
GATHAS

OF ZARATHUSHTRA

Mentions God only EIGHT times

Fariborz Rahnmoon

Now of these shall I speak to those eager
That qualities of wisdom that all the wise praise
And creation worthy of praise
And the good creation of mind
The factual knowledge of Asha
Truly and that more and better ways
Are discovered towards perfection.

ZARATHUSHTRA – GATHA - YASNA Ha 30.1 (FR)

Every human being who aspires for the Ultimate Truth and is interested in progress, with peace, justice and prosperity; towards a heavenly life on this very planet Earth, needs to understand the GATHAS of Zarathushtra.

Every **Scholar** and every researcher needs to understand the Gathas so that their research does not create a Frankenstein like the Atomic Bomb or the present day Global Warming.

Every **Businessperson** needs to understand the Gathas so that progress and perfection, not wealth, becomes their premier goal.

Every **Politician** needs to understand the Gathas so that they create the environment for their nation to become righteous and a breeding ground for progress towards perfection.

Every **Leader**, small or big, needs to understand the Gathas because a good leader makes a big difference in the life of the followers and the future of the world. The Gathas will help the leader to make a positive difference.

WHAT IS THE GATHAS

The Gathas are the teachings of “Zarathushtra”, the sage, the intellect, the greatest teacher the world has ever known.

The Gathas are in the form of poetry and reveal the truth, the absolute truth, the truth that is all around us but we are so disorientated that we do not see, and when shown, we prefer not to accept it out of fear.

The Gathas are the only ancient wisdom that can today, solve human problems and elevate human life to a higher level of existence in a practical way, without sacrifice, without penance, without rituals, without hoping for supernatural intervention, but by knowing oneself (Khod-A) and having confidence and belief in oneself.

The Gathas teaches us to think, how to think and why to think.

The Gathas have been preserved as part of the religious information of the Zarathushties. It is included in the YASNA, which forms part of what is commonly known as the AVESTA. Avesta also happens to be the name of the language in which the Gathas were recited. Literally, “A”-“Vesta” means that which was unknown or in modern terms “Research Papers”.¹

Avesta as a language is as old as Sanskrit, but unlike Sanskrit, it has not been in use for a long time and so has been forgotten. Around 500 BCE when the Persian kings left inscriptions of their deeds they wrote them in what scholars call Old Persian. This means that Avesta language has not been commonly used for at least the last 2500 years.

Is Gathas a religion?

Religion capitalizes on human ignorance and for that very reason, promotes ignorance. It talks of the unknown and the unseen, it is illusionary, it promises a better life after death, its' heaven was beyond the clouds and keeps on going further and further away as science explores into space. Religion is very successful for it does not tax the brain. It shuns progress and to question is considered sinful and punishable. Adam and Eve were driven out of Paradise for eating the fruit of knowledge. Socrates was condemned to death for questioning and not believing in the gods of the State. Galileo was tried by the Inquisition, found "vehemently suspect of heresy", and forced to recant. He spent the rest of his life under house arrest. All he had done was to go against the religious belief of the church that the earth was the centre of the universe.

Islam goes a step further, it requires its followers to produce just the necessities of life (food, clothing and shelter), and spent the rest of their time studying the Koran and spreading its version of God's message. It says that God is all-knowing and has planed every move and to work against the will of God is blasphemy. For this very reason, in the Islamic countries, progress is minimal, universities are few and the borrowed art and architecture limited to mosques. Advanced civilization like Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, Ur and Chaldea after being conquered and coerced into Islam by the Arabs, lost their ancient knowledge and pride. Their children were sent to religious schools (Madrassa) and to be knowledgeable was to know the Koran. In countries like Islamic Iran, which has inherited a system of higher education², Koran has been made the most important part of the curriculum.

The aim of religion is the life beyond; every step is directed towards achieving a better life after death. Life on earth is pre-planned and willed by God, doing stem cell research and landing on the moon is not appreciated. Based on religious beliefs the President of the United States, George W Bush, in September 2006 vetoed the bill that would have allowed the research on stem cells.

In contrast, the Gathas promotes research and questioning, it shows the way to progress, and it is against stagnation and prescribes no rituals, for rituals leads to stagnation. It does not require one to believe in the unknown and the unseen. It guides us towards the plain truth, the truth that is all around us and if we choose to, we can see it. It does not promise heaven after death but shows how to create a heaven on earth. It talks of the evil mind (Ahri-Mana) and not of the devil; it talks of the good mind (Vohu-Mana) and not the angels. It draws our attention to the secret of creation and teaches us how to be good creators. It talks about evolution towards Perfection “HAURVATATA” (Khordad). It does not hold God responsible for the good or the evil, for happiness or pain. **In fact, the Gathas talk of God “Ahura Mazda” only eight times.**

The Gathas promotes and guides research. It has no do's and don'ts. Knowledge and wisdom, is its main concern. Its aim is progress towards perfection. It acknowledges and guides the human power to create. It is concerned with life on earth, and guides us on how to live a full life on earth.

