

WHAT LITTLE I SHOULD PRAY AND WHEN

By : Curset M. Patel

(This article is taken in hand due to the fact that many youngsters are getting somewhat interested in the Zoroastrian religion. After a lecture or a talk, they usually pose the question, as to what little they should pray daily or whenever they feel inclined to recite some prayers during leisure hours. It is a regrettable fact, that they are not even aware of the basic daily prayers (apart from doing Kusti once or twice a day) which are required to be recited by every Zarthosti. They also get mixed up as regard the timings of the five Gahs. It is observed by the writer that even people who regularly recite from the book are unaware of the sequence of prayers e.g. many pray Yashts before Nayaishs. We shall take up here only basic prayers which can be recited in spite of acute shortage of time we experience in our materialistic and mundane life of hustle and bustle. We will give short explanation — but, will not enter into the merits of how and why one should pray nor what word, line or para one should pray for a particular ailment or in times of difficulties. We shall just touch in brief, what the heading here calls for).

The prayers or better still "Bandagi" which should be done by every Baste-Kustian Zarthosti, every single day was given to us by the last Raaenidaar Adarbad Marespand Saheb some 1800 years ago. We are still under his jurisdiction, which will last till the new Raaenidaar Behram Varzavand Saheb comes, sometime around the end of this century.

The Avesta prayers which our prophet of prophet Zarthusra Saheb gave us were Manthra, known as "Fshusho-Manthra."

The Avesta, which he made his direct disciples write is "Manthra-Spenta". And what is given from time to time by the Raaenidaar — like Adarbad Marespand Saheb is "Manthra-Spenta." Each Raaenidaar gives these Manthra which will be suitable to the souls who will emerge on the earth, during the period of his reign. All our Avesta is based on "Stoat Yasna" i.e. vibrations, and as such nobody has any right to delete or add anything to the existing Avesta Prayers, since nobody in to-day's world can have the knowledge of the "Stoat Yasna." Each Raaenidaar gives Avesta Prayers — which is the prescription for the soul, of all those Zoroastrians born during his particular reign.

In the Khorde Avesta, we have our basic Ashem Vohu, Yatha Ahu Vairyo, Kusti Prayer, different Baaj, Ceremonial Prayers like Vandidad, Yazashney, Afringen, Ashirvad, Geh-Sarna etc, etc. We will leave aside Ceremonial Prayers and touch only our daily Prayers here.

Ashem Vohu, Yatha Ahu Vairyo and Yengahey hataam are known as "Azad Manthra" (Free Manthra). You can pray the same at any time, under any circumstances, and situation if the occasion of praying the same arises. One point should be cleared here and that is your action should not be based on indifference or deliberate negligence. As for example, if you have a cap and it is possible to cover your head with it and still you do not whilst praying the "Azad Manthra," then it is not in order; or a woman during her monthly periods just prays because she has nothing else to do, then it's not correct but, she is allowed to do so if during that period, she suddenly gets frigh-

tened or is in pain or some trouble, etc. the appropriate occasion has to arise then she can recite the "Azad Manthra" of Ashem Vohu, Yatha Ahu Vairyo, and Yengahey Hataam only.

Kusti should be performed generally on getting up in the morning, after a bath, before eating meals, before reciting prayers, after answering Natures' call, when bad thoughts persist, at the beginning of all five Gahs, at bed-time, before proceeding to Atashbehran, Agiary-Kebla, room, etc. etc.

According to the Zarthusti Din, 24 hours in a day are divided into five parts, and as such, we have five Gahs: namely Havan, Raipithwan, Uziran, Aiwisruthrem and Ushahin.

Havan Gah starts from the sunrise of the place where you are — but before Havan there is what is known as Hoshbam. First 36 minutes before sunrise is Havan-ni-Hoshbam and another 36 minutes before that, is Ushahin-ni-Hoshbam i.e. the period of 72 minutes before sunrise is Hoshbam.

Standard Time :

72 to 37 minutes before sunrise	Ushahin-ni-Hoshbam.
36 " " "	.. Havan-ni-Hoshbam
Sunrise to 12.40 p.m.	.. Havan Gah.
1.10 p.m. to 3.40 p.m.	.. Raipithwan Gah.
4.10 p.m. to Sunset	.. Uziran Gah.
72 minutes after sunset to 12.40 a.m. (Night)	.. Aiwisruthrem.
2.45 a.m. to 36 minutes before sunrise	.. Ushahin Gah.

It will be observed that a gap of 30 minutes, 72 minutes or even about 2 hours is indicated in-between 2 gahs. This interim period is called the time of 'Gashak' when during the day the laity can pray if its really necessary. The explanation in brief for the same is that when one Gah gets over and changes to another — during the intermidate period the rays of the sun falling

on the earth are not as strong and straight as they should be, but are a bit inclined due to the rotation of the earth and because of this, the black side of nature or evil side catches in on this period for launching an attack on the white side of nature. This is the reason why we perform Boi-Kriya on the fires of Atash Behrams and Agiary as soon as the Gah changes, to repulse the attack brought on by the Evil — black side. During the 'Gashaks' period of the Aiwisruthrem and Ushahin Gahs, a Dastur or a Mobed can recite Avesta but the laity cannot. As per the given Gah chart timings, the laity should atleast perform the Kusti, if not anything else, on the change of one Gah to another.

Between sunrise and sunset (which includes 3 Gahs, Havan, Raipithwan, Uziran) a Zarthosti must, repeat must, recite one of the Gahs according to the time, and Khorshed and Meher Nyaish (ofcourse, this is after performing Kusti and Sarosh Baj). This is termed 'Farajiyat' or compulsory prayer for each and every Zarthusti, Come

what may. If you have no time then create time, do what you want, but, you shall pray, this as ordained.

