

# 'Freedom Of Choice'

Over last half a Century it has become a pet theme of some heterodox Parsis, as well as those who desire to introduce some change (for their benefit) in the age-old traditions and tenets of the Mazda-yasai Zarthushti Din, to do things under the false assumption of having a licence of 'Freedom Of Choice'. The root of this 'Freedom Of Choice' concept lies in the philological studies and translations of our Scriptures done through western eyes. Any Tom, Dick or Harry thinks that in Yasna Ha 30.2, liberty is granted by the Prophet to do as one wishes

by the 'Freedom Of Choice'. Some even term this as 'one of the great fundamental concepts of our religion'! This is far from truth. Where was the necessity for Prophet Zarthustra to come to this corporeal world, from Dadaar Ahuramazda, if He had, to pay that you have freedom of choice in whatever you do? Many writers and scholars have written against this fallacy of 'freedom' and 'choice' theme. I give below few extracts of the recent write-ups done on this wrong premises of 'Freedom of Choice'.

—Cureet M. Patel.

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Dasturji Dr. Kaikhusroo M. Jamaspasa (Head Priest Anjuman Atash Behram)  
Dasturji Dr. Firoz M. Kotwal (Head Priest Wadiaji Atash Behram)

All three Head Priests write :

The Gathic Stanza Yasna 30.2 is often quoted to show that Zarthustra grants freedom of 'moral choices', in other words, enjoins conversion. To say the least, this is not correct. The said Stanza, Yasna 30.2, may be translated as follows :

'Do you hear by ears with best mind, do you see by eye-sight; decision of two choices, man by man, for one's person, before the

great Consummation, to be accomplished for us, O thinking ones!'

Avesta, a Veranno is in the dual number : 'Of two choices' These two choices are mentioned in Yasna 30.3 and they are, 'good and bad'. The Said Stanza Yasna 30.2 lays down that man has to choose from two paths of life : good and bad, Man is free to choose any one, either good or bad but a warning has been given in Yasna 30.4 and other Stanzas that the result of good

will be good and the result of bad will be bad (e.g. Yasna 43.5). There is no idea of freedom of choices or conversion in the said Gathic Stanza. In support of this interpretation, we quote another Gathic Stanza Yasna 45.3 :

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Do you think a Prophet is at all needed to teach 'do as you like?' And, what materials you and I have to choose? Do we know all about ourselves and the world we live in? Are our Senses and channels of experiences capable of knowing and understanding the whole of nature?

Mr. Nani A. Palkhiwala has written a chapter on 'Our Purlblind Senses' in his book 'India's Priceless Heritage'—wherein he advocates that what is perceived by our senses and comprehended by the brain 'is not even a fraction of reality', and he quotes Bohr and Heisenberg and Eddington and Brgg and even Einstein in support of this. Now if you cannot grasp the whole reality and you are in darkness, how would you choose and what would you choose? How would you decide what is good and what is evil?

Prophets do not come to give Freedom of choice; they come to

'Then do I declare the foremost of this life, which the wise Ahura Mazda revealed unto me. : Those of you who shall not practise here this holy word (manthra), as I think and speak, unto them shall be woe at the end of life.'

show the right path to the ignorant who have chosen the wrong; and tell them to come back on the right. If He is not to do that, He may as well not come! The freedom doctrine is entirely inconsistent with all Religions.

But what about Gatha Ha 30-27. Does it not give that freedom? Answer is a big No. If you read that passage fairly, justly objectively and without twisting any words, you will find that the passage conveys this: Make your mind enlightened by following my Commands and you will see all the mysteries of creation. The passage does not address the listeners as 'oh, you of enlightened mind.' If their mind was enlightened, no prophet was needed. The problem was that their minds were in darkness. It was that Zarathushtra's audience most of whom was responsible for the cry of mother-earth as told in Ha 29-1. Had they been enlightened there would not have

been the oppression and tyranny and quarrels and robberies referred in the passage. Zarathushtra had to teach them how to enlighten their dark minds; the prescriptions of the Prophet were to be provided. The impurities within—the evil within—were to be first purified and then : ‘See God’ ‘Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall See God’, says Christ. We are sunk

in ignorance; we can't decide. we can't choose, therefore we follow Him relying on His promise, and that promise is in Ha 30-2.

You may also see Ha 45-5, 45-3 where Zarathushtra says, ‘if you do as I say, you will reach Perfection; and if you do not, you will end in ‘ruin’. **THAT** is the Prophet's language ‘Do as you like’ is a politician's language.

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In the Ahunavad Gatha ( Yasna 30.2 ), Zarathushtra says, ‘Listen to me with many best ears’, i.e. with highly developed **Keherpa**, with elevated **Chakbras**, meaning developed heart-powers in tune with the eternal consciousness

Even if the Avesta word **Vahishta** = ‘best’ is not associated with ‘ears’ and the translation is taken as, ‘hear the best with many ears’. i. e. ‘hear the divine Ahunavar music or vibration’, it would still mean that to hear such Cosmic Music, one has to strictly adhere to the path of **Ashoi** (Pathao Yo Ashabe), for which one has to practice very strictly the spiritual disciplines given by Holy Zarathushtra.

**Avaenata Soocha Manangha**= ‘See with illumined mind’, i. e.

with the developed Third Eye, see what I show of Nature's working, i.e. experience the eternal universal consciousness.

How is all this possible ?  
**Avarenao Vichithaya Narem Narem Khakhyai Tanuye** ‘Here **Vichithaya** means ‘prescribed, sanctioned and accepted’, **Avarenao** = ‘faith’ i. e. canons to be followed, to be taken on faith, **Narem Narem**= ‘separately for every man’, **Khakhyai Tanuye**, means suiting to his own bodily weakness, druj or inequities.

Thus, **Avarenao** = faith in **Patha**, path treaded on according to the Prophet's word will develop in him **Geushaish Vahishta** i. e. many best ears which can listen to the divine Ahunavar music of universal consciousness, and **soocha**

masangbba = illumined mind in tune with eternal consciousness.

We, therefore, find that the Zoroa-

( Translated from—the late Dr. Fiamroze S. Chiniwala Book )

It will be not out of context if I give here what Mr. Vasi Haider Tauquir Exeract recently wrote in Jame Jamshed.

As one who is devoted to the religion of his birth (Islam) and who is also interested in all ancient religions of the world, I have to say that I was much impressed by the point regarding 'freedom of Choice' raised by the Secretary of the Council of Vigilant Parsis. and further emphasised with quotations from the Zend-Avesta by three learned D<sup>st</sup>urjees. It might interest to know that, like Zoroastrianism and other ancient religions, Islam also takes the view that there is no 'freedom', particularly

strian religion enjoins on its votaries the duty of following the path prescribed and not the path that one chooses.

as the modern man understands this term in connection with moral choices. Apostles are not sent by God just to tell us 'Please, do what you like.' The Qur'an 4-64 says, 'We never sent an Apostle except to be followed even as God desired.' The Qur'an also says, 'And when God and His Apostle has decreed a thing, it is not for a believing man or a believing women to have any choice in respect thereof' (33, 36) Ordinary men like us should have the humility to realize that all of us, because of our limitations, cannot be vicegerents of God, a privilege which belongs only to the Apostles.