

BLESSINGS

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- Editor

"GOD BLESS YOU!" How often have we heard and repeated this magical phrase as one human being to another. It comes out of one's heart and mouth as a spontaneous reaction of Love; Love, which is the basis and the reason for every existence. Why would God bless us? Because He loves us. He loves every little and big being of His creation. In fact, this love story starts from the beginning of all beginning.

Creation in its very beginning, at one stage, had come to a standstill because of the onslaught of evil. There was then a total discord and terrific feuds reigned supreme. This chaos caused a deadlock in the furtherance of His plan. Several paragraphs in the Fravardin Yasht refer to this great chaos. The Bible too, talks of "Unmanifested Logos" which is in Avesta "Afratat Kushi". At that stage, the Supreme Deity showered the BLESSINGS of Manthra Spenta, removed the deadlock and enabled the Divine to create this universe. This was the very first BLESSING from the Divine, which many of us may not be even aware of.

The story of His Love continues.... The universe started functioning with the three stage Ahunavar Plan to :

- Create all the regions, centers and stations of the immortal and moral worlds,
- Pass Urvans (souls like us) to the mortal worlds from spirit into matter, for the development of their spiritual powers and transmutation of Evil into Good.
- Raise them back to the immortal worlds (matter back to spirit) so that they eventually merge into Him.

In order to bring about this transmutation, the Divine gives us blessings in the forms of:

ASARE ROSHNI (Forces of Light) as against **Asare Tariki (Forces of Darkness)**.

These are blessed currents coming down upon us from the Divine, in different forms. It is said that these currents are the very breath of the 33 Yazads which was originally Ahura's breath. It is also said that these forces of light are emanated from the Yazads, when they move the seven Aasmans in the Hasti (Immortal World). This original life breath of Ahura, is blown into the chief Ameshaspand Hormazd, then into the others, and finally into Khurshed Yazad known as 'Havare', who is the representative of Spenamino. That is why Khurshed Yazad is known as VISPE HAVARE HAZOSH. The word VISPE signifies that Khurshed Yazad, endowed with such forces of light now becomes full of powerful vibrations/forces, capable of centrifugal and centripetal motions, and cannot be pulled by any other force.

When this Asare Roshni, comes down on earth, Gahambars are caused, and these Gahambars then guide the souls on this earth. Such is the function of YAZDAN (plural of YAZAD). That is why we start our prayers with "Be Namey Yazdan" invoking them to bless us with these forces of light. Such is the power of Asare Roshni, the lustre, light, that the Yazads got from Ahura and thus got exalted; now they emanate the same light thereby improving others. Thus it is said numerologically the talismanic number which represents this Asare Roshni is 1001 (10-01) which in Avesta is called "Hazangarem Vairyanaam". '10' depicts perfection, which means that Asare Roshni is perfect - completely lustrous, shining, benevolent and knowledgeable. The other '01', is almost the same but of slightly inferior light, yet under the protection of the former, completely submissive and obedient to it too. Together, 1001 make 1001 channels, create the Nisti and the Geti (Earth) and raise the souls of Nisti and Geti to perfection. Those souls, who acquire this Asare Roshni, become parallel to Nature

and earn a divine authority to guide the others and bring them up to this level. All such souls are under the jurisdiction of Sarosh Yazad, their guide is Meher Yazad, and their protector, Avan Yazad.

Hasti, which is the immortal world, comprises of nine Aasmans, The eighth and ninth Aasman are known as Minoi Duniya and the eighth Aasman is known as that of ANAGRARAOCHAO. It is supposed to be the one decorated with stars (compared to an exact replica of our Sadra) where there is a Mansion of Sarosh Yazad with 1001 pillars! Incidentally, we believe that 1001 channels of light are brought down and consecrated in our Atashbehrams, hence Atashbehrams are supposed to be Sarosh Yazad's abode. Sarosh Yazad, it is said, performed a Yazashne ceremony with **Zarathushtra Gatha** (Zarathushtra's powerful spirit and source) and appointed Asho Zarathushtra as the organizer and administrator of these Asare Roshni in the Universe. Hence Asho Zarathushtra is said to possess "Aasne Veer", the entire knowledge of the formation and Creation; and so he with the strength of his own inner power, formulated Yasnas (ceremonies) and the 33 Aalats (agency and implement) through which we consecrate and perform all our major ceremonies).

On the principle of 'as above so below' (our ceremonies on earth are mini replicas of what goes on in nature), he taught us how to consecrate an Ateshbehram, established Gaas (will be explained later) which makes connection with the 33 aalats in the 'pavikat', so that the human who observes all these, can draw these forces of light upon himself and achieve 'Ushta', perfect bliss. Such a person then possesses HARBAREZ (becomes an instrument of Sarosh). Harbarez is his Lahyan Chakra - topmost in the head where Sarosh resides. Harbarez is also a high mountain where Sarosh's mansion with 1001 pillars is built - in the eighth aasman. It simply denotes a zenith of perfection.

