

THE DIVINE SCIENCE
OF
NAVJOTE
AND
SUDREH-KUSHTI

By

Erwad
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1993

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June, 1993

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Dedicated
to
my wife,

who died of a life-long ailment.....

"I wonder what the
world would be like,
if there were not
these great people,
who continually suffer,
- suffer with such
DIGNITY and LOVE".

Mother Teresa

CONTENTS

Introduction..... i

Navjote, not an empty symbolic ritual, but
a 'Kriya' generating divine fields, forces and energies.
Modern Science, knocking the door of mysticism.

Chapter I: The Basics..... 1

Zarathushtrian Religion, the Divine Science; code of
conduct for life; and expression of Devotion.
The composition of a human.
The "good" and the "evil".
Dissolution of evil, the ultimate aim of Creation.
"As above, so below."
Navjote and Sudreh Kushti, awakening of the chakras
and unison with the Divine Power station of Zarathushtra.

Chapter II: The Kriya..... 9

Time and place for Navjote; Hoshbaam and Atash-Kadeh.
"Nahn", "nirang", "manthra", "Atash", "Patet."
Din-no-Kalmo.
Tying the Kushti.
Engirdling; the three circles; the front and back knots.

Chapter III: Structure And Design Of Sudreh Kushti 14

Sudreh, shape, material, colour, stitches, 'girebaan'.
Kushti, length, material, 72 threads.
Daenaa, the Din, the Kushti and the Conscience.

Chapter IV: The Meaning Of The Kushti Prayer 19

Kshnaothra Ahurahey Mazdaao - May I join in His Music.
Ashem Vohu - Divine Law, Order, Beauty; Ecstasy.
Kem na Mazda - The "Enemies" within and without.
Ahura Mazda Khodae - Patet.
Taroiditey Angrahey Mainyeoosh - The luring ways of Evil.
2 Yatha - Ahura and His Zarathushtra
1 Ashem - Fields of the Divine
Jasa-me-Avangahey Mazda - Mazdayasnie Daena.
and its Divine Functions.

Conclusion..... 33

Sudreh Kushti, yogic exercise, divine weapon, circuit,
intrument, Kriya, Kinetic, unison.

Appendix 35

Modern Science knocking the door of mysticism - A
List of Books

Bibliography 39

INTRODUCTION

"Navjote of our child!". A grand occasion for Parsi parents! "We are going to make it great and glamorous! Best food for our guests; and excellent flower decorations; and glittering lights! Yes, we must start our preparations at least six months in advance..... Ah! incidentally just a month or so before, we will call a Dastoorji for an hour or so on holidays to teach the prayers and kushti to our child. Poor she (or he)! How heavy is the burden of school lessons!".

Is this the correct way of looking at the Navjote of a Parsi child? Is it just a time for eating, drinking and celebrating, with the religious aspect thrust in the remote backyard?

We do have a hazy notion that Navjote is a religious ceremony having something to do with Lord Zarathushtra; but that, to us, is a secondary matter. People, and allegedly knowledgeable people, tell us vaguely that Navjote is some symbolic ritual or ceremony, somehow related to good thoughts, words and deeds. So why bother much about such a symbolic exercise?

Is that the right attitude?

No! It is not! and this small book is intended to point out, why.

Navjote is not an empty external ritual, arising out of some ancient historical accidents and having some hazy and remote moral or religious significance, nor is it some decorous ceremony meant to affix a formal 'Parsi' census stamp on a child - an 'initiation ceremony' as is sometimes pompously called - like the crowning ceremony of an English king.

NAVJOTE AND SUDREH KUSHTI

Navjote is primarily and manifestly a **Kriya**. Kriya means motion, movement, work or action intended to generate certain non-physical and divine fields and forces which produce certain effects in nature.

Navjote connects a Parsi child to the divine power station of Zarathushtra and sets in motion certain spiritual forces and energies within the personality of the child.

Now, does this sound too mystical or spiritual? Can we talk about non-physical fields and divine power stations in this grand age of modern science, when man-made satellites are whirling around, the nuclear power stations are shaking the earth, and computers are stated to have the power to 'think'? Surely, modern science must have understood most of the mysteries of nature. How far is it 'scientific', in that sense, to think of Navjote as a mystical kriya and sudreh kushti a spiritual equipment?

The belief that modern science has comprehended, or is fast on its way to comprehend, the mysteries of nature around us is a gross misnomer and a great illusion in this last decade of the 20th Century, trip to the moon and nuclear bombs notwithstanding. The profound thinkers of science have declared in no uncertain terms that science has not understood even a speck of dust; that it is not in contact with truth and reality; and even that it has arrived at an intellectual barrier which it cannot penetrate, unless it changes its method from the material to the mystical. It is beyond the scope of this small book to show how this has happened. In the Appendix (page 35) is a list of modern books, some indicating and some emphasising that modern Science knocks the doors of mysticism.

Chapter I of this book sets out the basic religious truths, relevant for a reasonably good understanding of Navjote as a kriya and sudreh kushti as a yogic and spiritual equipment. It also describes, in general terms, their functions and effects.

Chapter II narrates the actual performance of the Navjote kriya and some aspects of its significance.

Chapter III is devoted to the special design of sudreh and kushti.

INTRODUCTION

Chapter IV sets out the meaning of the kushti prayer and the significance of the movements which we carry out while untying and tying the kushti.

Footnotes provide references from the holy Scriptures and other places, and also indicate a slightly advanced treatment.

CHAPTER I

THE BASICS

Every religious teaching, be it a passage from a holy scripture or a part of some **kriya** (loosely called 'ceremony'), has three aspects: scientific, practical and devotional. Embodied in the teaching is some mystical truth about the origin and working of nature; that is the scientific aspect. There is also a command, a precept, a practical guideline for our behavior in the day-to-day life. And, thirdly, a current of devotion flows in the teaching. The Navjote kriya (or 'kinetics') and the sudreh kushti should be looked at, from these three angles.

Modern science exerts to the utmost to find out the basic unity and order in the universe of our experience, using purely intellectual methods and tools, like laboratory experiments, 'thought experiments', logic and mathematics. After a long and arduous journey, modern science is knocking the doors of mysticism and is denied the entry (see Appendix - page 35). Religion on the other hand is a Science from the other side of the intellectual barrier, a Science from the realms of divinity, where the universe of our experience is an infinitesimal part. The Zarathushtrian religion contains profound chapters from the divine Science, wherein Navjote and sudreh-kushti occupy a very important and crucial place. Let us enter a little into that Science.

The root questions which bother us are: "Who am I? From where? Whence? What is all this and why? What are birth, life and death?"

The Zarathushtrian religion teaches that every human being has the flame of Ahura Mazda burning within. It is called **Ruvaan**

NAVJOTE AND SUDREH KUSHTI

(comparable to **Atma** or **Soul**). This Ruvaan was once immersed in Ahura Mazda, but somewhere in the remote past it found itself separated from Him. The reason: an element of 'evil' was found attached to the Ruvaan. From where did this 'factor' come and how, and most important, why, are questions beyond the comprehension of the ordinary (i.e. non-saintly) human intellect.

Ahura Mazda then asked the Ruvaan to embark on a long journey in His creation in order to dissolve the evil element and convert it to the good. "I am creating this multi-dimensional universe for you and am providing you with a certain 'good' element" said Ahura Mazda. The two elements, the good and the evil, then combined and formulated a casing, a covering, a 'body', to house the Ruvaan. The body then passed through various stages of evolution. The human body is the present ultimate product of that evolution and is now marching back to Ahura Mazda.

The human individual has, thus, within him or her, the divine flame of Ahura Mazda i.e. the Ruvaan and a combination of the two elements good(g) and evil(e). Zarathushtrian Science says that the combination is divided into two parts: in one, the evil element is almost converted to good and a non-physical body is formed. In the other, evil is still predominant and is required to be converted to good. All the Religions sent to man by God are intended to teach man how to convert evil into good. All the teachings, preaching, commands, practices, percepts, tenets and traditions of religion revolve round this central aim viz. conversion of evil into good.¹ All

1 All our holy Scriptures and Manthra recitations incessantly vibrate with this message. The very first paragraph of our Kushti prayer carries the theme. (See Chapter IV, page 21). "Who, save Thee oh Mazda, will protect me when the evil casts frightening glances?" This passage "Kem na Mazda..." is from Gatha 46-7.

All the five Gathas repeatedly refer to Druj (Ha 30-10, 31-1) Dregvaao (Ha 45-1, 30-5), Dregvaaitay (43-8), Dregvodebyo (30-11), Dregvato (31-18, 49-11); and several allied words. They do not mean 'persons belonging to other Religions' as some conversion fanatics try to argue. Druj, Daeva denote the evil which is within man and the forces hovering in the universe.