With these characteristics, does the Gatha compare and qualify as a religion?

THE AUTHOR

ZARATHUSHTRA or Zoroaster (as the Greeks called him) is universally acknowledged as the Author of the Gathas. Where and when Zarathushtra was born is an ever-changing theory. Every country bordering present day Iran from Azerbaijan to Afghanistan and up north into Siberia claims that Zarathushtra was born in their

land. This is a welcome sign. Theories about the year of his birth range from 600 to 6000 BCE, which again makes no difference.

That what is important is what he has said, and 6000 does not outdate it nor does 600 BCE reduce the uniqueness of his teachings.

According to tradition, Zarathushtra was born on the sixth of Farvardin which usually corresponds to the 26 of March. According to latest calculations, Zarathushtra was born in the year 1767 BCE. He left his country of birth and went in search of a ruler who would understand his teachings and create the atmosphere for its implementation in his kingdom. Finally, far away from home, it was King Gustasp of Balkh and his wise minister Jamasp who welcomed him. Ancient Balkh today comprises of Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, northern Afghanistan and northeastern Iran.

In 1725 BCE, Zarathushtra lived and researched at an observatory in Sistan, a province of Balkh. We know this, because on 21st March 1725 BCE, the equinox and sunrise coincided at Sistan and Zarathushtra had pre-calculated this event and coined the name "Nou Rouz" the "New Day" to explain and record this unique natural Phenomenon, which takes 72 years to return to the same vicinity and is a once in a life time event.³

Archaeological evidence of such an event is available at Takht e Jamshid (Persepolis) for in 487 BCE the sun rise coincided with the Vernal Equinox at this location and was celebrated by none other than Daryush the Great.

Zarathushtra also calculated and invented the concept of the Meridian. The Meridian (Zero longitude) of Zarathushtra was along, the present day, 63 degrees longitude, which happens to pass through Sistan. He called his Meridian "Nim Rouz" which means "Midday". Because when it is midday on the Meridian of Zarathushtra, there is sunshine on the entire hemisphere from Japan and Australia to Africa and Europe. In Afghanistan, even today that location is called Nim Ruz Province. This further strengthens the relation of Zarathushtra to the kingdom of Balkh. To

see this natural phenomenon of Nim Rouz live on the internet check the site below.

<http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/sunearth.html>

It would be good to return to the site when the sun reaches 63 degrees longitude; that is over the border of Iran and Afghanistan and you will see the sun setting in Japan (the land of the Rising Sun) and rising in the western parts of Africa.

According to Avesta, the name of Zarathushtra's mother was Dughdhova and his father Porushaspa. **Like a normal person**, he married a beautiful girl by the name of Havovi and had six children, three girls by the name of Farin, Triti and Pouruchista, and three boys by the name of Isatvastrar, Urvatatnara and Hvarechithra. He lived for 77 years and the traditional day of his death is the 26 of December.

Zarathushtra was a man without prejudice; he looked at things in a natural way, he looked at them as they are. He did not invent any thing new he simply discovered "The Truth". What he discovered was shocking then as it is today. To understand [his teachings](#) you have to put aside your prejudices, put aside your beliefs, and you have to put aside your preconceived ideology and theology. You have to look at things as they are.

Was Zarathushtra a Prophet?

Zarathushtra lived among the Aryans over 3700 years ago. It was an era of gods and goddess not prophets. The Aryans had no prophets but instead they believed in numerous gods and goddesses. At the same period in history, other ancient civilizations like the Sumerians, Elamians, Babylonians and Egyptians also believed in gods and goddesses, and not prophets. To this day in India where the ancient system of gods and goddesses continues, there has been no prophet. Instead, they have "Avatars", the presence of God in the form of man. The last living Avatar was "Satya Sai Baba" who died on 24 April 2011, he has millions of followers from all over the world. He performed magic tricks and called them miracles like those evangelist preachers in the USA that cure the sick.

“Prophet” was a Semitic concept. The Jews, latter while narrating their history, called their “Leaders” prophets, but when one in flesh and blood appeared among them, they did not accept him. Instead, they handed him over to the Romans as an imposter. Incidentally, the Romans like the rest of the world believed in gods and goddess, and not prophet, so they crucified him, and centuries later when they decided to adopt him, they adopted him as a son of God and not a prophet.

Therefore, at a time and age in history when the gods made prophecies and prophets were unknown, how could one be that which is unknown. It is like claiming that 2000 years ago there lived a President. It makes no sense to make such a claim. At that period in history, Kings reigned and the office of the President was unknown. The same is true with Zarathushtra he lived at a time when the concept of Prophet was unknown, instead there were gods for everything. Zarathushtra did not believe in these petty gods either and replaced them with a single God. He started a completely new concept and the world un-ceremoniously recognizes Zarathushtra as the father of “Monotheism”. Unfortunately, the anthropomorphic God has hijacked the God of Zarathushtra.

