

DOES GATHA 30-2 TELL US TO THINK OUT AND "CHOOSE" THE TRUTH?

Non-Saintly Human Mind, Incapable of Grasping Nature's Truths.

Prophets Command - They do not Give a Choice!

God's world is so curious. A small negligible event can result in a big catastrophe. Modern Science has encountered what is known as Chaos-theory or Chaology. Its emblem is the "butterfly effect", which implies that fluttering of a butterfly wing today in Peking can give rise to a chain of effects that will produce a violent storm next month in New York. Often a small incident gives rise to a chain of reasoning in somebody's head and the whole world changes. An apple fell before Newton (some say, it fell on his head) and within the next 300 years, man threw an atom bomb killing 80,000 people in one second and put a man on the moon.

Something like this happened to us, the Parsis. In the year 1754, a twenty years young French scholar of Oriental languages in Paris happened to see a fascimile of four leaves written in curious looking ancient letters and within the next 200 years the Parsi Community started tolling the bells of its extinction.

The French Scholar was Anquetil Duperron; the four leaves he saw were the fascimiles of **Vendidad**.

One Englishman George Boucher had in 1718 obtained a copy of the full text of Vendidad-e-Sadeh from the Parsis in Surat. This was brought to England in 1723 by another Englishman, Richard Cobbe. The manuscript was hanged by an iron-chain on the wall of Bodelean Library, perhaps as a tourist attraction. The four leaves which Duperron saw was fascimiled from this manuscript.

As the collective Karma of the Parsi Community ordained, Duperron was ignited with unbearable curiosity. He became a sailor on a ship of the French Indian Company, arrived at Bombay, managed to get the help of the French Government, wandered around the Parsis of Navsari and Surat, gathered extensive materials, left India in 1761 with 180 manuscripts, and in 1777 exposed the Parsi Religion to the Scholars of Europe, by publishing a Book in two Volumes, with a 54 words long title.

Thus started the European Scholarship of our Religion. We Parsis were (and are) very much lured by it. We were proud that our Religion was so great as to attract the attention of Europeans, who were demi-gods for us. We fell into the habit of glorifying the European studies. Little did we know what we were doing.

No doubt, the European scholars had worked very hard in developing their theories of etymology, grammar, syntax, general philology and the 'science' (as they thought to be) of words and languages, ancient and modern. But the most lethal trait of these theories is their acute uncertainty - too acute to be termed as scientific. For instance a single passage from the Gatha is translated by several translators in violently variant ways. A student lost in this jungle is not trying to find out what Asho Zarathushtra might have said, but what a scholar Mr. S-1 in his own whim, thought what He said. And S-1 is so different from each of S-2 to (say) S-45 that the jungle becomes frightfully dense and ghostly. Any sincere student will arrive at the inevitable conclusion that there is no sense in trying to understand the original message of the Holy Prophet as stated to have been laid down in the Gatha. (Mary Boyce said this). The uncertainty reaches its climax when it is not even certain whether the Gatha was really spoken or "sung" (as they say) by Asho Zarathushtra Himself. They were NOT, as Max Muller relying on his own thinking and the researches of Darmesteter, wrote.

DEVILISH EGO OF THE 19TH CENTURY

There is a peculiar undercurrent in this smoky cloud of uncertainties. The European studies originated in the 18th Century and thrived in the 19th. Those were the centuries, when the Western thinking was caught in the devilish grip of defiant egoism. We humans, with our glittering brains, were the supreme and final product of Darwinian evolution, so it was declared; our intellect is capable of torturing Nature to reveal its machineries. (One of the pioneers of this thinking, Bacon, was a prosecutor and torturer of witches). This 19th century paradigm stuck the European studies of all Religions. What was Religion, after all? It was a product of human fear and primitive thinking. It was far away from our "progressive" and "scientific" thinking. That is why

there are cows and camels, horses and donkeys and such absurdities in the sacred books of the East.

PARSI SCRIPTURES - SO "SCIENTIFIC"

But the Scholars of the Zoroastrian Scriptures flattered us, the Parsis. They said to the effect that Zoroaster was the only Prophet, who said what this 19th Century was saying, namely that the human intellect was supreme and capable of thinking out Nature's secrets. It can arrive at the truth, and therefore it was free to choose. This so called banner of "intellectual freedom of choice" flew at full mast in these winds of ego and faithlessness.

They said, this intellectual supremacy of the humans was defined and declared by Zoroaster in Gatha, Haa 30-2.

