

THE MEANING OF MAZDA AND AHURA IN THE GATHA

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Most scholars and translators of the Gathas believe that the words Ahura and Mazda in whatever syntax represents the name of the one and only God Ahura Mazda. I beg to differ.

Pouruhs Aspa was the father of Zara Thushttra, Visht Aspa was the king and Jam Aspa a learned counselor. 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 Thushttra Zara or Aspa Visht being used.

Some argue that, the Gathas being poetry, the need for rhyme and rhythm necessitates 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. A question that arises is whether the respect for the name of 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 in his Gathas. 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.

Gathas are the teachings of the Great Teacher and intellect, Zarathushtra. It is in the form of a poetry composed in the ancient Avesta language. Avesta is only 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 is as shocking today as it was then. *To understand his teachings you have to put aside your prejudices put aside your*

beliefs and 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 belief. 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 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.

The thinking and philosophy of the World at large is based on a combination of the Judeo Christian and the Graeco - Roman doctrine. Thus what Zarathushtra says is contrary to all these beliefs, to all the so-called moralities. To understand him you have to have a clear mind free of preconceived philosophy, preconceived theology, 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.

Scholars have endeavored to translate the Gathas but their preconceived beliefs and fear of established norms have stopped them from seeing the truth. 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 perspectives.

Zarathushtra in his Gathas talks of Mazda as Wisdom, and Ahura as Creation/Creator, Mazda Ahura - the Wisdom in Creation and Ahura Mazda the Creator of Wisdom - 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" - in other words, "don't blame it on God".

These, you, not Ahura Mazda
Knowledge also brings evil
Mind also is the best
That which strives to create good guidance
For you to be worthy
Mighty, satisfied, also worthy of praise
Zarathushtra - Gatha Yasna HA 28.9 (FR)

Now lets face the reality of the real world. Vohu means good, Ahri means Bad and Mana means mind. So Vohu-mana is the Good Mind and not a Bountiful Immortal. Ahri-mana is the Bad Mind and not the devil. Personification was Greek, the ancient Persian culture and religion had no place for deities and

angles. Herodotus says; "The Persian religion is not anthropomorphic like the Greek."

Let them who have seen an angle or deity in real life personify Vohu-mana and the Am Asha Sepantas and say "Oh Vahumana my lord". Otherwise lets come down to the real world for a moment and call a spade a spade.

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

Truly the knowledge derived
By the good mind
Never before known
Among the Wise and in the Universe (Mazdam cha Ahurem)
From it bring good rule, never waning
And make Righteous society
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, and 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 and 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 thoughts not the will of Ahura Mazda that brings evil or good. Ahura Mazda created the Wisdom in Creation, which it is taking its course. The suns the moons the planets the stars the galaxies are all moving ahead, some are disintegrating while others are being born. The "Blackhole" 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 set into motion The Wisdom in Creation, Mazda Ahura, **THE BIG BANG**, the self propelled system, the energy in the ever expanding never ending universe of which we humans are just one of its minute elements.*

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
Gaining through Knowledge
Whereby desiring and getting perfection
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, get to the truth, Asha Vahista, understand the wisdom in creation and go hand in hand with it, not against it. Your aim in life should be to strive for perfection in your work, vocation and existence. That is what will make your life 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 I shall use
The mind well for all times
In tune with Wisdom in Creation (Mazda Ahura)
I shall instruct all of them declare
Minds findings through the word of mouth
How the universe was before
Thereby being in tune with creation as was originally designed
Zarathushtra - Gatha Yasna HA 28.11 (FR)

In this endeavor to translate the Gathas, moving of words around under the pretext of grammar, rhyme and rhythm, or whatever other reasons have been avoided. The Avesta sentence has been repeated in English except where a little improvement would not change the meaning of the sentence.

Find the real Zarathushtra for your self. Please compare these few verses with whichever translation of the Gathas you have handy and see the difference. See the truth for yourself, is he the surprised one who is calling for help or is he the one that knows the Truth and illuminating our path? Please judge it for yourself.

And of these shall I speak to those eager,
That quality of wisdom (Mazda) that all the wise wish
And call creative (Ahurai) 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
Between the paths before deciding
Person by person for his own self
Before greatness of the message
Is truly spread understand each one
Zarathushtra - Gatha Yasna Ha 30.2 (FR)

And these thoughts in the beginning
That opposing thought revealed
In the mind and in the words also
In the deeds and these were good and bad
And of these the wise
Rightly choose not so truly the unwise
Zarathushtra - Gatha Yasna Ha 30.3 (FR)

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References

- 1-Herodotus- The Histories, Translated by Aubery de Selincourt, Penguin Books 1959
- 2-The Divine Songs of Zarathushtra - Dr. Irach J.S. Taraporewala and Gatha translated by Mobed Firouz Azargoshasb have been used as a guide in the translation of the Gatha.

This article is in reply to the following question.

In the Gathas Ha 28 which consist of 11 verses. We notice that only once is the word Ahura Mazda mentioned together. Does the word Mazda and Ahura used alone or in a different order mean any thing different?

	TIMES	Ha's			
MAZDA	FOUR	1	5	6	7
AHURA	TWO		6	8	
MAZDA AHURA	THREE		2	10	11
AHURA MAZDA	ONE		9		
MAZDAM CHA AHUREM	ONE		3		
MAZDAO AHURAH	ONE		4		