Zarathushtra was an intellect, a sage. He valued wisdom and so named his only God “Creator of Wisdom” - “Ahura Mazda”. He was also a mathematician an astronomer a scientist a researcher a discoverer a thinker. The tradition continued among the Persians and so in the Torah and the Bible the Persians are recognized as wise men, even when they report their act as prophetic in nature. Like the wise men who predicted the birth of baby Jesus.

On the other hand, **a prophet is a messenger he need not be wise or knowledgeable, or even literate. Moreover, a wise man cannot be a good messenger for he has the tendency to question any irrational or unwise message.**

HISTORY OF THE GATHAS

To believe that a person of the stature of Zarathushtra would only compose 241 stanzas is hard to digest. However, that is all that we have inherited from this great man. Fortunately, the little that has survived the tyranny of man and the ravages of time is enough to guide humans out of its modern-day dilemma and lead them to a brighter future.

Up to and until the end of the reign of the Hakhamaneshenians (Achaemenians), (Persian Empire 550 to 330 BCE), the teachings of Zarathushtra were understood and followed in its original form. The fact that the Persians used their wisdom, made wise decisions, and instead of building temples they built highways and underground waterways called Qanats. They mapped the depth of the waters from the Ganges to the Red Sea to make transportation by sea safe. They connected the Nile to the Red Sea a forerunner to the Suez Cannel. They introduced a postal system the description of which by Herodotus, has become the motto of the United States postal system in the 21st century, all this and more is proof enough to vouch the influence of the Gathas during that period.

The rest of the world before they encountered the followers of the teachings of Zarathushtra, were believers in supernatural beings called gods. To use their mind and raise questions, was considered trespassing into the realm of the gods and their days were cut short by the gods. This tradition continues in the Torah, the Bible and the Koran, where Adam and Eve are driven out of Paradise for eating from the tree of knowledge.

When the Persian Empire grew and became influential so did its systems and beliefs. The Greeks and the Romans on coming into contact with the Persians became philosophers for the first time. Before that time, (550 BCE) we do not know of any philosopher among the Greeks. Socrates who was born in 469 BCE became one of the initial philosophers. Ironically, the Roman system condemned him to death because what he said was alien to their culture. Socrates was charged for being very curious, asking

questions and searching into things and questioning the legitimacy of heaven and things under the earth. Most of the Greek philosophers were born within the Persian Empire and then moved to Athens. Philosophy became a mode after the peace treaty of 449 BCE between Rome and Persia.

This era influenced by the Gathas ended with the advent of Alexander of Macedonia. Aristotle who was a tutor to Alexander advised him by saying; "If you destroy the Persians you shall have destroyed one of the pillars of civilization". So Alexander made sure he did that. He did not destroy the political structure of Persia but he aimed at the cultural infrastructure. He preserved and used Susa the political capital but destroyed Persepolis - Takht e Jamshid - the cultural capital. He burnt the royal library, destroyed many books, though many were salvaged and taken to Rome, it is believed to have included one of the two original copies of the Avesta.

He further killed the learned and abducted thirty thousand Persian youth to Rome, trained them in Roman culture and sent them back to spread it among the Persians. He rebuilt the abandoned temples of Babylonia and revived the gods. He promoted the revival of the ancient sun god Mithra among the northwestern Iranians. Although Alexander died young this era lasted for 400 years. Mithraism which he reintroduced among the Iranians became a world religion, the Roman soldiers and merchants became attracted to Mithraism and they spread their new found religion in Europe where it became known as the religion of the soldiers and traders. So strong was the influence of Mithraism that it found its way into Christianity and Zoroastrianism when they became the official religions of the two Empires.

The winter solstice, the birth of the sun god Mithra, became Christmas the birth of Christ. The inner circle of the temple of Mithra and their hierarchy became the secret conclave of the Vatican. The rituals of Mithraism continued among the priest of both Christianity and the Zoroastrianism of the Sassanian.

The temple of Mithra in Europe became churches and we can still see the story of Mithra in their architect. The Dar e Mehr or the gate

to Mithra became the Fire Temples of Zoroastrianism. Fire the son of god Mithra became son of Ahura Mazda. **The Gathas lost their significance and became a yearly prayer** in the Avesta edition commissioned by the Sassanian. The last five days of the year were named after the Gathas and the Mobeds (priests) recited the Gathas as prayers during those days.

While the Sassanian were collecting bits and pieces from all over the Empire and trying to revive Zoroastrianism they were influenced by the beliefs of Zurvanism, and the person of Mani and Mazdak who lived during that period. They had proclaimed themselves as Prophets and were influential. The dualism preached and developed by these three were incorporated into the Avesta as part of Zoroastrianism. The Roman version of Christianity was growing and was a major threat to the work of the Zoroastrian Mobeds. In comparison with Christianity when the Mobeds did not find any reference to after life, they commissioned a young priest Arda Viraf to write about it and he did a good job, which has been preserved in a book called the "Arda Viraf Nameh". The heaven and hell of the Gathas were taken from earth and put high up in the skies beyond the clouds by Arda Viraf. His book latter inspired Dante to write his famous "Divine Comedy".

