltd. (a subsidiary of Imperial Tobacco Company Limited) and several such big concerns. He was the first Secretary and Legal Adviser to them and later Director and Chairman of several of them.

Nadirsha was also associated with the Advisory Board of the Central Bank of India in Secunderabad and with the State Bank of Hyderabad.

When the Bansilalpet Charity was established Raja Sir Bansilal Motilal, the Founder named Nadirsha Chenoy its life President and Trustee.

In keeping with long established family tradition, Nadirsha Chenoy was intimately involved in the welfare of the Zoroastrian Community. For 49 years he was a Trustee of the Parsee Anjuman. He was Chairman also of the Bai Rattanbai J. Chenoy Parsee Charitable School, and Trustee of the Seth Edulji Chenoy Zoroastrian Charitable Housing Trust

(founded in memory of his father), the Bai Maneckbai Chenoy Charitable Trust (in memory of his mother) and other family Trusts.

All who recall Nadirsha Chenoy will recall his generosity. He had strong civic sense and humanitarian feelings and helped all philanthropic causes. With characteristic dignity he shunned all lime-light. His death marks the passing of a Great Gentleman a final link with a vanished way of life, who lived graciously and unobtrusively by a high code of honour which embellished the habits of his life and mind, and won the lasting affection and respect of all colleagues and associates.

He is survived by his wife Jerbai, a selfless and dedicated social worker in Hyderabad and Secunderabad and three married daughters Mrs. Mithoo Khushroo Coorlawala, Mrs. Frainy Kaeki Captain and Mrs. Feroze Homi Sethna.

Dasturji Naoroz D. Minocher Homji member of our Advisory Board was close-associated with Nadirsha Chenoy during the years which he spent in Secunderabad as the Officiating Dasturji Saheb of the SETH EDULJI SOHRABJI CHENYOY DAR-E-MEHER which was endowed in memory of his grand father.



આ પણું મોબેદી ટોળાની ઊન્નતિ

મુંબઈ નગરી એટલે પારસી કોમનું મુખ્ય મહાનગરી વસ્તીનું સંગઠન. હયાં ૭૦ થી ૮૦,૦૦૦ પારસીઓનું એકત્ર સ્થાન. શહેરમાં ચાર પવિત્ર આતશબહેરાંમાં અને ત્રણ ડગ્ગન પાક આદરાંન તથા દાદગાહ સાહેબોના જમશે. પારસી વસ્તી અને પવિત્ર કેળાઓની હાજરીને લઈ દસ્તુર સાહેબો અને મોબેદ સાહેબોના પણ મુખ્ય વસવાટ મુંબઈ શહેરમાંજ વધુ થયો ઉદવાડા, બલસાર, નવસારી, સુરત વિગેરે સ્થળોથી વાર તહેવારે અને ખાસ કરી મુકતાદ ટાંકણે આ ગામોમાંથી મોબેદ સાહેબોની મુંબઈ મધ્યે વધુ ભરતી થવા લાગી.

માનવંત દસ્તુર સાહેબો તો આંગળીઓના વહેરા ઉપર ગણી શકાય પણ મોબેદ સાહેબોની ગણતરીના આંકડો આપણે જાણતા નથી. આ લખનારની બચગીથી મોબેદોની ઊન્નતિ માટેની તહેરવાર ચર્ચાઓ ચર્ચાઈ; પાનાઓ ભરી દેખો લખાયા; લખણો સાંભળતાં ધરડા થયાં, પણ આ સવાલનો ઉકેલ આજની ધડી સુધી આવ્યો નથી.

ખ્રીસ્તી ધર્મનાં ઉપાધ્યાઓને આદ કરતાં પ્રાહમણુ વર્ગ એટલે અભણતાથી ભાર્યો અને માંગતો વર્ગ ગણી શકાય. હિન્દુ તીરથ સ્થાનો ઉપર, પીરો અને ગ્રાંદ્યાઓની કબરો ઉપર જુઓ સાંઠ વરસો આગલના ઉદવાડાનો ખ્યાલ કરે તો આ માંગણુ વર્ગનો સચોટ ખ્યાલ આવી જશે. આનું મુખ્ય કારણ એક અભણતા, બીજો ચલાવી લેવાયસો માગણુતાનો રેવાજ અને ત્રીજો મુકલેશી. આ ગરીબાઈ અને અભણતા સાથે જોડાઈ બીજી વળણુ ઉપર ધનસાનને ઉતારી પાડે છે.

રૂઢશાદ મરહુમ ભાઈજી ખરજોરજી ભર્યાએ, એરવદ સાહેબો દીનશાહજી ઉતવાલા અને કેકાબાદ સીધવાની મદદ વડે આજથી ચાલીસ વરસો ઉપર જે સ્વમાનતાની જુમ્મેસ જગાડી ઉદવાડાને સ્વમાની અને સ્વચળી બનાવવામાં પોતાનો એ મુલ ફાળો નહિ આપ્યો હોત તો આજે પણ ઉદવાડાની ખસુસ કરી મોબેદી ટોળાની સ્થીતી કદાપી ખરગસ્તા હોત.

ગરીબડા રાંક મોબેદ વગેતી સ્થીતી સુધારવા અનેક પ્રયાસો નીરમુળ થયા છે. દસ્તુર દાવરોએ એ હાર ખાધી છે. છતાં, સેકંડ વર્લ્ડ ઝોરારદ્રીયન ક્રાંતિસે ફરીવાર આ સવાલ

ઉપાડી તેની મહત્વતા ક્રામ સમક્ષ રજુ કરી, લેકચરો અને રેસાલાઓ મારફતે જરથોસ્તીઓને સમગર કર્યા છે એ માટે કાર્યવહાકોનો આભાર.

જાણવામેલે, સમજી અને વાંચી ખેરતી નહિ રહેતાં, ક્રામનાં વડીલો મોડે મોડે પણ સમજગર થયા છે. આપણી મહાનગરી પારસી પંચાયતનાં માનવંત દ્રુસ્ટી સાહેબોનાં પીઠ બળ સાથે દ્રુસ્ટી સાહેબ શેઠ માણેક શ્રી. મીસ્ત્રી જ્યારે આ સવાલનો ઉકેલ લાવવા બહાર પડે ત્યારે એની સફળતા માટે આપણે જરૂરજ આશાવાદી બની શક્યે.