The evil within is the root cause of our ignorance. It has cast a veil on our consciousness, and therefore the world of our experience is highly limited and does not reveal the reality to us. That is why Gatha Ha 33-13 entreats God for enlightenment: "Oos moi uzareshwa Ahura": "Lead me Oh Ahura to Thy divine Light." The same passage occurs in Atash Niyayish whereupon we pray for Light before the holy Fire, itself the carrier of Ahura's Light.

continued on next page

CHAPTER I - THE BASICS

Religions declare a common message in varied words and languages: "Ye humans! you have the evil within you; your mental equipment is inclined towards evil; your physical body has inherent tendency to be dragged away by the currents of evil²; but at the same time you have inherent strength and energy to swim against the current, to endeavor to resist the evil within. I send Prophets, Avatars and Saints to you to teach you the way of life which will dissolve your evil and bring you nearer and nearer to Me. My Messengers³ declare to you My definition of the good you are required to adopt and of the evil you are required to discard in your day-to-day life on this tiniest of the tiny, but a living planet, earth.⁴ Do not be drowned away in carnal passions; control it through marriage,⁵ let your eyes see Me in the beauty of a woman and the handsomeness of a man. Do not be carried away by your own pride and ego; My streams of humility are all within you; bring them out from your heart and lead them to your

Footnote (continued)

The Truth that Ruvaan is housed in the body is indicated when we pray: "Haoma Urvaneem Yazamaidey" - "We attune ourselves with our own Ruvaan" (Khorshed Niyaish). In Patet Pashemani the body declares that it would die for the sake of Ruvaan (Kardeh 1). Haptan Yashta in its Kardeh 7 (Yazashney Ha 41) sets up, in the mantric language, the thoughts of a Ruvaan when it proceeds down to settle in the mother's womb. I rejoice in coming down; that will lead me to my ultimate aim of Mukti.

² "You will see some benefit in the ways of 'Druj', but that will lead you to evil food and spiritual death". "The chariot of evil accelerates fast" - that is the message of Gatha Ha 53-6. Lord Krishna declares that the wandering senses carry away the mind like a strong wind dragging away a boat (Gita II - 67). "Mara (the Tempter)'s arrows are flower tipped: break them", said Buddha (Dhammapad, verse 46). "Flee unto Allah", proclaims the Quran (Surah of The Winnowing Winds 50).

³ The divine Messengers are called Saoshyants. Gatha Ha 53-2 promises that the Path of the Daena (i.e. dharma) leading to the Truth shall be revealed to the humans from time to time by the Saoshyants.

⁴ What is good and what is evil is not determined by man; the definitions are prescribed by Ahura Mazda. "He has declared what is sin", says Patet Pashemani. Kardeh 3. Left to man he will think homosexuality as not being immoral at all, as the so-called 'gay societies' are trying to say.

⁵ Marriage is not a contract, it is a sacrament, leading to salvation of both the halves. That is the message running in Gatha Ha 53-3. "Beware you the marrying couple, there are enemies within; resist them: may you follow the dictates of Zarathushtra and attain the final union with Ahura Mazda", so warns and blesses the Ashirvaad Manthras recited at our marriage ceremonies.

NAVJOTE AND SUDREH KUSHTI

brain.⁶ Do not consume yourself in anger; be kind and compassionate. Do not be greedy for, and attached to, worldly wealth; if you get more than necessary, give it away; if less, be contented. Do not burn yourself in jealousy of others; be happy at others' happiness; help others in mitigating their miseries".⁷

The great German philosopher Immanuel Kant said that Moral law is in the heart of man and that itself is the proof for the existence of God. Ahura Mazda has provided a mechanism within us, which, if awakened and utilized, can train us to swim against our inherent inclination towards evil. That mechanism is housed in our non-physical body, where evil is mostly dissolved. A part of the mechanism consists of 16 centers of spiritual energy, which are located in the non-physical body. Picturing the non-physical body (also called **Kaherp**) as running parallel to the physical body of our day to day experience, the locations of the energy centers (also called '**Chakra**'s or '**Chakhra**'s)⁸ can be loosely indicated. For instance, the first chakhra is located at the top of the head; this means it is located in that part of the kaherp which corresponds to the highest point on the head of the physical body. Similarly, the 16th chakhra is at the bottom of the feet. In between there are 14; for instance, the 10th is near the heart, and the 12th is at the navel. Spiritual energies of different intensities and different textures are zooming in the centers. These energies can be invoked, awakened and made to come out and spread all over in the living cells of the physical body. This process activates our mind to resist our inherent inclination to evil and to be 'good'; that is, to adopt those human qualities and virtues which would result in the gradual conversion of evil into good.

⁶ Humility flows from Armaiti, one of the Channels of Ahura Mazda's divine Light. Gathas refer to Armaiti numerous times. Ashoi (the holiness of thought, word and deed) and Armaiti go together (47-6); there cannot be Ashoi without Armaiti (47-2); the evil of the times (**Zamaan**) prevents man from reaching Armaiti (49-2). Ego and pride are the enemies of Armaiti.

⁷ The great Hindu Religion describes six enemies of man: carnal passion, anger, greed, attachment, pride and jealousy. The Zarathushtrian writings, add four more: faithlessness, fraud, blasphemy and shamelessness.

⁸ **Chakras** are referred to in Vendidad, Pragarad 1, as cities of Ahura Mazda, attacked by Angramino.

CHAPTER I - THE BASICS

Navjote kriya and sudreh-kushti equipment are meant to invoke and awaken the energies of the centers. The material, the shape, the size, the form, the constitution of the sudreh as a garment and kushti as a thick thread, are ordained and geared for the invocation of spiritual energy within.

There is another truth taught in the Zarathushtrian Science, which is relevant to our subject. "As in the macrocosm, so in the microcosm". Just as there are three parts within us, viz. the physical body, the non-physical body, and the Ruvaan, there are three worlds 'outside' us in Ahura Mazda's unimaginably vast creation. They are:

- the divine world
- the non-physical world and,
- the physical world⁹.

The divine world is beyond our ordinary non-saintly comprehension and consciousness. It is taught, just by way of an axiom, that the divine world is composed of the divine light of Ahura Mazda, and space and time are merged with that light. The non-physical world is composed of very subtle non-material substances and the space-time continuum has an infinite number of dimensions. The physical world is made up of various levels of matter and is wider and vaster than the world of experience, which is confined to a mere three dimensions of space and one of time.¹⁰

As there is a constant conflict of the two elements, the good and the evil, in our own interior personal world, so also there are good and evil forces constantly whirling in the physical and large parts of the non-physical world, outside us.¹¹ Both the forces try to capture

⁹ The three worlds are called Hasti, Nisti and Geyti, in the Zarathushtrian Science.

¹⁰ The extremely queer behaviour of the elementary particles as revealed to modern physics is due to the subtle fluctuations between the non-physical and the physical.

¹¹ The evil forces are termed by the great modern saint, Sri Aurobindo, as 'the hostile forces'. "Wherever yoga or yagna is done, there the hostile forces gather together to stop it by any means", he says in Letters on Yoga (page 1731).

NAVJOTE AND SUDREH KUSHTI

the humans and lead them towards the good or the evil. The humans having evil predominant within, are easily carried away by the evil forces. The good forces require the humans to control the evil so that the goodness within is invoked. The messengers of God teach the humans the methods, the procedures and the behavior to invoke the spiritual energies within, so that the good forces from outside can actively help to control, conquer and convert the evil.

One of the divine Messengers is Lord Zarathushtra. It is the common understanding that he 'brought' the Zarathushtrian religion (or **Daena** or **Din**). But what did he 'bring'? Only the scriptures? Just a moral code? Just some philosophy?

The Zarathushtrian science (let us call it briefly as **Z-Science**) teaches that one of the divine missions of Lord Zarathushtra was to help, activate and energize the good forces of the creation in the non-physical worlds. He was equipped with the divine light of Ahura Mazda from the divine world and it was his function to bring down the beams of divine light in the non-physical and physical worlds where the evil in man and the hostile evil forces are rampant.¹² He established a divine Power station in certain regions of the non-physical world. We shall call it **Z-Power Station** or **Z-Ps**.¹³ The function of the Z-Ps is to absorb the divine light and emanate its beams on the non-physical world, particularly on our tiny planet Earth, where we the two-legged creatures, have a temporary abode.

The Z-Power Station itself is the Religion, the Daena, of Zarathushtra.

