

THIS SPECIAL ISSUE ON DOKHM-E-NASHINI

The Parsi Community is caught into a violent storm, where thoughts and feelings and sentiments and confusion and bewilderment are propelled up and down on all sides. Their age-old mode of Dokhm-e-nashini is having strong tremors. The community is confused. To add to the perplexity, political equations are written and unwritten; alliances are made and unmade.

The worst hit are the Bombay Parsi Punchayet trustees. "We are for the 'system'," they declared and then faced an onslaught from the prominent DDD's. The so termed orthodox roared in meetings and sittings. Their call now seems to be : continue the Dokhma as it goes on. DDD's shout : it has failed; however, if you want to go on, do so; but give us a Bangli on the land, where those bodies which are to be cremated could be brought, their Sachkaar, Geh Sarnaa, Uthamanu Sarosh be performed, then they be taken to a crematorium wherever outside the Dokhma, and their remaining 4 days ceremony be allowed to be performed in the Bangli. Orthodox furore again! No encouragement to crematorium; no use of Dokhma land for crematorianists. At one point, the knocking of the Court doors came dangerously near. Both factions met the trustees several times. Heat, temperature; rudeness, refined and unrefined; tea and biscuits.

As I observed from the outside of the storm, both factions did not want to go to Court. Why? And here both were found to be of one view that going to Court will expose "the present state of affairs at Doongervadi"! Then again when it is asked what is "this state of affair", the two suddenly and violently depart. "The system is working well; not that bad; crows and kites are doing it" - say the orthodox. "The system has become 'a health hazard,' a failure" say the DDD.

What about the trustees? They are bewildered. Their agony is quite some years old. They were frantically trying to consider "saving of the system" by various means like aviary and solar rays, and herbal powder and Ozone gas and acid carbonates. They were having meetings with some supposed to be important people since last three years. It was the disappearance of vultures that had caused the whole trouble. Your humble editor had attended a few of the meetings It was stated that the bodies are lying on the pavis and in the Bhandaar, the deep well within. The stench was reported to be acute in the Spenta complex and in Godrej Baag. Now it is said, the stench is reduced. As late as on 13-5-2001, Jam-e-Jamshed at page 12 carries a report of the erudite Dr. Homi Dhalla that the experiment with solar concentrator has proved extremely hopeful. The focused rays of the sun are observed to dehydrate the body and reduce it to a skeleton, dry and ready to be immersed in the Bhandar-well, by the fifth day. It seems that the concept of an urbanised Dokhma without vultures is now in the offing. It will be perhaps the best compromise between an ideal Dokhma as ordained by the Din and the present times of Kyamat - i.e., the most inhuman times.

How do we lay people look at the situation? We present to our readers', this special Issue on Dokhma and Dokhm-e-nashini. We place before you some relevant facts from Din and Duniya i.e. the mystical facts about the human journey in the next world and the existing facts of our experience of our daily life.

18-5-2001

- Editor.

DOKHM-E-NASHINI

NOT A MERE SYSTEM OF DISPOSAL OF THE DEAD BODY.

A SPIRITUAL INSTITUTION Helping the Departed Ruvaan (Soul) In Its Journey in the Next World.

Chapter I

Three Components of a Living Human

An infinitely small speck called earth revolves and rotates in an infinitely expansive sky. It carries with it about 5 billions of human beings and millions of species of animals. We call those humans and animals as "the life" on the globe; and all life is prelude to death, as if death is an important part of life. So say all Religions and all saints, and they advise us to prepare for death during our life.

But we, the non-saintly people do not know what is death. We see a running and jumping energetic body suddenly becoming still and lying on the floor. What has happened? There was something in this body, which seems to have left the body. Was there really "something" within it? If so, where has "it" gone and how and why?

Modern science has no answer. Seers and Saints know. They know the science of life and death. Seers can see and saints can experience,. They proclaim that as there is death after life, so there is life after death. They are inseparable. All Religions have described that life as the onward journey of the "soul".

Let us delve a little into what the Zarthoshti Din Says about this life-death-life... cycle and the journey after death. (It is not much different from what other Religions say).

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We identify human beings by their faces and bodies. So much so that we **equate** a man or woman with his or her body; and we ourselves think that the word "I" means the body. But that is not true. The very fact that we pray for the dead and get ceremonies performed for the dead, indicate that there is more to a human than the body alone. We have a hazy notion that there is something like 'soul' in us. We often use the word "Ruvaan" for "the departed soul".

All Religions teach the composition of a human. Their wordings, terminologies and picturisations appear different, but the Science they teach is inherently the same. We try to understand the Science in the Zarthoshti terminology.

The Living Human.

There are three components to a human being living on earth. In English, we can call them: (i) physical (ii) non-physical (iii) divine.

The **physical** is the body of our daily experience. It has an exterior with face, hand, chest, stomach, legs, etc.; and an interior with brain, heart, intestine etc., which can be seen on a surgery table. This body is made up of 'cells'. Cells are large molecular combinations of certain atoms like carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, sulphur.

The **non-physical component** is not made of the atoms of matter. It is an energy formation. Certain subtle kinds of **spiritual energies** are combined with each other, and result in the formation of "energy strings". These are beyond the vision and imagination of the ordinary non-saintly humans like us. The physical sciences cannot fathom them. The seers and saint, who can see and know, declare that the physical body of our experience is the result of the vibrations, rotations and revolutions of these subtle energy strings.

The Zarthoshti Science has named them "Anaasar". They are classified in the multiples of 4. There is a series indicating their classifications viz. 4, 4 x 2, 4 x 4, 4 x 8, 4 x 16, 4 x 64. (The Kriya of Taano in Dokhma is based on these energy equations. More about it later.)

The Zarthoshti Mystical Science teaches that the cells in the physical body are alive because of the energies emanating from the "Anaasar"s of the non-physical body. The energy to live is thus a flow from the "Anaasar"s. At death the flow is switched off. The cells loose their energy; they die; the physical body dies; **but the Anaasar's are still vibrating. They are now to be separated from the physical body; and here, the devouring of the corpse by the vultures and the parallel rays of the sun achieve this separation.** Why is this disintegrating chemistry necessary for the departed, we'll see later.

Let us first have a complete elementary picture of the composition of a human. We have seen that the second component of the living human personality is the non-physical energy body. It is the storehouse of spiritual energy. It radiates and infuses that energy into the physical body. It is because of this energy that the physical body lives i.e. has life in it. The energy reaches the 'Anaasar's, energise them and enlivens the cells. In elementary terminology, this energy storehouse - the non-physical component - is called "Keherpa".

Then there is a **third component: the divine**. In a simpler word, it is called "Ruvaan," something akin to soul or Atmaa in the great Hindu Dharma. The physical body is made up of matter. The Keherpa - the second component - is made up of spiritual energy; and Ruvaan is composed of the Light Divine, the Light of Ahura, sometimes also called Yazatic Light. Every human, may he be a die hard sinner or a holy saint, has a spark of Ahuramazda in him. (No doubt, 'she' and 'her' included!)

In the deeper Science, each of the three component have 3 subdivisions, which are named in Yazashney Ha 55:

I Physical: Tanu, Gaethaa, Azda

II Non-physical: Keherpa, Ushtaan, Teyvishi.

III Divine: Ruvaan, Baodaang, Fravash.

It is beyond the scope of this article to go deeper into this science.

WHAT ABOUT THE MIND AND CONSCIOUSNESS?.

The humans on earth have a peculiar faculty; consciousness. To be conscious means to be aware of anything through some identification process going on in us. It is often equated with mind. It is the mind which is said to be aware of something; in other words the mind has power to think on things of which it is aware. However scientists, psychologists and psychiatrics have explored various levels of consciousness in men, women and children by various methods. There lies deep in the humans a store of memories and unknown regions. Numerous books are written by Western Scientists on this subject. The emerging picture is confusing. However, the Saints Sages and Seers of all Religions and Mystic Sciences have gifted to the humans several 'Yogic exercises and disciplines to expand the consciousness. This means to be conscious of things of which we have no idea whatsoever at the present stage.

The Zarthoshti Mysticism reveals a complicated science of consciousness. Very tersely, a human has three kinds of consciousness; each is associated with the three components narrated above. Each of the three has one kind of consciousness. The physical body has a physical consciousness; the non-physical part -Keherp - has spiritual consciousness; the divine component - the Ruvaan has its own consciousness. In the ordinary non-saintly people like us, the only consciousness which is awake and working is the physical; the other two non-physical and divine are sleeping. In the saints and sages these two are awakened in various levels.

Why am I saying all this? Because it has great relevance to life, death, disposal of the dead body and above all Dokhm-e-nashini.

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Chapter II

LIFE ON EARTH

GOONAH, KERFEH, KARMA

The wonder of all wonder is our life. What are we doing on this speck of dust, the earth, a whirling, spiraling, dancing globe? We arrived; our parents rejoiced but we cried; we breathe; we live, do all kinds of things under the sun, moon and stars. And one day we are sure to go, disappear, disintegrate as if we were just not there. This time it is our dear ones' turn to cry and then after a while to be used to our disappearance. What is this? Is life an empty dream? From where? How? Why?....

