

HOW WILL YOU GO TO IRANSHAH

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Tehmurasp Shawaksha Pardiwala

FOREWORD

Pak Iranshah is a live, living, glowing flame for the Parsi community. Iranshah is a manifestation of the love and devotion moving in our heart for our dear Paigambar Zarthrushttra. The divine light, which is glowing for past 1200 years without even a second's break, is a link between the Parsi community and Pak Dadar Ahura Mazda. The consecration of this divine light 12 centuries ago is a big spiritual event for the Parsi community.

Iranshah is a SHAH, and this title itself indicates that the divine power and authority of Dadar Ahura Mazda is present in Iranshah. We have no idea as to how this divine flame is working to fight and eradicate the bad influence of physical, mental, and spiritual pollutions around us and what trouble He is taking to do so.

The holy building in Udvada is Iranshah's Darbar. Not only the Mobed Sahebs who are at Iranshah's service are present there round the clock, but the divine fields and vibrations of Yazatic power are also constantly moving in the premises.

To enter such magnanimous darbar, there are some rules and procedures. These rules are not just rules pertaining to social discipline and etiquette, but they are based on spiritual science, the intention of which is to support the divine mission of Iranshah and not to create any disturbance in His work. The intention to be present in Iranshah's Darbar is to leave aside the material surrounding temporarily and get attuned to the Yazatic divine field of Iranshah. It is not a place to exhibit artificial glamour and beauty supported by tight clothes, rouge and lipsticks.

Mr. Tehmurasp Pardiwala has explained these rules beautifully in a simple language, as to how one should present himself before Iranshah so that one can help Iranshah in His mission and do not become a cause, an instrument of disturbance in His work. To follow these rules and regulations is not at all difficult.

When we recite Atash Neyayesh before Padshah Saheb we enter into conversation with Him, a spiritual dialogue. This conversation is just not an ordinary conversation. It has to be well structured and also in the form of Avesta Manthravani. One has to show his divine love, respect faith and trust in the form of good thought good word and good deed. It is not a place to exhibit false ego and vanity at that time.

With my sincere desire that you would follow the rules and regulations very strictly when you visit Iranshah.

21.6.2000

Your humble Sevak,
Kaikhushro Navroz Dastoor

1. INTRODUCTION TO SHREEJI IRANSHAH

In today's time the divine, living, exquisite light of Shreeji Iranshah protects the mankind, takes care, looks after them and guides them. For Zoroastrians it is like a sword and a shield, which drives away the evil around us and protects us from the bad influence of Ahreman. He gives us light in the world of spiritual darkness.

This lustrous radiant Fire is a priceless light house for the Zarthostis. Iranshah is the main force and direct result of the existence of Zarthostis in India. Iranshah has kept our tiny community in a magnetic bonded chain of faith and devotion. The distinct identity of Parsis in India is maintained and preserved by the Padshah Saheb.

This divine lustrous Fire satisfies the sacred hunger of our souls. It is due to His presence that a Zarthosti gets the help and benefit for salvation of his soul to some extent. Even in today's materialistic world a Zarthosti who recites his prayers before Him with faith and devotion, gets the benefit of the Divine Light (Ashar - e - Roshni) He is able to reduce his time cycle of birth and death to some extent as per one's past good work and deed. According to our Pak Avesta the prayer recited before Atash Padshah is equivalent to the prayer recited before Dadar Ahura Mazda. It is our divine mechanism to reach Dadar Ahura Mazda through Atash Padshah, who is the son of Dadar Ahura Mazda (Atare Puthra Ahurahe Mazdao).

Atash Padshah is directly linked with a person's good and bad deeds (Karma). A devoted obedient Zarthosti must therefore desire and pray for a wish while offering reverence to Him that --- O! most powerful, creator of the universe, kindest of the kind, Dadar Ahura Mazda, what is good for me is already known to you. Give me exactly the same. Give me the stream of divine light, let my competency increase, my intellectual power be on the bright side of nature and the final aim and objective of my soul is fulfilled. Let my soul get a divine permanent place in the Heaven.

