

THE GATHAS

INTRODUCTION

By

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Gathas are the teachings of the Great Sage and Teacher Zarathushtra. It is in the form of poetry, composed in the ancient Avesta language. Avesta is as old as Sanskrit, but because it has not been in use for a long time it has been forgotten. Around 500 BCE when the Persian kings left inscriptions of their deeds they were written in what scholars call Old Persian. Which means Avesta has not been commonly used for at least 2500 years.

Zarathushtra was a man without prejudice; he looked at things in a new way. 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. You have to look at things as they are.

Zarathushtra in his Gathas does not want to propound a certain philosophy or a certain religion. He does not give a list of do's and don'ts. His approach is totally different, he does not teach us what to see but he teaches us HOW TO SEE. He teaches us 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 beliefs, to all our so-called moralities. To understand him you have to have a clear mind free of preconceived philosophy, preconceived theology, and preconceived ideology. You have to transcend yourself, acquire the innocence of a child and only then will you be comfortable and fearlessly understand the teachings of this Great Teacher.

The thinking and philosophy of the world today is based on a combination of the Old Testament and the Roman beliefs. When scholars have endeavored to translate the Gathas their preconceived beliefs and fear have stopped them from seeing the truth. Therefore in the name of grammar, rhyme and

rhythm and in the name of simplifying the language they have turned and twisted the Gathas to suit their beliefs.

A simple example will put things into perspective. "Pouruhs Aspa" was the father of "Zara Thushtira", "Visht Aspa" was the king and "Jam Aspa" a learned Vazir (minister). As we can see, all these names have two parts. Each part has a distinct meaning and when put together it becomes a proper name. Never has one part represented the full name nor have these names been inverted. We have never heard or seen "Thushtira Zara" or "Aspa Visht" being used. But when it comes to the words Mazda & Ahura most scholars and translators of the Gathas believe that the words Ahura and Mazda in whatever form represents the name of the one and only God Ahura Mazda.

Some argue that, the Gathas being poetry, the need for rhyme and rhythm encourages the break up of the name of Ahura Mazda. In Yasna Ha 28, Zarathushtra (28.6) Vishtaspai (28.7) and Ferashaoshtra (28.8) are used without breaking them up. While the components of the name Ahura Mazda which is used twelve times in Ha 28 has been broken up or inverted every time but once. We need to remember that Zarathushtra is the first person to introduce Monotheism to the world. Would it serve his aim if he named his only God in four forms, would it not confuse the people into believing in four gods instead of one? Another question that arises is whether the respect for the name of his only God is more important or rhyming the poetry. More over would not a good poet whose main purpose is to promote his God, change some other words in the poem to bring about the required effect instead of every time mutilating the name of the most important character he wants to introduce. Again as far as the syllables are concerned both the word Ahura and Mazda is made up of equal number of letters, that is five each, when written in Din Dabireh Script which has a letter for every sound.

I believe that Zarathushtra in his Gathas talks of Mazda - as "Wisdom", and Ahura - as "Creation", Mazda Ahura - as the "Wisdom in Creation" and Ahura Mazda the "Creator of Wisdom" or "**GOD**".

In Yasna Ha 28 Zarathushtra talks of Ahura Mazda only once, when in 28.9 he says "ANAISH VAO _NOIT_ AHURA MAZDA."

"These, you, not Ahura Mazda" - don't blame it on God.

These, you, not Ahura Mazda

ASHA also brings evil

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)

Now let's face the reality of the real world. Vohu means good, Ahri means Bad and Mana means Mind. So Vohumana is the Good Mind and not an angle. Personification was Greek, the ancient Zarathushti culture and religion had no place for deities and angles. Herodotus says; "The Persian religion is not anthropomorphic like the Greek."

So let us not personify Vohumana and the Am Asha Sepantas and say "Oh Vahumana my lord". Let us come down to the real world for a moment and call a spade a spade.

Once we do that, the whole character of the Zarathushtra changes from a confused person pleading for help, into a knowledgeable person giving direction for the world to follow.

Truly, the ASHA (Truth) derived

By the good mind

Never before known

Among the Wise and in the Universe (Mazdam cha Ahurem)

With it, make good rule, never waning

Increasing Righteousness

Leading us toward perfection

Zarathushtra - Gatha - Yasna HA 28.3 (FR)

Zarathushtra tells us in very clear earthly terms to use our mind fully in the good way, understand the Wisdom in Creation, and use it to make good rules to guide our path toward perfection. Thereby converting this planet Earth into a Paradise where everyone lives a full life in peace and heavenly tranquility.

No, he does not join his hands, pray, and plead for help. No, he does not stretch his hand and plead for a boon. On the contrary he says God has done his duty, each one of us already has that what is required to become perfect and so each one of us is responsible for what happens to us. "ANAISH VAO _NOIT_ AHURA MAZDA."

Zarathushtra says it is you and your deeds not the will of Ahura Mazda that brings evil or good. Ahura Mazda created the Wisdom in Creation and it is taking its course. The sun the moon the planets the stars the galaxies are all moving ahead some are dying while others are being born. The black-hole the wormhole all have a roll in this great creation, there is no manager managing the daily affairs, changing the course, punishing and rewarding.

Ahura Mazda having set into motion Mazda Ahura, The Wisdom in Creation, THE BIG BANG, the self propelled system, the energy in the ever expanding never ending universe of which we humans are just one of the products.

Certainly I shall acquire

The Wisdom in Creation (Mazda Ahura)

Through Good use of the Mind

I shall master them all

Physical and that of the mind (mental)

Gaining through Knowledge

Whereby desiring and achieving enlightenment

Zarathushtra - Gatha - Yasna HA 28.2 (FR)

Perfection is what Zarathushtra professes. The aim in life should be Perfection. He says, use your Vohumana, your good mind, understand the wisdom in creation and go hand in hand with it, not against it. The aim should be perfection in whatever profession you are. That is what will make our lives worth living on this planet; we can either create a heaven or a hell right here on this Earth. Zarathushtra's Heaven and Hell are right here on this planet.

Truly with these facts

We shall keep our thoughts good for ever

In tune with Wisdom in Creation

I shall instruct that

You all declare your minds findings

Through the word of mouth

Whereby creation first comes into being

Zarathushtra - Gatha - Yasna HA 28.11 (FR)

This verse spells out the secret of creation. It says everything that is created was first a thought, so let your thoughts be always good. Good thoughts are only those that are in tune with the wisdom in creation. Next it says that thoughts if not spoken about will be forgotten so let only your good thoughts be known through good words for that is the first step towards materializing your thoughts.

From this verse was coined the famous maxim

GOOD THOUGHTS GOOD WORD GOOD DEEDS

In the following translation an effort has been made not to move words around or invent a grammar, it is a straight translation. Many words when broken down match with words used in the Dari language, which we the Zarathushtrians of

Yazd still speak. The result is The Truth and you can see it for yourself.

To understand this better, please compare these few verses with whichever translation of the Gathas you have handy and find the real Zarathushtra for your self. Is he the one who needs help or is he the one that knows the Truth and is giving direction?

And of these shall I speak to those eager,
That quality of wisdom that all the wise wish
And call creative qualities
And good creation of the mind
The all powerful truth (Asha)
Truly and that more & better ways are discovered
Towards perfection

Zarathushtra - Gatha - Yasna HA 30.1 (FR)

Listen with your ears to the supreme facts
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 HA 30.2 (FR)

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http://www.ahura.homestead.com/files/Gathas/YASNA_HA-28-2007_web.pdf