મુંબઈની જશન કમીટી, અથેરનાન મંડળ, બઝામોં, ગામે ગામ અને શહેરે શહેરોની પંચાયતો અને અનજી-મનોનો પુરો સહકાર આ બીકટ સવાલનો ઉકેલ લાવવામાં મેળવવો રહ્યો.

મુંબઈ શહેરજ જે પોતાના આશ્રવાનોની ઊન્નતીની ચુંચનો ઉકેલ લાવે તો તેને પગળે નહાનાં મોટાં શહેરો અને ગામોની પંચાયતો અને અનજીમનો પગલાં ભરે.

મુળ મુખ્ય અને બીકટ સવાલ તે એ આખા ટોળાનું સેનસસ લેવાનો રહેશે. હરેક મોબેદી પૈસો ગ્રહન કરનાર દસ્તુરોને મોબેદોનું એક તુલેતવીલ ગણતરીપત્રક કરી તેમાં તેમના નામો પુરો કેકાણાં, નાવર-મરાતખ બંને થયા છે નાવરજ; કયાં અને શું કામ કરે છે? નોકરી છુટક ના ખાતગી મોબેદી કરે છે કે કેમ તેનો અંદાજ-ધરની જગ્યા ફેટલી-ફેટલા રૂમ રાંધણી વપકાસમાં લે છે-લાકુ શું ભરેછ-દોકરા દોકરી ફેટલાં? તેમની શિક્ષણની પુરી માહીતી, તેમની ઉમર તેમની પાછળ સારીક શું ખરચો થાય છે, એમાના ફેટલા કયાં નોકરી હુનર ઉદ્યોગમાં પડયાં છે, તેમની આવક શું છે? ધરમાં કોઇ બીજાનાવસ યા અપંગ છે કે? ધરમાં ૭૦ વરસથી ઉપરનાં ફેટલાં જણા છે તેમને બહારનાં ફેડોમાંથી કઈક અને ફેટલી સાહેતા મલે છે; શિક્ષણ, દવાદાર, અનાજ યા બીજા સાધણો, ફેટલા વરસોથી મોબેદી કરેછ? આ અને બીજી તેઓની ખરી સ્થીતીનો આંક જાણ્યા પછીજ આપણે કાયેસાત્રક પગલાં ભરી શક્યે.

અને આ હકીકતો આખા મોબેદી ટોળાંની ખજેતરી અંગે ખરાજ હોવા જોઈએ, એ અવશ્ય છે.

આપણા યુવક જરૂરથી ધર્મ અશોધ, પાકીઝગી અને પવિત્રતા ઉપર રચાયેલો હોઈ, અશોધ હાલતાં કબજા જમાનામાં ચાલી શકાય છે કે કેમ એ ઉપલા સેતસસની માહિતીમાંથી જાણી શકાશે.

એક જ ઓરડા અને રાંધણીમાં વસ્તુ એક મોળેદી કુટુંબ જેમાં એક આશ્રવાન પોતાનાં ધણીયાણી, જુવાન દીકરા દીકરીઓ સાથે વસતાં તેમની હકાકતો અને અશોધ ફેટલી હદે પાળી શકાય એ વિચાર માંગી લે છે.

આવાં ગરીબ કુટુંબો માટે એક અથોરનાન કોલોનીની અવસ્થા જરૂરયાત તરી આવે છે; જેમાં એક ઓરડા રાંધણી વારા-મેરી ઉપરાંત એક વધુ નહાના રૂમનો સમાવેશ કરાય, જેથી આપણી યાનુઆની રેવાળ તરીકેતોની જાળવણી થતા મોટા રૂમની અગવડ દૂર કરી શકાય.

યા તો આતશ બેઢરામો અને અગ્યારીઓની અતરાકમાં ફેર ફેર એકાદ એ એવી તરીકાતથી યાંધવામાં આવેલી ખાસ ખીટીગોમાં આ ગરીબ મોળેદ કુટુંબોને એકત્ર વસાવવામાં આવે.

આમ થતાં આ ટોળાંની મનની શાંતી જળવાશે, અને મનની શાંતી એટલે એકાગ્રદ્ય ચિત્ત, જે આપણાં દરેક ભણતરોનો મુળ પાયો છે, એ હાંસલ થઈ શકશે એટલે પવિત્રતા-અને એકાગ્રદ્યિત સાથે મલશે.

ગરીબ મોળેદોના કરજ હોતો કામા અથોરનાન સ્કુલ, ગોલવડની સર અને લેડી જહાંગીરની સ્કુલ, તવસારી વિગેરે સ્થળોની ભોરડીંગ સ્કુલોમાં સમાવેશ કરવો કે જેથી તેઓની તંગદીલી કમી કરી શકાશે.

પંથકોમાં ચાલુ કામ કરતા અને બહારગામની અગ્યારીમાંના પગારદાર મોળેદો માટે ફાઇક પ્રાઇવેટ ફંડ યા ગ્રેયુઇટીની સ્ક્રીમ દાખલ કરવી કે જેથી તેમનું ઘડપણ સાચવી શકાય.

આપણી ધર્મની રાહ સદીઓથી પારસી સખાવત એ એક કહેવત થઈ પડી છે કે “પારસી તાફ નામ સખાવત” આપણાં માનવંત વડીલો જમતી વેળા કુતરાનો છુક કાઢ્યા વીના જમતા નહિ. આ એક તરીકો એ દેખાડતો કે તેઓને એક નહાતાં જીવની પાળ અંતરમાં લાગણી હતી. આ એક છુક એ સખાવતનું ઘર આંગણેથી શરૂ થતું એક ખીડું હતું.

કીશનન ચર્ચોમાં કીયાઓ અને પાદરી સાહેબનાં ભાપણો પછી એક ઠાળી ફેરવાય છે. અને તેમાં હાજર રહેલાઓ પોતાનો નહાનો મોટો કાળો અર્પણ કરે છે. આ નહાની સખાવત છે. આપણાં વડીલો પોતાની આવકના ચોક્કસ ટકા સખાવતમાં મુકરર કરેલા દરે અર્પણ કરતા.