We Parsis were tickled. See how "Scientific" was our Religion.

Every Western and West oriented scholar took up this paradigm and tried all exertions to infuse this meaning in 30-2, and in the process, not only twisted and tortured the Avesta words but also traversed into extreme illogicality.

THE GREAT SCHOLAR, BARTHOLOMAE

In the last century, Christian Bartholomae's translation of the Gatha was believed to be the most authentic. He was an erudite scholar of greatest merit and most painstaking exertions. His Dictionary of Avesta words is a great philological exercise equal to none other. But we have to keep in mind the stark fact that he was nurtured in the same 19th century egoistic thinking, and therefore his translations were bound to be heavily influenced by it. Following is the text of the first two lines of Haa 30-2 with Bartholomae's translation.

1. Sraotaa Geyushaish Vahishtaa
Avaenataa Soocha Mananghahaa

2. Avereynaao Vichithahya
Nareym Nareym Khakhya-i Tanuye

"Hear with your ears the best things; look upon them with clear seeing thought for decision between two beliefs each man for himself."

Two requisites are laid down: (i) hear "best things" and (ii) "look upon them with clear-seeing thought." The first question that arises is, how are the listeners to decide what is best? What materials they have to discriminate between good, better and best? Why should they just believe that what Zoroaster says is the best?

The audience which Zoroaster is supposed to face here is mostly hostile; because as the Western Studies themselves declare, His times were very very bad. Haa 29-1 is supposed to be the cry of ox-soul or earth-soul that there was "violence and rapine (and) savegery" and "outrage and might" (Barth), and that there was no "herdsman". This means, the humans had sold themselves to the devil; they had gone frightfully astray. They had heard the voice of the devil by their ears and adopted it as the "best things". What is the sense in telling them, "hear best things"? " We have already heard and adopted what we consider by our free will to be the best" - they could well say.

"LOGICALLY" FEASIBLE?

The second requisite is subject to a similar objection. "Look upon the best things with clear-seeing thought". The whole difficulty is that they have already seen the devil's workshop with clear thought; and have already adopted it as the best, with a thought which they with their free will, think to be clear-seeing.

How can a Prophet of God, who has come to tell the humans that they are alarmingly on the wrong track, ask them to follow their own free will and choose by themselves? They would shout in a chorus, "We have already chosen, you go home, Sir." A Messenger of God has to command the humans to do certain things and not to do certain other things. He has to say you are sold to the devil! Wake up! Come back on the path of God. You have been deceived. If you do not abandon the devil's path and switch over to God's, you are doomed. And that is what, according to those Western translations themselves, Zoroaster

says in Gatha Haa 45-3:

" I will speak of that which Mazdah Ahura, the all knowing revealed to me first in this (earthly) life. **"Those of you that put not in practice this word as I think and utter it, to them shall be woe at the end of life" (Barth).**

THAT should be the language of a Prophet. Do as I say or be doomed. Where, is the alleged free will or freedom of choice? Is it that in 30-2 the Prophet is addressing an audience which has abandoned devil's ways? If so, no address is necessary; they are already with the Prophet. No question of choosing! Choice is already made.

It is therefore obvious that 30-2 is in serious contradiction to 45-3. Both cannot be in the same songs. Therefore **there is something radically wrong with the translations of 30-2.** 45-3 does sound like the Prophet's language. Moses had Ten **Commandments**. Christ had **Sermon** on the Mount. Mohammad sternly warns those who go astray from the Path of God. Gatha does the same.

"FOLLOW ME AND GO NEARER TO GOD"

To go a step further, a Prophet has not merely to warn against going astray; He has to declare what benefits will be reaped by treading on the Path of God. **"The aim of your life on earth is to go nearer and nearer to God. Life is sacred; it is a holy pilgrimage on this Mother Earth. Follow the ways prescribed by God and declared by Me as His Messenger. Obey His divine commands, as I am teaching you. Then and then only you will attain divine perfection and immortality. Only the way of God is the way of Truth. Follow me, without doubt and with full Faith, and you will attain salvation, liberation, Mukti, Frashogard."** THAT (and not 'Choose as you like') can be the only Divine message emanating from a Divine Messenger. And that, according to these very Western Translations, is the Message in Gatha Haa 45-5:

"I will speak of that which (He), the holiest declared to me as the word that is best for mortals **to obey**; while he said, **they who for my sake render him obedience, shall all attain unto Welfare and Immortality** by the actions of the Good Spirit - He Mazdah Ahura. (Barth as translated from German by Dr. Taraporewala).

