

DR FARAMROZ CHINIWALLA'S RENDERING OF THE THREE DIFFERENT VERSION OF THE GATHA IN PAHALVI DINKARD

Translated and elaborated by KN. Dastoor

[K.N.D.'s Note: In the last issue, I gave you some idea about the marathon Pahlavi Book titled "Dinkard", which was originally written in the 9th century and copied several times thereafter. The earliest copy appears to have been made in about 1020 A.D. and the later ones in 1338, 1496, 1640 A.D. The last one was brought from Iran to Surat in 1783 A.D. and the gigantic work of the erudite father and son, Dasturjis Peshotan and Darab Sanjana is based on that copy.

The last Book IX of Dinkard as set out, transliterated in English, and translated into English and Gujarati, in the 19th Volume of Sanjana's, contains three different versions of the Gatha. Each of them presents a certain phase of the divine message. Each is seemingly variant from the other and all the three seem to be different from the various highly divergent translation of the Western philological school. It is the mystic science of IIm-e-Khshnoom and the taavil revealed by it that a nexus is spelled out and unfolded between each passage of the original Gatha in Avesta and its different phases set out in the Pahlavi Dinkard. This by itself is a wonderful occurrence, manifesting the divine, mystically and spiritual nature of the Holy Scripture. The Parsis should consider themselves extremely fortunate to have not only the three different versions but also a glaring pointer to the truth that any Holy Scripture has different levels, phases, stages, ranges and dimensions.

Before proceeding with the three Pahlavi versions of Haa 30-1 as set out in Dr. Faramroz Chiniwalla's work, I would like to clarify that these versions in the Dinkard volume IX are different from the Pahlavi Translation of the Gatha, which has come down to us in certain manuscripts and was explored in the Westernly way by the Dini - Avaz

philological scholars particularly Dr. Lawrence Mills. There, the Pahlavi writers have actually translated and in a sense commented upon, the original Avesta text of the Gatha. The Pahlavi translation of Haa 30-1 is already presented in Dini Avaz of July-August 1994 (vol 19, no.4). The Dinkard versions are not such translations; they treat the different levels and dimensions of the Divine Message in the holy Avesta Scripture, the Gatha. As already stated the versions unfold the practical moral lessons and the deeper spiritual and mystical matters contained in the Gatha, as also the divine Yazatic stature of Asho Zarathushtra, and the efficacy of the Manthra of the Gathas. There is no hard and fast divisions of these matters in each of the three versions. They are inter-related and often the same subject matter appears in all the three versions but with emphasis on its different aspects.

It has been also pointed out that the three versions are given the names of the three Nasks: Sudkar Nask, Varshta Mansra Nask and Baga Nask. This naming is not just a fancy of the writers of Dinkard, nor have they done so to give fraudulent authenticity to their own fancies, as some westerly winded scholars are inclined to believe; they have gone to the extent of charging with this fraudulence even the alleged "writer priests" of "of later" i.e., non Gathic Avesta. The allegation is that they the later priests fraudulently used the statements like "Mraot Ahurahe Mazdaao" or "pereyset Zarathushthro Ahurem Mazdaam" to infuse an authenticity to their non-Gathic and non-Zoroastrian dogmas. The glaring illustration of the insulting charge is Prof. illya Gershevitch's much boasted article "Zoroaster's own contribution" in the journal: Near Eastern

studies, January 1964. The relevant quote from this article is set out in the Introduction to the present series-Dini Avaz vo.17 -1.

The names of three Dinkard-versions indicate that the three of the 21 Avesta Nasks did contain and set out the various Manthric levels and the doctrines and teachings woven into the. At several places in Dinkard, the author has stated that his source is the authentic original Avesta Scriptures.

We are now ready to delve into the three versions of Dinkard. Dr. Saheb has, in each of his six published books on Gatha, viz. (i) Haa 28, (ii) Haa 29, (iii) Haa 30, (iv) Haa's 47 to 50, (v) Haa 51 and (vi) Haa 53, given the Gujarati translations of each of the three Nasks as set out in Dinkard, and at the end of each stanza of the Gatha explained how the version is connected with the taavil of the Avesta. In what follows I have first-set out the English rendering of those passage from each of the Pahalvi _asks, which have a nexus with the translation and taavil of the Avesta Gatha Haa 30-1. In doing so, I have, wherever, Dr. Saheb has quoted the lines *from* the Pahalvi text, put it down in the English alphabet, subject to the limitations inherent in that language, which Bernard Shaw mourned in his drama "Pygmalion". The non-scholarly reader may, if so liked, ignore the text - and read only the translation.