આગળા જમાનામાં આપણા જરૂરથી રીત રીવાજ અને ધર્મ ફરમાનોની માન્યતાને લઈ દરેક કુટુંબ પોતાની આવકનાં ચોક્કસ ટકા મોળેદો-દરતુરોના નિભાવ અર્થે અર્પણ કરતા, આ રેવાજ ઇરાનમાંજ નહિ પણ આપણાં હિંદ સર જમીન ઉપર આવ્યા પછી પણ ચાલુ હતો, જે કમનસીબે વખતનાં વહેવા સાથે નાશુદ થયો છે.

આજે આપણી ભાષા ધ કોમો વહેારા અને બોનઓએ એ રેવાજ હજી જીવી રાખ્યો છે, જેથી આ કોમો આખા અને સુખ સંપત્તીથી ભરપુર છે.

શું આપણી મહાનામી સખાવતે-શાહી-કામ આનુ અભુકરણ નહિ કરી શકે?

આ માટે જેટલું કચે, સાહેબો એટલું ઓછું છે. આપણી કરોડોની સખાવતો છે. તો શું તે કામ પોતાનાં ધર્મના ઉપાધ્યાઓનેજ મદદરૂપ નહિ થઈ પડે?

શું આપણે આપણી સકમઈનાં ચોક્કસ ટકા આવાં એક ફંડમાં માસીક યા વારસીક તે મહાન ગુરૂ જરૂરિયાત સાહેબનાં ચરણે ખરી ન શકે? એ જરૂર જાને, મહેરબાનો, પણ એને માટે કોમમાં જાગ્રતી લાવવી રહી એ કાયદાથી નહિ પણ જ્ઞાન કેળવવાથી આવી શકશે. કોમની લાગણી એ તરફ જગાડવાથી તે બની શકશે.

આપણી કોમ શીક્ષીત છે, સમજુ છે, ભાગણીવંત છે, જીગરદાર છે. શીર્ક આ સર્વેને જાગ્રત કરનારાઓની અછત નજરે પડે છે.

કોમ એક વાર આ સત્તાલતી મહત્વતાથી જાગ્રત થઈ તો પૈસા જીનાં ખાડનાં પાતરાંઓ ખરે તેમ આપણાં પગ પાસે જમાં થશે. જરૂરજ એક ધરખમ ફંડનાં ઉપસ્થિત થતાં અને આ સેતસસ માંના “જીવતા મુરદાઓ” ની કોમને જાણ થતાં આનો ઉકેલ લાવી શકાશે.

ઓસ્તા.

GATHA: THE SONGS THAT ZARATHUSHTRA SANG:

by

MAHYAR BYRAMJI PATEL.

“The severest impediment in our quest for Truth is the apparently insurmountable mass of Untruth that we have amassed during our life-time. The most difficult lesson we have to learn in the process of imbibing True Knowledge is to un-learn all our previous False Notions and Beliefs. When this is achieved, the subsequent acquirement of True Wisdom becomes a matter of much lesser effort, whilst without undergoing this initial clearing-work, it becomes a task impossible of achievement !”

“YATHA NO AONGHAM SHYATO MANAO VAHISHTO,
URVANO KHWATHRAVAITISH, TANVO HENTO
VAHISHTO, ANGHEUSH AKAOSCHOIT, AHUIRE MAZDA
JASENTAM !”

Yasna 60.11

“With our minds full of joy, souls abiding in sublimity, bodies full of glory, and lives made spiritually perfect, thus, O ! Ahura Mazda would we approach You !”

— Hushbam

INTRODUCTION :—

ZARATHUSHTRA CAME TO EXPOUND A GREAT RELIGION in simple words. Nowhere in the Gathas, does he tend to confuse us with confounding statements or by any allegorical expositions. He speaks on a deep and sublime subject without any elaborations that may cause us to misinterpret anything that he says. Every verse of his is pregnant with fundamental principles explained without the least bit of confusion. He does not indulge in a superfluity of words, although he deals with a subject that has taxed the vigour of the greatest of minds of all times and nations. He imparts Divine Knowledge with the full strength of spiritual force, whilst

avoiding all exaggeration, nor does he ever indulge in any histrionics, although he plays a very great and leading part in the history of the whole human race. He expresses noble thoughts and feelings, combined with the excellence of such faith and ethics, that we stand mute before him as he pours out his inspired songs.

It is a matter of great surprise that there should be any two opinions about anything that he says anywhere, such is the clarity of his exegesis, and we are left with the incontrovertible impression that wherever any dispute arises about any of his statements, it is the work of deliberate distortion by perverse and prejudiced minds. Zarathushtra was well aware of such distortionists, for he had cause to suffer at the hands of these falsifiers of Truth during his own lifetime. The Kavas and the Karapas, those with eyes but no moral vision and those with ears but no ethical hearing, have plagued the past as greatly as they do the present, and we shall have to fight them right upto the end of time! Great shame shall accrue to the lot of those who discard Eternal—Truth for the glamour of Transient-Untruth, but boundless shall be the shame and suffering of all those who distort the Prophet's message in order to misguide the unsuspecting and ignorant masses, who tend to believe everything they are told when **the sanctity of the Holy Prophet's Name is shamelessly and falsely fathered upon apocryphal scriptures!**

Now, the Holy Prophet begins to ask various questions, to which he seeks immediate reply. The range of these queries is large and diverse. It is his desire to know all the closely-guarded secrets of Nature, which hitherto, no human being had either ever sought to unveil intentionally, or discovered accidentally. It is not his aim to keep these findings for himself or his followers alone, but he magnanimously shares them with all mankind. The questions are very colourful and sensitive, and they are expressed very beautifully in a manner that does not fail to strike a chord of appeal within our hearts. He questions Ahura-Mazda minutely about Creation and Nature, Purpose and Result, Cause and Effect, and leaves us to guess the undoubtable and unanimous reply that is contained within the question itself. Finally, in a voice full of love, and words replete with wisdom, he reveals all: **"I recognise You alone, O! Ahura-Mazda to be the Creator of them all; I denounce all the others from the depths of my heart!"**

Pronunciation of Vowels :—

a as in abide; e as in echo; i as in in; o as in odd; u as in ull
ā as in after; ē as in ate; ī as in eel; ō as in ode; ū as in pool;
ā as in aunt; n as in announce;

Every contiguous Vowel, that is Vowels following each other, must **always** be Pronounced separately, and **never** as one long Vowel.

