

Weekly Zoroastrian Scripture Extract # 276: Prayer - The Medium used by Zarathushtra to approach Ahura Mazda - Spentaa Mainyu Gatha - Yasna 50 - Verses 8-9

Hello all Tele Class friends:

NAMC The Distinguished Scholar Awards

At the last NAMC AGM in Washington DC, it was unanimously decided to confer the Distinguished Scholar Awards to Mobed Jehan Bagli and Mobed Soli P. Dastur.

The award was presented to Jehan at the Toronto ZSO Navroze Function by Past NAMC President Mobed Kobad Zarolia on August 18th.

The award was also presented by NAMC President Mobed Ardaeviraf Minocherhomji to Jo Ann and Mobed Soli P. Dastur at the Miami/Ft. Lauderdale/Boca Raton ZAF Navroze function on Saturday August 18th, and at the Orlando CFG Group Navroze function on Sunday August 19th and at the ZATAMBAY function on August 26th by Past FEZANA President Rustom Kevala and Hoshedar Tamboli.

Jo Ann and I want to thank NAMC for this surprised award and to President Arda for coming all the way from San Diego to present it to us. We are truly grateful for this award to NAMC, ZAF friends, ZATAMBAY friends and especially Orlando CFG friends who initiated this whole presentation. (Please see the attached photos)

Zarathushtra uses Prayers to approach Ahura Mazda

Our Vakhshur-e-Vakhshuraan Zarathushtra Spitamaan composed in poetic Gathic Avesta 5 Gathas with 17 Haas (chapters). The fourth Gatha is called Spentaa Mainyu (Pahlavi: Spentomad) and consists of Yasna Haas 47 – 50.

Gatha Scholars have translated Spentaa Mainyu as Holy Spirit, Beneficent Spirit, Bountiful Spirit and Progressive Mentality.

Scholars explained Spentaa Mainyu in different ways. Our eminent ZAGNY scholar, late Prof. Kaikhosrov D. Irani states: (<http://www.zarathushtra.com/z/gatha/dji/The%20Gathas%20-%20DJI.pdf>)

“Ahura Mazda meaning the Wise Lord, is the Divinity of Gathic theology. He is the Creator and the Source of Goodness. The two opposed Spirits, Principles, or Mentalities:

1. Spenta Mainyu, meaning the bountiful or progressive spirit in the ethical dualism, it is the Good-Spirit.
2. Angre Mainyu is the spirit of destruction or opposition. In the doctrine of ethical dualism it is the Evil Spirit. Although the concept is used, this term itself does not appear in the Gathas. It was employed a little later in the Avestan literature.”

Our very good friend Dina G. McIntyre explains:
(<http://www.zarathushtra.com/z/article/dgm/vol3.htm#volume3>)

“That spenta mainyu, the benevolent spirit, is a part of the Wise Lord, and operates at the divine level cannot, I think, be doubted. The Gathas are full of instances in which he is so identified.” She further states: “the benevolent spirit represents love, support, a built-in guidance system, assisting us to quest for truth and meet the exigencies of life by attending with good thinking. “

As mentioned above, Spentaa Mainyu (Benevolent Spirit) Gatha consists of 4 songs: Yasna 47 – 50.

We have covered many of its verses from Yasna 47, 48 and 50 in our previous WZSEs.

Today, we will cover Gatha Spentaa Mainyu, Yasna 50 Verses 8 - 9:

This is what Prof. K. D. Irani has to say about this last Haa of Spentaa Mainyu, Yasna 50:

“Spentaa Mainyu 4 [Y .50]. This is a powerful poetic expression of the Prophet's reverence for Ahura Mazda, with a feeling of conviction regarding the support he expects from Him. The Ha evinces the Prophet's sense of vindication, as well as his acceptance by Ahura Mazda. The Ha ends with a reaffirmation of the commitment to restore this existence to its ideal state envisioned in the Truth and realized by the Good Mind.”

(*Gathas – The Hymns of Zarathushtra* – D. J. Irani, Introduction by Prof. Kaikhosrov D. Irani – Page 12, available at: www.zarathushtra.com)

If you study Yasna 50, the above referred reverence of Ahura Mazda by Zarathushtra is quite evident. In these two verses, Zarathushtra wants to approach Ahura Mazda through his prayers/hymns and longs to be with HIM.

So, here are the two verses of Spentaa Mainyu Gatha, Yasna 50 – Verses 8 - 9:

Prayer – The Medium used by Zarathushtra to approach Ahura Mazda – Spentaa Mainyu Gatha – Yasna 50 – Verses 8 – 9

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

**8. Mat vaao padaaish yaa frasrutaa izhayaa,
Païri - jaaaï Mazdaa ustaana zasto,
At vaao ashaa arédrakhyaachaa nemanghaa,
At vaao Vangheûsh Manangho hunaréataataa.**

**9. Taaish vaao yashnaaish païti stavas ayeñi,
Mazdaa Ashaa Vangheush shyaothanaaish Manangho;
Yadaa ashoish makhyaa vaséh khshayaa,
At hudaanaaûsh ishayaas gerezdaa khyém.**

Prayer – The Medium used by Zarathushtra to approach Ahura Mazda – Spentaa Mainyu Gatha – Yasna 50 – Verses 8 – 9 Translation:

8. Ever with chants which well-up upto-You from-my-Inner-Being, May-I-reach-near to thee, O Mazda, with-hands-uplifted, even up to You through Asha and with the adoration of a Devotee, even upto-You through the Wondrous Wisdom of Vohu Mano.

