

Weekly Zoroastrian Scripture Extract # 373: Vakhshur-e-Vakhshuraan Zarathushtra Spitamaan's First Gatha Ahunavaiti - Yasna 34, Verses 1-2

Hello all Tele Class friends:

Maidhyoshahem Gaahambaar and Tirangaan and Aarish the Iranian Archer:

According to the Seasonal calendar, Maidhyoshahem Gaahambaar started on Tir Maah and Khorshed Roj (29th June) and ends on today Tir Maah and

Dae-pa-Meher Roj (July 3rd). Also, in between this Gaahambaar, on Tir Maah and Tir Roj, the Parabh (auspicious day) of Tirangaan also took place on July 1st.

According to our Gaahambaar Aafrin, Maidhyoshahem Gaahambaar is the second Gaahambaar and Daadaar Ahura Mazda created water during this Gaahambaar. Many of our Zoroastrian Associations do celebrate this Gaahambaar in their Atashkadehs which is quite commendable, especially if it is on Tirangaan.

In Iran, Tirangaan was celebrated with lots of fanfare. It celebrated the Tir Parabh (auspicious day) plus the famous story of the brave Iranian Archer Arish who gave his life by shooting an arrow with all his might which determined the boundary of Iran and its enemy Turan. That was when Iranian king Minocheher and Turanian King Afraasiyaab agreed to stop the war and determine the boundary by having an Iranian archer shoot an arrow and where the arrow came down, it determined the boundary between the two kingdoms and Iran got the better part of the deal. Of course, Archer Arish was chosen, and he gave all his strength to shoot the arrow from the top of the highest Iranian Damaavand Mountain, but after that he died due to the extreme physical effort. These days, not too many Zoroastrian Humdins know about this story. However, CZC LA every year celebrates this day with a get together which is a very good thing to know and I commend them to do this as well as all the other seasonal Gaahambaars.

This story of Arish, the Iranian Archer, can be found at:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arash> and at:

<https://welcometoiran.com/arash-the-archer/>

Maidyoshahem Gaahambaar:

According to the seasonal (Fasli) calendar, the second Gaahambaar Maidyoshahem will start from Tir Mah, Khorshed Roj through Tir Mah Dae-pa-Meher Roj, June 29th Monday through July 3rd Friday, 2020. Each of the six Gaahambaars is celebrated over five days, and so also Maidyoshahem Gaahambaar.

During these 5 days of Gaahambaars, we are supposed to perform a special Gaahambaar Jashan starting with Gaahambaar Aafringaana and ending with Aafrin-i-Gaahambaar, a special

Aafrin, in which Dadar Ahura Mazda is depicted as narrating Himself and explaining when He created HIS six creations: Sky, water, earth, vegetation, animals and lastly, his most favorite creation, Humans! In this Aafrin, exact days of six Gaahambaar celebrations are mentioned, starting from Navroze Day, March 21st, as the Day 1 and then the last fifth day of the first Gaahambaar Maidyozaem 45 days after that and then the last fifth day of the next Gaahambaar, and then the last fifth day of the next Gaahambaar and so on.

In North America, many Irani Organizations and some Parsi Associations are celebrating Gaahambaars by Seasonal calendars in sync with the seasons as they should be.

Many NA Parsi/Irani organizations also celebrate Gaahambaars but according to their Shehenshahi or Kadmi calendars, which due to no leap year reckoning, are hopelessly out of sync with the seasons they are meant to be. For instance, we celebrate our Navroze in August/July instead of on March 21st.

In my previous WZSE #97 as well as in our Young Mobeds Seminar at the LA NAZC in December 2014, I wrote: "Gaahambaars are seasonal celebrations and it is time when we in NA follow whatever calendar we wish to follow but celebrate the six Gaahambaars according to their correct seasonal timings! I know this is a very controversial subject, but this is my personal belief!"

However, not too many Associations are willing to do that in NA.

In South FL, we in ZAF (Miami, Ft. Lauderdale, Boca Raton, West Palm Beach) celebrate a Gaahambaar on a Saturday in November in an open pavilion with a solemn Satum prayer and a solemn feast served on banana leaves, an old Parsi/Irani tradition, attended by all three SF communities!

And the famous Orlando CFG Group Gaahambaar is celebrated on a convenient Sunday sometime during May through July with a solemn Satum prayer and a home cooked meal, under the leadership of our own Dinyar Mehta and many many Orlando Humdins.

And now, starting with 2018, NY ZAGNY WZCC is also celebrating their Gaahambaar sometime in July. They had a wonderful Gaahambaar celebration last year and we wish them all the success this year also!

However, due to Coronavirus lockdowns, many of these Gaahambaars may be postponed or cancelled.