A. TRANSLITERATION

B. FREE TRANSLATION.

C. COMMENTS.

GATHA USHTAVAITI — 2.
THE SONG OF REJOICING.
YASNA HA 44.

VERSE 1.

A. Tat Thwā peresā, eresh-mōi vaocha, Ahurā !

Nemanghō ā yathā neme khshmvato ?

Mazdā ! fryai Thwavas sakhwyat mavaite,

At ne Ashā fryā dazdyai hākurena,

Yathā-ne ā Vohū jimat Mananghā. (118)

B. This do I ask You, tell me clearly, O ! Ahura,
With what adoration shall Your devotee worship You ?
O ! Mazda show the correct way to Your friend such as I am,
And to us may Righteousness extend itself lovingly,
So that the Good-and-Loving-Mind may come to us.

C. Zarathushtra begins to ask Ahura-Mazda several questions that require immediate solving. He wants to have clear and precise answers to them all. He will not be satisfied with ambiguous replies that are capable of double meaning, whereby the perverse may subsequently misguide the unwary ignorant ! Only lucid and transparently simple Truths will be acceptable to him. It is thus, that the greatest and most ancient Religion came to be expressed in the simplest of terms ! He wants to be told the best method by which the faithful may satisfy the Beloved.

There is no element of dread or fear in his approach to Ahura-Mazda, Whom, at all times he regards as his dearest and closest friend ! He always hastens to Him with a perfect composure devoid of all uneasiness. He depends upon Him to show him the correct path of worship and service, whereby, he may approach Him unerringly. He depends upon Ahura-Mazda at every turn of event, and living a Righteous life, confidently expects the Good-and-Loving-Mind to awaken within him, which will put him into a direct communion with his God. He speaks with the assurance of a Messiah, in the language of the heart ! It is the voice of the deep, calling to the Deep !

VERSE 2.

A. Tat Thwā peresā, eresh-mōi vaochā, Ahurā !

Kathā angheush vahishtahyā paourvīm ?

Kāthe sūidyai ye-ī paitishat ?

Hvō zi Ashā spento irikthem vispoībyō,

Hārō Maīnyū ahūmbish urvathō, Mazda ! (119)

- B. This do I ask You, tell me clearly, O ! Ahura,
Who is esteemed the greatest in the spiritual life ?
Who strives to seek its fulfilment ?
He indeed is holy through Righteousness, the most-deserving
of all,
The guardian spirit and life-saving physician, the real friend, O !
Mazda.
- C. Our Prophet wants to know who should be reckoned to be the most advanced in spirituality. Who is the one, and what are the qualities of the one that should serve us as the acme and ideal of perfection ? The Ashavan, who strives to live Righteously and is holy is the model of perfection, and we are advised to follow in his footsteps without fear of stumbling or falling. He is the great beacon-light that guides us safely to our destination through all the hazards of the way. He protects us like a guardian-angel, heals us like a physician, and befriends us unselfishly. **The Ashavan most reminds us of the greatness and goodness of Ahura-Mazda !**

VERSE 3.

A. Tat Thwā peresā, eresh-mōi vaochā, Ahurā!

Kasnā zathā patā Ashahya pouruyō?

Kasnā Khvēng Staremchā dat advanem?

Kē yā Mao ukhshyeiti nerefsaiti thwat?

Tāchit, Mazdā! vasemi anyāchā viduye. (120)

B. This do I ask You, tell me clearly, O! Ahura,

Who is the primordial Creator and Father of Rectitude?

Who was it that appointed the way of the Sun and the Stars?

Through Whose Agency does the Moon wax and wane
alternately?

All these, O! Mazda, and much more besides do I yearn to know.

C. He continues to ask for clear explanations regarding the phenomena of Nature. Who was it that laid down the Great and Good Law that creates, sustains, transforms and renovates All? **Who else but Ahura-Mazda, is responsible for the manifestation of the Cosmic and Moral Law, and all its implications?** Who laid down the paths of the countless Astral Bodies that hurl through space at unmentionable speeds, yet maintaining their perfect and undeviating course without peril? Who organises the risings and the settings of the Moon and other Heavenly Orbs at their duly appointed times and in their closely calculated spheres? All this reveals that Holy Zarathushtra was a minute observer of the Heavens, and was a keen student of astronomy, whose searching eyes penetrated far into the unknown Celestial Realms in search of Knowledge and Wisdom. He makes it quite clear that he desires to know more about the Unfathomable Universes that lie in spaces beyond our earthly comprehension.

VERSE 4.

A. Tat Thwā peresā, eresh-mōi vaochā, Ahurā!

Kasnā deretā Zānchā adē Nabaoschā?

Avapastoish kē Apō Urvaraoschā?

Kē Vatai Dvānmaibyaschā yaoget asū?

Kasnā Vangheush, Mazdā! Dāmish Mananghō? (121)

B. This do I ask You, tell me clearly, O ! Ahura,
 Who holds up the Earth and also the Heavens ?
 Who is it that has fashioned the Waters and the Plants ?
 Who gives swiftness to the Wind and fleetness to the clouds ?
 Who, O ! Mazda, awakens the Good-and-Loving-Mind from
 within ?

C. He seeks elucidation on the wonders of Nature. How is it that
 the Earth balances in space ? What prevents the Heavens from
 falling down ? How did the Waters come into being, and what
 makes the Vegetation grow ? Who drives the speeding Wind,
 and raises up the Clouds ? The mysteries of Inner-Nature also
 attract his wonder. Who is it that awakens us to the Moral-
 Life, inspires us to act with Righteousness, and grants us the
 unique blessing of an Awakened-Conscience ? What manner
 of Inner-Light is this that prepares us to sacrifice our selfish
 Natures at the Altar of the Infinite and Universal Existence ?
 What prompts us to do the Right because it is Right, and not
 for any consideration of personal gain ? **Who inspires us to
 undergo sacrifices with real pleasure, accepting these as the
 precious Gifts of our Beloved ?**

VERSE 5.

A. Tat Thwā peresā, eresh-māi vaocha, Ahurā !
 Kē hvāpao raochaoscha dat temaoscha ?
 Kē hvāpao khvafnemcha dat zaemāchā ?
 Kē yā ushāo arēm-pithwā khshapachā ?
 Yao manaothrish chazdōnghvan̄tem arethahyā ? (122)

B. This do I ask You, tell me clearly, O ! Ahura,
 Which designer fashioned the realms-of-light and the abodes-of-
 darkness ?
 Which planner created sleep and wakefulness ?
 Through whom arise the dawn, noon and night ?
 Who brings to mind the duties of the wise ?