Religion is not merely a scriptural writing, or a way of life, or the moral code, or the spiritual disciplines and exercises. It is all that no doubt, but prominently and predominantly, it is a living vibrating power station, a divine force, a concentrated beam of Ahura Mazda's

¹² All the Avesta Scriptures vibrate with the narrations of Zarathushtra's divine stature, mission and functions. In particular Gatha Ha 29; Farvardin Yashta, Kardeh 24. His combat with the *daeva yasni* forces are described at numerous places in the Manthra compositions and other Pahlavi writings.

¹³ Z-Power station is termed as Avizey-veh-din or Gaas, in Z-Science.

CHAPTER I - THE BASICS

light, a transmitter of divine energies, a God designated store house of divinity, which can work on the humans and awaken spiritual energies within them.

For a Parsi, Navjote is a kriya, a kinetic which connects and attunes him or her with the Lord Zarathustra's Power Station so that he or she may throughout life continuously receive and absorb his divine currents, energies and blessings. They form internal currents with his or her personality within, invoke the chakhra energies, spread them out in every living cell and help him or her in the strenuous exertions to resist, conquer and convert evil to good, and in his or her march towards Ahura Mazda. The receiving points are the chakhras; and the sudreh and kushti are ordained to be devised in such a way that they become the material media for the light to enter into the chakhras. The **Gireh-baan** of the sudreh (a small bag) situated near the heart is one of the entry points. So also the place where the two front knots of kushti are required to be: on or near the navel. It is beyond the scope of this small book to set out the Z-Science of chakhras and their relation to the constitution and structure of sudreh and kushti.

As stated in the first paragraph of this chapter, every teaching of religion has three interior currents; the current of:

knowledge, **gnyan**, the Science;

practice, the commands to follow in day to day life, **karma**;
and,

devotion, **Bhakti**; love towards the divine.

We have seen in a faint outline, the science behind Navjote and Sudreh-kushti, and also the practical lesson of life embedded in them.

The third aspect, devotion, is something inexplicable simmering within us. Every human has an inherent craving for the divine; a burning feeling of separation from God; a heart-throb, a tear, a song addressed to Him, an intense desire to be in communion with Him, to

NAVJOTE AND SUDREH KUSHTI

be attuned with Him.¹⁴ Every preaching and practice of Religion vibrates in the burning medium of devotion and love; so also the kushti prayer.

¹⁴ The key theme of Gatha Ushtavad (Ha 43 to 46) is Ushta, which means a burning devotion; divine ecstasy, bliss, love. Ushta does not mean material happiness.

CHAPTER II

THE KRIYA

When such a momentous and memorable event like the Navjote of a child is to occur, the first question to arise is: "At which place and at what time?".

The Ruvaan before taking birth on the planet earth, has passed through a long and arduous journey. Ahura Mazda's forces and agencies have to make special preparations for the Ruvaan to be placed in the physical body. In which religion the Ruvaan will be born, is determined in advance and the corresponding divine fields are embedded in it.¹⁵ The Ruvaan of a Parsi child is connected with the Z-Power station right at birth, and a small current of Zarathushtra's light already starts flowing. During the Navjote kriya, these currents are intensified and entwined for life. The child is brought at the door of Zarathushtra's divine palace to receive and absorb his blessings - the blessings, which will infuse in the child the energy and strength to resist and control the evil within and to exert strenuously to follow His way, so that the Ruvaan may go nearer to Ahura Mazda.

¹⁵ The ultimate aim of the whole creation is to reach the union with Ahura. Religions teach the ways. Different Religions prescribe different procedures (tarikats) depending upon the spiritual compositions of different groups of humanity. This is in accordance with the divine Plan of the Daenao (plural of Daena). The word Daenao and the functions of more Religions than one, are referred to in the Gathas Ha 31-11, 33-13, 34-13, 46-6, 49-9, in Yazashney Ha 19 as puncha-takeysh (the five Centres of the divine Law). Zarathushtrian Deanaa prohibits conversion, not because it is superior to other Religions but because every other Religion is also sent by God and it is not for man to choose whichever he thinks, he "likes".

NAVJOTE AND SUDREH KUSHTI

Such a vital and crucial kriya is not to be carried out carelessly and in a slip shod way. It must be done in accordance with the tenets traditionally taught to us by those who know the divine laws of nature. The tenets require and command that the Navjote must be performed in a Fire-temple, Atash Behraam or Agiari, in the early morning during **Hoshbaam** hours.

Why Atash Behraam or Agiari? Because the sacred fire is the direct recipient of the currents from Z Power Station and has a divine field spread all over the Agiari.¹⁶ The child is required to be within this field, in order to absorb the Z-currents.

And why in the early morning? Because that is the time when the Atash-Padshah receives the maximum Z-currents and also because it is the time when the good forces of Ahura Mazda have maximum impact on that part of the earth. It is the time of **Hoshbaam**, the dawn of the divine consciousness, when the channels of divine light are scattered around and when Ahura Mazda's yazatas, i.e. the living spectra of His divinity, form an assembly, and the dark forces of evil are in wane.¹⁷

There is no sense in having the vital kriya in a public compound and in the evening, just for the sake of worldly pomp and show. The atmosphere is not at all conducive to the absorption of Z-currents. A public place with its polluted thought-fields cannot be an assembly of Yazatas. When we are carrying out our spiritual duty to connect our child to Lord Zarathushtra for life, it is not an occasion where catering is more important than the kriya itself. We are planting the seeds of faith in the innocent soil of the child; we are preparing the child for an incessant fight with the evil forces, within and without, throughout life. What right then, do we have to reduce such a divinely noble kriya to a downright farce? Are we not playing with the faith

¹⁶ The concept of 'field' has long entered modern science, but Rupert Sheldrake has given a new 'non-local' direction to it. His book, "*Presence of the Past*", ably and beautifully elaborates it.

¹⁷ Hoshbaam, the dawn, Usha, Amrit-vela, has been proclaimed to be the "best divine time" by all Religions.

CHAPTER II - THE KRIYA

and fate of our own dear child by committing a serious breach of the rules of religion?

And are such worldly considerations justified when the guests attending the evening Navjote have to wait and be bored for a couple of hours before dinner and make a grievance of it amongst themselves, while going home?

That much for the time and place. Now let us turn towards the actual kriya. It starts with **Nahen**, a procedure for purification of the child's interior soil, so that it is then ready to receive the Z-currents. The apparatus required for Nahen, come from the four kingdoms of God's creation. The sacred bulls' urine (**nirang**) on which the marathon kriya of **Nirangdin** is performed comes from the animal kingdom. The mineral kingdom (i.e. matter) is represented by the small metal bowl in which the nirang is poured; and the human kingdom is represented by the **mobed** (the priest) giving the nahen.

The nirang which is consecrated during the nirangdin kriya is a potent liquid with a spiritual charm. Its potency is not in its chemical composition. Because of its passing through the kriya, it becomes a storehouse of subtle energies emanating from God's light.¹⁸ The child is made to touch its tongue to the nirang, not by way of a physical drink, but to absorb the inner energies. This electrifies the child spiritually. The child's inner battery is charged; every cell vibrates in a spiritual rhythm and the whole personality is opened up to receive Z-currents. The process is catalyzed and augmented by a slight quantity of the juice from pomegranate leaves which the child is made to chew a little. The **manthras** (i.e. the prayer-words) pronounced by the child and the mobed generate certain subtle vibrations within and around the child forming a kind of ethereal cover which protects the child from the forces of pollution.¹⁹ A physical bath is then given to the child; she or he is made to wear a trouser; a shawl is placed on the upper body; a cap adorns his or her head, and slippers, the feet.

¹⁸ The nirang from the nirang-din kriya remains undecayed for an amazingly long time, sometimes years, depending upon the Ashoi-tarikats followed by the performing priests.

¹⁹ All the holy scriptures are Manthras. They are not historical, geographical or etymological treatises, as depicted by the western-oriented studies of our Religion.

NAVJOTE AND SUDREH KUSHTI

The child is then brought in a walking procession to a carpet with a seat (*paatlo*) covered by a clean white cloth. The child is made to sit down. The mobeds sit around her or him.

According to the tenets of the religion, the mobeds and the child are required to recite the Patet prayer.²⁰ (Today only the mobeds recite and not the child, because the child's school lessons time was too precious to induce the parents to teach the patet - even to read it from a book if not to recite it by heart - another instance of parental lethargy.)

A fire burns on an investure (fire-stand) at one side of the carpet. This fire becomes the deputy of the holy Atash Padshah of the Agiary; and is the receiving point on the circuit bringing down the Z-currents. It physically proclaims the connection of the place to the Z-power station; it is Ahura Mazda's light in the physical form reminding all present of the divine light of Ahura Mazda and Lord Zarathushtra.

