

## JADIRANA'S BOWL OF MILK -

### MIXED WITH SUGAR OR ENRICHED WITH A RING.

Now and then, we come across a writer/lecturer mentioning that when we came to India from Iran, Jadirana the ruling king of Sanjan, in order to test us, sent to us a bowl of milk, filled to the brim, and we returned the same by adding sugar in it. This part of sugar being added is obviously not correct (for various reasons), for it was the golden ring which our chief and High Priest Naryosang Dhaval, took from his finger and slipped it in the bowl. Those who are in favour of mix-marriages and of mixture by conversion in the community find the part of sugar very convenient to quote, stating that we should allow other outside communities to enter and gets mixed with us, whereby we will be lending sweetness to them, as we did to the bowl of milk.

The golden ring in the bowl of milk gave the message in reply to Jadirana, that although your country is full to the brim, with your people, who are pure as milk - we, who are as precious as gold, will live in the corner of your kingdom by ourselves, as the ring lying at the bottom of the bowl, without overflowing it. Ring maintains a separate identity by itself.

We have written about this episode in Dini-Avaz Vol. No. 6 No. 5 - Sept. - Oct. 1981, under the heading "No Sugar, it was Ring." by Adi Doctor, We once again refer to the same topic written by Mr. Noshir Dadrawala. - Ed}

According to the "Qissa-e-Sanjan," the early Zoroastrians did not merely come as refugees, with the intention of seeking political or social asylum. The latter they could have obtained in any other country. Their primary

object was the preservation of their Zoroastrian Identity and Faith, and the pilgrim fathers were well aware of the fact that this lofty objective would be defeated in any other country. In fact, Bahman Kekobad clearly states in the "Qissa-e-Sanjan" that - "There was among them a learned Dastur, who was an able astrologer, who had found from old almanacs that our stay there (Iran) was to come to an end. (The Dastur advised) if we wish to leave this country we must at once move out of it, otherwise we shall come to grief..... It would therefore, be better if leaving the demons and the infidels, we proceed to India".

Thus, it can be seen from the above that every move made by our pious and God-fearing pilgrim fathers, was pre-planned and pre-meditated.

The "Qissa-e-Sanjan" which is the one and only historical record (concerning the advent of the Parsees in India) available with us today, states that after sailing from the port Hormazd, the Parsees first landed on the island of Div. However, finding the climate unsuitable, they moved southwards (after staying in Div for nineteen years) towards the shores of Sanjan.

It is said that after landing in Sanjan "Dasturan-Dastur" Naryosang Dhaval, accompanied by a few other Zoroastrian priests, paid a visit to the court of King Jadirana. After showering benedictions and placing a few presents before him the leader of the delegation said, "We have heard that you are a very kind and generous ruler. We have left our motherland in order to preserve our religion. Kindly give us shelter." Upon hearing

this, the King laid down five conditions, on the basis of which he would consider providing shelter to them.

The five conditions laid down by Jadirana were as follows :

1. That the religion of Zarathustra be explained to him at length;
2. That they give up their mother tongue and adopt the language of the region (Gujarati);
3. That the ladies adopt the dressing styles of the local women (i.e., Sarees, bangles etc.,)
4. That they put down all their weapons; and
5. That the marriage ceremony should be performed as per the local customs.

Since none of the above conditions were found either humiliating or damaging to the religion, they were unanimously approved and accepted by the Parsis.

By this time the King had already made up his mind to provide sanctuary to these illustrious and dedicated band of Zoroastrians. However, as a final test the courtiers urged the king to place before Naryosang Dhaval, without any comment, a bowl filled to the brim with milk. This gesture symbolised the fact that Jadirana's land was like the bowl of milk - already filled to the brim. The question therefore was, where would the Parsis find a place in it?

As if in reply, the wise and pious "Dastur" took off a gold ring from his fingers and without any comment, gently dropped the ring into the bowl, without spilling a single drop of milk. This gesture in return symbolized the fact that just as the gold ring had settled down in a corner of the milk bowl (maintaining its identity and leaving the milk unadulterated) and yet continued to add lustre and richness all around it, so also will the Parsis find a small place for themselves, live with the locals in peace and harmony, maintain their distinct identity and continue to add lustre and richness all around.

Needless to state, Jadirana and his courtiers were extremely impressed and pleased by this gesture. In what must have been the most auspicious moment in the long and glorious history of India, Jadirana agreed to provide shelter to the Parsis in his land. The rest of course is only too well-known. The Parsees for centuries onward continued (and still continue) to live with the locals in peace and harmony and like the gold ring continue to maintain their distinct identity, and add lustre and richness all around them.

It is unfortunate that some later historians and writers in an attempt to further dramatize this incident, substituted the gold ring for sugar leading one to believe that like the latter the Parsees merged with the masses and added sweetness to it.

*Noshir Dadrawala*

### USTAD SAHIB KNEW

Ilm-e-Tib which was the Science of Medicines; Ilm-e-Nezoom which was Astrology; Ilm-e-Fal which was also something similar; Ilm-e-Zaafar which was the art of influencing the mind of man, so as to make it better, untruthful into truthful and selfish into selfless. Ilm-e-Ramal or fortune telling and many other arts and sciences, such as electricity (khastar), Radium properties (Radum) etc, etc., Behramshah's education in the Firdos commenced with female Magava, Banu Tannaz and ended with the fatherly guidance of Marzabanji the Shraoshavarez.

- N. F. Mama