So also, when the compilers did not find the story of the origin of life to compare with that of the Adam and Eve, they wrote their own version and called it Mashya and Mashyaneh. However, with a difference, for their ancient culture still played a role and they were comparatively more rational; particularly that they created the male and the female as equals.

Thus, the modern day Zoroastrianism was developed during the reign of the Sassanian comparable to the newly adopted religion of their enemy the Romans.

Just like in Christianity where in the New Testament the main principles of the Gathas were repeated by Jesus Christ, but not understood or followed by his

followers, so also the Gathas took a back seat in the Sassanian version of Zoroastrianism.⁴

In 637 CE, the Arabs invaded Iran. They believed that God in the Koran has given all the knowledge that humankind will ever need. So when Abu Waqas the commander of the invading army asked Omar the Khalifa (ruler) if he should distribute the books captured at the royal Persian library as booty among his soldiers. Omar said; "Allah has in the Koran given us all the knowledge that is good, and what he has not, is bad and he does not want us to know, so destroy all the books."⁵ Therefore, the Arabs burnt most of the books and threw the rest in the river.

In the centuries that followed the Arab conquerors demanded books as ransom from the Iranians and burnt them. They cut the fingers of scholars to disable them from writing. They burnt scholars in the pyre of their books. They even accepted books in lieu of tax and destroyed them. Four hundred years latter Ferdowsi the great Persian poet tells us how he had to collect bits and pieces of information preserved in various parts of the nation by the Mobeds and the knowledgeable.

Today Avesta contains all the information that was salvaged after the onslaught of the Arabs. It contains history geography medicine astronomy mythology and of course the Gathas. Avesta was hand written and hidden out of fear of the Arabs, available only to the Mobeds. That the Avesta survived such an onslaught shows the dedication of the Iranians to it. The Zarathushtis who had taken refuge in India replenished their information by traveling to Iran and bringing back copies of the Avesta and other books, the history of which is well documented.

The Gathas itself being in Avesta language and in the form of poetry have remained intact but not recognized until rediscovered by Western scholars in the 1700's. It is embedded in the Yasna and the last compilers of the Avesta who still recognized the Gathas had used numerology to number them,⁶ so the first Gatha is Yasna 28, which is $2+8=10 = 1+0 = 1$. This continues until Yasna 34 and then jumps to Yasna 43 both of which is equal to 7 and it continues with

a missing link in 52 and for some reason Yasna 29 does not (to me) seem to go with the theme of things for it introduces a Semitic concept of a weak and confused anthropomorphic God.

The western scholars who discovered the Gathas translated them with the help of Sanskrit and by studying the rituals and customs of Zarathushtis with whom they were in contact, and whom they evaluated as from a primitive culture, who followed complicated rituals, prayed to the fire and left their dead to be eaten by birds of prey. In addition to these, the scholars had their own beliefs, which influenced their thoughts and showed up in their work. The work of these scholars became reference for future translations. Thus, today we have more than fifty different translations but none depicts the original thoughts of Zarathushtra. Again, each of the translations is slightly different in philosophy from the other, but fortunately, all of the translations are good and positive, **so great is the original work that it breaths purity into all kinds of thoughts**. Unfortunately so great is the influence of the Roman philosophy and belief on modern humans that it will take some more time, even for people who believe in the Gathas, to understand and realize the truth in the Gathas. This problem will, hopefully be solved by exposing the Gathas to a larger audience on a global scale.

UNDERSTANDING THE GATHAS

Astronomers and Mathematicians believe only in what they can see or prove. Zarathushtra who was both a mathematician and astronomer could be no different. In his Gathas, he talks of only that what can be done and its results seen. He talks of reality.

Zarathushtra in his Gathas does not want to propound a belief. He does not give a list of do's and don'ts. His approach is very different, he does not teach us what to see but he teaches us **HOW TO SEE and HOW TO SEE CLEARLY**. He wants us to be able to see the TRUTH for ourselves; he does not give us a list of ready-made truth for easy reference.

What he says is contrary to all our present day beliefs and to all our so-called religious convictions. **To understand him one has to have a clear mind free of preconceived philosophy, preconceived theology, and preconceived ideology. One has to transcend oneself, acquire the innocence of a child and only then can one be comfortable and fearlessly understand the teachings of this Great Teacher.**

Therefore, it is very important that we try to understand what he has said without trying to find parallels and without looking for answers to questions based on myths and matters that are ideological and have no proof of existence. In order to be able to understand the real meaning of the Gathas we need to take help of the history of its early followers before foreign cultures influenced them.

The earliest followers with such qualification, who have left behind archaeological evidence for us to be able to study, are the Persians. Their statements carved on stone and clay tells us that they believed in the God of Zarathushtra, "Ahura Mazda" "Creator of Wisdom". They have left behind signs of their advanced technologically, like the underground tunnels in the deserts called "Kanats" or "Qanats", to carry water from the source, to the place of consumption scores of miles away. Their benevolence can be seen in the drafting of the first "Charter of Human Rights". The Torah and the Bible have stories of their good deeds and thoughts and even their enemies the Romans have good things to say about them and their way of life.