The chief mobed and the child then rise; both face the east. The mobed invests the child with the sudreh, reciting certain manthras. The first part of the manthras is what is known as *Din-no-kalmo* an expression of profound faith in the Daenaa (i.e. Din - the Religion) of Zarathushtra. Zarathushtra's Daenaa is the power-house of truth (*Rajistiyao*) and divine wisdom (*Chistiyao*); the prayer declares. The Daenaa is ordained according to the divine law of Mazda (*Mazda daatyao*). It is the light beam of goodness; the divine work (*yasna*) of Mazda Himself - *Daenayao Vanghooiao Mazdayasnaoish*. It is the *Din* of the truth and perfection, which is sent by Ahura Mazda and brought by Zarathushtra - a divine gift of Ahura Mazda bestowed on us by Zarathushtra.²¹

²⁰ The Patet prayer is a lofty mantra composition, touching the law of Karma and the practical ways of leading the life on earth, and life after death.

²¹ Din is one of the 33 Yazatas, the divine Channels of Ahura's Light. The whole of Din Yashta is devoted to this Yazata and intended to be attuned with Her. (She is a 'female' Yazata). The words *Razishtiyao Chistiyao ... Mazdayasnaoish* occurring in *Din-no-Kalmo* are taken from the Din Yashta.

CHAPTER II - THE KRIYA

The Mantras of *Din-no-kalmo* fine tunes the child with the Z-Power station. The currents now start streaming down; the energy centers of the child open up to receive them.

The actual investiture of the sudreh now begins. The next recital of the manthras is from the preamble of *Ahura Mazda Yashta*. It connects the whole place and the atmosphere to the divine plane of Ahura Mazda. The central words are *Ahurahey Mazdaao Raevato Kharenghato* - which mean: may Ahura Mazda's Divine Light and Blessings stream down here; may this place be attuned to His wavelength.

The kriya for tying the kushti then begins. The child holds the finger of the mobed, who then engirdles the kushti around the child's waist, reciting the specified prayer along with the child and doing certain movements while reciting certain lines of the prayer. The prayer begins at *Ahura Mazda Khodai, Ahriman Avadeyshan...* While reciting the words *Manashni Gavashni Kunashni*, a part of the kushti is entwined in three circles. At *Haithyavarashtam Hyat Vasna...* the kushti is engirdled round the child's waist and brought forward again. At the two *Yatha Ahu Vairyo* prayers the two knots - one from the right hand side and the other from the left are tied. At *Ashem Vohu* the kushti is again taken at the back and two right and left side knots are tied. The kushti is now fully engirdled. The prayer *Jasmey Avangahey Mazda... Mazdayasno Ahmi...* is then recited. The meaning of the kushti prayer and the effects and significance of the movements are outlined in Chapter IV.

The child now sits down and the mobed recites the **manthras** of *Tan Darosti*, showering over the head of the child a confetti of coconut pieces, rice, pomegranate drops, etc.

The kriya is over. The child is engirdled in the divine blessings of Zarathushtra. She or he is now ready to face the world. Armed with faith, she or he is strengthened to resist the currents of evil. Zarathushtra's divine flame will now inspire her or him to tread God's path of the good, throughout life, and to march nearer and nearer to Him.

CHAPTER III

STRUCTURE AND DESIGN OF SUDREH KUSHTI

The question, "Why sudreh kushti?", often gets curious answers. "It is an identification garment... A Parsi dying on the road in an accident can be identified by the sudreh-kushti." "Oh! it is a symbol, a reminder of good thoughts, words and deeds," another declares. A third pompously announces, "It is an external thing... there is nothing mystical about it. You don't become a better Zoroastrian by wearing it, but historically... socially... blah, blah, blah." All these do not answer the question. If it is an identification mark, why do we not affix a fine, gold coloured badge on our dress, rather than a complicated shirt with nine stitches and a chord with 72 threads that is to be worn beneath our clothes? Why do we need a symbol in order to be good? Are we so bad that we need to be reminded of the good by an external thing? And so on. The identification symbol theory is convincing enough to persuade a Parsi to stop wearing the sudreh kushti! In fact, many do so when the Dastors and scholars expound such theories that have the clear ring of very poor justification.

The Zarathushtrian Science teaches us that sudreh-kushti is an **Aalaat, Zaothra**. Every piece of matter, whether a stone or a flame or a butterfly or a human, has in its deep interior, a spark of God's Divine Light²². This is a scientific and not a figurative statement. Modern

²² "There is a mountain underneath the blade of grass; nobody sees the mountain," says Narsinh Bhagat, a great saint. "The Lord of the whole universe has His abode under a grain of wheat", says another great saint, Tukaram, of India. All the high-brow talks about one God versus two Gods or many Gods are useless jargon. When infinity is present, all numbers are reduced to zero.

continued on next page

CHAPTER III - STRUCTURE AND DESIGN OF SUDREH KUSHTI

science has gone right up to the stage of wondering that the amount of energy in every cubic centimeter of space is larger than the total energy contained in all observable matter in the universe! And that "between the shortest distance now measurable in physics (10^{-16} cm.) and the shortest distance in which current notions of space and time probably have meaning (10^{-33} cm.) there is a vast range of scale in which an immense amount of yet undiscovered structure could be contained."²³ This is knocking at the doors of mysticism! The immense amount of energy in space and the structure within the shortest conceivable length -- these are the border lines between the physical and the mystical; a pointer towards the spiritual and the divine.

There is a store house of extremely subtle non-physical energy in every material object. The Zarathushtrian Science (Z-Science) teaches that beyond the non-physical, there are other levels of subtler and subtler energies; reaching the divine. These are dormant and hidden in the deep interior of everything, but can be invoked, awakened and enlightened by certain kinetics and **mantras**; i.e., 'religious ceremonies' as we very loosely call them. There are certain objects in which the level of subtle energy is naturally higher than others -- pomegranate leaves, or sandalwood, for example. In the **nirang**, the bull's urine has reached a much higher level of spiritual energy, due to the **kriya** of the **nirangdin** performed on it.

An Aalaat or Zaothra is a material or living object, in which certain higher levels of spiritual energies are awakened. This generates certain subtle wavelengths and vibrations within the object and it then becomes attuned with similar waves and vibrations flowing in nature outside it. A circuit is thus formed which enables the object, now an Aalaat, to receive and absorb the streams of Ahura Mazda's divine light in greater and greater concentration and then emanate and transmit it

Footnote (continued)

²³ This is pointed out by David Bohm, a renowned quantum physicist and a great scientific thinker, and described in "Science Order and Creativity" by Bohm and David Peat (page 94, Bantam Books, 1987)

NAVJOTE AND SUDREH KUSHTI

all around. The sacred fire burning in our eight Atesh Behrams and numerous Agiaris is another illustration of an Aalaat²⁴.

Sudreh and kushti are the Aalaats that perform the above-mentioned function of absorption and emission of divine energies. They must therefore be composed and structured in a special way, according to the spiritual laws, most of which are beyond our experience and even consciousness.

The sudreh is required to be of cotton and white in colour; so also kushti of white wool. The Z-Science teaches that white is the colour, and cotton and wool are the materials, which are very amenable to the awakening of the divine flashes within them. They are almost ready to spark. Just a specific amount of energy is infused, and they become surcharged with divine energy.

The shape of the sudreh; the mode and manner of its stitching; the positions and the forms of the stitches, which are required to be nine in number; - are all specifically designed and structured so as to make the sudreh a divine dynamo, when put on the body touching the skin. It is beyond the scope of this small book to describe the details regarding each of the stitches and the other elements of sudreh kushti and the function of each. Just by way of an illustration, take the **gireh-baan**, a small hollow bag stitched at the end of the neck formation of sudreh. This rests at a place, on the chest, near the heart. We have seen on page 4, that the 10th energy center or chakra is located in that part of our non-physical body which is corresponding to our physical heart. Z-Science calls this chakra **Daenaa**; the abode of divine light of Ahura Mazda and Zarathushtra. It is the heart which throbs in love and devotion, and pricks when something wrong is done. The Daenaa chakra is required to vibrate with the right frequency to emanate and diffuse its spiritual energy throughout the physical body. The position, the shape and the structure of gireh-baan are determined and designed to achieve this²⁵.

²⁴ A human being can become an aalaat (Zaotra) through his spiritual exertions in practical life, so says the passage "*Haoma yo gava bareysmana*" occurring in almost all the Niyaishs and Yashtas.

