

# GAHAMBAR – A CURTAIN RAISER

[In 2006-07 we are to celebrate the Xnoom Centenary Year when special events are being organized during each Gahambar. We give below a translation of the article on Gahambar as it appeared in Frashogard magazine Vol. 31 Nos.1-2 (July-Dec. 1941) to give our readers a bird's eye view of the concept of Gahambars as revealed by Xnoom. We trust this will be of immense interest especially to the youth of the community. Translated by Mr. Minoo Irani for our esteemed reader - Editor]

Ordinarily, the members of our community have a very superficial and tentative idea about 'Gahambar'. Just as Navjote means wearing sudreh and kustī; "Marriage" means showering blessings on the married couple; "Firetemple" means a place where fire is kept burning by wood/sandalwood and where prayers are recited; "Dokhme-nashini" means a place where dead bodies are put for vultures to eat; these are superficial and very base ideas, and an ordinary Parsi is not at all aware of the intricacies and the spirituality involved in these matters, their connection with the soul and its progress in the spiritual realms. In the same way "GAHAMBAR" for them means going to "Elahibaug" and eating dal, rice, chapāti - besides which they have no notion of what it is.

## GAHAMBAR – WHAT IS IT?

The esoteric and deeper meaning of Gahambar and its exposition has been given by late Dr. Framroze Chiniwalla in his two books 'Nikiz-e'-vehdin.' volume's 1 & 2 and it is recommended to look through the index for this topic and read the same. Besides, a lot of material has appeared about Gahambar in the "Frashogard" issues and the "Silver Jubilee Volume" published by "Zathosti Radih Society" and therefore it is not necessary to repeat the same here. In this article we shall take a brief idea of what Gahambar is, and pay special attention to the prayers offered and the reason for publicly celebrating the occasion and holding community dinner during the gahambar days.

## GAHAMBAR AND THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING IT

There are twelve constellations (Signs) of the Zodiac in nature which operates on the

eighth plane of the "MINOI" world also known as "Anagra Raochao". The abode of 'Mino Aneran', and where the dual energies of "Khordad" and fire energy known as "Atash-e'-Berejo Savangah" are active and which is the original heaven for beginning of existence of all souls.

Further, there are seven planets which revolve with their own fire energies in the starry heavens of the HASTI regions and which by their incessant revolutions create conditions for the two worlds of NISTI region, namely "ARVAHI" and "JIRMANI" (JHIRUM) to progress towards the state of "FRASHOGARD" (Eternal Peace), and which send special energy currents which continuously provide nourishment to "GEUSH URVAN" and "GEUSH-TASHAN" the 'Soul' and 'Divine Wisdom' of our earth for its progress towards Eternal Bliss.

Each of these seven planets have their own exalted sign; thus : Sun's exalted sign is Aires;

Moon's exalted sign is Taurus; Jupiter's exalted sign is Cancer; Mercury's exalted sign is Virgo; Saturn's exalted sign is Libra; Mars' exalted sign is Capricorn and Venus' exalted sign is Pisces.

When the sun who is the Emperor amongst all planets enters its own sign Aires, its luster is increased manifold and it showers beneficial currents throughout the entire Universe. This event is known to usher in "Jamshedi Navroz" which, along with the first seven days of the seven Ameshaspands is known as "Fasl-e Khaas" and which occasion is considered more exalted than "GAHAMBAR". When the Sun passes through the exalted signs of the other six planets, it spreads the beneficial currents left behind by these planets throughout the

Universe. This occasion is known as GAHAMBAR and there are six such Gahambars during the whole year. Further, each sign of Zodiac is divided into thirty degrees. When the Sun passes through the particular degrees where the planets attain their maximum point of exaltation, of that sign, those days are known as Gahambar days. The first two Gahambars "MAIDYOZAREM" and "MAIDYOSHAHEM" fall during the Zoroastrian months, "Ardibehest" and "Tir" i.e. when the Sun passes through the eleventh to fifteenth degree of the second and fourth signs of the Zodiac. Therefore the Gahambar days of these two months are from "Khorshed" roz to "Daepemeher" roz, which are the eleventh to fifteenth days of the month respectively. Similarly the third and fourth Gahambars, "Paitishahem" and "Aiyathrem" occur when the Sun passes through twenty six to thirty degrees of the Sixth and the Seventh signs of the Zodiac and therefore the Gahambar days are from "Astad" roz to "Aneran" roz of the sixth and seventh months of the Zoroastrian calendar, namely "Shaerewar" and "Meher"

Thereafter when the sun passes through the 10 sign Capricorn of the zodiac, the 5 Gahambar "Maidyarem" falls in the month "Dae"-the 10 month of the Zoroastrian calendar. The Gahambar days are considered from the 16 to the 20 days i.e. from Meher roj to Behram roj when the sun passes through the 16 to 20 degrees of constellation Capricorn.