During those two centuries, with the benevolent influence of the Persian as a super power, there were great changes in the path of civilizations, which an unbiased student of history cannot miss. As mentioned earlier philosophy and wisdom flourished, science and knowledge increased and the world was put on a path of progress. This was because of the belief of the Persians in "Wisdom" "Mazda" and "Hurvata" "Perfection".

On the other hand, what was significantly missing among the Persian is a temple or the evidence of any kind of worship. The many bas-reliefs left behind on the great walls of their cultural capital Takht-e-Jamshid is evidence of this fact. Herodotus confirms this when he says, "The erection of statutes, temples and altars is not an accepted practice among the Persians, and anyone who does such a thing is considered a fool, because presumably, the Persian religion is not anthropomorphic like the Greeks." However, when reading modern translation of the Gathas we see a different story.

THE PROBLEMS WITH THE MODERN TRANSLATIONS OF THE GATHAS.

It will suffice to highlight only two of the main problems here.

AHURA MAZDA

To translate the Gathas with Greek standards of an anthropomorphic God is surely going to be misleading. I think the single most evident proof of a good translation is the number of times the translation mentions the name of God. In the Gathas, Zarathushtra mentions "Ahura Mazda" the God, only eight times.

Those that claim to have made the most literal translation mentions God at least 222 times. The reason is that they translate the words Ahura and Mazda in whatever form and syntax as "God". The translators claim that Zarathushtra the poet played with the two parts of the name of his God by switching it around or omitting one part of it, or mentioning the two parts in different sentences in a stanza, just to rhyme his poem. Consequently, apart from translating "Ahura Mazda" as God, they also translate Mazda Ahura as God, Mazda by itself as God, and also Ahura by itself as God.

Now the numbers of times these words are mentioned in the 241 stanzas of the Gathas are as under:

MAZDA	164 times
AHURA	131 times
MAZDA AHURA	50 times

AHURA MAZDA 08 times
Total 353 times

When all of these words are given the meaning “God”, every stanza evolves around God. Therefore, the next step for the translator is to juggle with the rest of the words in the stanza, under the pretext of rhyme and rhythm, and grammar, to form a meaningful idea around the word God. For the same reason the translator chooses an appropriate synonym for other words in the stanza to give sense to the stanza. The result is the various translations that we have in the market although all are morally and philosophically good but they are not exactly what Zarathushtra propounds.

The other fact that we need to remember is that Zarathushtra was speaking to a people who had hundreds of gods; he was telling them that they were wrong and that there was only one God. Now would he confuse them by giving his only God four forms of names.

It is more logical that Zarathushtra who has named his only God the “Creator of Wisdom” (“Ahura Mazda”) would talk more about the creation of his God, namely “Wisdom” “Mazda”. This we can see in the number of times the word Mazda has been used in the Gathas, namely 164 times. No other concept has been discussed as many times as Mazda, in the Gathas.

Now if we imagine that the poet was so weak that he had to mutilate the name of his only God to rhyme his poem. That the rhyming was more important than the concept he wants to propound, and that, although each word has a literal meaning he does not consider it, and decides to add to the confusion by calling all of them God; then there is no need for further discussion.

However, if we stop imagining and instead give each of those words their literal meaning we will see a different Gatha. First and foremost, the need to juggle the words around to make a meaningful sentence will no longer be necessary. Next we will see the clear and simple truth rather than confusion, personification and prayers. As a result, we will see that Gatha, which had lead the

Persian 2500 year ago, the Gatha that created the mind set to lead them to do what they did.

So let us give each of the key words its literal meaning and see the results. The literal meaning of the key words is:

MAZDA	Wisdom
AHURA	Creator / Creation
MAZDA AHURA	Wisdom in Creation
AHURA MAZDA	Creator of Wisdom (God)

URVANEM - SOUL

The other problem is the paradigm of the soul. Take the concept of the soul out of any religion and its world collapses. The Protestant religion came into being when Luther protested against the Catholic churches' scam of selling heaven to its followers, but even the Protestant version of religion could not do away with the soul or the human aspiration for residing in heaven after death. A religion flourishes on how well it can guarantee the journey of the soul to heaven. Prayers penance and confessions are some of the means of guarantying in the catholic religion. While in Islam, the soul has been used to serve its imperialistic expansionist program. They hang a actual metal key to heaven around the neck of a person who ventures to kills in the name of Islam or dies in the act.

Every religion claims its Prophet was in direct contact with God but in spite of that, each of their concepts and the means of achieving an abode in heaven are different, so also is the description of the privileges bestowed in heaven different. The soul has created more problems than it has solved.

