



NORTH AMERICAN MOBED COUNCIL **NEWSLETTER** **ATHRAVAN**

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Presidents Message:

I would personally like to wish Happy New Year & Happy Holidays to all our members and their families as we enter 2013. I look forward to another successful year for the NAMC.

NAMC's 2013 AGM will be hosted by the Zoroastrian Association of Quebec in Montreal from May 18 to May 19/2013.

You are requested to send your \$25 NAMC membership fees to our treasurer Tehemton Mirza.

A VOYAGE OF LIFE: FROM MANLINESS TO GODLINESS **(Part II)**

Ervad Dr. Jehan Bagli

To fully elaborate the Majesty of God - Ahura Mazda, Zarathushtra resorts to its Divine component. It is like splitting the white light into its spectral components. The Prophet addresses this spectrum of colors as Amesha Spentas –the Bounteous Immortals. The term *Amesha Spentas* does not appear in the Gathas, but is used **for the first time in older Avesta** in Yasna Haptanhaiti (yasht). In fact, Ys 35.1 of Haptan yasht **starts** with collective **reverence to Amesha Spentas**, and **ends** in Ys 42.5 with the same **reverence to them**.

This pantheon of values, have often been individually anthropomorphized as Archangels, in later Zarathushtrian literature. However a closer look at the younger avestan texts reveals, that these values or attributes as we refer to them, are in actuality **not separate entities at all**, but they are a part and parcel of and synonymous with that Supreme Being we address as Mazda.

These six values together with **Mazda Ahura constitute a heptad** of seven that is **one for all and**

all for one. This notion is supported in several younger avestan texts. **In Hormazd Yasht** verse 3, when Zarathushtra queries his God, “what Holy spell can purify the soul in the corporeal world?”

Hormazd responds;

...ahmakem nama Spitama zarathushtra yat

Ameshanam Spentanam

....the names of US the Bountiful immortals (Yt 1.3)

Once again in Ardibehest Yasht (Yt 3.1) we see the Creator affirming the notion of His synonymy with Amesha Spenta when He states:

...yat Asha vahishta frada-ithisha....ahmakem yasnaicha

vahmaicha yat ameshnam spantanam

**.....for the worship and invocation of US Amesha Spentas
may thou appoint *Ardibehesht* ...of the shining light...(Yt 3.1)**

In a passage that appears both in *Fraverdin yasht* (Yt 13.83) and *Zamyad yasht* (Yt 19.16) further reaffirms the concept of **oneness of Mazda with Amesha Spentas**, where it states

Yoi hapta hamo-manangho yoi hapta hamo-vachangaho,

yoi hapta hamo-shyothnaongho yaeshenm asti

hamem mano, hamem vacho hamem shyaothnem

hamo patacha frasastacha yo dadvao ahuro mazdao.

(YT 13.83, Yt 19.16)

Seven are of one thought, seven are of one word, seven are of one deed whose thought is the same, word is the same, and deed is the same instructed by one father who is the creator Ahura Mazda.

It is relevant to tie this notion with the golden thread of the Gathic strands. In Ys 28.2 zarathushtra himself alludes to the oneness of these aspects of Mazda when in his devotion, he invokes upon them collectively as ‘all of you Wise Lord’. In Ys 28.2 He states:

“I...shall serve all of you, Wise Lord, with good thinking ...” Ys 28.2.

This is reiterated in Ys 50.4

**“...I shall always worship all of you, Wise Lord, with truth and
the very best mind and with their dominion ...” Ys 50.4.**

No where is this concept of oneness, more strikingly expressed than in Ys 30.9 and also in Ys 31.4 where we note the term *Mazdaoscha Ahuraongho*. These words are unanimously interpreted by philologists, as **Wise One and other Ahuras**, thereby raising the status of all these values to the highest level of divinity. In fact Taraporewala makes a special mention in a footnote saying, “the name Mazda Ahura when used in plural implies all the seven *Amesha Spenta* including the supreme”.

These aspects collectively also represents the beneficent way of being or thinking that is doctrinally identified as *spenta mainyu*. Etymologist have interpreted *spenta mainyu* as progressive or advancing **thought process** or a benevolent way of thinking. However several respected scholars (Taraporewala, Duchesne-Guillemin, Moulton, Bode/Nanavutty) have interpreted the term as Holy mentality or Holy Spirit. *spenta mainyu* can be best described as the **beneficent thinking towards progress of evolution by the Creator**. In the younger Avestan literature, it is sometimes misconstrued as synonymous with Ahura Mazda. Perhaps Dastur Dhalla puts it in its most appropriate perspective when he says,

**“Spenta Mainyu symbolizes the ideal or perfect
existence as conceived in thought by Ahura Mazda”.**

This implies that Mazda is an entity with a thinking mind. The universe therefore, can be conceived as a product or creation by of a **universal mind** that follows this **progressive benevolent mentality or spirit**. Gatha teaches that mankind can be holy and progressive by being in the state of *spenta mainyu* through truth. This notion is expressed at the very beginning of the Gatha Ys 28.1 where Zarathushtra asks for assistance from this Holy spirit, and reiterated as slight variant in Ys 44.2 where it states,

**". . . For such a righteous person, is progressive.....
a world-healer and Thy ally in spirit, Wise One."**

Ys 44.2.

Thus both the older as well as the younger avesta we find support for the notion that *Amesha Spentas* are synonymous with the same whole being of Mazda, the prophet worships them all singularly and collectively as Wise Lords and mankind should do no less.

What are the returns that one experiences through such a worship of Wisdom Incarnate through truth? It is through devotion to Mazda that mankind evolves spiritually within the order of Nature, and be progressively god-like, that is the ultimate goal of the journey, to be the benefactor of the less fortunate among mankind, and the other creation. That is what last line of Ahuna Vairya prayer reminds us

*khshthremcha ahurai a yim dregubyo
dadat vasta rehem.*

**Ahura empowers him, who
Rehabilitate the less fortunate**

That is what the opening line of Ys 43.1 tells us

ushta ahmai yahmai ushta kahmaichit

Radiant Happiness to him who radiates

happiness to others

The overall message is loud and clear. True happiness of receiving is vested in giving, It is in giving, that brings, the fulfillment of being a benefactor *a Saoshyant*.

This is precisely what is reflected in the hymns of our prophet who repeatedly states that the rewards of truthful and righteous life through the use of the good mind are in fact truth and good thinking from the mankind at large.

**“.....those whom Thou dost know, Wise Lord to be just and deserving
in conformity with truth and good mind...
Thou fulfill their longing with these attainments....”**

Ys 28:10

This also resonates in Ys 51.21

"... The rule of truth and good thinking is advancing.

The Wise Lord created this, (and)

I shall entreat Him for this good reward. "

Ys 51.21

In summery it is the *Amesha Spenta* that make up the **complete life-force Mazda**, they are the **objects of worship** and that they are also **the rewards in themselves**.

*For more Information or submission of any articles in NAMC Newsletter,
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