Finally the 6 and the last Gahambar of the year "Hamaspahmaedem" falls during the five Gatha days when the sun passes through the last Zodiacal sign Pisces.

Thus the twelve signs of the zodiac are related to the twelve months of the zoroastrian calendar, because of which the six Gahambars are considered during the 2,4,6,7,10 & 12 months when the sun passes through the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4, 6, 7, 10 & 12 sign of the zodiac respectively, through the particular degrees of each sign.

#### **"GAHAMBAR" - IT'S IMPORTANT FUNCTION IN CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE**

After having seen how the Gahambars are arranged in nature, let us now see how these

6 Gahambars play their role in helping the entire Creation progress towards "Frashogard" i.e. (Eternal Peace) - providing incessant munificent beneficial currents of the White Side of nature to the evanescent world of matter (Nisti) - maintaining the Divine law of "Asha" throughout the Universe - helping in the evolution of the six perceptible creations namely ether, water, earth, vegetation, animal & man having their origin in the spiritual worlds and known as Zarwan (time cycles), Aap (divine waters), subtle earthy element, eternal tree of life, Gav Spenta, the divine energy of the white side of nature working in animals and Nar Ashvans (highly spiritually evolved men). Bearing in mind this fact, we shall now consider the different types of beneficial currents of each sign of the zodiac showered by the six Gahambars on the entire creation.

#### **Nourishment provided by each Gahambar**

During the 1st Gahambar "Maidyozarem" such currents or energies are showered and transmitted to earth which are necessary for spreading greenery and rejuvenating the physical and spiritual constituents of life on earth, and by which the power to SPROUT is imparted to the seeds. These currents are known in Avesta as "Payangaha"- nourishing milk, and in Persian as "Kuvvat-e-Gajja" i.e. The power to grow. These currents charge the entire physical and spiritual creations of nature with energy to "spring" and the spring season is thus heralded on different places on earth as and when they absorb these currents during the revolution of the earth.

Similarly during the 5 days of "Maidyoshahem" which is the 2nd Gahambar, the energy required to GROW which is vital for life, is provided, known in Persian as "Kuvvat-e-Namia"- the power to grow and expand. In Avesta it is known as "Vastro Datyen"- the law of fertility or bearing fruits. The sun's rays spread. These currents which bring about fertility in the entire cosmos, and provide conditions to bring about the next season on

earth namely the monsoon season during which the soil is provided with nourishment so that sowing can be done. The earth during its revolution spreads this energy which is absorbed by different places on earth at the proper time and experience hot & rainy conditions bringing about growth of grass, fodder, grain etc.

The 3rd Gahambar - Paitishahem, brings about the power in things to take shape and form. In the Avesta text of "Visperad" it is known as "Haya-ya"- heat and form. Different types of heat energies as required by things according to their nature are showered on earth by the sun's rays during this period. This energy is absorbed by different places on earth according to their needs at the proper time depending upon their location on earth. This phenomenon is governed by the Law of Rapithwan. It is to be noted that currents showered during the Gahambar days benefit not only the life on earth but also help the various creations in the cosmos which are in different stages of Involution and Evolution and also assists all souls who are in different stages of Infoldment and Unfoldment.

The 4th Gahambar "Aiyathrem" falls during the zoroastrian calendar month of Meher, when the sun passes through the constellation Libra and brings about in its wake "Kuvvat-e-Muvaladya"- the power to form kernel and flesh in Fruits, vegetables etc. In the Avesta text of Visperad it is known as "Fra-u-vishtra-varashni-Hareshtaischa"- FORMATION of soft fleshy parts similar to the formation of fetus by the union of man and woman. When these currents are showered on earth it is harvest time for different places on the globe according to their geographic location. Grain, fruits and nuts get ready for harvesting heralding the setting of autumn. This 4th Gahambar provides spiritual nourishment and energy to souls helping them in their evolutionary progress.

The important 5th Gahambar "Maidyarem" falls during the Dae month of the zoroastrian calendar when the sun progresses through the sign Capricorn and brings about in its advent "Kuvvat-e-Kharid Farokht"- the process of BUYING & SELLING. This is the time for the soul to receive its due according to its karma