DR. SAHEB ON SUDKAR NASK

1. Shashum Fargarad "At Taa Vakhshya' Madem Pahlumih-e-Panj Avaadih = The sixth Fargarad" At Taa vakhshya" is about the excellence of five kinds of the blessed bounties ('karam bakhshesh');

Fratum Pavan Ahlaahee: The first bounty is of the righteousness (truth);

Da digar Pavan Frazend-e-Nivag: The second blessing is of the best progeny;

Dinl-Avaz

Sadigar Pavan Zimig-e- Rodishna
Aaomand: The third bounty is of the fertile land;

Cheyhaarum Pavan Ramag-e-Meyshaan:

The fourth blessing is of the flocks of sheep;

Panjam Pavan Farakhteeth-e-Pavan
Kheyshkaaree: The fifth bounty is of the cleverness.
in one's work.

2. Madam Khalkunashn-e-Vel Tukhshaa
kann Gadman Val Ashghehaanaan

Shakunaaeeh: (This is) About the craftsmen - those who alchemise their own self, those who observe the 'tarikats', will have the auspicious fortune of attaining "Gad man" i.e., the progressive state of purification of the Aipi'.

[KND's Note: 'Aipi' here means the field surrounding a human; every human has his or her own Aipi extending in a circle of about one foot around the body. This field has the property of absorbing the effects of every-thought, word and deed, whether good or evil. Any spiritual advance is accompanied by the progressive purification of the Aipi. Aipi in the process of purification is called Gadman". The message here is that those who alechemise themselves, that is, convert or transmute the evil within into good attain the state of Gadman. This is a part of the curriculum laid down in 30-1

Dr. Saheb continues:]

And those who are idle (i.e. avert their duty of alchemising) will get poverty and indigence;

3. Yeti bunaan: those who **sit idle** (i.e. do not exert) will get the Gadman i.e. the refined state of Aipi, one fold (or degree);

Sagitunaan: those who **walk** will get it two fold (or to two degrees).

Tachaan: those who **run** will get it three fold (or to three degrees).

Raatunaanak: those who are **speedy will** get it four fold (or to four degrees):

Vol. 19 No.6

Oeybrunaan ik Pavan Aspa: those who **ride the horse** will get it five fold (or to five degrees).

Vazaanak Pavan Raeee: those who **sit in a chariot** will get it six fold (or to six degrees);

Oadistaan Shnaakhtaareeh va Vichaar taareeh: those who **learn and know the laws and teach** others how to recognize good and bad will get it seven fold (i.e, to seven degrees.)

Hoo Paanaageeh-e-Khastgaanak: Those who dwell in the shade of propitious (gracious, auspicious), sinless and conscientiously earned **wealth** will get it eight fold (or to eight degrees);

Shnaasgeehaa Tukshaakih-e-Medem Verzidaareeh-e-Zeemeeg: Those who are experts in the knowledge of **tilling of land** will get it nine fold (or to nine degrees);

Aamuzkaareehee-e-Manthra Spenta: those who teach **Manthra Spenta** will get it ten fold (or to ten degrees).

[KND's Note: An astute reader will at once see that here the grades of self-alchemisation are referred to, Self-alchemy results in the purification of one's Aipi and that amounts to progress on the divine path, spiritual advancement. Those who are 'Isheynto' i.e., those, who crave to advance, should not sit idle; idleness is static; Aipi sticks to one degree. But those who walk, run, rush, ride, sit in a *fast* chariot will alchemise their Aipi in successively higher degrees. These words are not to be taken literally in the dry dictionary sense. They are the velocities of spiritual journey towards Frasho-Gard, the ultimate divine goal. Still higher stages are: gaining the divine knowledge and imparting it, attaining divine wealth by obeying God's Law and utilising it for the advancement of others; knowing the divine Rules of tilling one's own earth Le, the body, which is to be freed *from* Druj the evil inter woven in it; learning and teaching Manthra-Spenta which is founded on the laws of divine vibrations, staota yasna.

Dinl - Avaz

We have seen that Haa 30-1 is the address of Asho Zarathushtra to those aspirants who crave to advance on the divine path. The curriculum *for* this has three subjects: the Staota, the Yasna and the Manthra. The aspirants has to advance step by step in these divine subjects. The message is therefore *for* the humans at all levels. It is not confined only to the more advanced 'Ashavan' or 'Athraavan's. It contains the teachings *for* non-saintly humans too. That is unfolded through the 'Taavil', and here the taavil in the Sudkar Nask reveals the successive advancing stages beginning with the idle. Each stage learns the three subjects progressively: *from* primary to intermediate and then to high and higher and highest. First, learn to walk; abandon your sluggishness, exert on the path of Daena like a child learning to walk; improve your walk; then learn to run, rush, ride. Horse in all mystic sciences depict the speedy journey on the divine path. 'Aspa' is the suffix in the names of highly evolved Ashavans, warriors and Kings like Lohraaspa, Vishtaaspa, Paurooshaspa. Four of the nine ascendants of Asho Zarathushtra are "aspa's. As riding a horse requires skill, imparts exertion, induces fatigue and takes the rider forward with grace and beauty, so do all the exercises *for* the Ruvaan's march towards Ahura Mazda.

