

MUSHKEL AASAAN BEHRAM YAZAD NI PANAHI!!

WE TAKE REFUGE IN THE GREAT BEHRAM YAZATA THE SOLVER OF ALL PROBLEMS!!

THE ANCIENT TALE OF THE WOODCUTTER MISHKIN AND HIS GREAT FORTUNE

Introduction

There is a wonderful tale of tradition that is told when our Parsi-Irani Zarathushtri people are in great need or difficulty. In this tale, we tell the story of how a poor woodcutter, called Mishkin, was helped and uplifted by the spiritual and heavenly help of Shah Behram Yazad, a great worshipable divinity in our religion who has the power to remove obstacles and ease all difficulties.

This story happened many thousands of years ago in our sacred fatherland of Iran, and is repeated even today with devotion to call for the Divine Help in the time of great difficulty and obstacles.

What to do

Simply put a glass of water and a plate with Chana (grams) and some sweets. Add cardamom if possible. Also, light a Diwa (lamp). Have one person say this story, and start shelling the chana. As the story continues, the other person should say “Ha Ji” or “Ji Re Ji” (meaning yes, I fully agree) at any point in the story, after every line or two lines or so.

At the end, the two persons should eat the chana and the water and the cardamom, or give it to any other Parsi-Irani Zarathushtri. A single person can also say the story by looking into the mirror and saying the yes words along with the story, but it is recommended that two persons say the story as described above.

It is highly recommended that this prayer be done when you are facing a problem with no possible human solution and in times of extreme difficulties. The Divine Godly Power of Shah Behram Yazad will work miracles. Amin, Amin, Amin. (May it be so).

Starting Prayer to Divinity

May the Divine Grace and kindly support of the Merciful Lord, the Uplifter and Caretaker of the poor of the world, the Almighty, the Just Dadar Ahura Mazda, and that of all Amesha Spentas (Divine Attributes of God) and Yazatas (Worshipable Created Beings), and our great Prophet Asho Zarathustra, and all wise men, and all pure souls always, at all moments, be on this house, our house. Amin, Amin, Amin.

We pray to God Almighty, Dadar Ahura Mazda and thank Him for His Blessings, and bow to Him and His Yazata, the mighty Shah Behram Yazad, asking for Divine protection and Blessings for our whole family. We praise Shah Behram Yazad and His Divine Power of easing all difficulties.

We pray for the support of Mushkil Aasaan Behram Yazad, Dadar Ahura Mazda, Vohuman Ameshaspand (Divine Attribute of God), Ardibehest Ameshaspand, Meher Yazad and Sarosh Yazad. We pray for the protection of Shah Behram Yazad who eases all our difficulties. Amin, Amin, Amin.

Shah Behram Yazad, please ease all our difficulties. Remove all our troubles and illnesses. Keep the curse of indebtedness away from us. Keep wickedness and its influence away from us. Forgive us if we have committed any intentional or unintentional sins.

Keep us safe from the wicked influence of others, dirty thoughts, black magic and so on. Keep us safe from bad company, and protect us from unhappiness caused by wrong choices.

Give us strength to bear any sorrow. Help us to defeat our enemies, or rather have no enemies at all.

Let all other people treat us with love and affection, and help us treat everyone in the same way.

Keep us away from all financial troubles. Give us prosperity in our lives. Let us always have a way of earning a good living. Protect our family and dear ones, and keep us happy and contented at all times. Please give our family and dear ones peace of mind, health and prosperity. Amin, Amin, Amin.

(At this point, you can mention your desire or wish, or ask for a solution to a problem.)

Mushkil Aasaan Shah Behram Yazad, please ease all our difficulties. Keep us safe from troubles, illness, tragedy and bad company. Fulfill all our wishes and look after our family and dear ones at all times. Amin, Amin, Amin.

We profusely thank Ahura Mazda, all the wise and ancient souls, and Mushkil Aasaan Behram Yazad because of whose grace and protection we are kept safe and all our difficulties are removed and all problems solved. We humbly offer to You these simple heart-felt offerings of Chana (grams) and Sweets, which please accept from us and bless us, Amin, Amin, Amin.

The Story Begins

In the days of yore, in our sacred fatherland of Iran where the steps of our Holy Prophet Zarathustra fell more than 8000 years ago, there once lived Mishkin, a simple woodcutter along with his small family, a wife and young daughter.