OBEY Me and attain Perfection and Immortality. (Haurvataat and Amereytaat) - (45-5); and don't follow me and be doomed (45-3). Where is the freedom of Will and Choice?

PHILOLOGICAL JUGGLERIES

The above translation of 30-2 is Bartholomae's as given by Dr. Taraporewala in his "Divine Songs of Zarathushtra" (page 135). As usual, other translations are at variance with it and with each other. "Vahishtaa" means "the best", for all translators, but there are differences as to what "best" is talked about in the passage.

Bartholomae and Moulton have taken "the best (things)". For Kangaji, it is "best (admonitions)"; for Mills, "with best (thought)"; for Spiegel, just "the best"; for Poonegar, "in the best way"; for Taraporewala, "the highest (truths)"; for Baheramgore, 'the best' goes with "Soochaa Managhahaa" which means "inspiring divine intelligence". The most natural way is to take "Vahishtaa" with "Geushaish" and say "Listen with best ears". But that the majority scholars don't do. Ears are ears; how can there be good, better and best ears? That perhaps is their rationale. But in translating, one must be faithful to the original. The deadly difficulty was that every translator wanted to stick to that notorious notion of supremacy of human intellect and freedom of the mind to arrive at the truth and to 'choose'. Hence attempts to twist. So, "Soochaa Managhahaa" is to be brought down to the level of the ordinary human mind. Thus Taraporewala gave the meaning "mind illumined"; Kanga and Poonegar, "bright intellect". Baheramgore gave the meaning "divine intelligence", but in his prologue talks of 'free will' and says that the Prophet asks his listeners to follow the creed of their own choice. Again, the question arises: how can the Prophet ask those, who are already in the devil's workshop, as having bright or illumined or divine intellect? They have already chosen their way, the way of devil. Their minds are exactly opposite of bright or illumined or divine. What is required is the proclamation that remove the darkness of your devilish minds; come back, you fools, on the Path of God, or face the doom. That is 45-3.

There is another word 'Avaenataa' which, poor thing, is tortured. Its root is admitted to be in "see", yet Taraporewala says 'consider', Kangaji says "ponder". There is a world of difference between 'see' and 'ponder'. You see a thing and say here it is. You ponder over a thing which you don't see.

THE MESSAGE DIVINE

I am not going any further in these scholastic juggleries. The point is that this passage is no declaration of the mental supremacy of a non-saintly human or the alleged free to choose bogey. If anything, it talks about the higher intelligence and higher consciousness, which a human being is required to achieve and attain. To do this, he is required to follow faithfully and doubtlessly, the Path of God, as prescribed and specified by Him through His Prophets. Left to itself, a human mind is inclined towards evil. If you give it liberty to choose, it is sure to choose evil. It is to be commanded to abandon the Path of evil and develop in it a higher consciousness, a higher level of probing into the unknown regions of Nature and seeing them with the evolved eyes of the mind. THAT is what is said in 30-2.

"Each of you hear through your Internal ears (i.e. the centres of spiritual energies in you - the Chakras ("Geushaish Vahishtaaa") ("Geushaish" is in plural and not in dual number although "each man for himself" is referred to.)

Follow the divine prescriptions with all the Faith at your command. (*Avernaao Vichithahya*). And thereby develop the illumined consciousness within you, (*Soocha Manangahaa*). So that you can directly see, with your expanded and enlightened vision, (*Avaenataa*) the Great Events of pre-cosmogenesis (para mazey yaonghaho) and thus realise the Divine Secret of Existence and the ultimate divine aim of every soul. (*Ney Sazdiyai baodanto paiti*)."

This is the divine message of Haa 30-2 as revealed by Dr. Saheb Faramroz Chiniwala of Ilm-e-Khshnoom. To advise the feeble minded humans to arrive at the truth through their own devilish thinking is to provide a monkey with ultra-sharp razors. He will bleed himself and others, crimson red. That is what the "progressive intellectualism" of 19th century has done to humanity.

The most bizarre thing which has happened to humanity is that those 19th century notions about the supremacy of the human mind have been mercilessly shattered by the same branch of science which gave birth to it viz. Physics. Every pioneer of 20th century physics was a mystic. Jeans, Eddington, Schrodinger, Heisenberg, Pauli – all of them believed that the human intellect was too incapable and incompetent to grasp the deep reality of Nature. Every saint, sage, Prophet, Avataar said so. Can it be that Asho zarathushtra was not aware of this Truth?

- CANDOUR

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