
SADEH

SADEH is a festival celebrated by the Zarathushtis on 10th of Bahman (January 30). It is a festival that has continued from their ancient homeland in the Arctic. SAAD means 100 in Persian and Sadeh is the celebration of the 100th Day of Arctic Winter as celebrated by their ancestors when they lived in the Arctic region. In the Arctic, they had 5 months of winter and 7 months of summer. Their winter began on the 1st of ABAN (23 of October) so 30 days of Aban plus 30 days of Azar, 30 days of Dey and 10 days of Bahman constitutes the 100 days. The festival is celebrated on the 10th of Bahman (30 January). (9 days in October + 30 in November +31 in December +30 in January = 100).

Zarathushti culture promotes the enjoyment of life. When they migrated to the temperate region and had four seasons they did not discard this festival even though it lost its original significance, for it gave them reason to enjoy life. Today it is a link in history to the original homeland in the Arctic. There are two more festivals from the Arctic homeland that is still celebrated. It is called Maidhyo-Shahem Gahanbars (the Mid-Summer Gahanbars). Which is celebrated on July 3 / 15 Tir. This day is exactly in the middle of the 7 month Arctic summer. And Ayeh-Threm (the Coming of Winter). 22 Oct / 30 Mehr is the last day of summer just before winter starts. The name and its celebration time signifies its relation to the two Arctic seasons.

Sadeh according to ancient literature is known to be celebrated 100 days after the Ayeh Threm Gahanbar, as a welcome to the spring and the start of activity. It was a practice to go on mountain tops and roof tops and light fires signaling to their neighbours, their solidarity and the advent of Sadeh. Even today farmers in Yazd and Kerman after the celebration of Sadeh start preparing their farm lands for spring. Sadeh is today a link in history that reminds the Zarathushtis of their ancient history, of where their ancestors came from and of how ancient their history is.

Latter other events in history some mythical, were attributed to Sadeh, like the discovering of how to light a fire. According to the Shahnameh Hoshang Shah of the Pishdadi dynasty while hunting, saw a dragon and he threw a stone to kill the dragon but instead hit another stone and sparked a fire, thus discovering how to light a fire.

There is also some wrong significance associated to Sadeh by scholars due to lack of knowledge, like professing that the 100 of the Sadeh comes from 50 nights and 50 days before Now Ruz. This theory is made up, does not have any significance and is not true.

In modern days, fire has been given more significance than the historic implication of Sadeh. People gather just before sun set at a central location, every one provides some fire wood usually desert thorns and shrubs. A huge bonfire is lit and people enjoy its heat in the cold winter night by dancing and singing around the fire. They offer each other fruits and sweets and enjoy the night as long as the fire provides the heat.

Wishing everyone a happy SADEH

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<http://zarathushticalendar.com/>