C. The mysteries of Nature are truly remarkable ! Everything is
 created with purposeful intent. Who bathes us with light, so
 that we must pursue our daily tasks, and again, who covers us
 with darkness, so that we might rest at the end of our toils ?

Who brings to us the round of morning, noon and night, so that we might regulate our lives systematically? **Who is it that reminds us that we are here for a definite purpose, and that there are tasks allotted to us which we must fulfil?** It is a distinct belief of the followers of the Prophet, that we neither come here empty handed, nor depart in that manner. When we take birth, we carry with us a list of the good works that we have to perform on earth, and when we finally depart from here, we carry back with us the pleasant burden of tasks completed, the troublesome burden of tasks unfulfilled, and the sorry burden of tasks unattended! Under no circumstances, should our existence on earth be considered an aimless occupation!

VERSE 6.

A. Tat Thwā peresā, eresh-moi vaocha, Ahurā!

Yā fravakhshyā yēzi tā athā haithyā:

Ashem shyaothanaish debazaiti Armaithish?

Taibyō Khshathrem Vohū chinas Mananghā?

Kaeibyō azim ranyo-skeretim gam tasho? (123)

B. This do I ask You, tell me clearly, O! Ahura,
Whether what I teach indeed is true:

Does Reasoned-Faith prosper the works of Righteousness?

Do You bless with the Divine-Power those in whom the Good-
and-Loving-Mind awakens?

For whom did You fashion the abundantly joyful earth?

C. Zarathushtra wants to be sure that what he preaches is really correct. How often has earth unfortunately been plagued by tyrants who thought they were divinely right, whilst being confoundedly wrong? He wants to be re-assured that Reasoned-Faith, as against Unreasoned-Credulity, is conducive to furthering the cause of Rectitude. He wants to know whether developing the gross Mind of the selfish into the sublime Mind of the selfless has any real value. He wishes to be informed whether Ahura-Mazda does grant the Divine-Power which enables Good-and-Loving-Minded people to carry into effect the decisions of their Conscience in face of all opposition, both external as well as selfish. **What would be the value of knowing**

what Virtue is, if we simultaneously do not have the requisite strength and will to put it into practise? We thus see, that the four great Zarathushtrian Virtues i.e. Righteousness, the Good-and-Loving-Mind, Reasoned-Faith and Divine-Power are all inter-allied and inter-dependant, each one existing and acting through the cohesion of the others. He fully knows that the Joys of the Prolific Earth are created for the enjoyment of the Ashavan, who is a combined product of all the four great Virtues just mentioned.

VERSE 7.

A. Tat Thwā peresā, eresh-mōi vaocha, Ahurā !'

Kē berekhdhām tāsht Khshathrā mat Ārmaitīm ?

Kē uzemēm chōret vyanāyā puthrem pithrē ?

Azēm tāish Thwā frakhshnī avāmī, Mazdā !

Spentā Mainyu vīspanām Dafārem. (124)

B. This do I ask You, tell me clearly, O ! Ahura, Who created the mighty Divine-Power together with Reasoned- Faith ?

Who filled the father's breast with love for his son ?

With these questions I come to You for enlightenment, O ! Mazda,
Creator of All through the Holy Spirit.

C. Who is the inspirer of all the Divine Virtues ? Who is the source of all Strength ? Who nourishes us with Reasoned-Faith? Who fills our breast with Love ? Who is the Sovereign Repository of all Noble Sentiments ? What manner of Power is this that drives us to reach for Abstract Virtues, even though it be at the cost of concrete and immediate advantages ? There is something truly noble in having recourse to Divine-Dependance when all our earthly supports have failed us; When we trust in never-failing Faith in the face of all apparent futility. **What spirit lights the Fire-of-Love in the father's breast, that enables him to sacrifice his all for his beloved son ?** Who is responsible for all these, and who will give the true reply to all these questions ? Who else, but Ahura-Mazda, Who creates All through the Love and Wisdom of His Holy Spirit ! None other ! None else !

VERSE 8.

A. Tat Thwā peresā, eresh-mōi vaocha, Ahurā !

Mendaidyāi ya-Toi, Mazdā ! adishtish, —

Yāchā Vohū ukhdhā frashī Mananghā,

Yāchā Ashā angheush arem vaedyāi, —

Kā — mē urvā vohū urvashat āgemat tā ? (125)

B. This do I ask You, tell me clearly, O ! Ahura,
I would meditate upon Your purpose, O ! Mazda, —
The teachings You impart through the Good-and-Loving-Mind,
I would understand the reason for living a Righteous life, —
And what good my soul would obtain and enjoy thereby ?

C. Our Prophet seeks to find out the purpose and benefit of living a life of Rectitude. What are the merits of leading a Moral Life ? Why should we endeavour to be Good at the sacrifice of tangible gain ? Why should we satisfy a Higher Urge at the cost of Mammon ? What is the great benefit of leading a spiritual life, when the allurements of earthly temptations are so inviting ?
Why should man sacrifice the attractions of his Lower-Self, when the rewards of an after-life appear to be so very intangible?
He seeks explicit instructions upon these ethical problems, and expects Ahura-Mazda to enlighten him through his Inner-Perception. He meditates long and deep upon the various problems of life, and hopes to unravel the Path that leads to Happiness.

VERSE 9.

A. Tat Thwā peresā, eresh-mōi vaocha, Ahurā !

Kathā — mōi yām yaosh Daenām Yaosh dāne,

Yām Hudanaush Paitishe sakhwyat Khshathrahyā ?

Ereshvā Khshathra Thwāvās asishtish, Mazdā !

Hademoi Ashā Vohuchā shyās Mananghā. (126)

B. This do I ask You, tell me clearly, O ! Ahura,
How shall I dedicate myself to this Holy Religion,
Which the Lord of Infinite-Wisdom expounds about the Divine-Kingdom ?

You impart as blessings Your lofty Divine-Power, O ! Mazda,
And Righteousness and the Good-Mind that dwell in Your
Abode.

