

Weekly Zoroastrian Scripture Extract # 95 – Cherag Roshan - The Lamp is Lit! - A short Prayer for turning on the first lamp in the home!

Hello all Tele Class friends:

In this weekly, we have reminisced about an old Parsi home custom that is steadily being forgotten!

My father, Mobed Pirojshah Kawasji Dastur served as the Panthaki of the Sir Jamshedji Nusserwanji Petit Daremeher for over fifty years (from the early 1920's till 1963) and also as the manager of the Parsi Dharamshalla in the little village of Tarapore.

Growing up in those days, we did not have running water, paved roads or electricity.

In the quiet, simple life we led, one of our daily routines was to clean all the hurricane lanterns in our home. Amongst many, there was a special one – the Petromax gaslight lamp – for lighting the huge veranda of our home.

Every day my father would make sure that the mantle was in good shape, the gas venturi was not blocked and everything else was in tiptop working condition.

As still is the custom in most Parsi homes, especially in Gujarat villages, just after sunset, the ritual of “Lobaan” would be performed.

In a miniature Afarganyu, amid the glowing wood embers, a pinch of Lobaan (incense, myrrh) would be sprinkled frequently which will burn into a fragrant, billowing smoke.

This miniature Afarganyu would then be carried to all the rooms of the house ... the aromatic smoke wafting in all the rooms.

This unusual and unbelievable fragrance evoked a sense of spiritual serenity, tranquility and the sense of being one with our Dadar Ahura Mazda!

Each person would bow to this billowing smoke Afarganyu with reverence, pinch a little of the ashes from the Afarganyu and make a “tilli” on the forehead.

Just about the same time, all the other hurricane lanterns were lit.



The star of the lights – the Petromax – would be lighted by our father.

The Petromax was then hung from the ceiling on an S-shaped hook.

Facing this special light, all of us would stand up and recite the Hum-Bandagi:

Short Prayer at the time of lighting a lamp:

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

Cheraag roshan, Mushkel Aashaan,
Muraad Haansul, Tandoorasti, Nek Muraad Haansul.

Short Prayer at the time of lighting a lamp Translation:

The lamp is lit, all difficulties will be solved,
All wishes will be granted.
Good health, All good wishes will be granted.

This recitation was followed by:

Khshnaothra Ahurahe Mazdaao! (Propitiation to Daadaar Ahura Mazda!)

Ashem Vohu, Vahisitem Asti; (Righteousness is good; It is the best!)

Ushtaa Asti; (It is Happiness!)

Ushtaa Ahmaai, hyat ashaai vahishtaa Ashem! (Happiness to him/her who is righteous for the sake of Righteousness!)

and then we would greet one another with a "Saahebjee" - Good Evening - salutation!

What a simple way to recognize Aathro Ahurahe Mazdaao Puthra! (The Fire, the son of Ahura Mazda!)

This custom is still observed in many homes in Udwada.

As a side remark, it may be a good thing to have a Deevo (floating candle) burning 24/7 in our homes.

Jo Ann and I have such a protected Deevo in our home. (see attached photo)

SPD Explanation:

A word about Tarapore:

1. Tarapore sits on the shores of the Arabian Sea, some 60 miles north of Bombay.
2. In 1601, the Portuguese, thinking it would make a great harbor, built an immense fort, the remnants of which are still standing today.
3. In its heydays, Tarapore was the official seat of the Vicaji Meherji family.
4. Brothers Vicaji and Pestonji were the treasurers of the Nizam of Hyderabad and brother

Pestonji was the only common person allowed to mint his own coins called
“Pestonshaahi Sikka”!

5. Thanks to Ambassador Jamsheed Marker of Pakistan, I have a replica of these coins!

6. Today, one can still see the magnificence of the past in the ruins of the palatial buildings of the Vicaji Meherji family.

7. Tarapur, as it is now called, is in the state of Maharashtra and has the dubious distinction of being the first Atomic Energy Station in India.

8. It was selected by the committee headed by late Dr. Homi Jehangir Bhabha, and I read about it when I was cruising on the ship SS Oronsay, from Bombay to London, on my way to USA in August 1960.

May the flame of Paak Iranshah burn ever eternal in our hearts!

And 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!

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

Love and Tandoorasti, Soli

Deevo in our home:

