

MAZDAYASNO AHMI, MAZDAYASNO ZARTHUSHTISH

In our daily Kusti prayers, we say "Mazdayasno Ahmi, Mazdayasno Zarthushtish" claiming that I am the descendant of Mazdayasni Din, and that I am a Zarthushti. Even if one performs his or her Kusti once a day, instead of doing atleast five times a day, at the change of each 5 Gahs, viz. Haven, Rapithwan, Uziran, Aiwishathrum and Ushahin. Yet in a day, he or she claims to be a Mazdayasno Zarthushti, but what is a Mazdayasno Zarthushti? That is the question. Well, let us not enter into its definition, or its meaning in the true sense of the term, because we are all far away from being a real Zarthushti. We are still a "Baste-kustian-darvand" as the Magav Mandal (high Barjishi souls of Zarthushti Din) has labelled us, and truly so, because we are unable to develop "Ashoi" in us the way we live and lead our life.

In today's world,

(i) normally a person who is born of parents (father & mother) who are Parsee Zarthushti,

(ii) whose Navjote is performed, and

(iii) who follows or tries his best to follow (let us be fair), all the tenets and canons of the Zarthushti Din can claim to be a Mazdayasno Zarthushti. The first two points, born of both Parsee

parents, and performance of Navjote Ceremony are a must. So we will consider the third point, of following the tenets and canons of Zarthushti Din. How should one live as a Zarthushti, and die as a Zarthushti? Let us first consider the procedure for one day: we begin from Hushbam i.e. 36 minutes before sunrise at any given place, which is called Havan-ni-Hushbam (and another 36 minutes before that is called Ushain-ni-Hushbam). This period is one of the best periods of the day for prayers; but before this, as soon as you get up from your sleep, pray one Ashem-Vohu on the bed itself, if you do not know a small prayer to be recited in bed. Then as soon as you get down, and your feet touches the ground, recite one Ashem, bow to Spenta Armaiti (the mother earth) three times. Every time you bow, send a thought force that (a) May I be as humble as Spenta Armaiti! (b) May I be as tolerant as Spenta Armaiti! (c) May I be as patient as Spenta Armaiti! Then perform your morning Kusti from Hormazd Khodaay to two Yatha and one Ashem. After this, the important Tarikat of 'Nirang-I-Abazar' should be performed by taking Taro and applying it on all open parts of the body, letting it dry up and then washing it away with water. Before going to the toilet, there is a Baaj known as 'Hajatay Javani Baj', which should be taken,

if not, at least Kusti must be performed afterwards, and likewise every time after attending the call of nature. There is also 'Nahvani Baj', which should be taken before going for bath. Remember, during the period of bath, a Zarthushti is without Sudreh and Kusti. So he gets protected, if he takes this Baj.

'Bandagi' (prayers) is necessary for all Zarthushtis, for it is the food for ones' soul. As our body requires nourishment, so also does the soul. A Zarthushti must do, come what may, his 'Farajiat' i.e. certain compulsory prayers in a day, between sunrise and sunset. According to the time, Havan, Rapithwan, or Uzirin Gah should be recited, together with Khorshed and Meher-ni-Nyaish. This is a must, as we have seen before, and similarly at night i.e. 72 minutes after sunset to midnight (12.40 a.m.). Aiwishathrum Gah, Sarosh Yasht (Ratni Vadi) and Atash-ni-Nyaish is a must.

One should not speak while eating/drinking, because one has taken 'Khavani Baj' before eating or drinking. This has connection with food which is obvious, but the food which we eat has got a sublime and wonderful connection with the progress of a man in evolution. This subject is very vast, hence we will leave it at this juncture.

A Zarthushti must cover his head at all times, especially whilst eating, attending to Nature's call, and of course during the

time of prayers, i.e. at the time of reciting the Avesta, (some radicals even do not agree, that it is necessary to cover the head while praying). How should the head be covered, and how should Sudreh and Kusti be made and worn? Why Sudreh should be of cotton, and Kusti of Wool? Why Sudreh should be white? Will purple or any other colour not do? etc. etc. will be taken up some other time. Till then, refer to some old Khordeh-Avesta Book, or better still to Dr. Chiniwalla's or Vegetarian & Temperance Society's Khordeh Avesta, or for that matter, talk with your grandpa or grandma for all the Baj\* mentioned above/in the article and try to incorporate as much as you can in your daily life.

— CURSET M. PATEL

\* [Those who really wish to know why Baj should be taken, and what are their background, and importance, should write to the Editor. If substantial number of letters are received, then we will take up in "Dini-Avaz". this chapter, of course in brief --Editor.]

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who with the help of his Manthra of Us moi uzareshwa Ahura ..... recited on unlit sandalwood, can kindle it without any extraneous process!

-- ADI DOCTOR

MAZDAYASNO AHMI, MAZDAYASNO ZARTHUSHTISH

"Early to bed and early to rise, makes the man healthy, wealthy and wise". So sang the poet, and truly so. Our Zoroastrian religion also enjoins early rising, for that is the most auspicious time for prayers in the whole day. We call this period in question 'Hushbam'.

According to the Zarthushti Din our day starts from Hushbam (and not at 12 p.m. at mid-night). 72 minutes before the sunrise of any given place is the Hushbam of that place. Take for example, if the sunrise is at 6.16 a.m. then first 36 minutes before sunrise (i.e. from 5.40 a.m. to 6.16 a.m.) is called 'Haven ni Hushbam' and another 36 minutes before that (i.e. 5.04 a.m. to 5.40 a.m.) is called 'Ushan ni Hushbam'. Blessed are those who start their day with nature and pray the beautiful prayer of Hushbam. This calm and beautiful twilight period, with its cool air, filled with the fragrance of the blooming flower and the cuckoo call or the sparrow chirp behoves man to be awake like birds and animals, fruits and flowers and thank his Maker. Hushbam is a small prayer, and if you can catch the 36 minutes of the Heaven ni Hushbam, then pray Haven Geh and Hushbam. If it's the earlier period, then pray Ushan Geh and Hushbam.

In Hindustani there is a beautiful quotation, which shows the period of Sunset to Sunrise in four parts:

Paholey pahor sub koi jagat  
 Dusrey jagat bhogi  
 Teesrey pahor tastar jagat  
 Chauthey jagat jogi.

In the first part of the night all and sundries are awake and in the second part married people -- 'sansari' people are awake. After this when they go to sleep also, it is the thief (chor) who is active and awake to do his job, but when all have gone to sleep, in the fourth it is the holy one 'sage' who is awake.

At the dawn, Khurshid Yazad spreads his light on the world till he goes down in the West. This period between Sunrise and Sunset is divided into three parts, which is called Gahs. Totally in a day we have five Gahs: viz.: Havan, Rapithwan, Uziran, Aiwisruthrem and Ushain.

From sunrise to 12.40 p.m. (Standard Time) is Haven Gah. From 1.10 p.m. to 3.40 p.m. Rapithwan Gah and from 4.10 p.m. to Sunset it is Uziran Gah. During this time a Zarthushti who calls himself Mazdayasno Ahmi, Mazdayasno Zarthushtish everytime he performs his Kusti, must recite one of the Gahs according to the time of the day, and Khurshed and Meher Nyaish (of course, this will be after performing Kusti and praying Sarosh Baj). This is termed in our religion as 'Fara-

jiyat" -- (compulsory) prayer for each and every Zarthushti, come what may.

It will be observed that between Gahs (timing mentioned above) there is a gap of 30 minutes. This interim period is called "Gashak". During this time the laity can pray if its really necessary and complete his prayers, but should not start a fresh prayer. The explanation for the Gashak period in brief, is that during this period the rays of the Sun falling on the Earth are not as effective and straight as they should be, but are a bit inclined due to the rotation of the Earth, and because of this, the Satanic side, the black side of Nature cashes in on this period for launching an attack on the white side of Nature. This is the reason why we perform the 'Boi-Kriya' on the fires of Atash-Behrams and Agiaries as soon as the Gah changes, to drive away and repulse the attack brought on by the Evil black side of Nature.

Hence it will be seen that recitation of Khurshed -- Meher Nysh is one of the "Musts" from other such "musts" given in the Mazdayasni Zarthoshti Din. Now, if one wishes to go a little further in prayer then one will have to recite with the above prayers, Hormazd, Ardibehest and Sarosh Yasht Hadokht, together with their small Nirangs. This will be the performance of what is known as "Big Farajiyat". In the end, one can recite "Pazand" prayers (In our present day Khordeh

Avesta -- given to us by Rainidar Adarbad Marespand Sahib -- all is not Avesta, some prayers are in 'Pazand' and some are a mixture of the two) like Doa Nam Setayashni, Din-no-Kalmo, Char Disha no Namaskar, Chithrem Booyat, Tandarosti, 101 names of Dadar Ahurmazd etc.

What should be recited after Sunset will be taken up next time, if God Wills. Till then, my friends, do not wait till tomorrow to start with your (Farajiyat) prayers, for who knows what tomorrow will bring -- Tomorrow is another day!

— Curset M. Patel

#### "RAMANO KHA STRAHE" -- Mino Ram

The angel Mino Ram has special function in Nature. Thus, the shaping of the border of the leaf of a tree or shrub or the healing of a wound is through the electro-magnetic function (Khastra) of Mino Ram, Mino Ram has the power of cohesion, i.e. prevention from disintegration or of restoring the original shape of a thing, such as, preventing upto a certain stage the tearing of a leaf of a tree by the wind. Mino Ram has the power of modelling and shaping things. Besides, he performs the function of arranging the elements in their varied forms, while they are transiting from the regions above to this earth.

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**MAZDAYASNO AHMI, MAZDAYASNO ZARTHUSHTISH  
(PART III)**

We have seen in our issues what prayers one should recite as "Farajiyat" between sun up and sun down. Now, let us consider what one should recite after Sunset. **Uziran Gah** (3rd Gah of the day) continues till Sunset, after which **Aiwisruthrem Gah** follows, which really starts 72 minutes after sunset. Hence, the question arises what about this 72 minutes? Let us take an example, say the Sunset of a given place is at 6.18 p.m., then the first 36 minutes after Sunset (i.e. upto 6.54 p.m.), **Uziran Gah** continues, which is called **Uziran-ni-Meher**, during which one can complete one's prayers, but should not start Prayers afresh. Another 36 minutes after that (i.e. from 6.54 to 7.30 p.m.) is the 'Gashak' period, when the laity cannot pray.

**Aiwisruthrem Gah** (4th Gah of the day) which starts 72 minutes after Sunset will last upto 12-40 (midnight) (All timings are Indian standard time) during which a **Mazdayasni Zarthushti** should recite his or her night-time "**Farajiyat**" which consists of **Kusti**, **Sarosh Baj**, **Aiwisruthrem Gah**, followed by **Sarosh Yasht Ratri Vadi** and **Atash-Nyaish**. This is followed by **Doa-Nam-Satayshn**, **Din-no-Kalmo**, **Cherag-no-Namaskar**, 101 names of **Dadar Ahuramazda** etc.

From 12-40 midnight upto about 3 O'clock is the period of heavy

"**Gashak**" when laity are strictly forbidden to recite any Avesta Manthra except of course **Ashem-Vohu**, **Yatha Ahu Vairyo**, and **Yenghe Hatam**, which are termed as **Azad Manthra**. One can perform ordinary **Kusti** (not **Sarosh-ni-Kusti**) during this time, after attending the call of nature.

So, for the laity the last 5th Gah **Ushahen** starts at about 2.45 a.m. If health permits, and other home facilities allow, or if you are a natural early riser then by all means recite the **Ushahen Gah**, **Atash-Nyaish**, **Sarosh-Yasht Hadokht**. (Of course, this will be after performing **Kusti** and reciting **Sarosh Baj**). Thus a **Basti-Kustian** who proclaims himself **Mazdayasno Ahmi**, **Mazdayasno Zarthushtish** everytime he performs the **Kusti** should remember Him, who is the Master of our pleasure and pain, with at least "**Farajiyat**" Avesta Manthra for benefitting his own self, his loved ones, and the world at large.

Our young readers will observe that in the previous paragraph, **Ashem**, **Yatha**, and **Yenghe Hatam**, is termed as **Azad-Manthra** what do we mean by this? The other word for (Azad) can be 'free'. That is "**Free Manthra**" which can be recited at any time, at any place, under any circumstances.

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For example, suddenly you find yourself in a difficult situation, and want to pray although your head is uncovered, then you can recite this Azad Manthras. Similarly, in the night you are in bed, and get frightened, you can recite . . . . . but this licence should not be misused. Say, you have a cap or a cloth, or something to cover your head with, still you go on reciting the three Manthra with your head uncovered, then that would be a wrong thing.

Let us stop here for the present, if God wills, next time we shall take up in brief something regards **Ashem-Yatha** of which you must have already read many things. We will endeavour to show you when if you pray only **one Ashem Vohu** its value will be equal to praying 10 or 100 or 1000 or 10,000 Ashem-Vohu. Till then, on with your "**Farajiyats**"!

-- Curset M. Patel

## MAZDAYASNO AHMI, MAZDAYASNO ZARATHUSHTRIST

## ASHEM VOHU

Volumes have been written and many translations and interpretations done, on the three line prayer of Ashem Vohu. These wonderful and strange three lines of Ashem Vohu with just twelve words, contain untold spiritual richness, which can be ascertained, if one goes deep into its "Tawil"- (inner esoteric meaning - word analysis), Ashem Vohu, the basic and commonest of our Manthra (Prayers), taught to all of us first when we are toddlers, is so potent and powerful that the divine light of "Asha. Vahishta" (one of our seven "Ameshaspand's") flows into it and emanates from it when Ashem Vohu is recited. That divine light is thus transmitted and the reciter of Ashem Vohu thus attunes himself or herself with the Ashem - Channel Vibrating in Nature.

The Late DR. Sahib Framroz Chiniwala, Whilst explaining the 'Tawil' of Ashem Vohu says that it contains the relationship of men right from Dadar Ahura-mazda to the lower Animal, vegetable and Mineral Kingdoms. Behman and Ardibesht Ameshaspands' Humta, Hukta, and Havarshata are connected with it. Gave and daera, Red, yellow and Blue basic colours, Nav-Ashvan, Tarikats, and explanation of cosmogenesis is included in a nutshell in Ashem-Vohu. Here, we shall only see

where one Ashem should be prayed on different Occasions, and on what occasions if one Ashem is prayed, it is the equivalent of praying ten, hundred, thousand, or ten thousand Ashem. If one is aware of this, one can very easily utilise it in enriching one's life.

After sneezing pray one Ashem :- We often hear that Zoroastrian Religion is the most Scientific, and this Ashem Vohu provides one of the proofs. After a sneeze, whatever pollution is left in the air, and in our "Aipy" (atmosphere personal to the body) gets cleansed by this one Ashem. In English we usually say "Excuse me" to those around us, and they in turn say "Bless you" - This custom is adopted from our Iranian forefathers. In old Khordey Avesta, one comes across a Nirang termed Chikhwani-Nirang to pray after a Sneezing (If you Sneeze whilst praying you need not pray one Ashem).

If you hear a Cock's crow Pray one Ashem :-

In Zoroastrian Religion a cock is also known as "Tukhmay Sarosh". The sound of Cock's Crow cuts the 'Gashak' and reaches cutting across many layers of the atmosphere. (This was also recorded in olden

days when man use to fly high up in Ballons). Behind the forceful sound of a Cock's crow we may send high up our one Ashem also.

(C) Goshpands like Varsiaji, Bull, Cow, animals of Gava - when they are eating peacefully - Pray one Ashem :-

Here 'Manthra' is being joined with 'Mithra' - It is said that when these animals are chewing the cud calmly their Mithra (thought force) are very pure. It is therefore, desirable to attune with it, by One Ashem recitation.

(d) When you hear the news of someone's death Pray one Ashem :-

On hearing someone's death (whilst remembering the dead person) one should pray one Ashem Vohu as enjoined in the Zoroastrian Religion.

(e) When bad thoughts persist or assial you Pray one Ashem:-

By praying one Ashem you apply some sort of a break to the bad thoughts.

(f) When you go to meet someone important, or your boss Pray one Ashem :-

To become successful in your mission/work and/or to reduce difficulties.

(g) When you light a lamp or when light or lamp gets extinguished pray one Ashem.

(h) When you remember your dear departed - relatives, friends, pray one Ashem.

(i) When you come into contact with some Druj - evil or Nasa etc, pray one Ashem.

Avesta scriptures contain numerous references about the power and potency of Ashem Vohu. One of these is in Pargard 1 of "Hadokhta Nask". It narrates a Divine dialogue between Ahura Mazda and Zarathushtra on Ashem Vohu. One 'Ashem' recited during a particular event or circumstances and at a particular time has the multiple effect of reciting 10 Ashem or infinite Ashems.

Zarthusht Sahib asks Dadaar Ahuramazda when will just one Ashem Vohu recited be equivalent in value to 10 Ashem Vohu?

ANS:- (1) When one sits to have his food (coming to him from the blessings of Khordad and Amardad) and thinking of Humata, Hukhta, Havarshta - Good thoughts, words and deeds - ("Good" as specified and defined by Ahura Mazda and His Messengers) - Shuning bad thought, word and deeds, if one Prays one Ashem, it is equivalent to Ashem Vohu.

(2) Similarly when one prays one Ashem whilst drinking the duly Crushed Haoma Water - then its value is as praying 100 Ashem.

(3) In sleep while changing one's side if one prays one Ashem then its value is that of 1000 Ashem.

(4) In the morning, as soon as your eyes open if one Ashem is prayed, it is equivalent in value to 10,000 Ashem.

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Needless to say that on each of the above occasions, 'Ashem'

should be accompanied with the thought of absorbing Humta, Hukhta, Havarashta and discarding Dushmata Dujukhta, and Dujavar-shta - then only the value of Ashem increases in its divine Stature, goodness and beauty.

At this juncture of the Question the quantitative formula changes to the qualitative one.

Zarthusht Sahib asks Ahura Mazda:

When is one Ashem prayed in its Splendour, goodness and beauty worth as much as the whole "Khanirath Keshvar" with its full creation ?

ANS:- When one human being recites one Ashem at the last moment of his life thinking of Humata, Hukhta, and Havarashta - Good thought, word and deed.....

Q. Which is one Ashem when prayed worth as much as all that is in and between the earth and the sky (i.e. worlds, material, ultra-material, spiritual-divine).

ANS:- When a human being recites one Ashem after renouncing forever the bad thoughts words and deeds- when the human has converted all his evil into good, and has thus attained the higher stage of Nar-Ashavan.

There is a vast difference in the effect generated by an Ashem recited by us, the worldly mortals, and an Ashavan the one who has renounced all evil and is fast climbing the ladder of Ashoi and Farasho Gard. His Ashem reaches straightway.

Ours naturally requires an effort, but it does have the effect as laid down in the formula of the Hadokhta Nask.