It is crystal clear that our non-saintly mind and consciousness are just unable to fathom the mystery of life... and death. Philosophers and scientists have tried frantically to find the answers and solutions, through their observations, thinking, imagination, and mind tools like logic and mathematics, but to no avail. Since last 500 years the humans were swept away by a poisonous and fatal fad that the human mind was capable of understanding all nature. That myth is shattered and exploded, and the splinters from the explosion have brought all humans to the brink of extinction. The hatred and the wars and strikes and the calamities and greed and ego and carnal desires are those splinters.

Our theories and conjectures and speculations have not the faintest idea since how long this life drama is going on, on this stage, the earth, the only one earth, the tiniest of the tiny particle. The amazing part of the situation is that the answer to the riddle of life and death is staring at us; but we close our eyes. God sent His Prophets, Avatars, Saints, Sages and Seers in answer to the riddle. They proclaimed that the answer can be arrived only through experience and not by the highly limited three dimensional consciousness of man. To have that experience step by step is our march towards God. To meet Him, to be attuned to Him, to be one with Him is our final goal. **And He declared through His divine Messengers that to reach the goal, follow the Path of Dharma prescribed for you.**

Dharma - loosely called Religion - is thus the path leading to God; and one of the stations of our journey on the Path is the life on earth. Earth is our "Dharma-Shala" - the School of Dharma. We have come to this school to learn Dharma, and we cannot learn Dharma without living it. A science degree requires practical work in the laboratory. This school of life requires certain rules to be obeyed, certain disciplines to be self-enforced, certain code to be complied with.

The analogy of Dharmashala is very apt; because dharmashala also means a temporary abode, a motel, where we arrive from our original home to do some work and collect some goods; and then depart to go back. All dharamshalas have certain rules to be observed, so also here.

Whether it is a motel or a school, the code and the rules are to be strictly observed. Do's and don'ts are prescribed. Thou shalt do this and thou shalt not do this, proclaims the Head Master through his deputy-Teachers.

In the Zarthoshti Din, the human thoughts words and deeds are classified in two broad divisions : "Goonah" and Kerfeh", meaning: vice and virtue; sin and righteousness; immorality and morality; good and evil. The most fundamental and essential truth to be absorbed is that the **definitions of Goonah and Kerfeh, good and evil, moral and immoral are determined by Ahuramazda and not by the mortal non-saintly human.** Man's own definitions of good and evil are most likely to go wrong, because his mind is capable of being drifted away towards 'goonah'.

Another truth taught by all 'Dharma's is that Goonah and Kerfeh give rise **to Karmic reactions.** What is defined as a sin germinates bad karma that is, it causes a bad reaction in nature which then falls on the doer. Every Dharma has taught this in most emphatic terms. Some call it punishment; some, Karmic reaction. Similarly every thought, word and deed defined by Ahuramazda as Kerfeh or good, gives rise to good reaction. This 'good' does not mean worldly good; it means: march towards Ahura. Do good, and you have

taken a step towards Him; do bad, and you have gone away from Him.

Now how is a sin or righteousness defined? All 'dharma's have described sin or vice by naming them. They are called man's internal enemies. The following table sets out the names as given by the Hindu and Zarthoshti Dins

Hindu	"Kaam"	"Krodh"	"Lobh"	"Moh"	"Med"	"Matsar"	-	-	-	-
Zarthoshti:	Varuni	Aesham	Aaj	Niyaz	Goomani	Areshka	Aashmogi	Kin	Sazgi	Nang
Meaning:	Carnal Passion	Anger	Greed	Attachment to worldly things	Pride to think high about oneself	Envy	Faithless- ness Enmity to Din	Fraud	Blasp- hemy	Shame less- ness

(We Parsis claiming to be superior have **ten** enemies as against **six** of Hindus). This is a broad classification. Patet Pasheymani gives a long list of sins - more than one hundred! It is possible to fit them in the main ten.

Now another question: From where does these sins originate? And why? Why are people sinful? Why are they attracted to evil thoughts, words and deeds? Why was Hitler so bad and Mother Theresa so good? To put it in a philosophical grab, what is the origin of evil?

No idea! We know that evil exists: in the human mind and outside (say as HIV). But why and how, is beyond us. Any attempt to fit in evil in the three dimensional thinking of man may result in a brain crack. (It actually has, in some cases). All that we can do is to believe in what the authentic Zarthoshti Saints and Gurus have informed us. If some point sounds to you not logical, remember Godel's Theorem which says that any statement made in a human language has an unprovable component.

It is taught that in the beginning of the creation "Ruvan" came into existence, and immersed itself into ego. "There is one Ahoo "above" all right but I am also I", the Ruvaan said. This ego generated evil. The evil fastened itself to the Ruvaan. At a point, Ruvaan realised its mistake and repented. It was then asked to dissolve and alchemise the evil by having a long journey in Creation, and come back to Ahura with all the evil converted to good. The Ruvaan started its journey. A process of division based on certain decimal formulae was applied to it. Most of its evil is already alchemised. The last part with its attached evil has to travel through earth and here we are. The attached evil is woven into the physical body. The strings of Anaasar (pages 1, 2) is a weaved carpet of good and evil. Our non-physical body, the Keherpa, has almost all its evil alchemised. The Ruvaan as the divine essence of Ahura is imprisoned in the physical body. Our duty during our life on earth is to endeavor every moment to alchemise the evil within. Dharma prescribes the rules of conduct for such alchemy, and defines 'goonah' ('don't') and 'kerfeh' ('do').

We have thus a good element and an evil element within us. In the present times, evil has surfaced up and that is why sin is so rampant. The good element has the name: "Gava"; the evil: "Druja". This is picturesquely described by saying that we have a cow and a wolf within us. The cow is serene love and selflessness; the wolf is ferocious hatred and selfishness. The cow desires to give its milk to the wolf. The wolf desires to devour the cow.

During our life on earth, although our mind is inclined to evil, we do alchemise some part of our 'druj' to 'gava'. The most wicked man has and does some good in life. We may have to come back again and again on earth until all the druj is alchemised. Then the last part of our journey to Ahura begins. Coming back is called "Tanaasakh"; going ahead is called "Tan-pasin".

This takes us to : what happens when a human dies and what is the role of Dokhm-e-nashini in the Ruvaan's journey in the next world.

On page 1 and 2, we have seen that a human is made up of three main components - (i) physical (matter) (ii) non-physical (Keherp) and (iii) divine (Ruvaan - Ahura's Light). We have also seen that each of the three has its own consciousness. In non-saintly people like us, only the consciousness of the physical body is awake and works throughout our life. The other two are "asleep" i.e., unconscious of what the body is doing.

When a human dies, the consciousness of the body working through our brain is switched off and the other two wake up. This happens at the moment of death.

Ruvaan and Keherpa get out of the world and flyaway on the Cheharoom morning to the next world. The fallen body appears to be a heap of dead matter: but actually it has still woven into it the subtle energy strings the 'Anaasar's, which are required to be separated from the body and to be sent to the Ruvaan and Keherp in the next world. One of the functions of Dokhm-e-nashini is to snatch out the Anaasars from the decaying body at the earliest. The ideal condition is that the Annasars should reach the other world on the fourth day. This is the reason why the vultures and sun's natural are an essential requirement of the Dokhma. We now delve a little in **life after death**.

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Chapter III

GLIMPSES OF RUVAN'S JOURNEY IN THE NEXT WORLD

We have seen that when a human dies, the Ruvaan, the divine component and Keherp, the non-physical energy component get out; and the physical body and its consciousness are switched off.

At the moment of death, the two consciousness of Ruvaan and Keherp wake up. This is the instant when the Ruvaan becomes aware of what the body had done during the earthly life. The Scriptures declare and the taavil reveals that the state of the Ruvaan's consciousness depends on the credit-debit balance of Goonah and Kerfeh. If the person had tried to keep Kehrfeh up and Goonah down, and had during life tried to follow the commands of the Din, Ruvaan's consciousness remains calm and it prepares for the onward journey. In particular, at the moment of dying, if the physical mind, before switching off, recites Ashem Vohu, the awakening Ruvaan's peace is abundant. A lesson for you, my dear readers! When you go to sleep go on reciting Ashem Vohu, till the sleep fully takes over. This will habituate your mind to recite Ashem Vohu at the instant of your last sleep - death, and your Ruvaan will "smile". Ashem Vohu is a powerful mantra. Its every syllable has divine energy bound in it. If you are present when anyone is dying, recite Ashem in his or her ears.

On the other hand, if the dying person had not cared for the commands of Din and was all throughout the life selfish and immersed in material pleasures and objects without minding a hoot for the spiritual and divine, his or her Ruvaan goes in pain in death. Its consciousness becomes dazed and hazy. Instead of looking up for the journey towards the next world, it looks down to earth. This state is named "Sey-shab" - literally three nights. Ruvaan has some fear running through it. The Kriyas viz. recital of Khordeh Avesta prayers before the body "Sarosh-nu-patoo", and Geh Sarna try to mitigate the Ruvaan's agony. The Kriyas infuse energy and zeal in the Ruvaan's consciousness. "Look up now; forget the down. Ahura and His Yazata's Meher, Sarosh, Rashney are ready to help you in your onward journey." : this is the message of all Kriyas of the first four days.