of past deeds, which is the immutable law of nature and by which the entire creation is governed. As is in the case of present humanity, the soul reaches the stage when it has to fulfil its obligations towards other souls in a just manner, i.e. it has to give others their proper and rightful due and at the same time receive from others what is due to it. In other words it has to bear the fruits for its deeds either good or bad and thus receive either punishment for the sins or reward for the good deeds of the past lives, during interaction with others. During this Gahambar the soul of each human during its life on earth, draws the appropriate currents, which make him partake of food suitable to its needs, and undergoes the experiences in life according to its stage of evolution. In the Avesta texts of Yazashne and Visperad these currents are termed as "Kuvvat-e-Sared"-distribution and division of various types of currents according to one's destiny. The soul after fulfilling its obligations towards others in this manner, gets ready for its progress of return journey towards its final destination in Hasti region from where it had initially started. There are two stages during this journey namely "Ya-I-rai- and Sared" of which the soul after passing the Sared stage enters the "Ya-I-rai" stage on its return journey of merger with Ahuramazda. The currents of "Maidyarem" Gahambar provides necessary nourishment to the soul which helps it in achieving "GOLDEN MEAN" i.e. Maintaining the balance between its elemental (Anasar) and ethereal (Urvanic) constituents. This Gahambar brings in its wake "Fasal-e- Zamestan" i.e. Winter season according to the latitude and longitude of the place. The currents of this Gahambar helps the soul to fulfill its mutual obligations according to the Law of Retribution and finally raising its consciousness to the level when it yearns to be one with the Creator.

The five holy gatha days are the days of the 6 and the last Gahambar "Hamas-path-maedem". It has connection with the 18 days of Muktd and occurs when the sun passes through the 12th sign Pisces. The currents

showered over the entire cosmos during the last days of the last month Spendarmard known as Fravrdegan days provides the energy known as "Kuvvat-e- Ereto-Karethna" as per the Avesta text of Visperad. The sun spreads this energy whilst passing through this sign, which is the exalted sign of Venus. This energy puts the soul on the straight path to be in the company of "Masters' known as 'Ardafravash' or the 'White Brotherhood'. The energy left behind by Venus whilst passing through its exalted sign are known as "Johar-e' Mufarrad" and "Aab-e'-Muffarad" To draw these currents, the Zoroastrian religion has prescribed performing such exalted ceremonies as Tackchian, Afringhan, Baaj, Farokhshi, Stum, Yazashne', Vendidad, Gatha prayers, Laakh prayers, reciting prayers in the honour of Sarosh and Ashaunam souls, Ameshaspands etc. The stoat vibrations of these prayers draw these currents of "Ereto-Karethna" and it is thus ordained in our Din to perform these special prayers during Fravardegan days of this Gahambar, because these currents help the soul of the dead in its progress towards the heavenly plane of "Atar-e'-Minokarko", where it can unite with its counterpart and become a whole soul. By receiving this 'Ereto-Karethna' energy, the soul passes through the evanescent world of Nisti region and gets ready to enter the permanent Divine world of Hasti. Symbolically speaking the soul successfully passes the exams of this earthly school and the college of Nisti thereafter qualifying to enter the University of Hasti.

### GAHAMBAR - HEXAGONAL BASIS OF THE UNIVERSE

Gahambers are thus the means to help the souls and all creations of Nature in their six stage progress and evolution. Gahambers keep on occurring due to the combined effect of the motions of the 12 signs and the 7 planets. The divine science of Xnoom explains and elucidates according to Mazdayasni Din, the soul's journey from its abode in the realms of Hasti region to the material world and back to Hasti. As explained in the Din; at the start of Cosmo

genesis the souls involve and infold on their journey from the Hasti through the evanescent world of Nisti where they take up the anasari (4 elements) bodies to be born on the physical plane of this earth, all the time striving to convert the stigma of Druj attached to it into Gav. This happens during the first four Gahambar. During the 5 and 6 Gahambar the souls unfold and evolve after fulfilling their karmic obligations over a span of several lifetimes and finally go back to Hasti.

This process takes place according to the Law of Mazdadat as proclaimed by our prophet Zarathushtra in the Zarthosti Din. This thus is in a nutshell the functions of six Gahambar and their role in the evolution of the entire Creation.

### **GREAT ADVANTAGE FOR THOSE PARTICIPATING IN COMMUNITY DINNER DURING GAHAMBAR DAYS - HOW AND WHY?**

Besides as explained above, there are many other deeper meanings contained in Gahambar, and every Gahambar has connection with the lofty liturgical ceremonies such as 1. Nirangdin 2. Hamayast 3. Paasta 4. Getikharid 5. Invocation of Aryaman and 6. To develop the powers of Saok & Ashi. It is for this reason that it is the duty of every Parsi Zoroastrian to celebrate the Gahambar. All ceremonies performed during the Gahambar days - Yazashne', Visparad, Vandidad, Baaj, Farokhshi, Afringan, Stum and other ceremonies performed within the precincts of Fire Temple has to be performed and the consecrated articles of food has to be partaken by those present - public dinners have to be held and all members of the community should be invited - Gahambar should be eaten by self and others invited to do the same. It is the duty of every co-religionist no matter however poor he may be to give his share either in cash or kind or if even that is not possible, to present himself and mentally attune with the ceremonies. By partaking the consecrated items of food one gets the opportunity to draw within oneself the

above mentioned beneficial seasonal currents and if it is in one's fate, there is a likelihood of getting the scattered particles of one's soul from the grains, pulses, fruits, dry fruits, vegetables etc. used in the preparation of Gahambar dinner. Thus these community dinners provide a golden opportunity for the rapid progress of the evolution of one's own soul. This can be compared to a situation where a person bids for an item in an auction and if lucky is able to get the same or whilst strolling in a marketplace one sights by chance an article wanted by him and buys it.

