

CONCEPT OF CHINVAT BRIDGE AND PARADISICAL REGIONS BEYOND

[This brief but very interesting extract is taken from : A Manual of Kshnoom by P. N. Tavaría which we hope the readers will find useful. - Editor]

The Chinvat (meaning Requirer) Bridge comprises four graded stages. This Chinvat is allegorically called a 'Bridge' because from its top sub-region called 'Var-i-Jam-kard' begin the paradisiacal regions, while the lowest sub-region of the Chinvat called Ganjesh (which is the portal sub-region of the Chinvat) is connected with the regions of the spirit worlds and of wicked or sinful souls.

Chinvat is derived from Chi, to select; or punish (after judgment). It is a selector of saintly souls, who on account of their practising strict truthfulness in life on earth with contrition for wrongs done, accompanied with control over passions, and practice of the Zoroastrian anti-microbe Baj-rites in daily life, become 'Ashim ashai', 'holy for the sake of holiness' (Ysn. 46,10), whom Zarathushtra promises to help cross the Chinvat Bridge, while the wicked on account of the sinful life on earth cannot go higher beyond Ganjesh its bottom stage. Partly better souls can go up to the second or third stage called Gangdez or Kang-dez respectively, but not "Var-i-Jam-kard" the paradisiacal top stage. The rejected souls are hurled down to the halting station of Vantar above mentioned prior to rebirth. Thus Chinvat selects the pious, and rejects and thereby punishes the wicked as its derivative signifies. It may be noted that higher sub-regions of this Zamrir are connected with paradisiacal regions, and the lower sub-regions with Vantar" the halting station for sinful souls destined for rebirth on the material world.

As stated above, a saintly soul by becoming 'Ashim-ashai,' holy for the sake of holiness, succeeds in crossing the Chinvat Bridge, and ascends to the fourth Zamrir, in which are located the 'Chakati Bridge' and several paradisiacal stations known as centres of

'Jaza' meaning 'reward' (as opposed to 'Saza, punishment to sinful souls in this material world). The highest among these paradisiacal stations is 'Pahlum Ahwan', literally the 'best abode', which is referred to in Avesta as 'Vahishtem Ahum' (Vd. 19,36).

Khanirath Bami: After crossing the Chinvat Bridge, the soul takes birth again in this material world for drawing to itself its particle-souls alienated in the beginning of its journey of exile to the Space. It may be recalled that at that stage every wicked whole soul ('Aka Chithra') is bifurcated into sexes on Zareh Yourukasha, and that 1/10th particle of both sexes is divided among animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms. Ages and ages after, when that parent human soul (masculine or feminine, whichever it be) becomes pure, it attracts to itself and absorbs those alienated particles of its soul in the, three lower kingdoms as also in other human beings, and renders them Druj-free, i.e., turns their Druj into Gao, evil into good, by its spiritual powers of holiness. Such alchemization of the Druj in those particles effected in its microcosm by that pious soul on this earth is called 'Khanirath Bami', literally Golden or shining shore. Khanirath Bami as the seventh and the only terrestrial Keshvar is expounded in its own place in part II hereafter.

[Rastakheez: Having achieved the great desideratum of alchemizing the particles of the soul in animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms to the state of Khanirath Bami, as explained above, the saintly soul is delivered from taking birth in this material world and so gets Rastiikheez (Iristekheez), i.e., takes birth in the paradisiacal region of Pahlum Ahwin, which is within the range of, but beyond, Var-i-Jam-kard, the top region of the Chinvat Bridge]

Dadare Gehan: from Pahlum Ahwan, the soul advances to 'Dadare Gehan' higher up. The term 'Dadare Gehan' occurs at the end of every Nyaesh and Yasht prayer. The devotee thrice repeats the Pazand sentence "Man ano avayad shudan" meaning 'I must get there', i.e., to the felicitous Dadare Gehan by rarefying the material body by transmutation of Evil into Good and (must) advance to the Keshvars higher up, which are stations of 'Ravangh', bliss (Yt. 13,99), Then turning to the South (in which direction Dadare Gehan is situated) the devotee supplicates to Ardivi for imparting purity, because the potentiality of Ardivi or Avan Yazad is the deliverer of mankind from the impurities of lust etc., and "the smiter of Satan with terrific weapons" (Sura) of perfection-of-purity.

Dadare Gehan is the portal region to the six fiery orbs of Keshvars, the residing places for holy souls. These six Keshvars are situated in the super-ethereal regions beyond Dadare Gehan as shown in the Chart. On leaving Dadare Gehan, the soul takes birth in 'Tane-pasin', the last finest and subtlest fiery-type elemental body, leading to Ushta, eternal Bliss. This Tane-Pasin is a semi-luminous fiery-type body fit to reside in the fiery orbs of Keshvars. This is individual case of Tane-Pasin which is extremely rare in this material age and in this current fourth Zarvana-Akarana, Boundless Time, when the mixed activities of Ohrmazd, the Blissful Principle, and Ahriman, the Destructive Principle, are the order of the day (Bd. 1,73. By the time a soul gets Tane Pasin, it is so purified that, as stated above, its particle-souls in animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms are reabsorbed in the human parent-soul, masculine or feminine, as the case may be, and moreover that exalted soul gains mastery over the five senses, to which worldly people are more or less like slaves. Tane-Pasin indicates end of 'Tan- asak', se-birth. In the end, on reaching the top Keshvar 'Vida-Dafshu', the soul awaits the arrival of its tardy counterpart to become Khaetvadatha, i.e., to blend together into one asexual whole soul called 'Magavan' (Ysn. 33,7).

The terms 'Rastakheez, and' 'Tane-Pasin' occur together in the short prayer-formula called 'Nirang' appended to Hormazd Yt., where the devotee confirms faith in birth in paradisiacal region, and in the last fiery-type body Tane-pasin. Thus, these two terms here refer to exaltation of an individual soul, whether masculine or feminine.

In Bundehehsh; 1, 2 the reference to Tane-pasin is to the gradual exaltation of totality of souls who will gain Tane-pasin in the next fifth 'Zarvana Akarana', Boundless Time, involving millions of years, during which all souls will gain Emancipation, the internal conflict (Yaokhedra; Ysn. 12,9) will cease due to Druj, the source of conflict having been transmuted into Gao, blissfulness, and they (souls) will gain control over the five senses, when vice will turn into virtue in totality of souls, and consequently the existence of Satan will be extinct.

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