²⁵ An excellent account of the chakras is given by Dr. Faramroze Chiniwalla in his "Nikhiz on Geyti" and also in his "Vendidaad".

continued on next page

CHAPTER III - STRUCTURE AND DESIGN OF SUDREH KUSHTI

Similarly, the 12th chakra is at a place in the non-physical body, corresponding to the naval of our physical body. The kushti knots are required to be located there. The two long stitches from the ends of the two sleeves to the bottom of the sudreh, the hollow surrounding bottom itself, the length of the sleeves, the two small stitches at the sides, their locations and angles - all these are specifically designed to achieve the main object, which is to generate a circuit of spiritual energy between the chakras, i.e. energy centers within us and the Z-power station outside us. As we have seen on page 6, the Z-power station is the recipient of immense amounts of divine energy from the Yazatic channels of Ahura Mazda. A certain portion of this energy from certain channels are made to stream down on us from the Z-power station through sudreh and kushti²⁶.

Each part of the sudreh absorbs one or the other channel of the divine light and is associated with certain thought forces and fields whirling in nature.

Like sudreh, the kushti is also specifically structured and designed²⁷. Its main objects are to absorb the mantric vibrations of the prayers and to store and retain, in our non-physical body, the spiritual energies received from the higher energy channels. It is required to be hollow and to have three tassels at each end. Each of the six tassels has three visible threads at its end. The total number of interwoven threads is 72. It is often said that the 72 threads symbolize the 72 chapters of the scripture known as Yazashney. But it is not mere symbolism. We can well remember that the Yazashney has 72 chapters, without needing a symbol to remind us. The point to note is that each chapter (ha) of Yazashney has a corresponding channel of subtle vibrations in nature (called the channels of Staota) and each interwoven thread of

Footnote (continued)

²⁶ In Avesta, *vastra*, garment is the symbol of spiritual exertions, compared to an agricultural operation.

²⁷ The word *Aiviaangahen* in *Haoma Yashta* (Yazashney Ha 9) and *Daenaabish, Abyastaa* in the 5th Gatha (Ha 53-5).

NAVJOTE AND SUDREH KUSHTI

the kushti and all the 72 collectively, have the capacity to be connected with these 72 staotic channels of Yazashney.

It is also said that the 72 threads symbolize or signify or remind us of the 72 stages of spiritual advancement. Again, it is not just a symbol or a reminder. Each of the 72 threads has a spiritual connection with the stages of evolution of the ruvaan and its march towards Ahura Mazda.

The small word Daenaa is a glittering diamond reflecting profound truths from the Zarathushtrian mystical science. Daenaa is akin to the word **din**, which ordinarily means religion; but it is not a mere moral code or just scriptures, but the power station of Lord Zarathushtra.

The prayer **Din-no-kalmo** is an invocation of the Daenaa. One of the 33 Yazatas of Ahura Mazda (i.e. the divine spectrum of his light) is Din Yazata, who has a Yashta devoted to him. The beginning words of Din-no-kalmo - "*Rajishtiyaoo...*" are from that Yashta. Z-power station is the direct projection of Din Yazata, like a huge tributary from the main river. Our scriptures refer to kushti as **Daenaabish Abyastaa**, meaning engirdled with Daenaa (Gatha, Ha: 53.5). Daenaa is also the name of the 10th chakra, near the heart, and it also means CONSCIENCE! Z-Science teaches that when the 10th chakra is invoked and fully awakened, it becomes a generator of divine thoughts and intense love towards Ahura Mazda and all his creations. In the ordinary non-saintly humans like us, it often gives a prick when something wrong is done by us. It infuses a consciousness in us that such and such thing should not have been done. It infuses a flow of repentance (**patet**) within us. The Gireh-baan of the sudreh located near the heart is meant to infuse such pricks of conscience in us.

Here then is the necklace of divine thoughts bound by the thread of the word Daenaa, which also means kushti. The pearls in the necklace are: Ahura Mazda, Din Yazata, Zarathushtra, His Daenaa (power station), the kushti (Daenaabish Abyastaa), the human being, his 10th chakra (Daenaa) and his conscience also Daenaa. It is a necklace of pearls so arranged that if you look at one, you see all the others in it. One is in all and all are in one.

CHAPTER IV

THE MEANING OF THE KUSHTI PRAYER

We now enter into the significance of the kushti prayer. We have seen that every line in our scriptures and prayers has profound meanings stored in it with three facets - knowledge of the divine, the practice of life, and fervent devotion to Ahura Mazda and His divine channels. It is, again, beyond the scope of this book to set out the full grammatical meaning and the tricolour message compressed in every line of the kushti prayer. All that can be done here, is to indicate the basic thought contained in every passage. It is also not possible to set out separately the thought relating to each of the three facets. A mixed fare, keeping in mind the relative importance of one or the other facet in our daily life, is attempted to be provided.

Let us begin with the first three words which are at the beginning of every prayer:

Kshnaothra Ahurahey Mazdaao.

May Ahura Mazda be 'pleased'!
Propitiation to Ahura Mazda!

This terse address to Him is the essence of all the divine thoughts we should remain immersed in.

You, Oh Ahura Mazda!, are the infinite ocean of
ecstasy! Give me a small drop from it so that,
the ecstasy in me may awaken,
I may be intoxicated in your love,

NAVJOTE AND SUDREH KUSHTI

I may join with my feeble voice in the great music
you are singing in every particle of your creation,
I may in my smallest of the small way become your
servant to do your work,
I may tread on the path shown by you through
Zarathushtra,
I may cultivate the strength to give away myself and
everything in the service of Thy creation.
Because, I know, that is Your delight!
May my burning desire for You enlighten the flame
of goodness in me;
I know that it is Your Decree to light the lamp of
my soul with Your own light.....

The **Ashem Vohu** prayer that follows declares Ahura Mazda's divine law, order and beauty which are the foundations of all His creations and their journey towards Him. Ashem Vohu also declares the righteousness, the moral law, stored in man's conscience, the 10th chakra of Daenaa²⁸. It also generates ecstasy, divine pleasure (**Ushta**²⁹) and intense currents of love and devotion.

Doing kushti (i.e. untying it and tying again) starts with washing the face with water, and reciting,

Kshnaothra Ahurahey Mazdaao, Ashem Vohu (1),

with the above thoughts in our mind. Then comes the **Kem-na-Mazda** prayer, which is to be recited fully without untying the kushti. The meaning and the thoughts to be churned in the mind while reciting Kem-na-Mazda are summarized below.

The first passage is from Gatha Ha 46-7:

Kem na Mazda Mavaite Paayum Dadat,

²⁸ Asha denotes the divine Law, Order, Beauty.

²⁹ See note 14 to Chapter I.

CHAPTER IV - THE MEANING OF THE KUSHTI PRAYER

*Hyat ma Dregvaao Didereyshata Ainangahey Anyem
Thwa-ahmat Athrascha Manangh-hascha,
Yayaa Shyothnaaish Ashem Thraoshta Ahura,
Tam moi Dastvam Daenayaa Fravaaocha.*

Who, save Thee, Oh Mazda will protect me
When the evil (within me and outside me) casts
frightening glances,
and (who save Thee) will purify my Athra (The Fire
within me) and my mind?

By the work of these two (Fire and mind), Ashoi
(Holiness, Righteousness, beauty, order) is
generated.

Reveal to me Oh Ahura! the divine knowledge that
flows from Daenaa.

This very first passage of the kushti prayer refers to the evil, the conquest and conversion of which is the very aim of every soul and the whole creation. The evil always stares at us, ready to divert us from the path of the truth. We seek Mazda's protection and tell Him, with abject devotional fervor, that, His very thought gives us strength to resist evil.

The passage also refers to the fire within us, which is required to be purified, because the spiritual energies whirling in us are retarded by the evil element, and our mind is led astray. The impurity is in our mind; Mazda will purify it with the help of His Atash. And the two together, the fire and the mind, when purified, will lead us on the path of Ashoi.

How do we purify ourselves?

By being conscious of Daenaa, the din and the knowledge revealed by it; so we ask for such knowledge.

* * * * *

The second passage is from Gatha Ha 44-16.

NAVJOTE AND SUDREH KUSHTI

*Kay Verethrem-ja thwa Poisengaha yoi henti,
Chithra moi Daam Ahoobish Ratoom chijhdi;
At Hoi Vohu Seraosho jantu Mananghaha,
Mazda Ahmai yahammai Vashi Kahmaaichit.*

How will the protecting manthra conquer the evil within?
Demonstrate to me, Oh Ahura, a Ratu (a guide)
Who will lead me in this world and the next?
Whomsoever Thou lovest will receive in him Sarosh
of Thy Divine Consciousness.