Mobed Neriyoasang Dhaval Saheb was a highly advanced soul. Out of the total 72 steps of Ashoi, he was already on the 54th step. He consecrated our Iranshah and put up a divine power station

on its centre, which is known as Pav Mahal. The Pav Mahal of Iransha is in direct communion with the Pav Mahal placed by our Paigambā Saheb at Har Barez. Iranshah's contact is also with the seven heavens c Nisti as well as the eighth and the ninth heaven of Hasti. It is for thi reason that Iranshah is offered with a Maachi of nine pieces. The othe Padshah Sahebs of the remaining seven Atash Behrams are offered Machi of 7 pieces only. The blessings of all nine heavens are showere down on Iranshah, the benefit of which is available to His devotees.

In consecrating other Atash Behrams there were 1128 flames (Jyot) where as in case of Iranshah there were more than, 16000 flames. The writing in support of this is available in the ancient hand written scripts. While consecrating Iranshah, Mobed Neriyoasang Dhaval Saheb and his co-workers were able to bring down the lightening fire on this earth through a miracle, an astonishing event by applying their spiritual power and practices

When Parsees had to leave Iran, our motherland, due to some unfortunate circumstances to safeguard our religion, we had also to leave all our Atash Padshah in Iran. Under such circumstances with the grace of God and the ability and power of prayers (Manthrawani) of our Rainidar Neriyoasang Dhaval Saheb, our first Atash Padshah in India, was consecrated and enthroned which later on came to be known as Shreeji Iranshah. Nearly 1200 years have passed since the happening of this beautiful event.

In establishing our fire temple the local king Jadirana of that time had helped us immensely. No Parsee should forget his obligation on our community. After settling down in his kingdom the Zarhostis expressed their desire to have their own Atash Behram. Appreciating the ability, skills and immense religious faith of this group of people Jadirana readily gave them a piece of land to establish the fire temple. According to the tenet of our religion no juddin (non parsi) should stay in the vicinity of the place where the fire temple was to be established. Jadirana merily agreed to this proposal also and provided this facility by asking all Hindus to evacuate the land given to Parsis. All this thing could not have happened in the absence of a noble,

god loving king like Jadirana. Therefore the fire worshipper Zarthostis should also remember king Jadirana with honour and respect.

Tears will roll down the eyes of a true Zarthosti if he comes to know the plight and hardship that had been undergone by the then Zarthostis and Mobed Sahebs. Many sacrifices were given to protect our Iranshah. Our forefathers had to move from place to place like Sanjan, Bahrot, Vansda, Navsari, Surat and Valsad to protect and preserve Padsah Saheb's sanctity. Finally they arrived and settled down in Udvada. All this travelling was not easy at all. It was only with the grace of God that our Padshah Saheb was safe and sound wherever He moved. In this long span of over 1200 years, history has changed in India many times. Many kings, many emperors came and went but the flame of our Iranshah has remained undisturbed. We bow down to the efforts and sacrifices our Mobed Sahebs have given and are still putting in their efforts in keeping the flame burning.

When a Zarthosti bows down to Iranshah he should remember that it is the same Fire where their ancestors had put their heads down in veneration 1200 years ago. Our Iranshah had blessed them and gave them bountiful of riches and true happiness. Today we bow down to Him and desire similar riches and true happiness. No one has returned disappointed from Iranshah. The reward of one's prayers and devotion is always given by Iranshah.

It should be remembered that in places like Iranshah and also in other fire temples (Atash Behrams) where the Fire is enthroned, the vibrations of Sarosh Yazad are circulating continuously. Sarosh Yazad's throne is on the top of Nisti where there is one Atash Behram of Atashe Mino Karko. Our Padshah Saheb of Iranshah and other Atash Behram have direct contact with the Atashe Mino Karko. This contact is based on the levels of Atash Padshah, which are there on this Geity (Earth). Fire of Iranshah being of the highest level the contact is closer than any other Fire temple and therefore the divine music of Sarosh Yazad (Sarosh no naad) and the spiritual atmosphere in Iranshah is very much exalted. A Zarthosti who recites his prayers in such holy atmosphere gets abundant happiness and peace of mind.