He earned a meager living by chopping wood in the forest with his axe and a rope (to drag the wood) and selling it in the market nearby. The small family lived a simple life, eating simple food and knowing no luxuries. But they were devout people and believed in Dadar Ahura Mazda.

It was one of those days when Mishkin had gone to the forest that his rich neighbors decided to cook a delicious dish in the Iranian style. In those days house doors were kept open so the wonderful aromas started to pour into Mishkin's house, where his young teenage daughter was knitting some garments. The daughter was still like a child, and she was so tempted by the fine aromas that she decided to visit the rich neighbor on an excuse, in the hope that they would then invite her in to share the delicious

meal. So she knocked on the neighbor's open door and asked for some embers to rekindle their household fire - since all Zoroastrian houses in those days maintained a Holy Fire inside their own house.

The neighbor gave her the embers, but made no mention of inviting the girl to share the meal. Disappointed, Mishkin's daughter went back to her house, where she waited a while before trying again. This happened two more times, but by the third time, the neighbor was quite irritated and scowled at Mishkin's daughter that she well knew why the little girl kept coming back again and again, that it was a sin to extinguish the Holy Fire on purpose, and that she would never be invited to eat the dish. So saying, the selfish rich neighbor slammed the door on the young girl's face.

Devastated, Mishkin's daughter went crying to her house, where she sat in motionless depression until it was very dark and her father Mishkin came home.

Shocked to see her in such a state, the father asked "O Daughter! Why are you so sad, what has happened?" The young girl poured out her whole heart, and the father was immensely saddened.

"My child, you should realize we are poor compared with our neighbors and cannot afford the ingredients for that kind of delicious food. But I promise you, I will make an extra effort to earn more money tomorrow by chopping a lot more wood. When I sell this wood, I will use the extra money earned to buy all the ingredients necessary to cook this delicious dish you want. So my child, be happy once again and look forward to that."

The daughter was happy when she heard the father's promise, and the whole family went to sleep dreaming of the nice meal that was to be cooked the next day. When one is poor, one finds delight in the smallest pleasures. So always help the poor, and feed them. They will bless you with their hearts and souls. In the end, these blessings will be worth more to you than anything else you may have earned in this world.

In the morning, Mishkin made a very early start so that he would have more time to chop wood in the forest before the sun set. But when he reached the forest, he was aghast to see a forest fire that was spreading through the whole forest. He sat down at the edge of the forest and waited with great patience, but the fire raged on and on and he could not cut any wood on that day.

Deeply disappointed, Mishkin came home without any earnings, and the whole family had nothing to eat on that day, they went to bed quite hungry after filling their stomach with only water.

This scenario continued the next day and the family was brought to the brink of starvation. On the third day, the starving Mishkin was filled with utter despair when he saw that the forest fire was still raging and there was no chance of him cutting any wood. Breaking down totally, he sobbed like a child, hiding his face in his folded arms and crouching down beneath a large dark tree. He just could not bear to go home and face his starving family again, and tell them that he had nothing to give them to ease their hunger.

Take a moment to consider what the poor, who live from day to day, have to go through in this world. Always help them and feed them.

It was at that divine moment that five Divine beings (Yazatas) from Heaven were passing through the luminous sky above the blazing forest. They were dressed in divine colors of white, green and yellow, and they were none other than Behram Yazad, Ardibehest Yazad, Meher Yazad, Bahman Yazad and Sarosh Yazad. Among these, Behram Yazad was the Yazad in charge of solving human problems.

When the Divine beings saw Mishkin crying by himself in a corner of the forest, they were filled with pity and stopped in their journey. They descended to the forest and asked Mishkin - "Oh human being, what are you weeping for? Please tell us. We will surely try and help you out."

At first Mishkin refused to part with his problems, but later opened up and explained the whole situation of how his family had to go without food for three days due to forest fires, and about his selfish rich neighbors who refused to share their food even when their poor neighbors were starving.

Touched by the sad story of the starving young family, Shah Behram Yazad picked up three handfuls of sand from the ground and put it in Mishkin's lap and said "O Mishkin, keep this safely with you. If your situation improves with this, then whenever convenient narrate the whole story and offer some grams (nuts), flowers and sweets and remember us."

Now Mishkin was skeptical and thought to himself, "Actually, What good is this sand going to do for me? It is nothing but sand. After they leave, I shall throw it away". The five Yazatas disappeared into the air and immediately a mysterious voice came booming from the heavens above:

"Oh Mishkin, look after this sand as you would look after your own life. You will prosper with it -- don't throw it away, otherwise you will face poverty all your life". Hearing the powerful voice from Heaven, Mishkin decided not to throw this gift of God away, even if it looked like sand and pebbles!!

When Mishkin returned home, he placed the sand carefully in one corner of his room. The whole family went to sleep, again very hungry.

Now in the wee hours next morning, when dawn was yet to break and it was the Holy time of HOSHBAM (when prayers are most effective), the neighbors saw a bright glowing light emanating from Mishkin's house. They were frightened and yelled out "There is a Fire in your house, Mishkin - wake up!!"

Mishkin's daughter too came running to her father's bed, and shook and woke up her father:

"Father, there is unusual brightness in the house. It could be a torch carried by a thief who has entered our home, to steal things. Please investigate, we are really scared!!"

Mishkin replied, "Don't be silly my daughter, we have nothing in the house except my rope and axe for the thief to take. Let him take those since they are useless. What else can he steal? Daughter, you have been starved for the last three days so you must be having visions. Don't worry, go back to sleep and let your father sleep too."

However, Mishkin found he himself couldn't go back to sleep, since he was a little uneasy to notice this unusual brightness around the house. After a few minutes of tossing and turning, he got up from the bed to check around the house.

To his amazement, he found that the sand he had placed in a corner had all turned to precious diamonds and jewels, and these were throwing a dazzling glittering light all over the house. This had happened in the Holy time of HOSHBAM.

When the sun arose, Mishkin thanked Almighty God with his morning GEH prayers. He then took a piece out of his precious jewels to the market to sell it.

The jeweler he went to examined the piece, and was amazed to see that it was a perfect and dazzling jewel. He asked Mishkin if he could offer him 100,000 or 200,000 Gold pieces for the piece?

Mishkin could not believe his ears – he thought the jeweler was jesting with him, so he went to another jeweler in the same market to get his jewels valued.

The second jeweler too was amazed to see the jewel, as in his lifetime he had never seen such a precious jewel. Surely it must have come from Heaven!

The second jeweler was also an honest man, so he made three bags full of money ready and asked Mishkin to toss his jewel and take away whichever bag it landed on. Almighty God would guide the throw!

So Mishkin did, and sure enough, it landed on the biggest bag of money. Mishkin was now a very rich man.

Remembering his promise to his young daughter, he immediately went shopping for provisions and bought some of the nicest ingredients to cook food, and got a helper to carry it down to his house. On his way home, he started to distribute some grams, sweets and cardamom to whoever came his way, and narrated the story of how he had been helped by the Divine Forces of God.

When the food and goods arrived at his house, his wife and daughter refused to accept or empty the goods, thinking that it must belong to some rich family and has landed there in error. At that point, Mishkin reached his home. The daughter quizzically asked the father:

“O Father! We are starved for every grain of food and we have no money, so how did you manage to bring all this? Did you steal, father?”

Mishkin replied, “No my daughter, I have not stolen the goods. It was Almighty God who bestowed this upon us all as a gift, and He has lifted us out of dire poverty with His Divine Grace. Blessed be His Name.” So saying, he narrated the whole incident of how the Divine Yazatas – the forces of God had given him the sand, and how the sand had turned into glittering jewels at the Holy time of HOSHBAM.

Soon after, the rich Mishkin built a house for himself that was more magnificent than even the King's palace, and this became the talk of the town where Mishkin lived.

One day as the King of Iran himself was passing by Mishkin's house on his RATH (horsed chariot), he was astonished to see a house that was more magnificent than his own palace. Upon enquiring, he found out who the owner was and heard the incredible story.

The King decided to find out if the newly-rich Mishkin had become an arrogant man due to his new found wealth, so he sent the same high quality food that they ate to Mishkin's house to see how Mishkin would react to this gift from the King. IF he was truly noble in his soul, his behavior would reflect his nobility.

Mishkin and his family felt highly obligated when they saw the delicious food from the Royal kitchen, and they wondered how to repay the King's obligation. So Mishkin decided to give the King's young daughter a piece of jewel out of his precious collection.

The King and the Princess of Iran were totally amazed to see this beautiful piece of jewel. Even in the treasure house of the rich country that was Iran in those days, there was no such jewel. Surely it must have come from Heaven! The Princess had it set in a Golden necklace and wore the jewel proudly from then on.

