

BASIC SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

Some norms and laws of nature exist in this world for mankind to survive and progress further, in the cycles of evolution. From all these laws of Nature, the most exalted, and topping the list, is the law of Purity and Piety. It is the most Excellent Fundamentum Naturalis for mankind. In both the Gathas and Vendidad, one finds the words "Yaozdao Mashyai Aipi-Zanthen Vahishtai" referring to Piety and Purity.

In this materialistic world, the Purity of the physical body is of the utmost importance, because by observing the laws of purity and piety of body, the purification of "Khoreh" starts; the magnetism gets cleansed and charged, after which only the unseen body known as "Keherp" in Avesta, proceeds towards purification. The poet Thomson says "Even from body's purity, the mind receives a secret sympathetic aid". This kind of law is taught to us in the Vendidad and our other scriptures, because of the fact that body and soul have a very close relationship with one another.

Purity of the heart, according to Zartushti Din can never be achieved without observing purity of body and laws of "Khoreh". Due to all this, the first step is "Tarikat" -- Ways to purity and piety. "Pathan-Khas-taitim" meaning desirable paths of life and Rules of Procedure of life. All these laws of Ashoi are beneficial, and how they are so beneficial to mankind is taught in the chapter of Marayfat. How this is connected with the original beneficial laws "Hakikat" while the final end and

aim of "Tarikat" is in the advancement of soul, and the destiny of merging ourselves with sublime divine light.

One can understand from the above that Good Thoughts and Consciousness cannot be achieved without knowing Nature's Laws and performing our duties according to them. Sinners as we are, we, many a time, presume that our own thoughts and Conscience is pure, which may not be the case. What can be termed as Good Thoughts and Good Conscience? There must be some test in Nature. Mazdiyasni Zartushti Din teaches us that it is that test which lies in following all the 'Tarikats' and in preserving the "Khoreh".

It behoves one to know the "Farajats" -- daily Zarathushti disciplines, laws of preserving Khoreh, small and big Tarikats, Path of Discipleship, etc., etc. In short, how can one Zarthoshti advance spiritually?

In order to free oneself from the whirlpool of birth-death cycles one will have to follow the path of Ashoi. One cannot change the laws of Nature according to one's desire. Dadar Hormuzda runs the universe according to the "Ahunavar" plan and we, the insignificant servants have to conform and obey according to His plan alone. No one has and no one will change it. There is no other way for the advancement of soul except the Path of Ashoi. "Aevo Pathao yo Ashahe" The only Path -- way is that of Ashoi and no other, -- teaches Avesta.

It is regrettable, that some members of the Community think that all these rituals, tarikats, are outdated and outmoded in the present Scientific Age, although they themselves have hardly studied Modern Science. We can never vanquish Nature. Zarthushti Din teaches us to follow the path of "Maglub-Bit-Tahbey" -- subject to Nature's Laws, merged in Nature.

Another great fallacy of some Zarthushtis is that they think they are far advanced now in the Jet age and they have no time for this kind of "Tarikats", which are not necessary. What will suffice is having Good thoughts, Good words and Good deeds. This is very easy for one to say but very hard to do. We all know what thoughts pass through our minds, day in and day out, and how we live. We have also seen above, how Good thoughts can be achieved only through obedience of Nature's Laws etc.

Through "Tarikats" we put Zarthushti Din into Practice, thus following the percept of Gatha "Erezush-Patha" trying to attune ourselves with Righteous laws of living the life.

If God will it, in future, we shall consider all the basic "Tarikats" which should be and can be followed from the time we open our eyes in the morning in bed, till the time we lie again at night.

Atha Zamiat, Yatha Afrinami.

-- Curset M. Patel