Zarathushtra had his heaven on earth. Zarathushtra's Heaven can be created by using the **good mind**⁷ to understand the **laws of nature**⁸ and then use that knowledge to make **good rules**⁹ thereby making the **society righteous**¹⁰. In a righteous society, the people **progress towards perfection**¹¹ and in the process, lose the fear of death and achieve **immortality**¹² while alive. Such people leave behind a legacy which makes them **immortal** because they are remembered in the collective memories of society for generations.

Such a society is a heavenly society where peace tranquillity prosperity and justice prevail. On a smaller scale, the heaven can be in your home and on a larger scale; society, nations and ultimately the earth can be converted into a heavenly place, where everyone lives hand in hand with nature, in peace tranquillity and prosperity. Here the soul loses its traditional role since Heaven is achieved when the person is still alive.

In spite of this, because the translators of the Gathas have the traditional concept of the soul engraved in their very existence, they mistranslate the Gathas to make room for the traditional soul.

Just as the Tooth Fairies and the Santa Claus gives false hope to the world of a child so does the concept of the soul give similar hope to the now grown up child.

WHAT DOES THE GATHAS TEACH¹

The Gathas reveals the Truth, analysis it, and shows the way to progress towards a better life, the best life, "**Be-hest**" a heavenly life.

The Gatha recommends the use of the Mind, to become learned, to explore, to discover, to invent, to progress and not be bogged in traditions. Its theme is the human mind, which it analyses and guides.

The Gatha starts by seeking perfectness of the mind, Wisdom, Mazda. The goal is, to harmonize the human spirit with the universe.

This I seek with reverence
With uplifted hands
The perfect-ness of the mind

¹ Please note that the translations of the Gathas given below are word-by-word translation without having consideration for the English grammar.

Wisdom (Mazda) is the first righteous gift of Asha
All should aspire to make
Good use of the intelligence in the mind
To create harmony between the universe
And the inner-self**.

Zarathushtra – Gatha – Yasna 28.1 (FR)

**ASHA – The law of nature, the law of the Universe. The Truth.
**(Urvanem) (Human spirit) (Spiritual force of the mind)*

The next step is (to make use of the mind) to acquire the knowledge of the “Wisdom in Creation” and gain control over the physical and the mental forces and become enlightened.

Certainly, I shall acquire
The Wisdom in Creation
Through Good use of the Mind

I shall master the dual forces
Physical and Mental
Through Knowledge
Whereby the truthful achieve enlightenment.

Zarathushtra – Gatha – Yasna 28.2 (FR)

Having achieved enlightenment, with the use of the good mind, understand “Asha” the truth, the laws of nature, the laws of the universe. Then with it make good rules, give good guidance, making sure they are in tune with Asha, the laws of nature. Such rules will never wane and will increase righteousness and lead us towards perfection.

Truly, the **Asha (Ultimate Truth) (2)** derived
By the **Good Mind (1)**
Never before known
Among the wise and all creation
With it, make **Good Rules (3)** and never waning
Increasing **Righteousness (4)**

Leading us towards **Perfection (5)**

Zarathushtra – Gatha -Yasna Ha 28.3 (FR)

The human mind, the mental force, has a spiritual part, the “urvamem” the inner-self. This spiritual part of the mind derives satisfaction when there is harmony between the thoughts and the laws of nature, the Wisdom in Creation. The result is good deeds, good products, and good creation. This is an ongoing process and as long as each one of us has the strength, we should strive for the truth, **and also teach others to strive for the truth.**

Truly, the spiritual result is exalted (*when*)
Goodness leads to harmony in thoughts
Which result in good deeds
In harmony with the Wisdom in Creation

As long as we have will and strength
So long we should teach to strive for Truth

Zarathushtra – Gatha –Yasna Ha 28.4 (FR)

It is also the duty of every person who derives the truth, to pass on the knowledge to those who do not know, and thereby keep the process of progress continuous. An important point is that the information is not to be forced upon others but be passed on by speaking. **Persuasion and not persecution is the mode of passing on the message and showing the path of progress.**

Asha when you gain
With minds good use
Having realized wisdom
The path to creation (righteousness)
The ultimate message of Wisdom
Through words excellent
We shall turn (convert)
Those who do not know
With tongue (By speaking)

Zarathushtra – Gatha -Yasna Ha 28.5 (FR)

For those who believe, that there is no conversion in Zarathushtism this verse clearly shows that they are wrong, and that Zarathushtra wants everyone to reap the benefit and does not limit the fruits of wisdom for a chosen or limited group.

It is common belief among people that natural calamities are the work of God. Even insurance companies will not pay claims by calling floods, hurricanes, earthquakes and the like, an act of God. The Gatha makes it clear that God is not to be blamed for them.

Zarathushtra says; the laws of Nature - Asha - can also bring about disaster, Ahura Mazda is not to be blamed for them. It is nature taking its' natural course that causes disaster. We do not have to give up, and accept the disaster as the wish of God. Instead, we should use our mind and find a way to stay out of harm's way, while nature takes its course. He further says that, the best mind is the one that gives good guidance to survive such situations in future. Like the Japanese, who have acknowledged that their land is earthquake prone and so are designing their lives in such a way that they can withstand the earthquakes without loss of life and property. The Japanese are worthy of praise as per the Gathas.

