

Weekly Zoroastrian Scripture Extract # 308: Monajaat - In the Praise of Asho Zarathushtra - Firoze Rustomjee Batliwalla - Verses 1-4

Hello all Tele Class friends:

“Monajaats are Zoroastrian devotional songs. The word Monajaat is from the Persian language, and the earliest Monajaats were in Persian, many of them composed by Dastur Mullan Firoz bin Kaus.”

“Later, Monajaats were composed in Gujarati, the language understood by the majority of Zoroastrians. The earliest Gujarati Monajaats were published in the mid 19th century on historical and religious subjects, usually at the back of Khordeh Avesta books.” (Dr. Ervad Ramiyar Karanjia - <https://ramiyarkaranjia.com/2017/07/21/what-are-monajats-tmy-jame-jamshed-of-9-7-17/>)

“Sir Dr. Ervad Jivanji J. Modi gives an illustrative description of the prayer *Monajaat* concerning its function for the believer as an outlet of religious emotions: “It is a prayer in which the person praying holds, as it were, a converse with his God and pours forth his own inward personal feelings of devotion and expression of humility”. This definition of Zoroastrian *Monajaat* stresses the individuality and intimacy of the prayer which is suited to build up a very close personal relationship to God in the form of a dialogue. In contrast to the official Zoroastrian prayers which are composed in the ancient Avestan language, the language of the *Monajaat* is normally the mother tongue of the praying person, Persian or Gujarati, so that the believer is able to follow each formulation of the prayer.” (<http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/monajat-i>)

In our beloved MF Cama Athornan Institute (MFCAl), we used to have a Monajaat booklet with 15 or so Monajaats in it, all in Gujarati. All these Monajaats were written with rhymes. Our Duty Teacher in charge of our morning and night prayers will select one of these Monajaats and we had to sing them every day. And of course, the last official routine just before going upstairs to bed is to line up in two lines facing one another and singing that beautiful Khudaavind Khaavind Monajaat ending with “Goodnight Sir”! Those were the wonderful days!

We have presented many a Vakhshur-e-Vakhshuraan Zarathushtra Spitamaan’s words from his 17 Gatha songs but have never presented a Monajaat in his praise which is quite overdue in our 307 WZSEs. So today we will present a beautiful Gujarati Monajaat in praise of Zarathushtra written by none other than that wonderful Parsi Poet Firoze Rustomjee Batliwalla, also the author of Khudaavind Khaavind and the famous Parsi anthem – Chhaiye

Hameh Zarthoshti!

All the Monajaats I know are in Parsi Gujarati which have old Parsi Gujarati words, some Persian, a few even Arabic. Some of these words are difficult to translate into English and sometimes there is no suitable English words for some of them. With this background, I have tried my best to translate this beautiful Monajaat in praise of our dear Prophet. Many of our loyal readers of WZSEs do understand Gujarati well and many times they have requested me to present the original Gujarati of some songs or Monajaats we have presented. Hence for the Monajaat presented in this WZSE, we have attached a file with the Gujarati Monajaat in it.

In the Monajaat below, the first sentence will be the English transliteration of the original Gujarati poem, followed by its English translation.

Please understand I am no Gujarati or Parsi Gujarati scholar, and even with my best efforts, please accept my apology for any mistakes in my translation.

In this Monajaat for the praise of Zarathushtra, the last part of each word is the repetition: "Asho Zarthosht Paygambar" meaning "Righteous Zarathushtra Prophet". In the Monajaat, these three words are supposed to be repeated three times and they give a very good ending to each verse. So I have decided to use these three original words as is after the first time so as to give the original three words of the Monajaat and we want you to recite them as is in Gujarati.

In the following transliteration, the Gujarati word tehn, te with a nasal sound, is used. I have transliterate it as tehn and please do not think it is a spelling error – it is nasal te.

This Monajaat has 8 verses so we have decided to present the first four verses today and then present the rest next week in WZSE #309.

With this long drawn out background, let us present the first 4 verses of this beautiful monajaat:

Monajaat – In the Praise of Asho Zarathushtra – Firoze Rustomjee Batliwalla – Verses 1 – 4

(Please hear the attached .mp3 file for its recitation of the entire 8 verses)

1. Sarasa saoothee kharo rehavar, Asho Jarthosht Paygambar.

1. The best of all, the real guide, The Righteous Prophet Zarathushtra.

Darood taaraan rawaan oopar, Asho Jarthosht Paygambar.

May the blessings be upon your Farohar, Asho Jarthosht Paygambar.

2. Amaaree daad tehn leedhee, tajaawee tehn badee deedhee,

2. You took care of all of us, you remove all vices from all of us,

Utaaree neka raahopar, Asho Jarthosht Paygambar.

You brought us all on good path, Asho Jarthosht Paygambar.

3. Jagatneh kaaja tehn dukhneh, lidhu maantheh tajee sukhaneh,

3. For the sake of the world, you took all our troubles upon yourself leaving your happiness,

Kidho dukhno dileh nahee dar, Asho Jarthosht Paygambar.

You did not fear taking up these troubles, Asho Jarthosht Paygambar.

4. ladaaee tuhn ladyo satanee, Ahura Mazda nee mahobataneh,

4. You fought battles for the truth, for Ahura Mazda's love,

Mukee maaloh, maheloh, jahr, Asho Jarthosht Paygambar.

Leaving possessions, palaces, valuables, Asho Jarthosht Paygambar.

SPD Comments:

1. Many Gujarati Monajaats are written in the praise of Zarathushtra by a number of Parsi Poets, like the one above.
2. Word Paygambar is actually a Persian word – Paygaambar – Paygaam = message, bar is the imperative of the Persian verb Bordan = to carry, and so Paygaambar = message carrier = messenger = Prophet.

The rest of the Monajaat will be presented in our next WZSE #309.

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

Love and Tandoorasti, Soli

અશો જરથોશ્તની સિફતમાં

- ૧ સરસ સહુધી ખરો રેહબર, અશો જરથોશ્ત પયગમ્બર;
ઠરૂઠ તારાં રવાન ઉપર, અશો જરથોશ્ત પયગમ્બર.
- ૨ અમારી ઠાઠ તેં લીધી, તજાવી તેં બઢી ઢીધી;
ઉતારી નેક રાહોપર અશો જરથોશ્ત પયગમ્બર
- ૩ જગતને કાજ તેં દુઃખને, લિધું માંથે તજી સુખને;
કિધો દુખનો દિલે નહિ ડર, અશો જરથોશ્ત પયગમ્બર.
- ૪ લડાઈ તું લડયો સતની, અહુરમજ્દની મહોબતની;
મુકી માલો, મહેલો, જર, અશો જરથોશ્ત પયગમ્બર.
- ૫ ખુદાની રાહ પર ચાલી, અશોઈને સદા પાળી;
સદા રાજી કિધો પરવર, અશો જરથોશ્ત પયગમ્બર.
- ૬ બઢી, અજ્ઞાન, અંધારું, કિધું તેં જ્ઞાનથી ન્યાડું;
ભલો તું નેક તાલેવર, અશો જરથોશ્ત પયગમ્બર.
- ૭ પઢી સહુ આફરિનો લાખો, કિઠા જાનો કરી નાખો;
કહો તું રેહનુમાઈ કર અશો જરથોશ્ત પયગમ્બર.
- ૮ ભલે ઠાઠાર તેં સ્થાપ્યો, જનમ જરથોશ્તને આપ્યો;
ખુલ્યું જેથી સુખોનું ઘર, અશો જરથોશ્ત પયગમ્બર.

(કવિ - ફીરોઝ રૂસ્તમજી બાટલીવાલા)