These Forces of Light contained in Khurshed Yazad (Sun) through the rays, seeds of which

travel in a ship-like vessel to the Moon (Mah Bokhtar). Mah Bokhtar then sends it down to the Nisti and Geti. When they come down to the Nisti, they come under Meher Yazad and are known as Meher's Swa (rays).

What then is the mystery of Avan Ardivisur with its 1001 tributaries? While the souls in Hasti are in the charge of Sarosh Yazad, those in Nisti are under Avan Ardivisur Banoo. The former helps the latter. Ardivisur is not the name of any river on earth. Ardivisur is a power or shakti of Avan Yazad which originates in the 8th aasman, flows through Hasti, Nisti, in different subtle forms, and comes into our earth as physical water; has subtle magnetic currents (frado) and is useful and indispensable for Creation on earth. Thus Ahura showers His blessings in the form of Water (Aap) of Ardivisur and the power that brings about this is called Ardivisur. Thus what Harbarez is to Sarosh Yazad, Apam Napat is to Ardivisur - both have the same number of channels (1001) - which bring about the reformation of souls. That is why when we pray to Avan Ardivisur : "येदं दे उजंघरेम वर्धयनाम उजंघरेम आपदाकरनाम".

We ask for help from the waters - that we who are incomplete (imperfect) souls, observe the path of tarikat (spiritual disciplines), by the help of the motion of '10'; and further we pray: **ढुनाम्य अंघडुषाम्य जतनम्य अशेनाम ँद जसेन्तु इभाष्यो यो ढीश.... इय**. Those pious people who were on earth at one time, are now marching toward 'Hasti' and sending help for the different graded souls for the blessings through all flowing waters. That is why we Zoroastrians should not pollute water and acknowledge its cleansing properties. Hence we do Padyab (ablution) before all ceremonies and prayers.

How do we draw these blessings of Asare Roshni and receive them? One of the ways is to pray the Niyashes to (Sun, Moon, Waters and Fire) Sun (Khurshid / Meher), Moon (Mahbokhtaor), Water (Ava) and Fire (Aatash) Niyayeshes. These are the agencies through which we do this. They demolish darkness and

feed the flame of immortality. By reciting the Niyashes, we salute them for their philanthropic selfless missions and wish that their functions may go on with full force and aspire to assist them in their noble work.

DIFFERENT FORMS OF ASARE ROSHNI

a) ASHO ZARATHUSHTRA'S GAAS

Our Paegambar Sahab has established a powerful station of MNO GAAS between Upairi and Adairi Dakhyus in the Nisti realms. In Gathas, it is known as **Gatumcha Ahurai**. From the 8th Asmaan, the forces of light, the Asare Roshni currents flow to this Gatumcha Ahurai. From there, the currents come down to the Namane Pourushasp (Cosmic North) where our prophet was born. This was our very first Pav-Mahal on earth. Our Iranshah at Udwarda attracts these currents and from there, they flow into other Atash Behrams, Agiaris and Dadgahs. Therefore our Atash Behrams are also miniature powerhouses.

When a Zarathustrian child is born, he receives currents (blessings) from this Gaas. These blessings are also showered upon the child when he is initiated into the Religion through the Navjote ceremony.

Establishing the MNO GAAS in the Nisti was one of the missions of our Paegambar Sahab, the other being to bind the demonic forces and make arrangements for the spiritual evolution of not only Zarathushtrians but others as well. There is ample evidence in the Gathas to prove that Zarathustra not only established our religion but also sowed the seeds and prepared the ground for the advent of the other Religions as well. Hence the universality of Zarathustra's teachings.

Paegambar Sahab's special blessings to his disciples were: To Jamasp to whom he revealed the knowledge of all seven 'Kaals' from the past of the past to the future of the futures, by making him smell a flower. Asfandiar was made Roohinton (body of steel) by making him drink the juice of a pomegranate. King

Gushtasp was given Hom water, which enabled him to get a glimpse of the Heaven he was going to in the Future.

b) GAHAMBAR'S CURRENTS

The necessities of life are provided by these gifts from Nature. These bring down the powers to grow, ripen the crops, etc. The six Gahambars depict the six stages of evolution of the soul and the Gahambar currents are attracted and absorbed by performing appropriate ceremonies and celebrating the **Fasl**, which is not season but the cause of seasons.

c) KARMA'S CURRENTS :

Whatever deeds we perform towards men, animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms, each and every deed, big or small, is noted in Nature and gives rise to forms. Thus we weave our own destiny. The planets affect us throughout our days on earth and so we have **Sukh and Dukh** (Happiness and Sorrow). When we first explained how Asare Roshni comes down on earth, we mentioned that the Sun (Khurshed Yazad) gives it to Mah Bokhtar (The Moon) who then sends it to us as and when we deserve, according to our Karma.

d) DHARMANA BAAP'S CURRENTS

By now we know that our souls are incomplete. Three fourth's of our soul which is liberated and resides in the Heavens is forever anxious and wishes us to improve and be liberated. For that reason it keeps sending blessings and guidance to us on earth, This is again another kind of a source for us from above, if we are fortunate enough to know how to tap it. These cascades of blissful showers rain down on earth and upon us continuously; but the question is, are we ready or fit to receive them? We have to have a Receiving Station too. The 16 chakras in our body are the receiving centers. If these charkas are open are not blocked by spiritual contagion, the external energies will fall upon and will form a complete balanced circuit with the internal energies. The amal (practice) of sudreh kushti helps us to establish this circuit.