Vakhshur-e-Vakhshuraan Zarathushtra Spitamaan's First Gatha Ahunavaiti – Yasna 34 - Verses 1 - 2:

Vakhshur-e-Vakhshuraan Zarathushtra Spitamaan composed 5 Gathas (songs) with 17 Haas (chapters) which are placed within 72 Haas of Yasna from Haa 28 through Haa 53. The first Gatha Ahunavaiti is composed on our holy prayer Ahunavar and consists of seven Haas from Haa 28 through Haa 34. Today, we will present the first 2 verses of Haa 34.

Zarathushtra's Gathas have been translated by over 20 Western and Zoroastrian scholars each with their own interpretation for these over 3500+ years old songs. Today, we will present the translation of these 2 verses by the father of our own late Prof. Kaikhosrov D. Irani – scholar Dinshaw J. Irani in his book: *The Gathas – The Hymns of Zarathushtra*.

For this Haa, D. J. Irani states:

This *HA* must have been composed at a time in the middle of Prophet's ministry. He has already proclaimed the fundamental teachings of the religion. After some difficulties, the religion has been adopted by King Vishtaspa and his court and has spread among some of the Iranian tribes. But there are still some who have not accepted the religion and are engaged in the traditional cults of sacrifice and warfare. These are the old cults associated with social practices of raids and depredation, which are repugnant to Zarathushtra's eyes. Knowing what Ahura Mazda expects from the pious believers, the Prophet assures the Lord of their faithful adherence. He also explains his rejection of the unbelievers and repudiates their evil ways. But above all, he seeks confirmation of the way of life he has received from Ahura Mazda, and the hope of the regeneration of existence with appropriate recompense for the good and evil.

He further states for the first two verses as:

The Ha opens with a dedication. The two aspects of life which come to the person who has lived a life of good words, deeds, and worship are Haurvatat and Ameretat, meaning respectively, the Perfection of Integrity, and Immortality. These are of course, characteristics of the Divinity as are all the Amesha Spentas. The actions which lead to them are offered as dedication to Ahura Mazda.

Just as in the previous verse we saw the combination of deeds, words, and worship, so in the next verse actions of the good spirit in accordance with Truth are combined with singing hymns of Ahura Mazda's praise.

With this wonderful introduction, let us present these first two verses of Yasna 34:

(Please hear the attached .mp3 file for its recitation)

Prayer Text	Translation
(1) Yaa shyaothanaa yaa vachanghaa yaa yasnaa	(1) The deeds, the words, the worship,
Ameretaatem, Ashemchaa taeibyodaonghaa Mazdaa Khshathremchaa Haurvataato,	For which Thou hast established Immortality, Righteous existence and the Kingdom of Perfection.
Aeshaam toi Ahuraa ehmaa pourutemaish dasteh.	All these deeds and words and worship I dedicate first of all to Thee, O Lord Mazda!
(2) At-chaa i-toi mananghaa mainyush vanghush vispa daataa,	(2) Inspired by the Good Mind,
Spentakhyaachaa neresh shyaothanaa yehyaa urvaa ashaa	these deeds come from the good spirit of the virtuous person,

hachaiteh,	whose soul follows the path of Truth,
Pairigaetheh khshmaavato vahmeh Mazdaa garobish stutaam.	Approaching Thy Presence, O Mazda, singing hymns of Thy praise.

(The Gathas - The Hymns of Zarathustra by Dinshaw J. Irani – Page 27)

SPD Comments:

1. Dr. Kolsawala in his Thesis states for this Haa as follows:

In this Haa Zarathustra began with a prayer seeking Ahura Mazda's blessings and guidance.

His deeds were dedicated to God so that he could achieve his mission. His doctrines were new and quite a radical change from the previously held religious notions. His doctrine was based on righteousness and good mind which proved a direct challenge to the vested interest of the followers of daévas.

The Prophet taught us that through dedicated thoughts, words, acts and prayers one arrives at self-realisation which in turn leads to immortality. Zarathustra had asked for various blessings from Ahura as the Magha society had grown large with many righteous men who had assembled in it. They all had acquired complete spiritual knowledge through Zarathushtra. The gifts of Ahura were shared amongst them. They in turn would share it with the rest of the world.

2. Insler for these verses states:

Verses 1 – 3 are a solemn promise to the Wise Lord that the faithful shall strengthen his power in this world through the sacred dimension of worship and praise for their Lord and by the secular enactment of the spiritual values of truth and good thinking which he created amid their fellow men.

May the Flame of Fellowship, Love, Charity and Respect for all burn ever eternal in our hearts so we can do HIS work with humility, diligence and eternal enthusiasm!

In HIS SERVICE 24/7!

Atha Janyaat, Yatha Aafrinaamahi! (May it be so as we wish!)