A Ruvaan whose body had, during life, endeavored to follow the Din, does not have that fearing state of consciousness. It absorbs the vibrations of the Kriyas and tries to keep cool and calm. This state is called "**Seydosh**".

On the Cheharum morning, the Ruvaan and Keherp leaves this globe and enters into certain n-dimensional regions. These are beyond the three dimensions of our limited consciousness. There is a place called **lower 'Chinvat'** where the Ruvaan and Keherp enter. Here, they have to do certain cleansing work which is related to the thoughts, words and deeds which the deceased's body did when it was alive on earth. It is beyond the scope of this article to give the details of this stage.

This lower-Chinvat state continues for three days to 57 years on our time scale.

Thereafter the Ruvaan ascends the **higher Chinvat**, another place. It is called the Chinvat Bridge and is referred to in the Gatha Ha 51 and other Scriptural Manthra's. By this time the Anaasars, the energy-strings (page 1-2) trapped in the dead body arrive. This is the rise of the Consciousness which the person had in life on earth and which led the body towards goonah and Kerfeh. On this Chinvat Bridge, a resurrection of the person takes place. He or she gets a subtle personality in which all the three consciousnesses are awake - namely (i) that which was awake during earthly life. (ii) the consciousness of Keherp and (iii) the consciousness of Ruvaan. This resurrected individual then sees the "**Kerdaar**". It is a formulation in human (woman's) shape. **It is the field picturisation of all the good and bad thoughts, words and deeds the individual did, through its physical mind, on earth.** The Kerdaar tells the resurrected individual that she is made up of what the individual was on earth. In the earthly life, it was that physical mind which worked. The other two consciousness were sleeping. That mind now sees its doings. Before it, appear all the credit-debits of goonah and Kerfeh. Non-saintly persons like us had been led away to goonah several times on earth. Here

the person sees the disorders which he or she generated in nature by his or her sins. **It is now time for that physical mind to lament and repent.** It is taught that Chinvat is a place where Rashney Yazat is in charge. Rashney is the Yazat of Justice and Truth. **No one can think untruth on Chinvat.** The physical mind then pleads to Ahura and Zarathushtra, "Oh Lord! I was responsible for all these goonahs; **it is I, who have given such intense agonies to my own Ruvaan, I plead guilty, my Lord, extremely guilty.** I must be severely punished for creating disorders in the Lord's universe."

Rashney Yazat answers, "Yes, you are no doubt responsible for the disorders. **But Ahura is just and kind. My colleague Meher Yazat is just and merciful.** Your Patet-earnest repentance - is recorded in Nature. Whatever disorders you have generated by your goonah, you will have to erase by taking on yourself their Karmic reactions. If you have harmed somebody, you'll have to repay him. In your dealings with the humans, animals, plants and matter on earth, whatever bad you have done, you will have to repay in your next birth on earth."

Thus arrives **the day of Judgement** on the Chinvat and the individual then prepares to go back to earth. Between this point and the point of being reborn through the mother's womb, several events occur and several stages are passed through. Again, these are beyond the scope of this series.

You will please see that the above journey involves two main requirements.

(i) the individual's Ruvaan has to get back his or her Anaasars entrapped in the physical body, so that the personality is resurrected on Chinvat.

(ii) Ruvaan has to pass through certain states of consciousness right from the moment of death till the last Judgement on Chinvat and thereafter for the preparation of rebirth.

All our Kriyakaam for the dead are related to the above stages. Sachkaar controls the spread of Druj-e-Nasu, the subtle fields of pollution. Sarosh-nu-Patru infuses serene consciousness in the Ruvaan which is still near the body. Geh Sarnoo generates such vibrations as to induce the Ruvaan to leave its attractions towards the earth and prepare it for its onward journey. Dokhm-e-nashini then brings in the action of vultures and sun's rays, so that the body is fully disintegrated in all its wet parts and only the bones remain. This results in the liberation of the Anaasars and their flight to Ruvaan, which by then should have reached the lower Chinvat.

Mind! That is not the only task of Dokhma. It has certain religious fields carved in its whole ground and also in the surroundings. They not only help the vultures and sun rays to release the Anaasars from the body, but also help the Ruvaan in passing through the various stages of its journey. That is the reason why extensive Kriyas are done while consecrating, the Dokhma - from Taanaa procedure to the performance of Yazashney and Vendidaad deep inside the Dokhma. **Dokhma is a storehouse of spiritual energy in every ounce of its air. The surrounding area vibrates with the divine energy.** It is a sin to pollute the inside of a Dokhma and the air of the surroundings.

There are thus three 'Taleysam's in a Dokhma. (Taleysam means a thing an object, or a field - like gravitational or magnetic or vibratory - which has power and which performs certain function.) They are: (i) Vultures, (ii) Sunlight and (iii) the Religious field in the ground and air. (We can call this Dini Taleysam). These three are inseparably interconnected. One cannot function without the other two.

Mind again! The Dini Taleysam of the Dokhma helps the Ruvaan during all its journey in the next world, at all stages. The function of the Dokhma is not over once the body is disintegrated. It continues to function thereafter too.

How our Kriyas like Dokhma the Chehaarum, Dasmu, Masiso, Chhamsi, Varsi etc are connected with the various experiences of the Ruvaan in its journey, is a fascinating subject. You can find this in the extensive writings of Ilm-e-Khshnoom.

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Chapter IV

VULTURES AND SUN'S RAYS, VITAL COMPONENTS OF DOKHM-E-NASHINI

THE AMAZING TRAITS AND FACULTIES OF VULTURES, NATURE'S OWN SANITIZING AGENTS.

The devouring of the dead corpses of animals by vultures is a part of the life cycle on earth. They are made by nature to carry out their special function of eating away the dead bodies with amazing speed.

Zarathoshti Din points out an astonishing truth of Nature. Every animal on this Mother-Earth is an important part of Nature's Spiritual Cycle. We know there are many life-cycles on earth. For instance, in carbon cycle, the element carbon circulates and is recycled. It is one of the most essential contributors to survival of life on earth. Carbon from carbon dioxide is released in the atmosphere by animals and humans through respiration (i.e. breathing). The plants inhale carbon dioxide and release oxygen through a process called photosynthesis. In this process carbon gets into chemical compounds called carbohydrates, which form the trunks, branches and leaves of the trees and plants. Animals eat the plants and leaves and take in the carbohydrates, which form life-molecules for the animal to survive by breathing. Thus the cycle of plants - animal - plants goes on through carbon. There are other cycles like nitrogen, phosphorous, sulphur.

Zarathoshti science teaches that there are animal and human cycles too, which are not merely physical but also spiritual. Each species of animal has a specified function in Nature in the cycle. **Thus, when the birds sing in the morning, they bring out subtle vibrations through their music and join in the celestial music of Nature then going on as a part of the spiritual cycle.** You can also join in, if you recite **Hoshbaam and Khorshed Meher Niyaish's**.

Dog has special function in Nature's spiritual working. Vendidad Pargarad 5-29 to 34 narrates a spiritual classification of the dog's species as related to the spread of "Druj-e-nasu" - the forces of physical and spiritual pollutions. There are several other references to dog in the Vendidad, which are not the rules of primitive pastors. They are the narrations of the **spiritual functions of different kinds of dogs**. This requires "Taavil" - the esoteric key, which you can find in Framroze Chiniwalla's Vendidad.

Similarly vulture is a species with certain physical features connected with their function in the physical as well as spiritual cycles of life on earth. They have specially made long bills, suited to pluck out through raw flesh. Their necks are long to enable them to delve deep into the carreas. The necks are bare and have no feathers. This is done by Nature calculatingly. Feathers on the neck would invite bacteria and germs to stick to the deep penetrating neck. Their excreta is highly antiseptic. They sprinkle it on their own legs to kill the germs there. These are facts you can find in any book on Ornithology. Years back 'Time-Life' had published book called "Birds", where you can find these and many other facts, showing that Nature has created Vultures to act as the fastest sanitary agents and inspectors. When they feast on a corpse, their co-operation with each other is amazing. They devour the corpse as if they are anxious to eat away in the shortest possible time. No undue waste of time. Finish it before it decays and pollutes the air with stench and spread of bacteria - this seems to the Nature's military command to them and they comply, earnestly, eagerly and fervently.