Similarly chariot depicts, in the mystic sciences, the vehicle of the soul. Here, chariot-driving is shown as a stage higher than horse riding. Chariot occurs in Meher Yasht, as also in Veda, and Upnished. Soul is described in Kathapanishad as traveling in the chariot of the body. In Kardeah 25 of Meher yashta Meher Yazad's chariot is stated to be surrounded by the chariots of Sarosh, Rashney, Aap, Urvar and Ashaonaam Fravashi.

The stage next to chariot driving is the attainment of higher knowledge and the authority to impart it on others, where the Aipi is sanctified to the 7th degree. He or she then

Vol. 19 No.6

becomes "wealthy" with divine treasures.

Then comes the stage of expertise "in tilling the land". Ruvaan is enclaved in the body. The body is a stony land to start with. The stones are to be dug out and the earth is to be softened so that the seeds of goodness, selflessness and divinity can grow up and the human can become a garden emanating divine fragrance throughout the cosmos. This is the real meaning of agriculture in Religious Scriptures. The western study has never appreciated, nay imagined this. It has been carried away by its own intellectual ego to assign the literary dictionary meanings to such words like agriculture, cow, cattle, sheep, Shepherd occurring in the Holy Scriptures, and pompously conclude that the Religions were the products of an alleged agricultural or pastoral times which were slightly later than cave-man's times, and much earlier to the progressive present of the 19th century.

Thus the great scholar Mills, in spite of all his scholastic exertions, wrote in his Introduction to the Gathas in S.B.E. Vol. 31: "Here it must be noted that the population among whom these hymns (i.e., the Gathas) were composed were chiefly agriculturists and herdsmen" for whom "their land and cattle represented their most valuable property" (page XXI). These scholars natured in the materialistic thinking of 19th century never dreamt in their deepest sleep that these words denoted the evolution of the

Ruvaan through the tilling and ploughing of the land of the physical body and transmuting its Druj into Gava. Gava is not just the cow and cattle but the element of selflessness dwelling into the human heart and the Prophets and 'Soshyant's therefore call themselves Shepherds. Christ spoke of Himself as the Good Shepherd; Moses loved "to tend his flocks"; all Founders of Religions do. They guide, they feed, they nurture their own flocks that is, the Ruvaan's passing through their respective 'Din's. Lord Krishna with

Dinl- Avaz

the flute of devotion in His hands led His "cow and the cattle" to the fields of spiritual nourishment. In the very first stanza of Gatha Haa 29 (which Haa depicts the Divine story of the Yazatic Origin of Asho Zarathushtra) Geush Urva, the-mother Earth, the soul of "the cattle", thunderingly asks for the Divine Farmer ('Vaastrya'), who will teach the way of Ahura Mazda to these earthlings. And Ahura Mazda in his Divine wisdom decrees, in Haa 29,6, that Asha Zarathushtra is the divinely authorized and empowered Lord, Leader, Guide, temporal as well as spiritual, who has been moulded, formed, structured "tatashaa" and ordained as the Divine Farmer, Shepherd, Tiller to lead the humans, through the Fields of Divinity to Ahura Mazda. In Faravardin Yasht, Asho Zarathushtra is called "yo Paoriyo Vastryo Fashunyas", who was the first Farmer to teach the humans how to till and plough the stony land of their physique. Haa 29-6 uses the words "Frashu-yantaeychaa Vastryaa-eechaa",

Therefore, the curriculum of Haa 30.1 also includes the divine exertion of agriculture and Sudkar Nask points this out by saying that the experts in agriculture have their Aipi sanctified nine-fold.

The ten-fold purification of Aipi is for the teachers of Manthra-Spenta, who have the divine knowledge of Staota Yasna, the Founding vibrations of the whole Creation and Cosmos'

This, my reader, is the only right way to comprehend the right message of the Gathas. The philological somersaults do not and cannot in the very nature of things reveal the right key. They mislead; and worse: kill the faith of the Parsis; and worst: increase the production of the faithless.

(to be continued.....)