Now Mishkin decided to go out of town on a pilgrimage to all the Holy sites of Iran, to offer thanks to all the Divine Forces of God. These were the ancient ATASH BEHRAMS of Iran, the highest grade of Consecrated Fires tended day and night by the Aryan Athravans, the Fire Priests.

When an Aryan Zoroastrian prayed before these mighty Fires and offered wood to the Red Flaming Fire, his/her prayers reached straight to God - since Fire was the most perfect representation of God on earth, as per the ancient Aryan beliefs. The Holy Fire was prayed to as the PUTHRA (Son) of Dadar Ahura Mazda in the ancient Aryan scriptures.

Before Mishkin left for this Holy Pilgrimage, he entrusted his daughter to say her weekly prayers to Shah Behram Yazad, and give thanks for all the happiness they had received so far from the Divine Forces of God.

However, things had changed. Having become rich, Mishkin's daughter now had made many new friends, as is very normal in this world. One day the group of friends came to a pond where the King's daughter also came with her servants for a bath.

Let us clarify that in ancient Iran, the Zoroastrians did not bathe in rivers and ponds due to strict religious rules that protected the waters from pollution. Rather, they carried the water outside, and took their bath in a protected place standing on stones or a stone platform, so that even the earth was not polluted. Our religion was very pure and ecological from the early days. That is why Iran had been transformed into a paradise on this earth.

Mishkin's daughter also came to the same place. She met the Royal Princess who liked the young girl, inviting her to the palace for a further meeting, and then lunch on a future date, which Mishkin's daughter gladly accepted.

A deep friendship blossomed between the two young girls, however with all this new-found enjoyment and royal company, Mishkin's daughter soon forgot to say her prayers to Shah Behram Yazad.

One day the two young girls were passing by a lake and the King's daughter decided to take a bath with the nice cool blue water. She had her servants carry the water to a secluded leafy place nearby where she took the bath. Mishkin's daughter stayed behind to look after the Princess' clothes and diamond necklace.

When the Princess finished her bath, she started to dress but found her precious necklace missing. She accused Mishkin's daughter of stealing it. A quarrel soon ensued between the two girls, with Mishkin's daughter protesting her innocence. Why would she steal back a gift that her own father had made?

But the angry princess refused to listen and complained to her father the King of Iran, and got both mother and daughter arrested and put in prison.

On the other hand Mishkin got robbed by thieves on one of the lonely mountain roads. He returned home empty-handed. When he came to know that his wife and daughter were in prison, he went straight to the King and pleaded with him to release them and put him in prison instead.

The King obliged him, and Mishkin was now thrown into the darkest dungeon.

That same night, in the dungeon, Mishkin was sleeping sadly. In the early hours of the morning, in the Holy time of Hoshbani, he had a beautiful dream in which he saw a Dazzling Yazata (Divine Being) who said: "O Mishkin, you were granted so much happiness in life and still you or your daughter could not say a prayer to Shah Behram Yazad?"

Mishkin, in the dream, sincerely apologized for his daughter's mistake. "Worshipable Being, please forgive my daughter, she is very young and has innocently erred. I ask forgiveness on her behalf, Divine Yazad".

The Yazad was pleased and nodded. "Never mind what has happened in the past, Mishkin. When the sun rises and you wake up, you will find some money under your pillow. Your chain will loosen up too. Go out of the prison. If you order some grams out of this money and pray to the Mighty Shah Behram Yazad and tell this story to any person, ALL your difficulties will be resolved."

In the morning when Mishkin woke up, he found that his chain had become loose and he also found some money as promised by the Divine Yazad in his dream. Mishkin went out of the prison. He stood on the road, and requested a young passerby who was riding on a horse to buy him some grams (nuts), so he could say the prayer to Shah Behram Yazad.

But the young passerby haughtily refused to do so saying, "I am in a hurry to pick up some wedding clothes and I do not have the time to bring you the grams". Soon after he left, the horse of the young passerby fell in quick sand and he broke his leg.

Just then another old man was walking by with a sad face. When Mishkin requested him, he agreed to bring the grams for Mishkin even though his son was on his death bed and counting his last moments.

Mishkin was touched with humanity and requested him to sit with him while he narrated the story and acknowledge it by saying “Ha Ji” (“Yes Please”) to whatever he heard. The old man agreed to do so, and he listened to the story. Mishkin completed his story and wished well for everybody and offered the grams to the man by way of offerings.