So when one goes to meet such divine authority and God's wonderful creation for mankind one must remember to observe certain disciplines and respect in His presence with love prayers and good behaviour. The purpose of this book is to guide people who have faith; feelings and respect for Iranshah, but unfortunately are ignorant of certain dos and don'ts.

So dear readers it is my humble request to you, to go through the pages of this book, think very calmly and sincerely and then put into practice so that your next visit to Iranshah will be a meaningful and memorable one. Iranshah will then call you again and again with cheers on your face and happiness in your heart.

Amen.

2. THE NEED TO HAVE A BATH (ABLUTION)

A morning bath has been given a great importance in the Mazdayasni Din. For us it is a religious command to get up early in the morning, take a bath and start our prayers. A true Zarthosti never starts any work before taking a bath. It also reflects on the family culture to which he belongs. So when we do not start even our daily routine work without a bath then why does a Zarthosti avoid taking a bath before going to Iranshah? This is very difficult to understand.

Some people argue that while coming from Mumbai or from elsewhere they have already taken a bath in the morning. They claim that they are travelling in first class or in their own private car then where is the need to go for a second bath after coming to Udvada? This group conveniently put their argument to suit their comfort and convenience. They do not know that in the atmosphere there is any amount of impurities. It could be physical impurities as well as spiritual too. Evil currents are always moving in the atmosphere apart from dust and smoke which can be physically seen. The traveller comes into contact with all such matters and unknowingly, absorbs it in his physical and ultra physical body. The longer the journey the harder is the impact on the person. It is therefore most essential

to take a bath before going to Iranshah so that the person is totally free from all evil matters that he/she has contacted during the journey.

So in future do not make the mistake of going to Iranshah without taking a bath in Udvada. The male gender is advised that if they wish to have a shave then please ensure that they put aside the shaving kit before going for the bath. Never touch such items after you have taken the bath. The best way is to put off shaving for the number of days you are in Udvada. This will help you to maintain maximum purity in this respect. Of course this is not valid if your stay is for a longer period. In olden days, it is said that facility was available to take bath in the compound of Atash Behram. However due to changed circumstances, this practice is discontinued. But that does not mean that we Parsees totally discontinue the practice of taking a bath before entering our Fire Temples. It is also heard that there was a custom to take a holy bath (Nahan) given by Mobed Saheb before entering Iranshah. But if this is not possible, it would be a real good gesture to make use of Taro (Bull's/Cow's urine) in your house before taking the bath.

3. DRESS

After taking the bath the question that comes is of the dress. So many articles are written on this subject as to what should be our dress while visiting Iranshah. Ladies have been repeatedly told, requested and explained as to what type of dress they should wear while going to Iranshah. However, all such talks, it seems have fallen on deaf ears.

So many instances have been pointed out by Mobed Saheb where young girls have entered Iranshah in the most atrocious dresses. There are instances where our Mobed Sahebs were even insulted and humiliated for pointing out such shameless dresses put on by some ladies. Such act on the part of the ladies reflects their family culture and their faith, feelings and love for Iranshah.

With such indecent dresses the wearer puts burden on Iranshah. Negative currents pass through such dresses, which are harmful to human beings also. This has been proved by today's science.

A decent dress for a man is white Dagli, white shirt and pant. For ladies a white or light coloured sari with a long sleeve blouse is an ideal dress. Young girls may put on a frock, which should be long enough to cover their knees. Along with the above dress the head must be covered. For this the gents must wear a regular Parsi Topi either of black, red or blue colour. The mazdayasni din prescribes white cap along with white dress mentioned above. Under no circumstances one should wear the fancy knitted cap, it is absolutely out of place for going to Iranshah. For ladies the prescribed head cover is popularly known as Mathubanu. It must be of pure cotton and not of silk. The silk scarf neither gives the required protection nor the nourishment to the head. Further, the ladies are requested to put on the Mathubanu in such a way that all the hair gets covered inside. Today's fashion is to wear Salvar Kamiz, which is really an ideal dress for ladies as it covers the body very well. However, along with the Salvar Kamiz, the head must be covered with the regular Mathubanu. Mere putting on the Odhani or Dupatta is not at all acceptable.