### **PARSIS SHOULD CELEBRATE GAHAMBAR - IF NECESSARY BY TAKING A HOLIDAY**

If one has attended the Gahambar dinner and observed the enthusiasm with which the poor eat the food, one can get an idea of how eagerly they must be looking forward to the occasion. When rich or poor high or low rub shoulders and sit at the same table to dine,

*With Best Compliments From*

**PERCY & KAIZAD**

**ROADLINES PVT. LTD.**

*Transport Contractors & Fleet Owners*

**CONTRACTORS OF :**

Godrej & Boyce Mfg. Co. Ltd.,

Godrej GE Appliances Ltd.

Krup Industries (India) Ltd.

**Daily & Direct Service To :**

Maharashtra, M. P., U. P., Rajasthan,  
Haryana & Delhi, Chandigarh & Punjab.

**: Registered Office :**

111, Trapinex House, 1st Floor,  
Sholapur Street, BOMBAY - 400 009.

**: Telephones :**

(Office) 2371 8679 - 2372 7831

2374 0913 - 2377 4531

(Mobile) 98200 77300

(Resi.) 2281 5674 - 2281 2885

(Fax) 2371 8679

a sense of equality and brotherhood prevails because the pride of personal status and position is set-aside for the time being. This attitude of mind brings out the qualities of humbleness and humility, which is a step forward in evolution of one's soul. The Parsi sethias of yore had appreciated and understood this fact and Gahambar were held regularly with the help of their magnanimous donations. As an added advantage these dinners largely helped to maintain unity amongst the community and provide a platform for the sethias to intervene and settle the disputes among the less fortunate brethren thereby averting ugly situations. Nobody utters or writes a word against the dinners and parties held at Freemason's meetings or weddings or picnics but when it comes to Gahambar sections of the community who call themselves 'reformists' show their disgust, in the same manner as they show their dislike towards Dokhme' Nashini, marriage and navjote ceremonies, fire temples, religious ceremonies and other institutions of the Zoroastrian faith thereby making futile efforts to shake the Massive Pillars of our religion. Their attitude towards Gahambar is an attempt to shake and uproot one more pillar of the Din. Alas!

Only if Parsis realized the importance of Gahambar and celebrated at least one of the five days of each Gahambar during the whole year by reciting prayers, holding community dinners, entertainment programmes, sports meets, etc., with the same zeal and enthusiasm as they celebrated Jamshedi Navroz, Khordad saal, Meherangan etc. We get holidays for Holi,

Diwali, Raksha Bandhan, Good Friday, Christmas, Muharram, Id but these holidays neither helps us in spiritual evolution nor improves our worldly Position. Instead if even one day of each Gahambar is declared a holiday in Parsi schools, offices and establishments and encourage the children and the staff to participate in Gahambar celebrations; it would go a long way in cultivating 'Parsipanu' and 'Zarthostipanu' in the community. But no! The present day spirit of the Age is inclined against such movement so that the Parsis are showing dislike towards Parsi culture, religious ceremonies, Gahambar dinners etc. This has resulted in spreading immorality, faithlessness and atheistic attitude, which will surely take the community to the brink of disaster and ruin.

This article is a Bird's eye view of the Gahambars. There are detailed writings in Pehelvi literature. Those who have read the 'Afrin - e- Gahambar' will realise its importance. Amongst other things it is mentioned in the Afrin, that whosoever does not attune with, neglects to celebrate, does not partake of food or avoids taking part in the celebrations; is committing a grievous sin as it tantamounts to 'Breach Of Nature's Law'.

Let us hope and pray that the 'educated' leaders of our community turn their attention towards the teachings of our religion in the light of Kshnoom and stop adopting such attitude which would destroy whatever little faith is left and respect they have for the religion in their hearts. May the Fravashi of Lord Zarthushtra and the holy Abeds continue to protect the Parsi community. Amen!

#### FAME

They who neglect their social duties for their individual life fall into darkness; and those who sacrifice their individuality for social popularity fall into the greater darkness.

- *Ishopanishad*

\* \* \* \* \*

Fame, to an ambitious, is like salt water to the thirsty.  
The more one gets, the more he wants.

- *Elbers*