But the most astounding feature of vultures is their ability to be aware of the falling of a living body to death. The hunters report that when the animal falls, suddenly in the clearest sky, high up and far away, the vultures appear! The scientists have tried their best to find how they do this. Sight? No. Smell? No. What is it then? Some special psychic quality? A scientist, a biologist of great repute, Dr. Lyall Watson, has written several books to show that Nature is full of several events, incidents and occurrences, which are not explicable by any amount of modern science. He has shown this convincingly in his best-seller **"Supernature"** (Hodder & Stoughton - 1973), "Beyond Supernatural" (Bantam - 1988), "Gifts of Unknown Things" (Coronet - 1976-1980 - 4 impressions) and others. His **"The Romeo Error"** (Coronet -1974-76) sub-title "A Matter of Life and Death", is one of the best scientific treatise, unbiased and objective, on death and its

relation to life. Describing the various reactions animals have towards death, Watson writes that the **Vultures have some non-physical power to catch up a death signal from amazingly long distances**. Zarthoshti science has therefore adopted this bird of nature as one of the vital and essential components of Dokhm-e-nashini. Without vultures not only it cannot survive, but it can create obstacles in the Ruvaan's journey in the next world. **It is absolutely necessary for the smooth journey that the Anaasars in the body should be extracted out at the earliest**; and the ideal period to reach the Anaasars to the Ruvaan is three days. The body except the bones must be fully disintegrated and the Anaasars trapped within should fly to the Ruvaan in three days. Only the devouring of the body by the vultures can achieve this. The energy strings of the Anaasars go through the powerful heat of the vultures digestive system and thrown out. From this point the sun rays take over and help the Anaasars to sore up. The period of three days to achieve this is the IDEAL period. It may vary; if the circumstances to that effect arise - like, there being not many vultures and/or the winter or cloudy and rainy days. But not having vultures is not the ideal Dokhm-e-nashini. It may take months and even years to disintegrate the body. The sun's rays, whether natural or focused through artificial means like solar panels or that the crows and kites is again not an ideal Dokhma.

The crux of the matter, thus, is that the vultures and sunlight are the two of the most essential components of Dokhm-e-nashini, for the liberation of the Anaasars.

The Zarthoshti Din and for that matter all the Din's declare in emphatic terms that the Ruvaan of each human being is ultimately to reach God. It may pass through cycles and cycles of rebirth, but ultimately the "Druj" attached to it is bound to be fully alchemised to "Gava". At that point of time Ruvaan is free from its earth cycles and reaches the stage of "tan-pasin" - a celestial march in the higher divine regions of creation, towards Ahura.

Therefore it is not that a Zarthoshti Ruvaan not passing through Dokhma but through burial or cremation is lost for ever. What happens is that it takes a very much longer time in its journey and the most important aspect is that **the Ruvaan passes through unbearable agony in the next world**. This is a chapter in higher Mysticism of Zarthoshti Din, revealed by the holy Ashavan Masters. Its glimpses are scattered in our extant holy Manthra Scriptures and writings; but their encoded message can be disentangled by the special key of taavil. The chapter touches the Ahura's divine plan of different Religions, as tersely, touched in Gatha 31-11. The Hindu sacred kriya of burning the body on fire or the ground burial by other Religions, does not damage the Ruvaan as much as that of a Parsi. Therefore Dokhm-e-nashini is a MUST for a Ruvaan born as a Parsi. If the unavoidable circumstances compel a Parsi Ruvaan to be cremated or buried, it is a matter of its individual Karma, for which the Divine Forces and Energies of our Din do help in mitigating the Ruvaan's agony; and the Kriya kaam of such ill-destined Ruvaan should never be avoided. Remember they need kriyas more than the normal.

When the person concerned wishes during his life time that he or she must be cremated or buried although there may be a Dokhma in his or her town, the plight of the Ruvaan in the next world is more agonising. Because the decision to discard Dokhm-e-nashini was taken by that person's **physical consciousness and not by the Ruvaan**, which was in slumber during the life on earth. It is that physical body and that physical consciousness which is inclined to evil and drags the physical life towards Goonah. (Chapter II) The Ruvaan has to pass through different stations in the next world to undo the karmic effects of what that person's physical body did on earth. If that body while living wishes to be cremated, it does not know what is it doing. The living person does not know that his decision to discard Dokhma will give his Ruvaan great agony. A stage will arise on Chinvat when that physical consciousness, which took the decision on earth, will be awakened, and will then burn in the extreme heat of his or her own repentance. That physical consciousness will be extremely miserable for his or her causing great agonies to his or her own Ruvaan.

These are the Mysteries of life, death, body, Ruvaan and its journey, of which we are entirely unaware and ignorant.

A MESSAGE TO A SUFFERER OF ACUTE PAIN.

Sogyal Rinpoche is a Tibetan sage, the disciple of a highly revered Tibetan Master. He sent the following message to a person who was just twenty-five and suffering from the acute pains of leukemia:

"I know how much pain you are in. Imagine now all the others in the world who are in pain like yours, or even greater. Fill your heart with compassion for them. And pray to whomever you believe in and ask that your suffering should help alleviate theirs. Again and again you dedicate your pain to the alleviation of their pain. And you will quickly discover in yourself a new source of strength, a compassion you'll hardly be able now to imagine, and a certainty beyond any shadow of doubt that your suffering is not only not being wasted, but has now a marvelous meaning."

- Tibetan Book of Living and Dying (Rupa - 1993-94), pp. 219.

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Chapter V

"WHERE IS "IT" WRITTEN?"

Law of Goonah and Kerfeh in the Gatha and at other places.

Since the time the study of our religion fell into the hands of the Western scholars, we Parsis developed a doubt virus: Whenever any discipline ordained by our Din - say: Sudreh Kushti or Manthra Prayers or Kriyakaam or Dokm-e-nashini, is referred to, a question popped up : "Where is this written"? For a full thousand years of our stay in Hindustaan, nobody asked this question. Every Parsi had undoubted and unshaken faith in each of the spiritual Institutions and Disciplines of the Din. But the western scientific method taught us to ask it again and again, with fatal consequences.

Religion is a spiritual discipline which goes beyond our limited three dimensional consciousness. A non-saintly human mind is incapable of understanding the truths hidden in the unknown and mystical regions of nature, and is therefore required to have faith. We cannot reason out the energies whirling behind our spiritual Institutions and Disciplines. In this situation Scriptural references may help, but they have their own limitations. First and foremost is that not all our holy Scriptures are with us. It is said, we have only 1/20th of the original. And much of whatever we have is not clear. There are numerous highly divergent translations of the Gatha. We are not in a position to say that "Gatha says so". If we say that, the question springs up : Whose Gatha? Bartholomae's? Kangaji's? Poonegar's? Insler's? Taraporewalla's? Humach's? We don't know what is Asho Zarathushtra's Gatha! The other non-Gathic Avesta Scriptures are comparatively easier to translate, but when translated, they do not convey to us the deeper inner Truths.

The Western studies overlook the fact that our Pazend Prayers like "Ahuramazda Khodae," "Doa Naam Setayashney", "Patet Pashemaani", "Deebaacha-e Afringaan", "Aafrins", "Setayesh's of 30 days", set out much of the Truth that lies behind our limited consciousness. To have a glimpse of such truths, the Pazend Prayers are to be seen in the light of the Pahalvi writings and Mystical Sciences propounded by Ilm-e-Khshnoom. The Path for studying the Avesta, Gathic or non-gathic consists in understanding these: (i) Divine sciences (ii) Pahalvi Writings and (iii) Pazend Prayers, together and then step up to the Avesta Scriptures, when you will be able to find evidences in support of all that is taught in Khshnoom about our Institutions and Disciplines, - Tarikat, Manthra, Yasna. Every Science, whether physical or mystical which tries to probe the Nature's secrets, has its own technical terminologies. Our Scriptures contain numerous technical terms, words and expressions, which have much deeper meanings than what appears from grammar and etymology. For instance, Cow, Horse, Camel, Sheep in mystical sciences signify several secrets. Similarly the terms Asha, Gava, Ashavan, Fravashi etc have hidden meanings, messages and truths.

Chapter I to IV described several deeper truths connected with our life, death and thereafter. In particular, we saw the topic of Goonah and Kerfeh. Patet Pashemani is the Pazend Prayer, proclaiming the contents of that topic. To provide food for thought to those who asks for evidence from scriptures here are some quotations from the Patet prayers.

GOOD AND BAD ARE DEFINED BY GOD AND NOT BY MAN.

"Ahuramazda Khoda has proclaimed in the Din the sins and accordingly the Paorio-takesh Ashavans have defined them as sins."

This is preceded and followed by a list of actions and inactions specified as sins. These actions and inactions are declared to be related to our dealings not only with every and all humans we meet during our life but also with the animal, vegetable and material kingdoms on earth. (Kardeh 8). What is termed as the products of "Akoman", (i.e., the evil side of the non-saintly human mind) in the Gatha are elaborated in Patet Prayer as practical sins in daily life.

An undercurrent runs throughout the Patet Prayer that every sin has a Karmic reaction in this life and the next. A passage in Kardeh 12 starting with the words "Auem Kardeh Hom In Pateti...." sets out this truth with

amazing terseness yet clarity. The whole Patet Prayer is intended to infuse energy in the living and the dead to bear the Karmic reactions patiently, resignedly and even smilingly. "Az Anaai Khorsand Hom" - "whatever Karmic calamity falls on me, may I be able to take it with a smile. Because it liberates me from the Karmic bonds and takes me nearer to my Lord", is the underlying entreaty of the faithful, running through and through in the Patet Prayer. The passage from Kardeh 12 of Patet Pashemani is elaborated on the cover page of this Issue.