Manthra is the weapon of protection against evil, this passage proclaims³⁰. The pronouncing of the Manthras liberates spiritual energy of the chakras and gives us strength to resist evil. The passage also pleads for a spiritual guide for our journeys in this and the other world³¹. Whomsoever follows the Daenaa, is the object of His love. He will expand the consciousness of the striving soul and make it an abode of Sarosh, the Yazata dominant over all our mental equipment and consciousness.

* * * * *

The next passage is from another of our sacred scriptures, **Vendidad (Pargarad 8-21)**:

*Paata no Tabishiyantat Pairi, Mazdaaoscha
Armaitischa Spentascha,
Nasey Daevi Druksha, Nasey Daevo Chithrey,
Nasey Daevo Frakarashtey,
Nasey Daevo Fradaaitey,
Apa Druksha Nasey, Apa Druksha Dvaara,
Apa Druksha Veenasey,*

³⁰ Manthra is one of Ahura Mazda's names, declares Ahura Mazda Yashta. Manthra is referred to in whole of the Avesta as a powerful weapon, a transformer of evil into good.

³¹ The Guide is Lord Zarathushtra.

CHAPTER IV - THE MEANING OF THE KUSHTI PRAYER

*Apaakheydhrey Apa nasayehey Ma Mereynchainish
Gaethaao Astavaitish Ashahey.*

Oh Mazda! Oh Spenta Armaiti!
Protect us against the siege of evil.
May the movement of the **daeva** be destroyed.
May the seeds of the daeva be destroyed.
May the laws of the daeva be destroyed.
Oh Druj! be you destroyed,
 be you away and uprooted,
 be you further and further away,
 be you converted to good.
May not the matter of this temporal world, which is
to reach divine purity, be oppressed.

The first and the foremost weapon to resist evil is **humility**; Spenta-Armaiti is the Yazata whose channel inspires humility³². It is a mental force which constantly reminds the humans not to be proud and self-admiring. Pride and ego are our worst enemies. Individuals, families, nations and the whole mankind go astray from the Lord's path because of our ego and pride. We, therefore, ask for the protection of Mazda and Spenta Armaiti and plead with them to keep us immersed in the thoughts of humility.

Daeva and **druj** in this passage mean the evil and its various manifestations³³. We pray for the dissolution and conversion of the evil and its various manifestations.

* * * * * * * *

The last line is from Gatha 49-10

Nemaschaa yaa Armaitish Eezaacha

³² See note 6 in Chapter I.

³³ See note 1 in Chapter I.

NAVJOTE AND SUDREH KUSHTI

Homage to you Oh *Armaiti!* (may she bestow on us)
(the ruvaanic - spiritual) peace and betterment.

Spenta *Armaiti* is one of the seven beams of light in *Ahura Mazda's* divine spectrum. She is a channel emanating from Him, carrying out certain functions throughout her journey in the divine, non-physical and physical worlds. Her channel has a tributary in the human heart. When a human being generates, in his or her mind, intense currents of devotion and humility, *Armaiti's* tributary enters the heart and infuses a spiritual calm, amongst, and in spite of, all the worldly toils, troubles and turmoil. When love and devotion towards *Ahura Mazda* and *Lord Zarathushtra* vibrates intensely in the deep interior of every cell, the human becomes a fertile soil for the divine fruits to grow and flourish. The main fruit is a throbbing humility, inducing the thought that, "Before *Ahura Mazda* I am nothing - a drop of the drop divided infinite number of times; my function is to crave for Him, to strive for Him, and to exert for the dissolution of the evil in me, in the manner taught by my *Lord Zarathushtra*. May this kushti induce in me such devotion and humility and exertion.³⁴"

These are the thoughts embedded in this last line of the *Kem-na-Mazda* prayer.

The prayer ends with *Ashem Vohu (1)*. *Ahura Mazda's Asha* i.e. the divine law, order and beauty in nature, the moral flame of righteousness burning in our heart and the craving for freedom from evil - these are thoughts to be flashed within us, while saying *Ashem Vohu*.

* * * * *

The first step in doing kushti is to wash your hands, arms and face, and stand facing a particular direction - east in the morning and west in the afternoon and evening. The idea is to face the direction of the sun. After sunset, you may stand before the fire or a non-electric lamp. If a fire or a non-electric lamp is not available, you may stand

³⁴ See note 6 in Chapter I.

CHAPTER IV - THE MEANING OF THE KUSHTI PRAYER

facing the direction of the moon. Failing all that, you may face the south.

The second step is to recite the whole of Kem-na-Mazda prayer standing in an upright position. Kushti is not to be untied while uttering Kem-na-Mazda. You must, while saying that prayer, whirl in your mind the thoughts embedded in the passages, as outlined above. That is the meditation exercise attached to kushti.

Kushti is now to be untied without uttering any word but reflecting, whatever little we can, on the meaning of Kem-na-Mazda and thus continuing the meditation exercise.

Kushti is now to be held in a double-string form, enfolding it around the first finger or the thumb of the left hand and holding the double string in the right hand, keeping a distance of about 1 to 2 feet between the two hands, so that the double strand remains horizontally parallel to the body and drops down towards the earth. Now start reciting Ahura Mazda Khodae.

* * * * *

The Meaning of the Ahura Mazda Khodae Prayer

*Ahura Mazda Khodaaey Ahereman Ava-dashaan
Door Avajh-dashtaar; Jhad Shekas-teyh Baad .
Ahereman Divan, Darujaan, Jaadoo-aan,
Darvan-daan, Kikaan, Kare-faan,
Sastaa-raan, Guneh-gaaraan, Ashmo-gaan
Dar-vendaan, Dushmanaan Friyaan
Jhad Sheykas-teyh Baad.*

I dedicate myself to Ahura Mazda and His command in whatever form it comes on me. May Ahriman, who is the master of evil, be kept away from me and be defeated.

The mental tricks of Ahriman, the deception of raising doubts beyond reason (**divaan**), the pollution induced from the evil (**darujaan**), the practice of

NAVJOTE AND SUDREH KUSHTI

destructive knowledge (jaadooaaan), those who abandon the path of Asha (darvandaan), those who deceive themselves into sin, who have eyes but refrain from looking at the truth (kikaan), those who deceive their ears by not listening to the truth (karafaan), those who oppress their own selves by adopting the evil (saastaaraan), those who revolt against the divine forces (aashmogaan), the abductors of Asha (darvandaan), the enemies of the soul - Ruvaan (dushmanaa), the forces and energies emanating from the evil (friaan) - may all these be rendered powerless and defeated.

One thought which is required to be kept uppermost while reciting the above passage is: "I myself am one of those so eloquently described above - maybe in a smaller degree, but I am not free from all these tricks of Ahriman, so these words are directed more towards me than to somebody else, and I pray that I may be free from these venoms of the master of evil."

* * * * *

Doosh-Paadshaa-haan Avaa-deshaan Baad;

Doosh-manaan Stoh Baad;

Doosh-manaan Avaa-deshaan Baad

May the power of the evil oppressors (within me and outside me), be upturned. May those who wish the evil and the venomous be repelled and defeated.

* * * * *

Ahura Mazda Khodaaey Ajh Hamaa Goonaah

Pateyt Pashey-maanoom Ajh Harvastin

Doosh-mata Doojhookhta Doojhvarashta

Meim pa Geiti Manid,

Ooem Goft, Ooem Kard, Ooem jast, Ooem

Boon Bood Eysteyd

Ajh Aan Goonah Manashni, Gavashni, Koonashni

CHAPTER IV - THE MEANING OF THE KUSHTI PRAYER

*Tani Ravaani, Geiti Mino-aani
Aukhey Avaakhsh Pashey-maan
Pasey Gavashni Pa Pateyt Hom.*

The thoughts, the words and the deeds which lead me astray from the path of Ahura Mazda (dooshmata, doozookhta, doozwarshta) and which I may have entertained, uttered and done in this life or which may have emanated from me or may have been fastened in me, - AND which may have disturbed my good thoughts, words and deeds (manashni, gavashni, koonashni) and may have tended to obstruct the evolution of my body, mind and soul and generated such pollution as may have hindered the evolution of the earth and the non-physical worlds - ALL THOSE SINS I am abjectly and sincerely repent - repent thrice - and pray to Ahura Mazda that may He grant me the energy and tolerance to bear my sin's reactions which are sure to snap on me according to His immutable law (of 'Karma'), and may He give me strength, tenacity and determination not to commit such sins again.

