

Weekly Zoroastrian Scripture Extract # 385: Commentary on Ahunavar – Yathaa Ahu Vairyo – Dialog Between Ahura Mazda and Zarathushtra – Yasna 19 – Verses 11–15

Hello all Tele Class friends:

Shahen Baaj – To be performed by Udvada 9 Sanjana Family

On March 24th, 2020, Arnavaz Sethna of Houston ZAH, daughter-in-law of famous Avesta scholar T. R. Sethna of Karachi, wrote to me:

“Hello Solibhai: When I was growing up in Karachi, there was a very pious lady Jerbai Kandawalla. At the time of partition when the country was ravaged by riots, she had requested a few Mobeds to do Shehen Baaj, saying that in the old Iranian times, during the "aafat" on the country, the Mobeds would do Shehen Baaj on a hill (taikri). Have you ever heard of that? Apparently, it was very expensive, but Jerbai was a very wealthy lady so she bore all the cost. I must have been around 9 or 10 years old so don't remember much except the name and that it was held. I don't even know what the expense was for - may be sukhad loban? Any insight into this would be very much appreciated. I wonder if we can do something like that here.

Arnavaz”

To this, I replied:

“Hello Arnavaz: You are correct about Shehen Baj.

I think it is performed by Udvada Mobeds only.

When I was in MF Cama Institute, around 1949 – 50, Boyce Agiary in Mumbai approached our Principal asking if they can perform a Shehen Baaj on the grounds (our school was on a hill). And school allowed them to perform it.

I remember they clear some ground under the mango groves and perform the Baaj, but we were not allowed to attend it, so I do not know what prayers were recited and what items were used.

My nephew in Udvada, Yozdathregar Mobed Zarir Dastoor, also informed me that when his dad, my brother Minu, was in charge of the Saghdi (small Aatash Daadgaah near Udvada Dakhmaa), this Baaj was performed on the hill nearby.

In Unwalla's book on Pavmahel (higher liturgical rituals) for the Udvada Sanjana Mobeds, it describes this Shehen Baaj which requires 132 Daroons for it, and 6 being large ones for performing a single Baaj with the combined Khshnuman of Sirojaa, Sarosh and Ardaafravash. It requires 7 Taai Barsam, 2 Karasyaas and 5 new Khumchaas which are filled with fruits and nuts. One Mobed with Bareshnum

is required to perform it. After he is done, his Bareshnum is vitiated and he has to take 9-night Bareshnum again to perform higher liturgies.

After the Baaj is performed, the attending Humdins can partake the “Chaashni”.

Unwalla book states that it originally was called “Shehenshahi Baaj” in the Sassanian times and was performed when the empire was faced with major catastrophe and performing it removed the catastrophe. So similarly, when a family faces a major problem, it can be performed.

This is all I know. The basic prayer is similar to a Baaj ceremony performed at the inauguration of your Bhandara Dar-e-Meher including the final “Chaashni” by Mobeds at the end of the prayer.

I could not find any reference to this Baaj in Navsari Bhagaria or Kadmi Paavmehel books.”

I then contacted Udvada Vadaa Dasturji Khurshed about it and he informed me that they are also thinking about performing this Baaj but due to some problems and availability of Bareshnum Mobeds, they had to postpone it.

So, finally, it is going to be performed together with a Jashan in Udvada Saghdi on Saturday September 26th at 9:40 AM Indian Standard time (12:10 AM NY time).

We want to thank Dasturji Khurshed and the Udvada 9 Family Sanjana Mobeds to perform this Shehen Baaj for the good of our community as well as for the whole world and with the Blessings of Iranshah we all hope that this calamity of COVID pandemic end soon.

Commentary on Yathaa Ahu Vairyo continued

In our last two WZSEs #383 and #384, we presented first ten verses of the unique commentary on our Ahunavar – Yathaa Ahu Vairyo – Yasna 19. Today, we continue this commentary with its next five verses 11 - 15.

Please refer to these previous WZSEs for the introduction of this commentary.

We have presented a unique commentary on Ashem Vohu from Yasna Haa 20, popularly called Fraamraot No Haa - in our previous two WZSEs – [WZSE #171](http://www.avesta.org/wzse/wzse171.pdf) and [WZSE #172](http://www.avesta.org/wzse/wzse172.pdf) at:

<http://www.avesta.org/wzse/wzse171.pdf>

<http://www.avesta.org/wzse/wzse172.pdf>

Today, we will continue with the Ahunavar (Yathaa Ahu Vairyo) Commentary – Yasna Haa 19.

In this Haa, Ahura Mazda replies to Zarathushtra the great efficacy of reciting Ahunavar. In our WZSE #383, in the first 5 verses of Yasna 19, Ahura Mazda proclaims the great benefits of chanting Ahunavar. In our next WZSE #384, Verses 6 – 10, HE further proclaims that HE will help the soul of the person who chants and lives by Ahunavar across the Chinvat Bridge. He further proclaims that whoever learns it, teaches it and recites it is freed from death.

In today's WZSE #385, Daadaar Ahura Mazda once again emphasizes the importance of reciting Ahunavar and for those Humdins, it gives protection against all evil. In the last Verse 15, He declares nothing in common with the Druj.