The next truth taught in all Religions is that goonah-sin arises out of the faults of the flesh. 'Druj' and 'Gava' are woven in our physical body and therefore our physical senses snares our mind into sins. A non-saintly human mind has to resist the onslaught of the physical storms, described as the internal enemies of our own self. They lure us; the snare of the Satan and Ahriman is very cunningly laid. The tips of Satan's poisonous arrows are adorned with flowers, so say Lord Buddha. The flowers induce us to invite the arrows; once they pierce us, the poison of goonah spreads. Gatha 53-6 and Gita set out this truth beautifully.

Gatha 53-6 : "Ithaa e Haithyaa Naro Athaa Jenayo..... Anaish Aa Manhim Ahoom Mereyngeduye", gives a stern warning to our physical mind which has an inborn tendency to slip and fall into the pit of goonah.

"Oh men! Oh women! This is the Truth here (in this life on earth) that you will see pleasure in the attractions of the Druj (the evil woven within you).

[The druj has laid a path for you on which its chariot is ever accelerating]. If you immerse your bodily self in its snares, you will get nothing but spiritual ruin and death. For men buried below the burden of sins, there is bad food to eat (i.e., to be caught in the whirlpool of birth-death cycles), which leads you away from the heavenly bliss and ecstasy, and inflicts harm to your ultimate goal of achieving the immortal bliss. You are shattering and destroying the divine existence determined for you in the next world."

Ponder, my friends, on this stern warning. By mounting the accelerating chariot of Druj, you race away from the peace and bliss destined for you. Similar truth is expressed by Lord Krishna in Bhagvad Gita 2-67 by another metaphor:

"इन्द्रियाणां हि चरतां यममनो नु विधीयते"

तदस्य हरति प्रज्ञां वायुर्नावि भिवाभ्रवसी ."

"Just as a gale pushes away a boat on waters, the mind that yields to the roving senses carries away his wisdom and intelligence".

Physical senses yielding to physical pleasures is the destroyer of all intelligence and all wisdom; Lord Krishna says in 2-68 and further on that the intelligence, the mind, is required to be free from carnal desires to become stable, and that alone gives peace and bliss. Sensual pleasures are a storm that uproots the beautiful and serene garden of divine ecstasy also hidden in man.

The Gatha therefore ordain that man has Akoman within him which leads him to goonah (Ha 33-4). It is for this reason that in our Kushti Prayer the very first passage of Kemna-Mazda entreats Ahuramazda to protect us from the attack of our enemies within. That passage is from Gatha. (Ha 46-7). "Who except Thee oh Lord, shall protect me from those enemies?" We so cry at every Kushti. That is the reason why Prophet Mohammad proclaims in Holy Koran: **"Flee unto Allah; So! I am a plain warner unto you from Him". (Sura of the Winnowing Winds: 51-50)**. That is why Lord Jesus orders His disciples to pray: **"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." (Mathew 6:13)**.

Here is another beautiful passage from the Gatha declaring that the druj (goonah) lead to destruction; and Gava (Kerfeh) to Ushta-bliss. This is Vohukhshathra Gatha - Ha 51, 8.

"अत ७ तोष्टवक्ष्या भञ्जदा

વીદુષે ળ-ના મુચાત
હયત અકોયા દ્રેગવાઈતે,
ઉશ્તા યે અષેમ દાદ્રે
હવો ળ માંધ્ર શ્યાતો
યે વીદુષે પ્રવઈતી."

So verily oh Mazda! I speak the truth (Vakhshyaa) to those who search and study the Din ('Veedushey') and who should emphatically declare it to others that one who is on the negative path of Druj ("dregavaaity") is bound to have evil effects (suffer distress, woe and decease) ("Akoyaa"). One who holds steadfast (Daadrey) to Ashoi (Asha i.e., Truth, righteousness, purity) shall get Ushtaa - the divine bliss. Whoever teaches Manthra to the disciples of Din (Veedushey) himself gets divine happiness and joy, peace and bliss, reward and bounty ("shyaato") - (cf. Hoshbaam : "Shaato Manaao" Yaz Ha 60 - 11,12).

The same message again! Let your mind chariot accelerate on the path of druj and you go further away from God, and invite woe and ruin. Let your mind immerse itself in Ashoi, and you are running to Him and every step is Ushta and the final manzil is Ushta.

The lesson for our daily life is simple in words: Resist goonah; don't fall to devil's temptations, which work through your physical mind and senses. If you fall, do Patet and determine not to do it again. The former invites woe; later Ushta.

These spiritual disciplines constitute our life on earth and our journey after death depends on them. Dokhm-e-nashini is directly related to this journey.....

In Chapter II we saw that Goonah and Kerfeh result in Karmic reactions: our pleasures and pains germinate from them. Every Religion has taught this law of Karma or Keshash. Good for the good; evil for the evil. And Karma is also the reason for taking births again and again until all our druj is alchemised.

The question again: Where is it written? Answer: written all throughout in our holy Scriptures and other writings in Pahalvi. Let us have a look to some of them in the next Chapter.

KARMA IN BUDDHA DHARMA

"Karma creates all, like the artist; Karma composes, like a dancer."

- Lord Buddha

"Whatever is happening to us now mirrors our past Karma.... Tibetans say that suffering is "a broom that sweeps away all our negative Karma. We can even be grateful that one Karma is coming to an end.... the result of negative Karma, may in fact be giving us a marvelous opportunity to evolve.

- Tibetan Book of Living and Dying by Sogyal Rinpoche - p. 95 & 96 (Rupa 1993)

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Chapter VI

SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES ON KARMA, LIFE AFTER DEATH, CHINVAT KERDAAR

The law of Karma is the fundamental law governing our life on earth. It is laid down in all Religions and our Dins abounds with the elaboration of this divine Law.

The first principle is : Goonah invites bad Karma; Kerfeh - attracts good Kerma. Bad Karma means going astray from the Path of God and from our final aim. Good Karma means marching towards God. Bad Karma does not necessarily mean worldly unhappiness in life. Pain and suffering emanate from past Karma and is a process of cleansing. Some sages have said: "Rejoice in pain; alchemy is on."

Let us have a look to a few of the several passages from the Gatha on Karma. First: Ha 30-11 (Ahoonavad Gatha, 3rd Ha.)

"Therefore, oh humans, you shall surely learn the two (viz. gifts and commands) bestowed by Mazda. They (the two) are the deliverers from druj and its obstacles and hindrances (Kheetichaa Aeney-iti). So (it follows that) for one who runs away from these commands (i.e. is immersed in goonah) there is woe and distress for a long time. For the Ashavans who acquire Ashoi-purity through those commands have eternal benefit. So, the spiritual fields surrounding them (Aipi) are the harbingers of Ushta, the divine peace and bliss.

Every human shall ultimately learn Ahura's laws and commands. But during his journey, if he goes astray, woe and distress shall be his for a long time. If he catches up the Path of Ashoi, he will be an Ashavan storing in and emanating out Ushta. (Same as in 51-8 : "Ushta Ye Ashem Daadre." Chapter V. An ordinary non-saintly human can also be at peace whatever be his suffering. My dear reader, if you have reached this thought and ever try to be in peace with Ahuramazda not withstanding any pain or misery, physical and mental, take it that you have alchemised a good amount of your druj into gava and you have marched nearer to Ahuramazda.

Another passage from the Gatha is Ha 43-5 (Ushtuvad Gatha's first Ha)

"હયત દાઓ જ્યોત્ના મીજદવાન
અકેમ અકાઈ વંધઉલીમ અખીમ વંધહઓવે
થવા હુનરા દામોઈશ ઉવંએસે અગેમે"

(Oh Mazda!) Till such time as Thy Creation ("Daamoish") shall turn and come back to Thee, Thou shalt, according to your art ("Hunaraa") of justice, bestow on the humans) your reward (prize, gift - "Mizdavaan") according to their deeds and words; that in such a way that the evil shall get evil and the good shall get good flowing from Thy blessings."

The good and the evil both shall get rewards from Him. The druj-practitioner shall get His blessings. But both are His rewards - (Mizdey, Chashni), because both are meant to take the human nearer to Him. The punishment for the evil deeds will alchemise his Druj to Gava, and the blessings from Ahura for his good deeds will shower peace on him. The passage preceding Ha 43-5 i.e. Ha 43-4 specifically proclaims that Ahuramazda helps both - the good and the bad. The punishment and the blessings both are alchemising processes.