An elaboration of this passage requires hundreds of pages. It contains the essence of Zarathushtrian Religion - and for that matter, all Religions of God. All that, you my dear reader, can be advised is to ponder and meditate on each thought embedded in this passage and set out above. The passage talks about the conflicting forces within us and outside us; it defines sin and describes its disturbing effects on the whole of nature; it refers to evolution of the earth, the world, the universe, the whole creation; it pleads and prays for the strength and energy to bear the Karmic reactions and to keep on resisting evil. The whole way of life and the whole gist of Religion is electronised in this prayer of just 23 words. (Its expansion is contained in the prayer known as **Patet-Pashemani**, which is required to be recited during the Navjote Kriya.)

* * * * *

KRIYA of Ahura Mazda Khodaae

While reciting the words,

Ahriman Divaanzad sheykastey baad

we whip the kushti with our right hand. Why? There is a two-fold significance to this whipping.

The Zarathushtrian Science reveals that every thought, word and deed, whether good or evil, generates a subtle non-physical field (something like a field surrounding a magnet). The field goes round our body and remains fastened in the space surrounding it, for quite some time. The field then penetrates within us and is stored in certain parts of our non-physical body.

The field generated by our good thoughts, words and deeds (g-field) helps to activate our chakras (page 4) to liberate energy for the dissolution of evil. The field emanating from our evil thoughts, words and deeds (e-field) has the opposite effect. The kushti when untied and retied in the prescribed manner activates these processes so as to lead us further on Ahura Mazda's path. The function of the kushti is to push the g-field inside us and duly organize it to reach the right place, and to push the e-field out of the space surrounding us and discharge it deep within the earth. The kushti whips are intended to work on the e-field in this manner. Whipping at the above-mentioned words has thus an actual function to carry out.

The other significance relates to our mental state. While whipping the kushti, we have to whip our mind too, with the thought that all these, *kikaan, karefaan,.....* do exist in our own mind and they require a real whipping to be thrown out of us. Such whipping thoughts also energize the kushti to discharge its functions on the e-field.

During the *Az-Hama Goonah* passage, the whipping is while praying *dooshmata, doojukhta, doojvarashta* - the right place to whip our mind and call upon it to be away from the evil thoughts, words and deeds.

There is another limb to the Kriya of this passage. We roll the kushti in three circles while uttering the words, *manashni, gavashni,*

CHAPTER IV - THE MEANING OF THE KUSHTI PRAYER

kunashni. At this point we have to think that Ahura Mazda's creation has tremendous amount of divine energy revolving, rotating and circulating everywhere; let a small field of such energy encircle my body in three circuits of good thought, word and deed, so that my mind may ever exert to remain immersed in the thoughts of manashni, gavashni, kunashni.

* * * * *

*Kshnaothra Ahurahey Mazdaao, Taroiditey
Angrahey Mainyeoosh*

May a small stream of Ahura Mazda's ecstasy and grace flow down on me, so that I may be able to see through and through the vile trickeries of Angramin, the master of evil.

The evil has a special power of luring us away from the good. "The arrows of the evil (mara) are flower tipped", said Buddha. We are enchanted by the flower tip, little knowing that there is a poisonous and terrific nib behind. It is only Ahura Mazda's grace which can keep us vigilant against the arrows. Oh Lord! Grant me such eyes as could see through the lure of evil.

* * * * *

*Haithya Varashtaam Hyat Vasna Frashotemem,
Staomi Ashem.
Ashem Vohu (1)*

Those who are already marching speedily towards Ahura Mazda have their Fields of Goodness spread over the universe. May I have a portion from their Fields stored in me; may I constantly be attracted towards them. Those Fields of Goodness are peace-giving, like a grove of green trees and are capable of leading me to my salvation - Frashogard. Homage to you Oh Asha! the Law Divine, through this Ashem Vohu prayer.

NAVJOTE AND SUDREH KUSHTI

Not to be lured away by the evil is a hard task. It requires a counter force. The Grace of God and the Fields of the Good provide such attraction as can divert our mind from the flower-tipped arrows of evil. That is the purport of this passage.

While saying, *Kshnaothra Ahurahey Mazdaao*, release the three circles, wait for an instant while saying, *Taroiditey Angra Maniyush*, and while reciting *Haithya Varashtaam..... Ashem Vohu(1)* engirdle the kushti around the waist, cross the two portions at the back, bring them again to the front, and wait till you reach *Yatha Ahu Vairyo*. All along, think of the meaning of the line, pray that the Fields of the Good and the Grace of Ahura Mazda be enwrapped around you and enter within you, so that the lure of evil be seen through and through, and you become the fertile soil of God's goodness.

* * * * *

Yatha Ahu Vairyo(2)

Yatha is one of the basic prayers of the Zarathushtrian Path. It contains a vast ocean of meaning in just 21 words. Stated very very tersely, the Prayer sets out,

- the major events of Creation,
- the goal of Creation and,
- the duty of the human being.

The goal of Creation is to dissolve and convert the evil; the duty of man is to help Nature in achieving this goal by following the Path of Religion.

While reciting the first **Yatha**, we must tie the first knot on the kushti thread from the right hand side. The right end is to be cast 'in' while speaking the word **Shyothananaam**. The thought to be whirled in the mind is, "I remember Ahura Mazda, whose instrument I wish to become by my work (**Shyothna**)."

While reciting the second **Yatha**, the knot is from the left hand with a throw-in at **Shyothananaam** and the thought is, "I remember my Lord Zarathushtra, who has shown the way of becoming Ahura Mazda's instrument. Here I am invoking His Z-Power station and

CHAPTER IV - THE MEANING OF THE KUSHTI PRAYER

taking in me His divine currents, so that I may advance nearer and nearer to Ahura, through my work (**Shyothna**).

After binding the two knots, the remaining portion of the kushti is to be entwined towards the back and the two small knots, one from the right and the other from the left are to be tied at the thinner treaded ends of the kushti, while reciting one Ashem Vohu. The thoughts are, "I have entwined the kushti three times around me; the figure 3 indicates three stages of my Ruvaanic evolution; the first stage was when my Ruvaan was with Ahura; the second is the present one when I am away from Him; and the third will be when I will meet Him and merge in Him. All the 3 stages are according to His Law of Asha, which is a channel of His Light, and therefore, I complete this engirdling by reciting one Ashem Vohu, which is the prayer for Asha."

We then shift and adjust the front knots, so that the kushti is properly set with the front two knots falling on the navel and the back knots at the end of an imaginary horizontal line starting from the navel. The next prayer is **Jasamaey Avangahey Mazda** to be recited fully without moving away from the place where this kushti is retied.

* * * * *

*Jasa mey Avangahey Mazda,
Jasa mey Avangahey Mazda;
Jasa mey Avangahey Mazda;
Mazda-yasno Ahmi Mazda-yasno Zarathush-trish
Frava-raaney Aastootaschaa Frava-rey-taschaa.
Aastooye Humateym Mano Aastooye Hukhteym
Vacho
Aastooye Havarshteym Shyothnem
Aastooye Daenaam Vangha-oohim Mazda-yasnim
Fraspaayo-kheydraam Nidaa-snaitheeshey
Khaey-twa-datham Asha-onim.
Yaa Haaiti-naamchaa Booshyenti-naamchaa
Majish-taa-chaa, Vahish-taa-chaa,*

Sra-eysh-taa-cha, Yaa Ahoo-irish Zarathush-trish.

Ahuraai Mazdaai vispa Vohoo Chi-nah-mmi.

Aey-sha Asti Daenayao Mazda-yasnoish

Aastoo-ee-tish. Ashem Vohu (1).

Oh Mazda! May Your divine help reach me. I am a Mazdayasni Zarathushtrish - a human for whom Ahura Mazda has determined the Path of Zarathushtra, as the way of my life. I place implicit faith in the talismanic Prayers and the commandments ordained in my Daena. I pray that may my thoughts, words and deeds endeavour to reach the Yazatic channels; I offer my prayers to the Mazdayasni Daena, which is the store house of Ahura's Light of Goodness, and which has the power to erase from me all the conflicts between good and evil (**fraspayokhedram**), to convert all my evil to good and thereby liberate my Ruvaan from its bodily existence (**nidasnaithisheym**), and to make me one with Ahura's Creation (**khaetvadatham**), and which Daena is the very embodiment of the divine channel of Asha (**ashaonim**), which, the Mazdayasni Daena, is the majestic Light on the Path - leading to Ahura (**majishtaachaa**), the harbinger of all the Goodness of Ahura (**vahishtaachaa**) and the carrier of the Divinest of His Divine Light (**sraeshtaachaa**), AND which is the path of Zarathushtra; I adopt the Daena as my path, knowing that it will shower Ahura Mazda's blessings on me. All these are the attributes of the Mazdayasni Daena. Homage to Asha through one **Ashem Vohu**.

