



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

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***Vol. # 2***

## ***Presidents Message:***

NAMC AGM will be held in New Jersey on 2nd weekend of May. NAMC membership is due for 2011. Please send your \$25 membership fees to our treasurer T. Mirza. Wishing you and your family a very Happy New Year.

Congratulation to APRO Ervad (Dr) Soli P. Dastur to be recognized as OUTSTANDING ZARATHUSTHI in North America by FEZANA at 2010 North American Zoroastrian Congress held in Houston.

If you know any Mobeds in India or any other countries please do forward their full name and email address to Soli P. Dastur at [dastur@comcast.net](mailto:dastur@comcast.net) and he will add them for next mailing.

Please forward your remarks and/or any article you would like us to print in our Newsletter to Khushroo Bharda at [kbbharda@hotmail.com](mailto:kbbharda@hotmail.com) or Kobad Zarolia at [kzarolia@ca.inter.net](mailto:kzarolia@ca.inter.net).

Ervad Kobad Zarolia

## **Equality between Man and Woman (Genders) in the EYES of Ahura Mazda** **Mobed Bahmanshah Minocher Sanjana**

Friends, Let us do our Basics today. Ahura Mazda first Created Farohars, millions of them, for the Entire Universe!! For the Material World as well as the Spiritual World!!!

If we consider Ahura Mazda to be a Big Fireball, then all its sparks are HIS Farohars, which means there is a Farohar in each and every of His Creation. Khorshed,(Sun) Meher,(Sun's rays), mahbokhtar(Moon), Teshtar (stars), men women, animals, waters, mountains, plants , trees, Fires, every thing every thing has its Own farohar. Keep this fundamental thing in your mind always. That is why peers and saints of all Religions and Deens say that God is in everyone and every thing.

Think like this for a moment!! If you consider this fact that God that is Ahura Mazda resides in everything and all human beings, nobody is Big or Small, superior or Inferior than any body in this world!!! With the same token we can say that if I Insult somebody, or curse at someone or insult someone = that means I am Insulting Ahura Mazda!!

If this simple But Very Important Religious Knowledge is Imbided in every one of us from the very Childhood, I do not think there ever will be Enemosity amongst us Humans!!! There should be Peace on Earth!! Respect all and Everyone.

We have our Zarathushti Concept of Amesha Spentas. Have you ever realized the Religious FACT that Bahman, Ardibehesht and Shehrever are Male ones, and Aspandad, Khordad and Amardad are Female ones!!! If you ever come to our Houston Zarathushti Center I will show you in Modern Art Paintings we have on our wall!! From that we can clearly recognize their Forms.

Bahman = Animal kingdom, Good Mind., Divine Wisdom.

Ardibehesht = Fire, Law, and Order.

Shehrever = Metal kingdom under the Earth, Power, Divine Kingdom.

Theses Three are so called “Male” Amesha Spentas., and

Aspandad = Zameen = Mother Earth ( Dharti Mata ), Humility, mercy, compassion, kindness, piety, devotion.

Khordad= Waters , fertility, ampleness, fullness, wholesomeness, prosperity. Rivers and Oceans.

Amardad = immortality, Evergreenness, Plant Kingdom, trees, Flowers, Fruits, grains etc.

These three are so called “Female” Amesha Spentas.

If Ahura Mazda wanted to establish or emphasis or Entrust MORE Power to us MEN, then He would have Created /Conceived More Amesha Spentas as Male Amesha Spentas than THREE!!!

BUT in HIS Divine Wisdom He has given us EQUAL Numbers of Amesha Spentas who should be our Hamkars to Run His Kingdom on this universe!!!

So in my humble opinion there Never Was and Never should be Any Distinction between A Man and A Woman. That is Our Zarathushti Culture!! That is WHY our Forefathers always loved Equally both their Daughters and sons in every respect be it Giving proper Higher Education, or Distribution of their Material as well as Spiritual Heritage, wealth etc..

## **Why Two Khorshed-Meher Niyayeshes In Afternoon Uthamna** **Ervad Gustad M. Panthaki**

**Introduction:** This is a modest attempt to answer a persistent question, why we recite two Khorshed-Meher Niyayeshes in the afternoon uthamna, and do we have scriptural evidence?