Please remember not to put your clothes meant for Iranshah on the bed. Put it on a table chair or such other place. Moreover keep this dress away from your shoes, chappals, shaving kit etc. during travelling. In other words do not keep all the materials in one bag. Have two bags.

In the matter of dress one more thing is to be remembered and that is the inside dress. As one takes care of the outside dress one must also take care of the inside dress that is Sudreh and Kushti. Please do not go to Iranshah with torn and dirty Sudreh Kushti. The Sudreh should be of nine seams only. Similarly the Kushti should be also made up of 72 threads and not less. The ladies have a fancy of putting on Sudreh made up of Net material, which is not correct. The Sudreh must be of cotton only. The garment made up of Net is like a mosquito net, which cannot preserve, store powers of Ashoi.

Nowadays boys and girls put on Jeans. They are requested to ensure that the Jeans are absolutely clean and are not put on during travelling. Jeans is a garment where one cannot distinguish whether

it is old or new, washed or dirty. The younger generation is also requested not to put on the same clothes after the bath, which they had put on during travelling. Finally in the matter of shoes and chappals please note that the plastic or rubber shoes, sandals and chappals nullifies the good effects of a Kushti and therefore care should be taken to ensure that one puts on such items made up of leather only.

4. KUSHTI PADIYAV

If sufficient attention is given to the above two points then we can say that we are ready and fit to go to Iranshah. Please bow down and give your first salute to Iranshah at the main entrance where you will find two steps. The boundary of Iranshah's darbar starts from here. Put on your right foot first and go straight to your right where there is provision to wash your face, hands and feet. There is no need to move here and there once you enter His darbar. After entering the Pavilion please wash your face and any open parts of your body like hands and feet. After making it dry with your handkerchief start your Kushti ritual. Before doing so please untie your shoelaces.

The correct Kushti is to start with Kemna Mazda prayer. After reciting this prayer completely untie your Kushti and start the complete prayer of Ahura Mazda Khodaye and tie up your Kushti again: After this please recite the prayer of Jasame Avangahe Mazda which completes the Kushti prayer. While doing your Kushti please see that the Kushti lars (ends) do not touch the ground. If this happens the good power preserved in your Kushti through the prayer will drain down in the earth and the powers of evil force will start getting in through the Kushti. It is also important to note here that one must not strike Kushti very hard like a whip It must be struck very gently and always in the North direction. While going to Iranshah instead of doing your Kushti once it is recommended to do the Kushti ritual twice.

After completing the Kushti ladies should remember NOT to put the Sudreh inside the blouse. Similarly the gents should also

remember NOT to put the Sudreh inside the trouser. It should be kept open outside. This is an act of indecency, and an insult to Iranshah which one would not like to do after knowing the truth. Sudreh Kushti is able to pull good forces from nature. When sudreh is not kept outside it brings deficiency in its power to pun good forces.

The big question that comes after the Kushti prayer particularly for the ladies is walking bare footed in the first hall of Iranshah where there is no carpet. After performing the Kushti prayer the moment one puts his foot down where there is no carpet or the person has not put on socks, the Kushti act becomes unworthy/invalid. A Zarhosti who receives divine powers from performance of a Kushti now starts receiving bad currents as his Kushti is broken and he is walking bare footed. He does not get protection from his Sudreh Kushti. To enter Iranshah with such invalid Kushti prayer is as if to enter Iranshah without the Kushti prayer and that should be avoided at all costs.

