

# A COMMUNITY THAT DRAWS ITS SPIRITUAL ENERGY FROM ATESH, THE HOLY FIRE.

## THE DANCING FLAME OF DIVINITY POINTING UPWARDS!

We Parsis are always enamoured of Atesh - 'Agni', Fire. We love to stare at the dancing golden flame which all the time points upwards and takes all sorts of designs and patterns, crests and troughs, jerks and jolts. It looks like a coloured cloud changing its shapes faster than the white one in the sky.

We have the abodes of Holy Fire, where it is kept burning constantly for years and even centuries. We love to stand before the Padshah Saheb, as we call the Holy Flame, and gaze at Him with intense devotion while passing the Manthra Prayer of Atesh Niyais on our tongue. It is an exercise in meditation, more blissful, if you know a little of the inner mystical meanings of that Prayer. **You experience two Fires, one burning before your eyes and the other dancing in your heart.**

The abodes of the Holy Fire - Atesh Gah-we have, are recognised in three classes, Atesh Baheram, Atesh Adran and Atesh Dadgah, as if some divine rank is assigned to each. Atesh - Beheram ranks the highest in its spiritual stature. There are only eight Atesh Beheram's in India, or for that matter, on the whole surface of the globe - the earth of our experience. The total number of Atesh Adran and Atesh Dadgah, according to a 1927 list, were 40 in Bombay and 128 in the rest of India! Quite large numbers. That was because whenever a Parsi earned good money, he or she would think of establishing an Atesh-Gah or Agiari, particularly at the place he or she was born and brought up.

Out of India, particularly in America, where the consecration ceremonies are not possible to be performed according the Rules and Tenets of the Daena, the devotional fervor for Atesh has induced the Parsis to have very very poor substitutes for Atesh-Gahs, which are unsubstantial symbols, yet do depict the Parsi attraction for Fire.

Going back in such history as we are able to preserve, 'Atash Gah's' or 'Atash Kadeh's' or the Holy Fires are referred to as existing even before the advent of Asho Zarathushtra - in the times of Shahs Hoshangh, Jamshed, Kaikhushru, Kai-Lohraspa.

Asho Zarathushtra had the Divine Atesh Adar Burzin Maher - glowing out of his palm. His chief disciple, Shah Vishtaspa, had established several Atesh Beherams. So also the kings of all other Irani Dynasties.

Why have we so much devotional lure and fervor for the Atesh ? It is as clear as the sun that **we are treating and revering the Holy Atesh as a divine conscious entity flowing down from Ahura Mazda's Mountain of Divine Light** and not just a symbol as the vainglorious professors and scholars from America blaspheme. "Athra", an Avesta term for Atesh, is defined as the Son of Ahura Mazda, "Athro Ahurahey Mazdaao Poothra", not just symbolically but as the declaration of certain mystical Truths of Nature. The establishment and consecration of Atesh Baheram and Atesh Adran require marathon rites and ceremonies, which, on the face of them, are too complex and too intricate to be just symbolic. They are clearly intended to invoke and invite certain Yazatic forces and energies, and to kindle Athra, the Son of Ahura, dormant in certain kinds of vocational and other fires, used and found on the earth.

**To furnish our devotional readers with some chapters from the mystical knowledge about Atesh contained in our Daena, we are presenting this first special Issue on Atesh.** It also contains some practical rules of praying before, and treating and dealing with, Atesh in Atesh-Gahs and in your daily lives. Please have a look at the Index opposite.

May this kindle, deep in your heart, the divine flame of Faith and Devotion for Asho Zarathushtra and His Daena, which is the Path of Truth and Ashoi - "Ereyzush Patho" -leading to Ahura.

Ahuramazda be with you!

- Editor

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