When the old man went home, he was amazed when he saw that his son was fine and everyone in the family was rejoicing at his fast recovery. Seeing this, the old man was overjoyed, he established his faith in Shah Behram Yazad and began to pray with grams for Shah Behram Yazad every week or whenever possible.

On the other side, the King and Queen of Iran with their daughter were relaxing in a garden. Just then a gigantic bird flew over them and dropped the necklace into the soft lap of the Princess. When they all looked up, they realized it was the SIMURGH bird of ancient legend (the great bird that raised Zal, father of Rustom Pahlavan, the hero warrior of Iran).

The King now admonished his daughter thus: “O Daughter! Mishkin’s daughter was innocent. You have falsely accused an innocent family of theft and have made them suffer in prison, what are we to do now?” (Such were the ancient Kings of Iran and India, they could not bear to do any injustice to their subjects).

The Princess was shame-faced and apologized sincerely to her father and to Mishkin’s daughter for her false accusations. The King had Mishkin freed immediately and brought to him, and apologized publicly to Mishkin for his error of judgment.

Mishkin said sadly, “O King, we accept your apology for this injustice, but you have already degraded my family and spoilt our name by branding us as thieves, who will marry my daughter now?”

The King and his family, seeing the truth in what Mishkin was saying, wanted to make amends. So the King agreed to marry his own son to Mishkin's daughter, after consulting with his son – the Prince of Iran and the future ShahenShah (King of Kings). Mishkin gladly accepted.

Thus the poor woodcutter Mishkin's family was raised to becoming a part of the royal family itself, by the Grace of Dadar Ahura Mazda and Shah Behram Yazad!! Such is the Mercy of God on the poor and helpless of the world. The poor man's daughter, who had hungered for good food and never got it due to her poverty, had become a Queen. Such things are all possible if God wills it. God can raise the dust to the heavens, and lower the stars to the ground. We bow to the Almighty Power of God.

Being relatives, the two families now visited each other quite often. One day they were all together at Mishkin's house, and the Queen of Iran saw that Mishkin was peeling some grams and saying the story in his mind. The Queen jokingly asked him the reason for peeling grams – “O Mishkin, WHAT are you doing? And WHY are you doing this?”

Mishkin replied “O Queen of Iran, these grams – the simplest of all foods and available to the poorest of the poor to fill their stomachs (Praise be to God) – have made us all very happy by the Grace of Dadar Ahura Mazda and Shah Behram Yazad”. He then told her the whole story.

The Queen said, “O Miskhin, if there is any truth in what you are saying, please hear me. I have lost my brothers since the last 7 years, when they travelled out of Iran. I fear for their safety since the outside world is not a safe place. I promise you that if my dear brothers come back to me, I will make your story world renowned”.

So the Queen and Mishkin told the story together, and offered the grams and sweets to Shah Behram Yazad and asked for His Divine Help for the Queen’s lost brothers to return home safely.

And Lo! By the Grace of God, the brothers came back to Iran in just 3 days time and met the Queen with great brotherly love and affection. The Queen was overjoyed to see her kin, and her faith in Dadar Ahura Mazda and Shah Behram Yazad grew a thousand-fold. So she fulfilled her promise and the story was made known to her subjects in Iran as well as the rest of the world, and it was recommended to pray to Shah Behram Yazad in times of severe difficulties.

Final Prayer

O Mighty Shah Behram Yazad! When our Parsi forefathers along with their great Fire-Priests (Dasturjees) left Iran by ship to save our sacred religion, there was a huge sea storm and their ship was about to sink. Our ancestors prayed to you, and it is only with your Divine Help that our Sacred Fire (present Fire in our Udwada Atash Behram) was saved and our Atash Behram was established in Udwada, India.

You have saved us refugees from Iran in our time of great need, and helped us get sanctuary in the *benevolent and great land of India*, where our religion has thrived in full peace and prosperity for more than a thousand years.

So, we pray, just as the Queen's wish was fulfilled, just as Mishkin and his wife and daughter’s desires were fulfilled, just as the old man's son miraculously came to life from his death bed, just as our Parsi forefathers were miraculously saved from the sea storm and sure extinction by Your Divine Grace, similarly may all our problems and difficulties be resolved and removed. Amin, Amin, Amin.

(Here offer incense and wish well for all.)

May God Almighty make all our problems and difficulties resolved and removed.

May Peace be on the entire World. Amin, Amin, Amin.

(Story derived from Traditional Parsi and Irani sources. We are His servants only.)