9. Praising with these hymns may I come back to You, O Mazda, Lord of Truth, through deeds of Vohu Mano; when I-have-fully-achieved my destiny, then, eagerly-longing, may I become possessor of-Supreme-Wisdom.

(Dr. Irach J. S. Taraporewala – *The Divine Songs of Zarathushtra* - Pages 753 - 757)

SPD Explanation:

1. Dr. Purviz Kolsawalla in his thesis states for the above verse 8:

“The way to unite with God is through singing the hymns of praise, with righteousness, moral courage and good thoughts. This in turn allows us to fulfil our destiny and satisfy the desire for possessing the supreme wisdom. The idea is that the chants rush forth from the inner being of the singer who was Zarathustra.”

“Chatterjee explained that this verse highlights the emergence of Monajats and Ghazals from Iran. Moral truth does not remain as an intellectual apprehension. It stirs up and arouses emotions and expresses itself in form of stirring songs and poems. As Zarathustra's religion is an ethical religion, the need for devotion to Conscience and Righteousness is highlighted. He believed that the love of Mazda is the vital fluid that feeds the Religious Life.”

“Inslar mentions that, Zarathustra shall lead others who are similarly devoted to the ways of truth and good thinking to further the cause of these high principles on the earth.”

2. In the first Verse 8 above, the words: “ustaana-zasto” is also used in Yasna 28.1 in Zarathushtra’s famous Verse “Ahyaa Yaasaa”, praying with uplifted hands (please see the attached photo).

3. Our scholar, D. J. Irani, in his book: *Gathas – The Hymns of Zarathushtra*, Page 46 – 47, translates the above Verse 8 as follows:

“8. Singing hymns of Thy praise, O Lord, and with hands outstretched shall I approach Thee. In adoration, with enlightenment from Truth and the Good Mind I shall verily reach Thy Presence, O Mazda!”

4. Dr. Khosro Khazai (Pardis) in his book: *The Gathas – The Sublime Book of Zarathushtra*,

Page 149, translates the above Verse 8 as follows:

“8. O Mazda, I, with thought provoking Gathas and with lifted hands turn to You, And as a free willed person, in the radiance of **Righteousness**, praise You, So that in time with **Good Thought** I can come closer to you.”

5. Alfred Lord Tennyson, one of my favorite English Poet Laureate said about Prayers:

“More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.”

6. Our very good friend and a very accomplished Iranian History scholar Malcolm Bhesania wrote to me about Faith and Prayer as follows:

So, how do we develop faith? The answer - by practicing habitual prayer and devotional meditation. Prayer, which is the manifestation of faith, works miracles. Prayer, as Dr. Alexis Carrel the renowned scientist describes it,

“is the surrender of personality to God, as the blank canvas stands before the painter and in effect says, ‘I am empty; fill me as you will’ or as the piano stands before the musician completely yielding itself to him for his music. So, prayer is man standing before God – his whole life opened for God’s will to be done through him.”

7. The last Verse of our beautiful prayer – Hoshbam – Yasna 60.12 - mirrors the same thought of approaching Ahura Mazda with the best Righteousness as:

**“Asha vahishta, asha sraeshta,
daresaama thwaa, pairi thwaa janyaama,
hamem thwaa, hakhma. “**

**“Through the best righteousness,
Through the excellent righteousness,
(Oh Ahura Mazda!)
May we see Thee, may we surround Thee
and may we become one unto Thee!”**

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 Aafrinaamaha! (May it be so as we wish!)

Love and Tandoorasti, Soli

Dinyar Mehta Hoshedar Tamboli and Rustom Kevala presenting Distinguished Scholar Award to Jo Ann and Mobed Soli Dastur in ZATAMBAY.JPG



NAMC Distinguished Scholar Award.jpg



THE NORTH AMERICAN MOBEDS COUNCIL
DISTINGUISHED SCHOLAR

Ervad Soli Pirojshah Dastur, PhD

Is hereby recognized for outstanding achievement and excellence in religious education, guidance, and service to Zarathustris in North America.



CONFERRED BY:

Ervad Arda-e-viraf M. Minocherhomjee
Ervad Arda-e-viraf M. Minocherhomjee, PhD
President

ON THIS DAY:

August 18, 2018

NAMC President Mobed Arda Minocherhomji presenting Distinguished Scholar Award to Jo Ann and Mobed Soli Dastur in Miami ZAF.jpg



Past NAMC President Mobed Kobad Zarolia presenting Distinguished Scholar Award to Mobed Jehan Bagli.jpg



Afsaan, Arda, Soli, Dilnavaz, Jo Ann, Yasmin, Adi in Orlando presenting a gift to Jo Ann and Soli.jpg



NAMC Distinguished Scholar Award for Jo Ann and Mobed Soli Dastur.jpg



NAMC President Arda presenting Award to Jo Ann and Soli in Orlando.jpg



Zarathushtra Prays with uplifted hands Ustaana Zasto.jpg



Heavenly Light descends on Zarathushtra on the Mount