- C. The Revelation about the Divine-Kingdom is fascinating beyond human comprehension ! **Mazdayasni Daena is the Best Religion in the world !** With what reverence and with what acts may one dedicate oneself to it ? How may one strive to bring the fruits of this great and good Religion within our own reach ? Zarathushtra knows that the blessings of Ahura-Mazda's Holy Abode are all purely Ethical. There is nothing gross or mundane about them. The blessings of thinking Lovingly and Wisely, speaking and acting with Divine-Selflessness, and living Righteously brings us two great rewards. The first is the incomparable and imperishable satisfaction of knowledge that we have done our work well and to the best of our capabilities. The second is the inflow of greater resources and powers wherewith we might indulge ourselves in doing unlimited Good ! These are the Rewards a devout Zarathushtrian always should aspire to.

VERSE 10.

- A. Tat Thwā peresā, eresh-mōi vaocha, Ahurā !

Tām Daenām yā hātām vahishtā !

Yā — mōi gaethao Asha fradoit hachemna;

Ārmatōish ukhdhāish shyaothana eresh daidyat,

Makhwyāo chishtoish Thwā ishtish usen, Mazdā ! (127)

- B. This do I ask You, tell me clearly, O ! Ahura,
Which is the Religion that is the best of all that exist !
The one that united with Righteousness prospers the life of all
beings;
Giving right guidance to our works through inspired Faith,
Being God-Intoxicated, my desires shall lead me to You, O !
Mazda.

- C. The Holy Prophet advances the authenticated claim that the Mazdayasni Zarathushtri Religion is the foremost, greatest and best amongst all that shall ever exist ! It is built upon the foundation-stone of Rectitude ! It brings prosperity to all mankind and

to all the living-beings. **Mazdayasna is inspired through the Wisdom of Reasoned-Faith!** It gives us accurate direction in all that we think, speak and do. It has its root in Monotheism, and teaches us to Love God without any Fear! All our desires are channelled to lead us to our Beloved! It creates the intoxicating urge within us to yearn for the day when we shall at last serve the real purpose of having been created, when we finally stand before Ahura-Mazda, worshipping Him and adoring Him, serving Him and obeying Him, happy in the fulfilment of a well-requited and Eternal Love!

VERSE 11.

A. **Tat Thwā peresā, eresh-mōi vaochā, Ahurā!**

Kathā tēng-ā vijemyāt Ārmaitish

Yaeibyō, Mazdā! Thwōi vashyētē Daēnā?

Azēm Toi aish pouruyō fravoivide;

Vispēng anyēng manyēush spasyā dvaeshanghā. (128)

B. This do I ask You, tell me clearly, O! Ahura,

How will Faith awaken in them

In whom Your Revelation has caused a stirring?

Because of this, I recognise You to be the Primal-One;

All the rest I spurn with denunciation and contempt.

C. When the first and greatest Revelation was declared to mankind by the Fountain-head of all Prophets, it was a matter of great concern how men would receive it. **It is a moot point whether Man will ever accept Mazdayasna, uncompromisingly, so different is it from anything else they had ever known before!** Yet, it had kindled sparks of awakening in some thinking-minds that were not fossilized into a state of mental-fixation. How this new awakening to something much vaster and grander would affect them and shape their Faith was a vital problem. **Faith had for the first time been revealed as something that is born of Reason and Conviction, and not merely Superstitious and Credulous Belief!** All traditional Thought-Processing had been swept aside by the Enlightened Prophet, and the Light of Real-Knowledge help up to mankind for the very first time. It was by Dynamic and Progressive Reasoning that the Prophet had arrived at the Ulti-

mate Truth ! This Truth had revealed to him that Ahura-Mazda was the Root of All Causes, whilst He Himself ever remained to be the Causeless and Eternal-One ! Consequently, the Prophet rejected with disdain all traces of Polytheism, whether we term them Daevas, Yazatas or Angels ! He also showed us that not Fear, but Love should inspire our hearts when we begin to visualise our relationship with Him, Who is the Master-Architect of both the Spiritual and the Material Worlds.

VERSE 12.

A. Tat Thwā peresā, eresh-mōi vaocha, Ahurā !

Kē Ashavā, yāish peresāi Dregvāo vā ?

Katarem ā angro vā, hvō vā angro ?

Yē-mā Dregvāo Thwā savā paiti-erete,

Chyanghat hvō nōit ayēm angro manyētē ? (129)

- B.** This do I ask You, tell me clearly, O ! Ahura,
Of those of whom I ask, who is the Righteous-One and who the Unrighteous ?
To whose help should I go, the victim-of-evil or the perpetrator-of-evil ?
The follower-of-evil who plunders Your-Bounty to me,
Why should he not be considered to be the evil-one ?

- C.** How shall we differentiate between the Righteous and the Unrighteous ? How shall we act towards them severally ? Should we ever abet, tolerate or ignore the evil ? Is it our duty to repulse or convert the wicked ? Zarathushtra preaches a Positive Creed. We should never ignore, tolerate or abet the wrong-doers ! We should not be satisfied with not being wrong-doers ourselves, but should always actively participate in performing Right-Action under all circumstances. It is our Sacred-Trust to either convert the Unrighteous or else repulse them and destroy their evil ! They who fail in carrying out this essential duty expose the innocent and the timid, as well as the ignorant and the weak to the terror and wiles of the infamous. **Not to be engaged in doing the work of a villain is simply not enough ! We are directed to play the part of the hero !** For Evil shall always suppress and conquer the lowly. Only the Virtuous-

Strong shall subjugate the vicious and vile ! **It is no virtue to refrain from practising Deceit. Virtue comprises in actively practising Truth !**

VERSE 13.

A. Tat Thwā peresā, eresh-mōi vaocha, Ahurā !

Kathā Drujem nish ahmat ā nish nashamā ?

Tēng-ā avā yōi asrushtoish perenaonghō,

Noit Ashahyā adīvyēinti hachēmna,

Noit frasayā Vangheush chakhnare Mananghō. (130)

B. This do I ask You, tell me clearly, O ! Ahura,

How shall we completely destroy Evil from amongst us ?

We shall remain aloof from such, just as much as those lacking
in obedience

Take no delight in the company of the Righteous,

Nor find happiness in the awakening of the Good-and-Loving-
Mind.