These, you, not Ahura Mazda
Asha also brings fury

Mind also is the best
That which strives' to give good guidance
For you to be worthy

Mighty, satisfied, also worthy of praise

Zarathushtra - Gatha - Yasna HA 28.9 (FR)

About creation, the Gathas draws our attention to the fact that everything that is created was first a thought. Therefore, we should keep our thoughts good and in tune with the wisdom in creation. Then again, the fact is that, we may have many thoughts but it is only those that we discuss and talk about it with others that become

reality. Therefore, we need to declare only our good thoughts through good words, so that we end up doing good deeds and creating good products. While theologians are still looking for the secret of creation and leading us astray, the Gathas brings us down to earth to the creation that concerns us and effects our daily life; and gives guidelines to avoid creating a Frankenstein.

The Wright brothers though of flying, they studied nature discussed it, designed, and created a flying machine in the shape of a bird. Then somebody had bad thoughts, it was not in tune with nature, but they discussed it and loaded the planes with bombs. That is why there is the maxim GOOD THOUGHTS, GOOD WORDS, GOOD DEEDS. Avoid converting your bad thoughts into words.

Truly with these facts
We shall keep our thoughts good forever
In tune with the Wisdom in Creation

I instruct that
You all declare your thoughts
Through the word of mouth
Whereby creation first comes into being
Zarathushtra - Gatha - Yasna 28.11 (FR)

This is just the beginning of the Gatha simple but full of Wisdom.

The Gatha has passed the practicality test in history, but has failed against the dark force in human nature that desire and conquer the human imagination and enslave the human spirit, by making it believe in supernatural forces and not see the plain truth. The Gathas require the use of “Wisdom” “Mazda” but it is easier not to use it. Religion offers the opportunity; it banishes those that use their wisdom.

Zarathushtra makes it clear in the Gathas itself as to what to expect from the Gathas. He says he is going to speak of the high quality of wisdom that is desired by the wise, about the creative qualities of the mind, and its good creations, about Asha and its powers. The aim is to help everyone progress towards perfection. Perfection is

the foremost aim of Zarathushtra in his Gathas; Perfection is an ongoing process with each generation improving on the work of the previous generations.

Now of these shall I speak to those eager
That qualities of wisdom that all the wise praise
And creation worthy of praise
And the good creation of mind
The factual knowledge of Asha
Truly and that more and better ways
Are discovered towards perfection.

Zarathushtra - Gatha - Yasna 30.01 (FR)

The road to perfection is varied; every person has to choose his own path. To do that one has to listen to the best with an open mind and from among the hundreds of paths (professions) choose the most suitable for oneself. Every human being has a natural ability and a liking for something, if they recognize it and chose to pursue it, provided it is honorable, good and beneficial, the chance of success is high. Every person has to choose the best course and progress on that path to perfection. Like, an artist can achieve perfection in his art, so can a doctor, an engineer, a farmer, or a baker achieve perfection in what they do.

Listen with your ears to the best
Consider with open mind
Among the paths before deciding
Person by person for his own self

Before greatness of this message
Is truly spread understand each one

Zarathushtra - Gatha - Yasna 30.02 (FR)

There are a few points to be noted here; first that the choice is from among the best, second that one has to have an open mind, third that each person should chose the path of their liking, which usually is the one that one has a natural ability for. People who like and enjoy what they do are the ones that become successful.

This verse is often mistranslated and is the one that is frequently quoted with pride, with regard to freedom of choice. The mistranslated version says there are “two paths” meaning the good and the bad path, and you can choose one. In other words, you can choose the bad path. First of all, the word “path” is in the plural form only, the word “two” does not exist in the Avesta text, it is the translators who presume it. More importantly, the first line talks of listening to the “Best” now how is the “bad” included in the “best”? This is an example of the wrong influence of the dualism of Mani and Mazdak, which has crept into the Pahlavi commentaries and used by the modern day translators of the Gathas, thereby changing the whole concept of the Gathas.

Once again, Zarathushtra shifts the blame away from God. He says we humans bring about happiness and pain on ourselves by our thoughts and deeds. The God of Zarathushtra is above such blames. Moreover, those who practice evil harm progress and also the followers of the righteous path. If this fact is understood, there will be enlightenment among the human kind.

That these laws you understand
That wisdom has given humans
Happiness and pain
And that practice of evil harms
Progress and followers of truth
And as a result of these shall come illumination
Zarathushtra - Gatha - Yasna 30.11 (FR)

How true, when we look at all the suffering and pain that exist in the world today all have a human cause. From the terrorist activities to wars, from global warming to Aids, from family feud to national disputes and the list can go on. Above all, the suffering that religion has caused for centuries, by believing in one God with different ideologies and each one thinking that God has ordained their ideology.

Zarathushtra sees the human mind as the cause of all the evil and happiness; he further pins the blame on the leaders. It is the leaders who do the most harm for they chose the evil thoughts and pass it

on to their followers. These evil thoughts combined with anger bring about death and destruction.