This problem could be easily solved if one wears socks while going to Iranshah. It is difficult for ladies to walk the distance from the hotel, residence or traveller's lodge (Dharmashala) with the socks on. However they can bring a pair to Iranshah, put it on in the Pavilion, then wash their hands and perform the Kushti. Before going home the socks could be removed in the Pavilion. If this little trouble is taken it would bring abundant good results to the person, as he would be entering Iranshah with his Kushti intact. It may be remembered here that in our Patet Pashemani prayer, to walk bare footed even in the house is considered as an offence which is punishable. We generally take out our shoes and chappals right at the inside front door of Iranshah. This leaves an ugly scene and an act of indiscipline. If we leave our shoes and chappals systematically elsewhere and also not below the Paigambar Saheb's portrait, it would show a good act and discipline on our part. If one wears socks, the problem could be very easily solved.

5. REVERANCE, KISSES AND SALUTATION

Now the time has come to enter the Iranshah's Darbar. Many a times we see that a Zarthosti bows down to each and every steps, doors, windows, statues and photo frames of all the departed souls, Paigambar Saheb etc. In one minute's time he salutes so many of them that one wonders whether he knows to whom he is giving respect or not. When he touches each step if he is holding sukhad in his hand the chances are the sukhad may also touch the ground, which is undesirable. One may bow down but one must refrain from touching the staircase from where so many people have passed by with their shoes on. It is advisable not to show such overrated devotion. One must remember that we have come to Iranshah and therefore the first respect should go to Iranshah and later on to others. An overall respect to all the departed souls would be much better. Of course you can always give your special respect to Paigambar Saheb. .

It is not the Reverence and Salutation, which creates so many problems, as is created by kisses. The epidemic of giving kisses here and there to show one's love is growing day by day. There is no such precedent or custom in Zarthosti Din to give kisses. This practice is copied from the Britishers. And from the houses it has gone to the streets and finally come up to Iranshah's Darbar. Our Mobed Saheb while performing any religious ceremony put on a cloth over their face, which is known as Padan. The purpose of putting this Padan is to ensure that while reciting the prayers bad breath, saliva etc. should not pollute the holy matters before him including the fire. We Zarthostis do exactly the opposite to what Mobed Sahebs are doing. It is therefore requested that at least in Iranshah at no place one should give kisses and pollute the place. Off course this is also valid for all other fire temples too.

When one Zarthosti gives a kiss on the Iranshah's threshold out of ignorance he leaves germs there, which cannot be seen with naked eyes. When the next person bows down at the same place there are very good chances of his contacting the disease through

the germs left by the earlier person. Furthermore, one must remember that as soon as one's lips touches the floor or a photo frame or such other matters the effect of the Kushti becomes null and void. A Zarhosti very well knows that Kushti is the foundation of all our prayers. One can very well imagine the condition of a building without foundation.

6. WOOD (KATHI) VS. SANDALWOOD (SUKHAD)

The ordinary wood, which we will call here as Kathi is an essential thing in preserving Atash Padshah in our fire temples. Kathi should necessarily be of Babul tree only. One does not get any fragrance from Kathi. According to my personal opinion the best present to Iranshah is your true faithful prayers and a piece of sandalwood of the finest quality.

When such sandalwood is offered to Iranshah, the atmosphere gets filled with divine fragrance and pious feelings. Contrary to this from where the system of offering Kathi to Iranshah has cropped up is difficult to understand. One must have observed that when Kathi is offered to Padshah Saheb it is used as and when it is required. However, present in the form of sandalwood is straightway offered to Padshah Saheb in your presence. Is it not a matter of happiness? Please remember that sandalwood is the food of our Padshah Saheb. Each time during Boi ceremony, Padshah Saheb is offered a Maachi, which is of sandalwood and not of Kathi. Just think it over. Moreover one must remember that while offering Maachi to Padshah Saheb, the minimum quantity of sandalwood should be of one kilo. The reason is one kilo of sandalwood would last at least till the first Atash Niayesh is recited by the Mobed Saheb and the fire will continue to spread the divine light. There is no need to be a miser in this matter. If it is not possible to do so then one should offer sandalwood of the equivalent amount which one can afford, instead of a Maachi.