**Two Uthamnas:** Currently we perform two uthamnas, one in Uzirin and other in Ushahin gah. There is a controversy over which uthamna is correct. The majority opines that the proper time for the ceremony is Ushahin gah (see “...Ceremonies and Customs...”, J.J. Mody, Pg.412). According to Dastur Kotwal, in very ancient times, only the Uzirin gah uthamna was performed, because that was the time when the whole anjuman could attend, i.e. in the evening. According to the Rivayats, even the uthamna was performed in Awisruthrem geh, and there is no mention of uthamna in Ushahin gah (vide “The Persian Rivayats” B.N. Dhabhar, Pg. 168).

**What is Uthamna:** According to Rististan by S. D. Bahrucha, the main principle behind an afternoon uthamna was to proclaim an heir, if the deceased has passed away without an heir. This means that someone now is responsible to look after his soul (rawan) and to perform ceremonies on his behalf. There is no evidence found for it in the Avesta, but an oblique hint can be seen in Vendidad 18:51. This

ceremony was performed on the third day after death, in Uzirin gah in the presence of elders and the community members (anjuman).

**Prayers for the Afternoon Uthamna:** The most common set of prayers in the Uzirin gah uthamna is: After individual Padyab Kusti, 101 Names of Khuda and Sarosh Baj, the uthamna is initiated with Khorshed and Meher Niyaaesh both recited twice, Doa Nam Setayeshne and Char Disano Namaskar. All the mobeds now sit down and recite Uzirin gah and Sarosh Hadokht. Then one priest stand up to recite Dhoop Nirang and the rest will recite Patet Ravanni.

One may find different sets of prayers for uthamna in existing literature. According to Rististan, obligatory uzirin gah prayers including niyayeshes (doesn't provide details as to what and how many), Sarosh Yasht Hadokht, Ravan ni Patet and Dhoop Nirang. It also mentions that some only pray Uzirin gah and Rawanni Patet.

“A Guide To The Zoroastrian Religion” (translation of Rehbar –E Din E Jarthushti by Dastur Erachji Sohrabji Dastur Meherjirana) edited and translated by Dastur F. Kotwal and James Boyd, states “we assemble and say prayers (the Khorshed and Meher Litanies) and Patet for the deceased.

The Persian Riviyats enjoins only recitation of Patet on the third day; there is not any mention of other prayers.

**Why Two Khorshed-Meher Niyayeshes:** Khorshed and Meher Niyaaeshes are repeated twice, because it is considered to be the duty of every Zoroastrian to say his Khorshed-Meher three times (Havan, Rapithwan and Uzirin) during the day. So, the first set of the Niyaaeshs for their own, and the second set is for the dead.

According to the Pahlavi Rivayats it is a sin for not performing one's daily Khorshed-Meher Niyaaeshes during his life, which can adversely affect a soul's attempt to cross Chinvat Bridge after his death. To rectify any omission while alive, deceased relatives perform these niyaaeshes on the third day. ( see “Praise and Piety” J.K. Choksy and Dastur F.M. Kotwal).

According to “A Guide To The Zoroastrian Religion”, every living Zoroastrian is enjoined to do daily obligatory prayers. Since the soul of a person remains for three days in this world after his death, it is our duty to recite those prayers on his behalf. However, there is no evidence found in the Avesta or Pazand for such an injunction, except an indirect hint in Dadistane Dini 7:6.

S.D. Bharucha in Ristisatn raises a question that how can anyone makes a dead person responsible for his obligatory prayers, which is basically the uthamna ceremony.

There is short dissertation given in Appendix I of “Praise and Piety” for variation and sequence in obligatory prayers, which may help understand why during Uzirin gah uthamna, gah is recited after niyaaeshes.

**Conclusion:** The repeated conquests of Iran, centuries of persecution and oppression caused the destruction of a grater part of the original Avestan literature, and only a few fragments now remain. Hence, it is not always possible to cite a scriptural reference for our ceremonies, customs and traditions. Traditions should be respected for their accumulated experience and knowledge of centuries as stated in Sarosh Yasht Hadokht kehrpem dareghayao upayanayao yazamaide “we praise the principal matters of old traditions of long duration”.

Hopefully this brief explanation helps to clear a few cobwebs about why two Khorshed-Meher.

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