This Gathic passage (Ha 43-4) refers to Atash (Athra) and touches a beautiful Truth revealed in the Din and pointed by IIm-e-Khshnoom (and no body else). **ATASH IS THE LORD OF KARMA. All Karmic motions, actions, reactions and energies are in charge of Atash.** (That is why in the consecration kriya of Atash Beheram and Atash Adraan, the vocational fires from goldsmith, blacksmith, baker, distiller etc. are taken. Vocation is a matter of one's Karma. Atash Niyash Prayer contains several passages setting out this Truth. Atash cooks food for the day and also for night, is a statement in the Atash Niyash denoting the good and bad karma. When you go to Atash Padshah, He asks, what you, my moving friend has brought for me, your sitting friend? The question implies: do you stand before me with good deeds or are you drawn away to

evil deeds, in your life? If bad, I'll suffocate you with foul smell, because you are placing the dirty bag of your goonah on me. If good, I'll take out pleasing fragrance for you which will immerse you in Ushta. **Either way, I take you to Ahura.**

The equation of Kerfeh, Goonah, Patet is set out in almost every Khordeh Avesta Prayer through the passage: Az Hama Goonah Patet Pasheymaanoom..... wherein we refer to our bad as well as good deeds and pray: May I dig out and throw away all the seeds of Dushmata, Dujukhta, Dujvarashte and replace them by Manashni, Gavashni, Kunashni, because, the passage says, this will be good for my body and Ruvaan ("Tani Ruvaani" and also for this world and the next. (Geti Minoani). Life on earth and life after death are inseparably connected with goonah and kerfeh and all our kriya for our departed dear ones are based on the karmic journey of the Ruvaan in the next world. Dokhm-e-nashini is an essential part of the kriya.

The relation of Goonah and Kerfeh to the bad and good Karma and Atash being the Lord of Karma are tersely but beautifully depicted in a small 20 words Gathic Stanza - Ha 51-9 (Gatha Vohu Khshathra).

याम इन्तेम रानोष्ठ्या था आथा सुध्रा

मजदाओ

अयंश्दा क्षुस्ता अश्वी अहवाहु दक्षते दावोष्ठ

राषयंश्दे द्रेगवन्तेम, सवयो अषवनेम.

The meaning - a little expanded to reveal the esoteric message (i.e. the taavil) - is :

Oh Mazda! By Thy burning Atash resulting from the molten metal ("Ayangha-haa Khshustaa"). Thou bestowest eternal bliss ("Khshnootem") to the two rivals in the battle field ("Raanoibiaa"). (Through that bliss) Thou pointest out to the people going through this life and the next ("Ahavaahu") that those, immersed in evil (i.e. goonah) ("Dregvantem") shall get misery punishment, wounds ("Raashayanghahey") and those who are on the Path of Ashoi (i.e. actively pursuing the alchemy of Druj into Gava i.e. Kerfeh) shall get the divine benefit and bliss ("Savayo").

Get bliss through Kerfeh, and misery, suffering and pain, through Goonah. All throughout your life, you are battling in the field of good and evil, Gav and Druj, the inner cow and wolf. Ahura's Atash within you tests you in this battle and is Ahura's divine Entity to proclaim His Law: bliss for the good, pain for the evil.

This passage has, like all other mantras, several levels of meanings. The above meaning refers to the **inner battle** between goonah and kerfeh persistently going on within us, and the function and award of our inner Atash in the battle. The deeper meaning reveals the Yogic process of spiritual journey and development going on in a human through the 16 'Chakra's i.e. the centres of spiritual energy functioning in our non-physical body, Keherpa.

A still deeper taavil refers to the ancient practice of Nirang-Var (known as "Agni-Parikshaa" in the great Hindu Religion). A person is made to walk on burning fire to establish his or her innocence on a charge of guilt brought against him or her. In the history of our Din, we have two instances of Nirang-Var : one of the Keyan Shah Siavax and the other of the Saoshayant-e-Zamaan Dastoor Adarbad Maraspend. The Hindu Dharma has the instance of Sati Sita (the daughter of Mother-Earth and wife of the Avataar Rama) going through the fire to prove her innocence.

It is beyond the scope of this article to delve deeper into the two higher level messages narrated above. Those who crave to know more about them may refer to Framroze Chiniwalla's Vohukhsathra Gatha, page 106 et seq (Ha 51-9), and Spentomad Gatha, page 62 et seq (Ha 47-6) - IIm-e-Khshnoom Felaavnaari Committee - 1984 and 1989 respectively.

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CHINVAT - BRIDGE

We have seen in Chapter III that one of the stations of the Ruvaan's journey in the next world is the Chinvat Bridge. This is not a fad of the so called "later non-Gathic priests" of the western studies. (In fact no such priest ever existed in Iran.) Chinvat Bridge is referred to in the Gatha themselves - directly in Vohu-

Khshathta Ha 51-13, and indirectly in Spentomad Ha 50-4.

In 51-13, "Chinvato Pereytaao Akaao", refer directly and name specifically the Chinvat Bridge and uses the word "Akaao" for it. "Akaao" means (the bridge) which informs, apprises, depicts, portrays; the word conveys that on the Chinvat, Ruvaan sees its Kerdaar, a field formation in the shape of a female, who is like a film of the good and bad thoughts words and deeds of the body in which the Ruvaan was imprisoned during the last life on earth.

Ha 51-13 is preceded by the famous Ha 51-12 which was translated allegedly in pornographical language by the erudite scholar Humbach. (This was elaborated in Parsi Pukar January, 1998 et seq.) Putting aside that funny-tragic chapter, 51-12 has the words (i) "Vaepayo" and (ii) "Kayvino", meaning (i) a homo-sexual person and (ii) one who deliberately closes one's eyes to the Din, Dharma and all Kerfeh, and is immersed in the sling of enmity to Din. They are mentioned in 51-12 and continued in 51-13. The latter says:

"The Din vibrating with Truth ("Daenaa Areyjaaush") reminds openly the two (i.e. 'Vaepayo' and 'Kayvino') that their Ruvaan, because of their destroying (obliterating) ("Naasvaao") their path of Ashoi due to their evil deeds and tongue, shall on the Chinvat Bridge, weep in woe and anger ("Khraodaiti") (towards the physical body, whose sensual goonah have done this havoc.)

This is a clear and concise declaration of the truth that because of the 'goonah's of the body through its senses, the Ruvaan of the evil ones lament in woe and anger towards its body. It is the body who committed sins on earth and it is the Ruvaan who laments on the Chinvat. (Here, let this be a warning that your body who decided to be cremated will cause immense pain to your Ruvaan on the Chinvat.)

Why and how does the Ruvaan so lament - at the sins of the body on earth? Because, it sees its "Kerdaar". The Kerdaar depicts to the Ruvaan, both the goonah and kerfeh. The Kerdaar is described in Vendidad Pargarad 19-30 as a dame of discrimination, wisdom, justice, authority, truth and art. She looks beautiful to Ashavan and hideously ugly to the Dregvant. Paras 27 onwards of Parg. 19 elaborates the events on the Chinvat and thereafter.

In Gatha 50-4, Chinvat is referred to as "Aa-paithi", and the Dinkard Pahalvi Commentary of Sudgar Nask thereon describes the path of Chinvat. It is said there that the Chinvat for the Asho is quite broad; even its measurements are given. But for the Dregvant it is like the edge of a razor.

Again, the Chinvat is referred to in Gatha Ha 46-10, where it is said that the Asho male of female is made to pass over the Chinvat with ease.

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Chapter VII

THE NINE STAGES OF ESTABLISHING A DOKHMA

The marathon kriya (yasna) itself proves beyond doubt that this is a Religious and Spiritual Institution.

We have seen that Dokhma is a Religious Institution - a Dini Yasna, not a mere system of disposal, and it has three interconnected components; Vultures, Sun-light and Consecration Kriya. All the three are essential and vital, and the foremost of the three is the Dini Kriya. All the actions and operations, modes and methods, procedures and performances which are ordained for establishing a Dokhma are manifestly religious and clearly related to the Ruvaan's exit from the earth and its journey in the next world. Right from day one, Kriyas - ceremonies begin. The selection of the ground and the treatment of the ground before even the foundation of the structure is laid involve Religious procedures. A lot of religious preparations are to be made for the Tana operation. Then follows the actual Tana ceremony on the foundation. Thereafter the Structure is built according to a religiously ordained plan, where specified measurements are to be observed. The structure itself is a wonderful piece of architecture, specially designed to comply with several religious requirements. Then follows the special and strenuous ceremonies of consecration within the structure, most of which are to be done in the deep well in the middle. Then arrives a public ceremony outside the structure, where the Parsis assemble. A Jashan is performed followed by the Tandorosti Prayer for the charitable persons who have founded and supported the marathon project.

And there ends the consecration. Dokhma is ready for use.

During all the controversies, and arguments and discussions and debates and wrangles about the present situation the most ignored or the least referred to was this religious, esoteric, mystical and occult phase of Dokhm-e-nashini. It did not require a search or research in the Gatha and the Rivayats to assert that Dokhma is manifestly a Religious and spiritual Institution, a link between this world and the next and the step for the Ruvan's entry and progress in the next world. In all their meetings and sittings, the trustees of Parsi Punchayet did not even remotely refer to this most essential and fundamental aspect. They went on talking about "the system" and pompously and zealously proclaimed that they were "for the system". They even swore an affidavit to that effect on "a stamp paper".