The meaning of the para coming in Atash Niayesh --- "Veespanam para - charentam, Atarsh zasta adidhaya ----" is as under.

Atash Padshah wishes to make friendship with the person reciting the prayer and wants to help him. He is eager and anxious to take the mankind to salvation. The status of Iranshah among all fire temples is the highest and therefore this thought process is highly activated. Zarthosti should take advantage of his presence and reach salvation faster. And therefore the friend on the throne (Padshah Saheb) looks at the walking friend coming near to HIM. HE looks at his hands and asks, what have you brought for me?

Late Dr. Faramroze Chiniwala saheb has written that in offering sandalwood to Atash Padshah to keep the Atash burning there is an unlimited act of benevolence and righteousness. So once again I urge you to offer only sandalwood to Padshah Saheb according to your condition. Off course you may put any amount of money in the Kathi fund as you wish. However, when you personally visit Iranshah, you should carry a piece of sandalwood only in your hand.

These days at many places cheap low quality wooden pieces are sold in the name of pure sandalwood at the prevailing price of sandalwood. The common man cannot make out the difference as certain ordinary wooden pieces look exactly like sandalwood because they are coated with sandalwood oil. Our Mobed Sahebs have the knack of finding out such cheap quality of sandalwood or rightly to say the ordinary wooden pieces. They take care that such pieces are not offered to Padshah Saheb. The Zarthosti should be thankful to the Mobed who has prevented him from offering such cheap wooden pieces to Iranshah. Of course the Zarthosti is not to be blamed because he has paid full price for the so-called sandalwood. When you go in the market and if your friend or relative stops you from buying spurious goods to save your health you will whole-heartedly thank him for the same. Then why such impolite attitude towards Mobed Saheb who takes care of your offering to Iranshah?

A point of reference to the expenses incurred on flowers is worth mentioning here. It is better if some control is exercised on the amount spent so lavishly on flowers. Such self-discipline will lead to reduce wastage of flowers, which is one of the most beautiful creations of nature. The extra money can always be given in charity

for some good cause. You have to just see, the condition of flowers offered on Behram roj, the next day to appreciate my point.

7. DISCIPLINE, RESTRICTION, MANNERS AND PATIENCE

To go to Iranshah for reverence is to go to the highest divine authority on this earth. And therefore the highest sense of discipline, self control and manners are very essential. Unfortunately, this is not happening many a times. Iranshah's Darbar is not our Albless Baug where one can move here and there, chitchat and make a public nuisance of oneself

If we have to learn the art of discipline, control and manners we should look at other religions and their religious places. The discipline observed in a Mosque, a Church or a Gurudwara is a shining example even in today's time. If you will carefully think over this matter you will realize that how backward we are in observing discipline in Iranshah.

To site a few examples, I would say that there are some Zarthostis who recite the prayers so loudly that it disturbs other fellow Zarthostis present nearby. Some people keep talking to their friends and relatives with their back to Iranshah. This is a gross insult to Padshah Saheb, which cannot be pardoned. A few more, Zarthostis stretch their legs towards Padshah Saheb not realizing that this act on their part is mannerless and yet another insult to Iranshah. On many occasions one finds that suddenly a Zarthosti leaves his prayers aside and starts talking to his long lost friend or relative. This disturbs the continuous harmonious effect of staot.

Allowing little kids to play with the holy religious books is a common scene in Iranshah. The innocent child throws the book on the ground where you know that we are walking all the time. There are enough notices put on the bookcase but nobody cares about it. Just realize how much respect is given by the Sikhs to their holy Granth. It is not just the respect but they even worship the book, whereas what we do to our holy Pak Avesta Book, you know better.

It is to be noted here that to turn the pages of Avesta book one must never put his fingers in the mouth and turn it. This is yet another offence which is unpardonable. Please note that one should also not put his fingers in the nose or ears while praying. If you get an itching sensation in the head use your handkerchief to scratch. Do not do it with bare hands. If you are sitting on a bench or a chair see that you do not cross your legs. Also ensure that you do not recite your prayers by keeping your legs hanging in the air. At least one leg must have a contact with the ground and that too, either you are wearing socks or your leg is on a carpet.