So, here are the next 5 verses of Yasna 19 – Commentary on Yathaa Ahu Vairyo.

Commentary on Ahunavar – Yathaa Ahu Vairyo – Dialog Between Ahura Mazda and Zarathushtra – Yasna 19 – Verses 11 – 15

[\(Please hear the attached .mp3 file for its recitation\)](#)

Prayer Text	Translation
(11) aétatcha no vacho fraavaochéh sakhshémcha hishmaairîmcha yathana kahmaaichit haataam ashaat hacha yat vahishtaata.	(11) To obtain the best righteousness, each one of us should learn and remember this prayer, which has been declared before us, over and over again.
(12) Yatha fraa idha aamraot. yat dim ahoomcha ratoomcha aadadaat, itha dim para-chinasti yim Ahurem Mazdaam manas-paoiryaéiby daamabyo. yatha im vîspanaam mazishtem chinasti atha ahmaai daamaan chinasti.	(12) When it (the Ahunavaîrya prayer) was declared it because He recognised it as the best ahu and ratu, when in His wisdom the more exalted animals (men) were compared with Ahura Mazda. By declaring this prayer as the very best, it gives all the animals which are the best in its protection.
(13) Yatha mazdaao hujeeetish vanghéush idha thritîm tkaéshem aadrenjayéiti dazda manangho para îm idha mananghéh chinasti. yatha fradakhshataarem mananghéh manangho aétavaitya îm kaarayéiti, shyaothnanaam. idha ahûm kaarayéiti.	(13) By reciting "mazdaao hûjeetish vangheush" the third part of the prayer is completed. When a wise person declared "dazda manangho", then for that wise person, good thoughts and good deeds are accepted as the lord. In that manner he accepts Ahunavar as the best lord.
(14) Yat dim daamabyo chinasti mazda itha tem yat ahmaai daamaan. khshathrem ahuraaî chinasti, tat mazda tava khshathrem, drigubyo vaastaarem chinasti yatha urvathem spitamaai, pancha tkaésha. vîspem vacho fravaakem haurum vacho Ahurahéh Mazdaao.	(14) When he acknowledges the products as of Great Wisdom, then those products are placed in its protection. When he recites "khshathrem ahuraaî" then he says " O Ahura, this Kingdom is for You." Just as he is the friend of Aшо Spitama Zarathustra, similarly he is declared a protector of the poor. Thus, there are five parts of Ahunavar. All of the Kingly prayers of Ahura Mazda, all of the prayers is this.

(15) Vahishto Ahuro Mazdaao ahunem vairim fraamraot vahishto haamo kaarayat. hithwat ako abavat antarecha drvantem aamrota. aya antareh-ukhti. noit naa manaao noit senghaa noit khratavo naédaa varanaa noit ukhdhaa naédaa shyaothanaa noit daénaa noit urvaano hachintéh.	(15) The totally complete Ahura Mazda had recited Ahunavaîrya; that complete lord had made it complete. As soon as He recited it the Evil fled immediately. And to that Evil, He said: When this prayer is said, then neither our thoughts, nor our teaching, nor our wisdom, nor our desires , nor our words, nor our deeds, nor our religion or nor our lives will be similar.
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(Prayer Text is from *Yajashneh Baa Nirang* by Ervad Tehmuras D. Anklesaria in Avestan script, 1926 CE, transliterated by me. Translation is from *Yasna and Vispered Translated into Gujarati by Ervad Kavasji Edalji Kangaji – Bombay 1886* – translated into English in his PhD Thesis by Dr. Purvez Kolsawalla)

SPD Explanation:

- Verse 15 above is a paraphrase of Ushtavaiti Gatha – Yasna 45 Verse 2 as:

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

Prayer Text	Translation
(Haa 45.2) At fravakhshyaa angheush mainyu pouruyeh, Yayaaospanyaao uiti mravat yem angrem, Noit naa manaao noit senghaa noit khratavo, Naedaa varanaa noit ukhdhaa naedaa shyaothana, Noit daenaao, noit urvaanno hachainteh.	(Haa 45.2) O members of the assembly! First of all I will declare unto you about the Twin Spirits of the world, of whom the more bountiful spirit spoke to the destructive spirit thus:- “Neither our thoughts, nor our teachings or understandings, nor our doctrines, nor words, or deeds, nor our consciences, nor souls conform with each other.”

(Translation from *Gatha – Baa – Maaeni* by Ervad Kavasji E. Kangaji translated into English by Prof. Ervad Maneck F. Kanga – Page 160)

It is interesting to note that Zarathushtra’s own words are paraphrased by a later Avesta writer within the Ahunavar commentary.

- It is very interesting to have commentaries in Avesta Yasna for our three pillars of our Religion – Yathaa, Ashem and Yenghe Haataam. We will cover the commentary of Yenghe Haataam – Yasna 20, in our upcoming WZSEs.

3. In our previous two WZSEs, #134 and #135, we presented a commentary on our Ahmaai Raescha prayer from Aafrin-e-Rapithwan at:

<http://www.avesta.org/wzse/wzse134.pdf>

<http://www.avesta.org/wzse/wzse135.pdf>

but it is in Pazend language.

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

Love and Tandoorasti, Soli