As to the Dastoors the so called "high-priests", they too kept and do keep this Religious and the next worldly aspect of Dokhma under the carpet. Most of them are the slaves of the Western study of our religion, which having been germinated in the world of materialism if far away from the spiritual aspects of Dokhma, or for that matter any of our spiritual Institutions like Atash-Kadeh, Sudreh Kushti, Manthra or Kriyakaam. They think, all these are primitive men's superstitions. This having been imbedded in the scholarly Dastoors from their foreign degree courses, they always hesitate to touch any mystical aspect of our Din. Mind! The priests of no other community does this. They all emphasise the spiritual and occult aspects of their respective Religions, admirably, sincerely and convincingly. Alas! For us!

Would you, my dear reader, like to go into some more details about the establishment of Dokhma and its Religious operations and procedures and understand a little of how and why? It is extremely interesting and exhilarating. It will remove all your fears of death and inspire confidence in you that you will not be alone after death; Yazat's will be there to help you. Your Ruvaan has a journey to undergo. At times it will be painful but Ahura Mazda has taken care to mitigate your pain at every stage. But mind! Most part of the journey will be pleasant. These divine arrangements start working right from the moment of death **through Dokhm-e-nashini**. That is why Dokhma is specially made for you.

We can divide the Kriya in NINE stages.

The FIRST STAGE is the selection of the ground. It is to be at a mountainous place, away from the city-civilisation. (Bernard Shaw's expression). It must be the ground lying in natural condition without any human onslaught. Such ground has magnetic currents. The forces of Spenta Armaiti are whirling in it with full

swing. The surrounding air is free of all pollutions. The green vegetation must be dense around to keep the air fresh. The birds and animals have their natural habitats there. They behave and go round according to their natural instinct. The sun's rays must be directly falling on the place and later in the Dokhma structure.

Pausing for a moment, let me assure my readers that the **23 acres of land donated by Bomi Sachinwala in the Vasai Taluka satisfies all these requirements.** It is about 90 kms. away from Central Mumbai. This is a plus point, not a minus one, as some think. In the very nature of things, the ground is required to be away from the suffocating human city-civilization, **It is a most natural piece of Mother-Earth the like of which so near to Mumbai is not available anywhere else. It is surrounded by mountainous hills in such a way that there is no likelihood of any industrial (so called) development.** It is really a flash of divine inspiration to Bomi-bhai to have kept such a land and to offer it free for Dokhma.

The SECOND STAGE is to keeping on the ground any kind of cattle and sheep, pending the start of all procedures. The reason is that their excreta and urine, further sanctify the ground by adding energy of Bahman Ameshaspend to the forces of Spenta Armaiti. It drives away any evil forces or spirits.

I may add here again that **already the sheep and goats are placed on the scheduled ground at Vasai Taluka.** Nature itself shaped the circumstances in such a way that today the sheep are gazing there!

The THIRD STAGE is to perform Baj ceremonies on the piece of ground where the structure is to be erected.

Baj is a Dini Kriya performed for invocation of any of the 33 Yazats and focusing their divine energy to the place of performance. The object is to have the Yazatic Vibrations generated and formulated in a subtle unobservable fields, which can then perform the intended task. For instance, when the Baj of our departed dear ones is performed on the anniversary days, the vibratory fields fly and help the Ruvaan in its then exertions. Here on the Dokhma ground, the Baj brings down the Yazatic Energies and infuse them in the ground, to make it more and more sacred and blessed.

The Mobeds performing the Baj's are required to be within their Barshnoom period and having energised themselves by Khoop (i.e. through a Yazashney.) 13 Baj's of different Yazats are to be performed in a certain order. For instance 1st Baj is of Daadaar Ahuramazda; 2nd, of Sarosh Yazata;.... 7th for Spendarmard Ameshaspend; 11th for Ardaafravash; 12th for Jamyad Yazat; 13th for Sarosh again. It is beyond the scope of this series to enumerate the respective functions of each of the 13 Baj's and connect them to the Ruvaan's journey. Suffice it to say they embed the Energies of the particular Yazat in the ground. For instance, Spendarmard is the Yazat of the earth; so also Jamyad Yazat; Sarosh is the guiding Yazat of all human consciousnesses. These Yazatic Energies make the ground a "Taleysem", a charged battery, ready to help the Ruvaans coming into the Dokhma.

The Baj's are followed by a Jashan with certain Kerda's. **This is the FOURTH STAGE.**

The FIFTH STAGE is the digging of the foundation pit. One of the Mobeds does Kushti and holds the axe in his hands. He then begins Sarosh Baj Prayer upto the word "Ashahey" (in Kem-naa-Mazdaa) and then starts digging, reciting 21 Yathaa Ahu Vairyo. (He then discharges the Sarosh Baj by reciting "Nemaschaa Yaa Armaitish Izaachaa"..... to Kerfeh Mozda.) Thereafter the foundation pit is dug, a specified measure deep.

Just imagine! This is only the consecration of the ground and foundation pit.

Now the SIXTH STAGE. It is "the taano poorvaani kriya". A cotton string of a specified length is to be prepared by an Athornan lady, and taking out 101 cotton wires whilst reciting 101 names of Ahura Mazda. It is to be sanctified further by Sarosh Baj. Then, 301 nails of specified weights are to be made out. There are certain figures and formulae regarding the number and weight of the nails. 301 is the number of nails required. The formulae are:

- a) 1 nail of the weight 1 maund (mn) (about 20 kg.)
- b) 4 nails each of 1/4 mn (total wt. 1 mn.)
- c) 36 nails each of 1/36 mn (total wt. 1 mn.)
- d) 260 nails each of 1/256 mn (total wt. 1 + 1/64 mn)

The total weight of all the 301 nails is 1 + 1/64 mn. They are designed in a special way. Two mobeds (who have invoked certain spiritual energy within them by Panch Tai Khoop) go into the pit and invoke Sarosh, and then start fastening the nails at specified places in a specified order. They then take the sacred thread and entwine it on the nails in a specified order. The thread goes around in three orbits. It is a fascinating sight to see this Kriya. You will observe that the mathematics of the number and weight of the nails is actually based on the figure 4. 4, 4x4, 4x4x4, 4x4x4x4. Why 4? Because the basic Anaasars in Nature are four; and one of the functions of Dokhma is to send the Anaasars entrapped in the dead body upto Ruvaan.

The SEVENTH STAGE is now erecting the circular structure. It is a piece of wonderful architecture. It has 3 rows of Paavi's specified dimensions and a deep well in the middle. The circumference of the structure and that of the middle well are to be in the ratio of 3:1. The three rows of Paavi's are meant to place the bodies of males, females and children. Each Paavi has small outlet-paths for the liquids to flow directly down the well. The bottom of the well have four outlets for flowing away of the liquids, water and the bone-powders inside the earth.

The EIGHT STAGE is the CONSECRATION OF THE DOKHMA. Ah!

The Dokhma is first washed with Nirang and then washed three times with water. It is then covered by white cloth. A pair of Mobeds then take a long cotton string and entwine it in such a way that every Paavi up on the floor is connected with the Yazashney seat ("hindolaa") placed at the bottom of the deep well. In other words, the thread goes around all the Paavis and its end is tied with the feet of the 'hindolaa'. A kind of a magnetic circuit. The idea is that the field generated by the Yazashney and Vendidaad ceremonies to be performed in the deep well will reach every paavi through the string. The pair of Mobeds then first do an Yazashney by way of their own individual "Khoop" i.e. generating their own internal spiritual energy, as to be fit for performing further ceremonies. They have then to perform three Sarosh - Yazashneys and three Vendidaad's - each a day i.e. for three days. On the 4th day, they do Daadaar Ahuramazda, Sfindarmard Ameshaspend, Sarosh Yazad and Ardaafraavash. Mind! All this is to be done in the Bhandaar, the deep well.

The NINTH STAGE is to INAUGRATE THE CONSECRATED DOKHMA. A public function is arranged at the open space around the Dokhma and a Jashan is performed with 5 Kardeh's : Daadaar Ahura Mazda, Asfindarmard, Ardaafraavash, Daham, Sarosh, followed by a Tandorsti of Hamaa Anjuman. Dokhma is now ready for use.

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Oh God! what a marathon procedure! The ground and foundation pit and Taano and structure and Baj and Yazashney and Vendidaad in the deep well and Jashan! On the face of it, it is as clear as the sun in the midsky that this is not just symbolism and intended just to dispose of the body. The whole Yasna of establishing a Dokhma is clearly intended and meant to invoke and embed Yazatic and divine Energies within and outside the built-up structure, so that the Ruvaan can get the benefit of those Energies and is helped actively in its journey further. Each of the above stages has a spiritual, mystical and occult-scientific significance, explanation which WORKS. It is a spiritual machinery that operate and functions. Do you, my reader, after reading this bare outline, have any doubt that this is not just a disposal method, but is a divine Establishment and a Religious Power-station?

WHAT THEN MUST WE DO AND HOW CAN YOU BE OF HELP ?

Additional Dokhma-Project at Vasai Taluka.

Let us now apply the foregoing principles, doctrines and truths to the existing situation in Mumbai.

The first principle is that Dokhm-e-nashini is ordained for every Zarathoshti. It is the cleanest and fastest process whereby the Anaasars reach the departed Ruvaan in the next world.