In today's time a large number of ladies are not following the complete tarikat (code of conduct) during their monthly periods. In an event when their monthly period is coming nearer such person should avoid visiting Udvada with their relatives and friends. It is because in any case she would not be able to visit Iranshah and at the same time she would create difficulties for others in maintaining purity. She would indirectly put burden on Iranshah. Such instances are recorded and hence this point is brought out here for caution.

8. RESPECT TO MOBED SAHEBS

The Mobed Saheb who is in service to Iranshah giving Boi is accountable to Iranshah and not to us. So please behave with full respect towards them. Do not behave rudely. In appreciation of their services every single Zarhosti is duty bound to pay them some Ashodad as per his condition. Their sacrifice in maintaining and preserving Iranshah is of the highest order. Perhaps Iranshah is rewarding the present generation for the services rendered by their forefathers. And therefore, please do not make an issue of any small mistake/lapse on their part. A true spiritual mobed has passion for devotion and worship. He is not after money.

*Dharm Guru Bhookhe Bhaktike
Dhan Ke Bhookhe Nahin
Jo Dharma Guru Bhookhe Dhan Ke
O Dharm Guru Nahin*

9. IRANSHAH'S THRESHOLD (UMBAR)

Iranshah's threshold (Umbar) is not a property of a single Zarthosti. Many a times it so happens that a Zarthosti does not move away from the Umbar for minutes together. This is a great inconvenience to other Zarthostis who are waiting behind to give their respect to Iranshah. One has to think of the people who are old and weak waiting for their turn to bow down to Iranshah. Especially on certain important days, this should not happen. A true Zarthosti should move out from the Umbar within 5 to 10 seconds, thereby giving a quick opportunity to other fellow Zarthostis. They should inculcate this habit in their children also. There is nothing wrong in standing away from the Umbar and praying for hours. Even Iranshah also likes the same way, as HE would not prefer that HIS disciples should wait for long after making a very long and tiring journey.

It is a general practice these days to ask Mobed Saheb to recite Tandarosti of the family members. However, even to write the names of the family members, one does not leave the Umbar is a bit too much. It is really bad manners and should be avoided. One can always write the names standing little away from the Umbar so that during that time several Zarthostis would get an opportunity to bow down to Iranshah. Even when the Tandarosti is recited by the Mobed Saheb the behdins just don't move away from the Umbar. One must remember that the Mobed Saheb always recites the prayer loud and clear therefore there is nothing wrong if the family stands a little away from the Umbar so that many others can do their duties during that time.

10. IRANSHAH'S RAKHYA

With love and respect, the Ash of any Atash Padshah is called Rakhya. In return of our present in the form of prayers and sandalwood/kathi, Iranshah gives us a divine gift in the form of Rakhya. This present given by way of a blessing is not to be eaten, and therefore never put it in your mouth. Iranshah's Rakhya is same for rich and poor. It reminds us of Universal Brotherhood of Rich and Poor. Please

do not pick up Rakhya like snuff with the help of your thumb and finger. The right way is to use your right hand finger (index finger), touch it to Rakhya and whatever you get by way of your luck, apply it on your forehead and at no other place of your body. Take care that it does not fall on the ground as the Rakhya may come under someone's feet. All these acts are direct insult to Iranshah.

Atash Padshah's divine power is also there in the Rakhya. The Rakhya has power to absorb good as well as bad currents. As long as we are in the holy atmosphere of Iranshah the Rakhya on your forehead draws only good divine currents. After your prayer is over and it is time to go home one must remember to clean the forehead and remove the Rakhya. Care should be taken that you do so at a place where no one is likely to put his foot. The ideal place to remove Rakhya from your forehead is on the flowerpot or a plant where there are no chances of any person putting his foot on the Rakhya.