C. There shall never be any compromise with anything evil. There should also be no appeasing attitude towards that which is wicked. No sacrifices are to be offered for the purpose of pacifying maleficent influences. **The only course we should avail ourselves of when dealing with the Powers-of-Darkness is to carry aggression into its very heart !** No pious excuses will ever be accepted, when we fail to play the part of soldiers in the battle between Right and Wrong ! We are commanded to be in the thick of the fight when the Trumpet-of-War sounds the battle-cry. Those who refuse to fall into the camp of the Righteous, and pretend to remain neutral or indifferent to the cause of Duty, are treated as belonging to the camp of the Unrighteous ! Our Prophet allows us no third camp belonging to the non-aligned ! This injunction remains in force at all times, whether we are faced with internal conflict or external war !

VERSE 14.

A. Tat Thwā peresā, eresh-mōi vaochā, Ahurā !

Kathā Ashāi Drujēm dyām zastayō—

Ni hīm merāzhdyai Thwahyā Māthraish Sēnghahyā,

Emā vaitīm sinām dāvoī Dregvasū,

Ā-ish dvafshēng Mazdā ! anashe astascha ? (131)

- B. This do I ask You, tell me clearly, O ! Ahura,
How shall Unrighteousness be handed over to the Righteous —
For its salvation by means of the Divine-utterances of Your
Teaching,
For bringing entire ruin upon the followers-of-Untruth,
For bringing upon them, O ! Mazda, retributions and contempt ?

- C. The Unrighteous must be made to suffer ! They must either
be cured or if this is not possible, their evil must then be destroyed.
They must never be tolerated or ignored. The Righteous must
at all times have the upper-hand over the Unrighteous.
The Revelation which Holy Zarathushtra brings from Ahura-
Mazda contains enough material to save the most depraved and
the lost. If in spite of this, the perverse persist in their vindictive-
ness and malevolence, they deserve to be severely punished !
Suffering is the greatest deterrent to folly and sin. The punish-
ment of Ahura-Mazda has a two-fold benefit. It protects the
helpless, by putting harmfulness out of the way; and it chastises
the guilty, thus awakening them to a sense of responsibility and
right-conduct. This ultimately leads to their own Salvation !
It is thus, that the punishment of God is a benediction in disguise!

VERSE 15.

A. Tat Thwā peresā, eresh-mōi vaochā, Ahurā !

Yezi ahyā Ashā pōi mat Khshayehī,

Hyat hēm spādā anaochanghā jamaēte,

Avaish urvataish ya-Tū, Mazdā ! diderezhō,

Kuthra ayāo kāhmai vananām dadaō ? (132)

B. This do I ask You, tell me clearly, O ! Ahura,
 Since through Righteousness, You are Ruler over all,
 When both the contending parties approach You,
 Then in accordance with Your Own Laws, O ! Mazda,
 To which of the two would You grant the victory ?

C. Ahura-Mazda is Ruler over Saint and Sinner alike. Ultimately, all have to bend their knees before Him ! Even the Daevas, with all their perversity are aware of the inevitability of that Truth. When the Ordeal becomes great, the Righteous as well as the Unrighteous turn helplessly towards Him, and ask for His Justice. He never withholds it. His rewards and retributions know no bias or partiality. It does not matter whether we believe in Him or not, whether we accept His Laws as binding upon us or not. **His Laws function flawlessly and determine the merit of every thought, word or deed of ours !** There is no escaping from them. He does not punish the innocent merely because he is not a believer. Neither does He pardon the guilty who belongs to the ranks of the faithful. Actually, it is we ourselves, who inflict pain and sorrow upon us, or earn pleasure and happiness for ourselves, by virtue of our own thoughts, words and deeds. **Ahura-Mazda has brought the Cosmic and Moral Law of Cause and Effect into operation, and has given us the immense responsibility of Free-Will whereby we become the architects of our own destiny !** Ahura-Mazda always lends His Might and His Support to the Righteous and the Deserving alone.

VERSE 16.

A. Tat Thwā peresā, eresh-moi vaocha, Ahurā !

Ke verethrem-ja Thwā poi sengha yoi henfi ?

Chithrā moi dām ahumbish Ratūm chizhdi,

At hoi Vohu Seraoshō jantū Mananghā,

Mazdā ! ahmāi yahmāi vashī Kahmāichit. (133)

B. This do I ask You, tell me clearly, O ! Ahura,
 Who shall conquer all that are through Your protective teaching?
 Reveal to me the wise Lord-Prophet of life through my inner-
 vision,

Let Infallible-Intuition awaken within him through the Good-
and-Loving-Mind,
O ! Mazda, let it be so on whomsoever Your-Choice falls.

- C. The whole world awaits the coming of the Blessed-Redeemer !
The Holy-One, when he comes, shall captivate and conquer all
through the weapon of Ahura-Mazda's incomparable Teaching.
Wisdom shall be the instrument that will make his Victory complete.
All humanity implores Ahura-Mazda to hasten the descent
to earth of this long-awaited-one. The coming of the Seer has
been fore-told through the vision of the pious. A mighty hope
is expressed that the Faultless-One will be fully Enlightened with
an Inner-and-Infallible-Perception, and that the Divinely Good-
and-Loving-Mind will have fully awakened within him. Man-
kind will be content to accept him as the Chosen-One on whom-
soever the choice of Ahura-Mazda alights. **The world has
cause to be of good cheer now. Holy Zarathushtra has arisen,
wreathed in smiles !** He blesses all the seven regions of the world
from the house of Pourushasp his father, and Dughdhova his
mother. — And all Nature rejoices !

VERSE 17.

- A. Tat Thwā peresā, eresh-mōi vaocha, Ahura !

Kathā, Mazdā ! zarem charānī hachā khshmat ?

Āsketiṁ khshmakam hyatchā mōi khwyat vakhsh aesho ?