Secondly, Dokhm-e-nashini has three components acting holistically viz. Vultures, Sun's rays and the holy fields embedded in the ground and established in the surrounding atmosphere by arduous Kriya's commanded by Din. Any of the three components cannot exist without the other. Vultures eat away the flesh at amazing speed, and leave the dry bones to exposure of sunlight. Within about four days, the Anaasars reach the Ruvaan through the sun's rays, which act on the excreta of the vultures. The subtle fields whirling in the ground and air greatly contribute to the process.

This does not happen when a body is cremated. The strong electric current acts with such intensity that the flesh and bones burn away simultaneously and the Anaasars the energy strings - entangle in a close mesh and are not released for onward transmission to Ruvaan. That is why Ruvaan is agonised. It takes a long time for the disentanglement of the Anasaric mesh and the Ruvaan has to wait in great torment. Those who cremate their dear ones' bodies do not know that they are the cause of the Ruvaan's agony. (See page 17.)

In the Dokhma the three components act in harmony to lift up the Anaasars. The physical operation is done by the vultures, the Nature's special sanitary equipment. If vultures are not there, the sun's rays by themselves cannot disintegrate the body and release the Anaasars. The body decomposes and decays, the Pavis become full of fluids and the stench is generated. We need not look into the scriptures to know this. The experience of last ten years of Mumbai Dokhma speaks by itself. Whenever in any religious writings, Surya-dah i.e. disposal by burning rays of the sun is referred to, it is implied that **Surya-deh goes with the animals who eat away the corpse**. The following words of Framroze Chiniwalla on page 3 of his book on "Dokhma-ni-Buland Zarthoshti Talesam" are to the point:

"Thus according to Zarthoshti Daen, the first rank procedure is khurshid-nagirashni (i.e. the exposure to sun's rays) **and** the "chashni" i.e. eating by the vultures and other birds simultaneously. The power than this is the procedure of placing the body on high mountains and exposing it to Khurshid nagirashni **when the birds and even animals will devour the body.**"

Thus Surya-dah implies and includes chashni by fast eating birds.

A statement in vendidad that a corpse lying on earth under the sun for one year does not corrupt the earth, is not a license to put a body in a place where there are no fast eating birds and animals.

So what do we do? The only rational way is to send our good wishes to the trustees of Parsi Punchayet that may they succeed in their unenviable and arduous task of continuing the Dokhma by whatever means they can, whether aviary or solar focusing or powders, herbs or chemicals. At the same time let us proceed to have an alternative. But that alternative should not be the discarding of the Dini Institution and changing the mode wholesale. Not the mode, but let there be another, additional, supplemental Dokhma if we can.

And Nature has extended its hand of divine help. An unassuming Parsi, who does not have the slightest desire of self publicity but has the spiritual strength to give away, (which is the virtue of Gava) is inspired to earmark a 23 acres of piece of land for a Dokhma, only 90 kms away from Mumbai. And what a place! You have to see it to be aware of its beauty. A secluded lush green piece of earth surrounded by mountainous hills, with the least amount of humans around and solitary villages here and there, and no possibility of any

hellish invasion of the so called development; a blessed spot as if destined for Dokhma, a transitional power house between this world and the next. The Parsis should grab this with extreme gratitude to Ahura Mazda and Asho Zarthushtra, who have made that unassuming Parsi, Bomi Sachinwalla as their human agent.

90 kms. from Mumbai is the ideal and optimum distance. Nearer would have fear of urbanisation. Till today Ruvaans are brought from Amalner, Jalgaon and Bhusawal to Surat; the respective distance are about 210, 280 and 330 kms. The surrounding hills at the Vasai Taluka place rule out the possibility of any industrial hell there.

A band of devoted workers have already started the work. A project report is prepared,. There is a rough access road to the place, which is being repaired and made motorable. The project includes a corpse carrier van and vehicles for the relatives.

Are there vultures? Answer is a BIG YES. On 9th April 2001 at a place only about 3 kms. away from the Vasai town-area, a large number of vultures (more than 50 on a conservative estimate) were found eating an animal corpse! This has been video-filmed. The film was shown at of lecture functions at Cusrow Baug Agiary on 18-4-2001, Andheri Agaiary on 26-4-2001 and Dadar Agiary on 12-5-2001. You have to see this to believe it. Actually due to the increase of dairy business around in Vasai Taluka, the Vulture population has increased. Since more cattle corpses are now available. Vultures are known to travel long distances when they receive death signals from a dying animal. (See page 10); and here they are not far. As if in answer to the doubts about the existence of vultures, the Mother Nature lovingly displayed to us a big flock of vultures not in the deep jungle, but near the town area! The project workers have experienced such silent help from Nature, from the day they began to work on the project. Your humble editor is one of the workers. We get encouragement from unexpected quarters, which just amazes us. We feel, we have the blessings from Nature to undergo this difficult task.

And you my reader can also help. It is a costly project - about 1.5 Crores. It includes, besides the actual Dokhma the Sagdi, the Bunglis, Office premises, Vehicles and all other para-fernelia. But we are getting money, though not with as much speed as we need. **Can you not, my dear reader, send to us whatever amount, howsoever small or big? It will be the best charity for your hard earned money and an opportunity to serve the Din and the community.** If you have benefited by reading this humble Parsi Pukar, I, your editor, in turn beseech you to help this divinely inspired project. Believe me, our displaying the video film of vultures at the Agiaries, resulted in a few spontaneous responses. In Cusrow Baug Agiary on 18th April, after the function, a cheque of Rs. 50,000/- was given there and then this was followed by two further cheques of Rs. 1 Lakh each. Smaller cheques are also coming. You my dear reader, please join.

I clarify, with due emphasis that this project is not meant as alternative to Malbar Hill Dokhma. It is not in competition; it is supplemental. The main intention is to reduce pressure on Malbar Hill, by having the Vasai Dokhma for the Parsis from suburbs. Of course, any body from any part of the world will be entitled to use it.

As to the consecration ceremonies. We are in contact with experienced Mobed Sahebs, and will do our best to ensure that they are performed in accordance with the Instructions and Tenets of the Din, as far as possible, under the present circumstances. In Khshnoom this is called "according to" mataa. It means: as will be possible, practicable and permissible, and as near to the ideal in the light of time, place and circumstances, Framroze Chiniwalla has, in his book: "Dokhmani Buland Zarthoshti Taleyssem", referred to "mataa pramane" at several places e.g. p. 114, 116, 130.

The implementation and management will be through a public charitable trust, which is already registered as "Manijeh Pirojsha Sachinwalla Charitable Trust" and the Dar-e-meher (Agiary) at Vasai (actually at Valiv village) belongs to that Trust. The Dokhma land and properties will be transferred to that Trust. It is an independent Trust and has no connection whatsoever with B. P. P. Trusts and Properties. The land at present belongs to Bomi Sachinwalla.

Now a word about Bomi. He is a practicing Architect, and a highly spiritual minded Parsi, who built the

Vasai Agiary on his own land, of course, donations were of great help. The agiary is a beautiful piece of architecture itself. The walls are of solid rocks and not pompous tiles. There is no electricity and no Chandaliers within the whole Agiary. It is a Daad-Gaah, on which Boy is performed in all the five Gahs.

Bomi Sachinwalla has in co-operation with a few Hindu devotees, established a Hindu sacred place at Medha, called "Tapo-bhoomi". Medha is about 25 kms. from Vasai. On the National Highway No.8, after Virar there is a right turn towards Varjeshwari. Medha is five kms before Varjeshwari. In fact, the proposed Dokhma site is less than 5 kms. from Medha in further, interior. In this Tapo-bhoomi a sacred Fire is burning since last 6 years, which was consecrated and is kept according to the ancient Hindu Yogic traditions. The place has several caves for meditation. Several Sadhus and saints come here to have yogic practices. (There is a cave for the Parsis also.)

In reply to the question why he has done this, Bomi bhai says, that he was inspired by spiritual forces to establish the Ashram and the Agni there, as a small repayment to this Mother-Earth of Bharat, who had lovingly taken us, the Parsis, in her lap and allowed us to consecrate the Iranshah Atash and to keep it burning for 1200 years! It is a very very small gift to this land of Yogis and Rishi Munies, for its tremendous obligation on Parsis. (By the way, Bomi is a regular visitor to Iranshah).

My dear reader! which Parsi has ever thought on these lines?

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I assure you, Bomi bhai himself and all the project workers have not the slightest desire for any self-publicity. There is no motive other than self-less service. In fact, we join Bomi bhai in his prayer of thanksgiving to Ahuramazda and Asho Zarathushtra, for giving us this wonderful opportunity of serving the Zarathoshti Din and Parsi Community. You also join us.

To divert from the spiritual to the worldly, **your cheques** should be in the name of "**Manijeh P. Sachinwalla Charitable Trust**" and forwarded to Bomi Sachinwalla, at 275, Green House, Post Valiv, Taluka Vasai, Pin 401 208. By the way Manijeh is Bomi's mother, who died in 1999. We sing with Narsinh Mehta, "dhan dhan janne teni re".... Bravo Mother!

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