The purpose of removing Rakhya from the forehead is when one goes out in the polluted atmosphere the Rakhya draws only bad currents, which are harmful to the person. It is also not desirable that a juddin's eye falls on the Rakhya. Many times we see Parsis moving in Udvada town with a big spot of Rakhya on their forehead. This is only to satisfy their ego, which should be avoided. In fact it is harmful to the person doing so.

11. THINGS WHICH SHOULD NEVER BE TAKEN TO IRANSHAH

Iranshah is just not an ordinary place of worship. Care has to be taken to maintain the purity and piety of Iranshah from all angles. The first step towards this is never to carry any material made up of leather inside the inner hall of Iranshah. You have noticed that because of this reason we take out our shoes and chappals outside the hall. So the principle should also apply to various other items made up of leather. This includes ladies purse, gents' wallet, leather belt of a wristwatch, and all such items made of leather. These items give additional burden to Iranshah in performing His mission.

The variety of items lying in a ladies purse like nail cutter, nail polish, nail file, lipstick, perfumes which are made up of unacceptable chemicals, comb, brush, eyebrow pencil etc. etc. are all undesirable and therefore should never be taken to Iranshah. It is better to have a separate purse exclusively for Iranshah where one can put some cash sukhad and perhaps a new handkerchief.

Another set of items, which should not be taken inside Iranshah are the items working on dry cells and batteries. For example a battery operated wristwatch, portable fan, torch and such other gadgets are not permitted in Iranshah. The reason being all such items work on a different type of electricity, which is not in harmony with the light of Iranshah. For centuries our Mobed Sahebs have maintained this piety and purity without falling in for the convenient electricity, which is at our disposal. The Zarthostis who follow this discipline help the Mobed Saheb and also help themselves in maintaining the sanctity of Iranshah.

A third type of absolutely non-essential, harmful items which are seen these days are Pagers, Mobile telephones, Cameras and Video cameras. A notice is put in Iranshah prohibiting these items inside. However many Parsis for their selfish motive just overlook such notices.

Some Parsees bring their whole travelling bag inside Iranshah in spite of the Mobed Saheb requesting them not to bring it in the inner hall of Iranshah. One must realize that such travelling bags come in contact with many people and therefore are subject to seen and unseen impurities of nature. It is for this reason that the Mobed Sahebs request, not to bring such bags inside the hall.

Please remember that your sundry purchases of items like pickles, papads, dry bombay ducks, bhakhras etc. should be done only after your main mission i.e. to pay your respect to Iranshah is over. Do not carry all such items with you for two reasons. Firstly the items by themselves are unwanted inside Iranshah and secondly you never know the condition of the seller.

A little care is also required to be taken when we put currency notes on the chamuch. Would it not be better to put crisp new notes and new coins rather than putting old soiled and dirty notes and coins?

Finally, I have only to say that when you go to Iranshah for giving Him respect it is not just sufficient that you come back with only reverence. A minimum of one Atash Niyayesh must be recited in praise of Iranshah. This Atash Niyayesh must be recited after performing your compulsory prayers that is Sarosh Baj, Gah, Khorshed and Meher Niyayesh (during day time) Vispa Humata and then Atash Niyayesh, followed by Doa naam Setayshne, to complete your prayer. The Atash Niyayesh should be recited before Atash Padshah in a standing position. If one does not know how to pray than an alternative given is to recite 65 Ahunavar (Yatha) in lieu of Atash Niyayesh.

Through this book I have attempted to draw the attention of my fellow hamdins about the do s and don'ts while going to Iranshah so that they will not make any mistake through ignorance and little carelessness. I hope my fellow Zarthostis will think over it and follow it sincerely to make their next visit to Iranshah a successful and memorable one.

O Pak Iranshah, worthy of being worshipped, an inspiring Light it is our sincere prayer with many many salutations that let your divine blessings continue to be showered on all the creation of the world and particularly on the Zarthoshti community and you show us the right path of love, service and selfless brotherhood.

Amen.

Tehmurasp Shawaksha Pardiwala