If one wants to go little further, add to the above prayer Hormazd, Ardibehest and Sarosh Yasht Hadokhat together with their Nirang and you have the 'Big Farajiyat'. In the end one can recite 'Pazand' (In our present Khorde Avesta — all is not Avesta,

some prayers are in Pazand also and some are a mixture of the two) prayers of 'Doa Nam Setayashney', Din-no-kälmo, Char disha no namaskar, Chithrem Booyad, Tandarosti, 101 names of Ahuramazda etc, etc.

If one wishes, he can Pray all five Nyaish in order of Khorshed, Meher, Mah Ardvisur and Atash-ni-nyaish. (One must note that in front of Atash Behram and Agiari. Atash Keble, except Atash-ni-nyaish, no other nyaish can be prayed. One must pray the same outside the Kebla room, or as far as possible, away from the Atash Kebla). Now with this five Nyaish, Hormazd, Ardibehest Yasht and Sarosh Hadokht further adding Behram and Haptan Yasht. can be added, or still further one can make a combination of 5 Nyaishes and 5 Yashts by

From all the above combinations one can select any as per convenience—all the combinations normally should be ended with

Doa-nam-Setayashney etc. as shown in previous paragraphs. — Well so much for the day.

At night i.e. 72 minutes after sunset, Gah Aiwisruthram starts; so recite Aiwisruthram Gah then Sarosh Yasht (Ratni) Vadi (This is an exception to the rule — usually Nyaish should be recited first then Yasht and Atash-Nyaish, This can be termed as 'Farajiyat' compulsory quota of the Night Prayers. ii) One can add to this, Mah Bokhtar-Nyaish, and any other Yasht except Avan Yasht— (Khorshed, Meher, Avan Ardvi Sur Nyaish and Avan, Khorshed and Meher Yasht cannot be recited after sunset). iii) Winding up with Doa Nam Setayashney etc. as shown previously. After this, one last very important prayer remains and that is Patet-pashemani for oneself and to do 'Patet Ravan-ni-nayate for the departed souls of our Kith and Kin and for anyone

who is dead. This is by no means an ordinary thing it is a very blessed prayer, (Patet can be done at the end of one's prayer only and not in between. For 'Patet-Ravanni' it would be more correct if one performs Kusti again, after his prayers and then start the same.)

Ushahin Gah (for laity) is after 2.45 a.m., if possible; one can recite Ushahein Gah, Atash-ni-nyaish, and Sarosh Hadokht and there after, as shown above in No. (ii) & (iii) of Aiwisrathram Gah. The best hour for prayers in a day is the early morning one especially, 72 minutes before sunrise, and to some extent 72 minutes before sunset.

In a nutshell those who wish to pray the bare minimum necessary in the whole day, then the following will be adequate.

Kusti prayers in all Gahs (if not possible in 5th Ushahin Gah, then at least in other 4) Khorshed and Meher-nyaish (in either Havan, Rapithwan or Uzirin Gah). Sarosh Yasht (Ratni) Vadi, and Atash-ni-nyaish in Aiwisruthram Gah, Sarosh Baj, Doa-nam-satayashney, Ahuramazda's 101 names and Patet. If one decides to spare only 30 minutes in the morning and night, then one can very comfortably recite the aforesaid prayers.

May God be with you!



FRAUD

As the bubble cannot endure, so the fraud cannot prosper. . . Nothing is ever gained, ever can be gained by fraud.

—James Allen.

Fraud always carries the germs of destruction with it.

—Manchershah Kekobad.

From My Little Nook:

(Come all ye from far and near, all ye young and oh not so young, all friends and aye even foes. Gather ye religion rosebuds while ye may! Sit back and inhale the mild whiff of sweet fragrance from these buds of Wisdom of Centuries.)

OMNIPRESENT

On a bombing raid over Germany during the last war, one plane had a piece of unscheduled Cargo in the person of an army Chaplain who had gone aboard 'for the ride'. Anti-aircraft fire and enemy fighter planes were all around and thinking he would try to calm the men, the Chaplain got on the intercom and said quietly: 'It's all right, men. Have no fear. God is with you.'

Immediately the tail gunner shouted back: 'He may be with you guys up front, but He's not back here!'

Seconds later a shell burst through the bottom of the tail turret and passed out the top without exploding. There was a moment of stunned silence, and then the tail gunner hastily added: 'Correction, Please. God just walked in!'

Lord, teach me to be generous,
To Serve you as you deserve,
To give and not to count the cost,
To fight and not to heed the wounds,
To toil and not to seek for rest,
To labour and to ask for no reward,
Save that of knowing that I do your will,
O Lord.

No man is born unto himself alone;
Who lives unto himself, he lives to none
Francis Quarles.

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HAVE I CHARITY?

Am I ever patient, ever kind, not envious, not puffed up, not selfish, not angered, not evil thinking, rejoicing with the truth, hearing all things, believing all things, hoping all things, enduring all things, never hating, ever loving?

If so, I have Charity.

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Abraham Lincoln once said :

'I can see how it might be possible for a man to look down upon the earth and be an atheist, but I cannot conceive how he could look up into the heavens and say there is no God.'

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Diplomacy is to do and say the nastiest things in the nicest way.

—Goldberg.

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It is impossible to tell where the law stops and justice begins.

—Baer.

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He that falls into sin is a man; that grieves at it, is a Saint; that boast of it, is a devil.

Thomes Fuller

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Good manners are the Small Coins of Virtue.

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When God is Seen with undefiled mind.
He becomes revealed to mind. Those who
Know him, become immortal.

Swetaswatara Upanishad

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All learning is vain except to Know God
and Serve Him.

Guru Nanak.

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