Saroi būzhdyai Haurvātā Ameretātā,

Avā Māthra ya rathemo Ashat hachā. (134)

- B. This do I ask You, tell me clearly, O ! Ahura,
How, O ! Mazda shall I walk with You in ecstatic-joy ?
By what means may I become Your intimate companion, and
how shall my voice carry far ?
For receiving the boons of Perfection and Immortality, hereafter,
Through the Divine-Utterances which are the best guides because
of their Rectitude.
- C. Zarathushtra enters the realms of mysticism. He talks of the
mystic-delight of walking and talking with Ahura-Mazda ! He
clasps Ahura-Mazda in a spiritual-embrace ! The lover beholds
the Beloved, and suffers none to come between them ! The

Divine-Union has been effected through the medium of Love-Eternal! The Lovers of God are blessed with the Wisdom of the Infinite! **There is no joy whether Earthly or Celestial comparable to that of enjoying the intimacy of companionship with Ahura-Mazda!** He drinks the Nectar of Bliss and savours the Ambrosia of Delight in the company of the Primordial-One! He sings out aloud, so that the whole world may know the glad event, and rejoice with him. He is the first one to receive the Holy-Word of God in person, and is bursting with zeal to broadcast the 'agushta-vachao' the Truths that had never been heard-of before, to all mankind. He brings us the glad tidings that Perfection and Immortality awaits us all! It is by living Righteously, through the dictates of the Good-and-Loving-Mind, that we shall secure for ourselves for all times the most-lasting and most-satisfying rewards that we can ever aspire to. **He brings us news of a Heavenly-Kingdom, where the limits to our Happiness is only set by our own capabilities to aspire for it!** This is what comprises the Revelation of which he sings.

VERSE 18.

A. Tat Thwa[̄] peresā, eresh-mōi vaochā, Ahurā!

Kathā Ashā tat mizhdem hanāni —

Dasa[̄] Aspāo, Arshnavaitish, Ushremchā?

Hyat mōi, Mazdā! apivaiti Haurvātā

Ameretata, yathā hi taēibyo dāonghā. (135)

B. This do I ask You, tell me clearly, O! Ahura,
How, through Rectitude, may I merit that reward —
Ten mares, led by the powerful stallion, and a camel?
So that by me, O! Mazda might be comprehended Perfection
And Immortality, whereby I may hold them both at Your Blessed Feet.

C. Zarathushtra knows that the Righteous deserve precious rewards. **He asks Ahura-Mazda to grant him the precious boons of his choice, ten mares, meaning control over the ten senses; a powerful stallion capable of leading, meaning an illuminated mind; and a camel, meaning spiritual insight that penetrates deeply into the scheme of things!** With the help of this reward, Zarathushtra

confidantly expects to unravel the Gordian knot of life and death, and thus hopes to understand the whys and the wherefors of God's mighty Creation. With the thorough grasping of this spiritual knowledge, Zarathushtra expects to bring the precious gifts of a Life-made-Perfect and a Soul-made-Immortal within the reach of all. He will open the portals of the Kingdom of Heaven to all who care to knock at the gates of Perfection and Immortality, after first passing through the prescribed Moral Code. Perfection and Immortality are the final destination of all without any reserve, and sooner or later, we shall all reach that desired abode, when we eradicate Druj, Untruth from our lives, and grow full in Asha, Righteousness.

VERSE 19.

A. Tat Thwā peresā, eresh-moi vaocha, Ahurā!

Yastat mizhdem hanente noit daiti,

Ye-it ahmāi erezhukhdhā nā dāite,

Kā-tem ahya mainish anghat pouruyē?

Vidvao avam ya-im anghat apemā. (136)

- B. This do I ask You, tell me clearly, O! Ahura,
He who does not give suitable reward to the deserving,
And the one who gives it to the Righteous such as we are,
What shall be the outcome of this for the former?
I am aware of what happens to the latter.
- C. Here, Zarathushtra clearly admonishes us. **We must never withhold the due reward from those who have righteously earned it!** The labourer is truly worthy of his toil. It is unpardonable to deprive him the fruits of his well-earned work. Our Prophet is contemptuous of the idler and the parasite, but holds up the honest worker as the epitome of Righteousness. In the Later Avesta, this theme is developed further, and we are informed that **he who sows corn, sows righteousness! The wandering nomad, who has no substantial method of earning his living, along with the begging mendicant, however apparently pious he may be, and the plundering vagabond are all equated with hatred and are regarded fit for only the worst type of existence!** Also those people who withhold the wages of labour, or cheat the labourer out of his just due, are treated with equal loathing, and

are warned that a mighty retribution awaits them. Zarathushtra takes pains to inform us with great emphasis that the just provider of the honest toiler will be rewarded by Ahura-Mazda, whilst the unjust withholder will be surely punished by Him !

VERSE 20.

A. Chithenā, Mazdā ! hukhshathrā Daēva aongharē ?

At it peresā : Yōi pishyeintī aeibyō kam ?

Yāish gam Karapā Usikhshcha Aeshemai data,

Yacha Kava anmene urudoyata,

Noit him mizen Asha vastrem fradainghe. (137)

How, O ! Mazda, have the Daevas become so powerful ?

Furthermore I ask : What about them that selfishly oppress ?

Thus have the Karapas and the Usiks delivered the world over
to Wrath,

And the Kavas have made the earth to groan in bondage,

Righteousness neither feels secure nor prospers under such
conditions.

- C. Zarathushtra looks about him, almost with despair ! What he sees does not tend to re-assure him. He is momentarily depressed with the prevailing sad state of affairs. The False-Daevas, who are the followers of Untruth, are in the ascendancy. The Karapas, who are the sacrificial priests of the Daeva-worshippers, and whom our Prophet terms 'those who are morally deaf;' and the Usiks, an Iranian priestly tribe of Fire-worshippers; along with the Kavas, who are the ruling princes that have sided with the Daevas, and whom Zarathushtra regards as 'morally blind', have become very powerful. They are selfish, cruel and oppressive. Amongst their vile brood, number such adherents of the Forces-of-Darkness as the sorcerers, sirens, tyrants, murderous-bipeds and sanctity-destroyers. They have delivered the good earth over to the evil of intoxication, bloody sacrifices, ritual orgies, polytheism, greed, violence, insolence and rape. How can Righteousness grow, flourish and prosper under such maleficent influences ? **Will the beautiful peacock ever unfurl its gorgeous tail in the company of wolves, and dance ? Will the divine nightingale ever sing its thrilling song of Love whilst it is enmeshed in a cruel cage ? Will the noble spirit of Virtue ever co-exist with the base ghoul of Wickedness ?** Zarathushtra leaves us to answer these questions by the Light of an Awakened-Conscience. There can only be one honest reply ! Only one ! "No ! Never so!"

(To be continued)

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