Let us say that there is a lake amidst a mountain, which receives heavy rainfall. Rainwater will collect in the lake only if strong winds do not scatter away the moisture before it reaches the lake.

BLESSINGS FROM THE DEAR DEPARTED

Evil to evil doers, good blessing to the noble. અહમ અકાર્ઈ વંદુહમ અશેમ વંદહોવે

Ceremonies for the dead are very important and necessary for as many years as possible; at least 12 years. Muktaḍ for 18 days is not only better but necessary. There is a long explanation for this, but in a nutshell, the first 10 days, the ravans are very busy trying to break the evil shell and fight the darkness that is on earth. After the 10th day, they spend the remaining 8 days sending their blessings towards their relatives IF THE MUKTAD BEHRAS ARE THERE AND THE CEREMONIES CONTINUE TO BE PERFORMED. In the 10 days Muktaḍ, we foolishly remove them and send them back before they have had the opportunity to bless us. It is very unfortunate that people, even Mobeds, do not realize the importance of the 18 days Muktaḍ.

To remember the dead and to ask for their guidance is very much stressed upon in our Religion. We all have experienced or heard real incidents which may be called miraculous... how our dear departed have guided us in our dreams. Every time we speak of or remember a person who has passed away, his/her fravashi picks up our thought good or bad and goes to alert the soul – “such and such a person said such and such a thing about you”. The soul then gets happy or sad accordingly. Hence we should never speak ill of the dead, no matter how true it may have been and every time we remember them, we should recite an Ashem Vohu. The soul realizes this little prayer sent for it and sends down its blessings.

EARTHLY BLESSINGS

The word for blessings in Avesta is Daham Afriti. Angle Mino Ashishavangh is in charge of Daham Afriti.

What do Ashirwads do? At first they bind a person in earthly love/ attraction. Then these very blessings help to transmute these worldly attractions into spiritual love. in the same way, a mother's love is such that it strives to make the child happy in material ways, then motivates him to look towards spiritual progress.

It is said that the Ameshaspands and the Yazads have spiritual attraction for Ahura Mazda. (The mystery of Hudamem: એકજ દમના થઈને રહેવું)

Such Divine Love is brought down on earth in Mother's Love. Therefore we can say that the love a Mother has for her child is an echo of the divine love that is of God for His Creation. So important it is to please our Mother and get her blessings, that Firdausi writes: “જીવનકે સરાએ મવેદન અસ્ત, બઝીરે કાફોપાયે માદરાન અસ્ત”.

“Heaven which men try to search is under the feet of their mothers.” This is why, woman who are mothers enjoy a very exalted position in Nature. The obligation we have to our parents is such that we can only repay them by performing their ceremonies after they pass away. Parents do not perform merely their earthly duties towards their offsprings; but continue to bless them even from the Other Side.

“That the whole universe is living on the strength of the blessings of Ahura Mazda is a pure fact unchallenged. The woe we suffer is a thousand times less than what it ought to be, judging from the standard of our past and present deeds and the happiness that we enjoy is a thousand times more than we deserve. This is a general fact. But an extra fact is that the blessings from the heart of our parents and our ancestors living and dead both make a nation or a community or a person what it or he appears to be. It is hence that the blessings of the live parents are to be invoked on the great occasions of marriage, birth and some achievement - without which the extra help is impossible. It is hence that the blessing of the departed are to be invoked for the upkeep of

the morals, virtues and happiness of the community.”

Then there are the blessings of our teachers, gurus, and elders. It is said that in our culture, one would never start a new venture or go on a journey without the blessings of our elders.

We have already talked about the blessings a child gets during his Navjote. It is said that the entire Yazadic Anjuman arrives and blesses the child during the initiation ceremony. The marriage ceremony includes all kinds of Nupital Benedictions (Ashirwad) too.

'Daham Afriti' is a kind of very special blessings given in very rare cases in our present times. Our Ustad Saheb Behramshah

Shroff was blessed with this by the Holy Abeds of Demavand; so was Dr. Saheb Faramroze Chiniwalla, his ace disciple, who penned the knowledge of Ilm-e-Kshnoom in more than 25,000 printed pages and some thousands more, yet to be printed.

We have heard elders blessing their children, dear ones and friends with Health, Wealth and Prosperity. On New Year or Birthday greeting cards, are all kinds of good wishes. Out of all these, the best one could wish for and bless with is this : “May you fulfill your incarnation on earth”. So here's wishing you all, each one of you dear readers, a Happy Naoroz and a fresh start and something to look forward to in the coming year.