Of these not the right did choose
The evil thinkers
For on them delusion, when in doubt, came over
Thus, they chose the worst thoughts
Then towards wrath together they rushed
Thus, destroying life mortal
Zarathushtra - Gatha - Yasna 30.6 (FR)

The Gathas has the solution to this problem of the human mind. It says that giving good guidance and awakening the person to realize the truth will help that person progress and achieve righteousness. This will also benefit those who are close to such a person and are the followers of such a person. Unfortunately, some modern religions being aware of this fact have forbidden their followers to listen to logic by claiming that God is all knowing and everything has been ordained beforehand.

The Gathas does not want the knowledgeable people to give up in their effort to guide the misled, for it says good knowledge will achieve righteousness without fail and this method has been tested successfully before.

This message and good guidance
Shall bring to the mind Goodness
Asha and People will progress
Righteousness (Armaitis) will grant
Strength to them and you
This has been successfully tested before
Zarathushtra - Gatha - Yasna 30.7 (FR)

And now that brought upon them
To change collectively their mistakes
Now wisdom brings upon them good rule*

Good use of the mind shall show*
Them learn of creation
So that by giving knowledge conquers the false one
Zarathushtra - Gatha - Yasna 30.8 (FR)

The Gatha gives importance to good knowledge and its power to win the unrighteous ones over to follow the right path.

The Gathas is not something that has to be hidden it is something that has to be spread.

CONCLUSION

Zarathushtra changed the paradigm of human belief. He raised humans to a higher level of existence. He pulled them out of slavery to petty gods and made them realize that they are creators themselves, that it was their creative power that made them different from animals and not that they were walking upright. He revealed the secret of creation and showed how they could be good creators.

He made them realize how important a gift it was to be able to think, provided the gift is properly used. He explained the thinking process and the results of good thoughts, the importance of leadership and its influence on its followers, the importance of nature and the harmony of human thoughts with nature. He oiled the human mind and put it into motion.

Slowly but steadily progress was being attained and the paradigm was changing in and around the Persian Empire when unfortunately for us humans, the evil thinkers took control; the very philosopher whom the Persians had trained turned against them and advised Alexander to destroy this benevolent pillar of civilization.

Systematically the followers of the teachings of Zarathushtra were disoriented, by killing the experienced and training the youth. In the scuffle that followed Organized Religion became the mode of the day. They used the weakness of the human mind to their advantage; very soon, the evil part of the human mind took over

under disguise of benevolence. This time everyone became slave to a single God, to the advantage of the inner enclave, the keepers of the house of God.

In their effort to reorganize, the Persians in their weakness, fell into the trap of their enemies, and fashioned their religion on that of their enemies. Mashya and Mashyaneh were introduced to counter Adam and Eve, Arda Viraf was commissioned to describe heaven and hell and a bridge was built for the dead to cross over to it. **Gathas, the teachings of Zarathushtra became prayers in this reorganized religion.**

Today many of the learned among the humans have realized the futility of their way of life and are staying away from Organized Religion. It is time to revive the Gathas, but not the Gatha that has been translated to walk the path of Organized Religion. **The original Gatha, the Gatha that mentions God only EIGHT times.**

¹ "Vesta" that what is knowledge, that what is know. "A" makes it negative. So, it becomes that what was not known. Research Papers

² The Jond e Shapour University in Iran is more than 1756 years old.

³ Looking back at history and the data on sunrise and sunset available with Nasa it seems to repeat at about the same location about every 72 years. There are many variables, which can affect the timing of the actual event, like the simple passing of a comet close to earth or an earthquake. For more information see "Nou Rouz & Nim Rouz" at <http://www.ancientiran.com>

⁴ See "Influence on other religions" at <http://www.ancientiran.com>

⁵ Muqadama by Ibn Kaldum

⁶ The Gathas were embedded in the Avesta and each chapter had been numbered using numerology. The chapters are numbered as under:

$$\begin{array}{rclcl} 28 & = & 2+8 & = & 10 & = & 1+0 & = & 1 \\ 29 & = & 2+9 & = & 11 & = & 1+1 & = & 2 \\ 30 & = & 3+0 & & & & & = & 3 \\ 31 & = & 3+1 & & & & & = & 4 \end{array}$$

32	= 3+2	= 5
33	= 3+3	= 6
34	= 3+4	= 7
43	= 4+3	= 7
44	= 4+4	= 8
45	= 4+5	= 9
46	= 4+6	= 10 = 1
47	= 4+7	= 11 = 2
48	= 4+8	= 12 = 3
49	= 4+9	= 13 = 4
50	= 5+0	= 5
51	= 5+1	= 6
		? ??
53	= 5+3	= 8
54	= 5+4	= 9

⁷ Vohumana

⁸ Asha Vahista

⁹ Khash atra vairya

¹⁰ Spenta armaity

¹¹ Haurvatata

¹² Ameretat

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