CONCLUSION

This, then, my dear reader is the meaning, significance, yoga and the divine art and science of Sudreh, Kushti and Navjote.

Sudreh-kushti is not just a lifeless symbol of good thoughts, words and deeds. It is an *Alaat*, a powerful and dynamic radio, specially designed to receive and transmit the divine currents from Lord Zarathushtra's Power Station, which has a positive existence in certain non-physical regions of Ahura's Universe. The design and composition of Sudreh Kushti, the Manthra Prayers, the thoughts and the Kriya associated with it make a Parsi herself or himself an *Alaat*, an absorber and transmitter of Z-blessings.

It is a yogic exercise and discipline intended and meant to lead us towards our *Ruvaanic* goal, which is to resist and conquer the evil within us and dissolve and convert it to the Good.

It is a weapon that generates within us the spiritual energy to resist evil and to tread on and stick to the Path shown to us by our Lord Zarathushtra - the Path of His *Daenaa*.

It is a circuit which activates the energy-centers (*chakhras*) located in our non-physical body.

It is an instrument which enables us to join in the divine melody of God.

Every word of its prayers has a divine meaning and significance, and contains a store house of spiritual knowledge(*gnyan*), and the practical rules of Life(*karma*) and is a fountain of devotion (*Bhakti*).

Every Kriya associated with Kushti Prayers has a positive effect within us and outside us.

NAVJOTE AND SUDREH KUSHTI

Sudreh Kushti is a guide for life; an attuning with our Lord Zarathushtra for life; a way of taking us towards His divine garden; His priceless gift to us.

And so Navjote is not a symbolic ceremony. It is a Kriya, a spiritual kinetic, joining us with the divine Power house of Lord Zarathushtra, through Sudreh Kushti.

APPENDIX

MODERN SCIENCE IS KNOCKING THE DOOR OF MYSTICISM - A LIST OF BOOKS

The intellectual activity called Science began 400 years ago. At the end of the 19th century, it was delivered completely in the hands of atheism and became a Devil's Workshop.

But in the last week of that infidel century, a then unassuming scientist Max Plank, discovered "the quantum" and a revolution set in. As the decades of the 20th century rolled by, science was increasingly boggled. Today, Physics, the same fundamental science of matter, which was the leader of the march towards atheism, is knocking at the door of mysticism! Here is a list of 22 modern books revealing this amazing phenomenon. There are many, many more. I have here selected the simpler few.

The theme propounded by these books is that science is not in contact with reality; the fact that a theory "works" and provides technology does not mean that the theory sets out the truth in Nature; that the tools of science, namely, observation, experiment, interference, logic, mathematics and thought-experiments are too inadequate and too ill equipped to have even a faint glimpse of the Divine Truths; that the non-saintly human intellect has arrived at a barrier beyond which it cannot permeate, although it has been made aware that there are vast Regions of Truth on the other side.

1. *The Mysterious Universe* by Sir James Jeans (Cambridge, 1930).
(A classic in 20th century physics).

NAVJOTE AND SUDREH KUSHTI

2. *Seven Mysteries Of Life* by Guy Murchie (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1978).
(A poetically scientific account of God's creation)
3. *Looking Glass Universe - Emerging Science Of Wholeness* by Briggs and Peat (Touchstone, 1984).
(The universe is a looking glass of Alice).
4. *Science, Order and Creativity - Dramatic New Look At The Creative Roots Of Science And Life* by David Bohm and Peat (Bantam, 1987).
(Implicate order behind the world of our experience).
5. *Mysticism & New Physics* by Michael Talbot (Arkana, 1980).
(How modern physics has arrived at the border of mysticism).
6. *Beyond The Quantum - God, Reality, Consciousness In The New Scientific Revolution* by Michael Talbot (Bantam, 1987).
7. *Tao Of Physics* by F. Capra (Bantam, 1976 - 83).
(Best-seller, attempting a synthesis of modern science and the eastern mysticism).
8. *The Dancing Wu Li Masters* by Gary Zukav (Bantam, 1980).
(Touching the mystic dance).
9. *Cosmic Blue Print - New Discoveries In Nature's Ability To Order The Universe* by Paul Davies (Touchstone, 1989).
(Universe is not an accidental random).
10. *Ghost In The Atom - Discussion In the Mysteries Of Quantum Phenomena (BBC)* by Paul Davies (Cambridge, 1988).
(Very instructive and informative discussion on the mysterious quantum).
11. *Matter Myth - Dramatic Discoveries That Challenge Our Understanding Of Physical Reality* by Paul Davies and John Gribbin (Touchstone, 1992).
(The myth of materialism and how common sense is helpless).

APPENDIX

12. *Fourth Dimension - How To Reach There* by Rudy Rucker (Penguin, 1985).
(There is a Beyond behind the three dimensional universe).
13. *Presence Of The Past* by Rupert Sheldrake (Times Books, 1988).
(A book on new field science - everything has a non-local field).
14. *Evolution, Theory In Crisis* by Michael Denton (Adler & Adler, 1986).
(Convincing materials against Darwin's theory).
15. *Paradigms Lost* by John Casti (Avon Books, 1989).
(How the 19th century notions of science are shattered and 20th century science is baffled like a jury in court).
16. *Super Force* by Paul Davies (Unwin, 1989).
(Has a chapter: New physics and the collapse of common sense).
17. *Superstrings* by Peat (Contemporary Books, 1989).
(Beyond the ultimate particles of matter).
18. *Supernature* by Dr. Lyll Watson (Sceptre, 1986).
(Events observed but not understood - between the rational and the supernatural).
19. *Dialogues With Scientists And Sages* by Rene Weber (Arkana, 1990).
(Dialogues with Bohm, Sheldrake, Capra, Hawking, Prigogine (Nobel Laureate), Dalai Lama, Father Griffiths, Lama Govinda. An excellent meeting ground of science and mysticism).
20. *A Sense Of The Cosmos* by Jacob Needleman (Arkana, 1975 - 88).
(Limitations of science, becoming more and more tragically evident everyday....).
21. *Understanding The Present* by Bryan Appleyard (Pan, 1992).

NAVJOTE AND SUDREH KUSHTI

(Modern science is at the root of all inhumanity of the present times).

22. *The Mind Of God - The Scientific Basis For A Rational World* by Paul Davies (Touchstone, 1993).
(Common sense, not adequate to comprehend Reality).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The three inter-connected aspects of Sudreh Kushti, namely, the scientific, the disciplinary and the devotional, are all spread out in the marathon writings of **Ilm-e-Khshnoom**, the authentic mysticism of the Zarathushtrian Daenaa.

The following are the names and titles of some of the standard books, journals and periodicals of Ilm-e-Khshnoom:

1. *Zoroastrianism, Ancient And Modern* by Ervad Phiroze Masani (1917, English).
(This book is a review of Dr. Dhalla's book, "Zoroastrian Theology", which was supposed to be the basis of all the alleged "reformist" craze then (and even now in some ignorant quarters) in vogue amongst the faithless Parsis whose task it was to find excuses to escape from the rigors of the Religious Disciplines. Ervad Masani's book sets out the elements of the Mystical Science of our Daenaa in a lucid and scholarly style. Photo-copies of the original book are available with The Mazdeyasnie Connection).
2. *Essential Origins Of Zoroastrianism* by Dr. F. S. Chiniwalla (1942, English).
3. *Manual Of Khshnoom* by P. N. Tavarua (1972, English).
4. *Zarathushtra, the Yazata* by K. N. Dastoor (1984, English).
5. *Khshnoom Nikeez-e-Vehdin Vols. 1, 2 and 3* by Dr. F. S. Chiniwalla (Gujerati).
(3300 pages, a treasure mine of Ilm-e-Khshnoom).

NAVJOTE AND SUDREH KUSHTI

6. *Khordeh Avesta baa Khshnoom* by Dr. F. S. Chiniwalla (Gujerati)
(Word by word translation and 'taavil' of Sarosh Baj, Kushti prayer, 5 Gahs, 5 Niyaishs, 3 Yashtas, with a chapter on the Zarathushtrian Disciplines of Life.)
7. *Vendidad* by Dr. F. S. Chiniwalla (Gujerati).
(The mystical content of one of the 21 Nasks).
8. *Gatha Ahoonvad, Ha 28, 29, 30* by Dr. F. S. Chiniwalla (Gujerati) - 3 separate books.
(Word by word translation and taavil, the mystical content).
9. *Gatha Spentomad, Vohukshathra, Vahishtoist* by Dr. F. S. Chiniwalla (Gujerati) - 3 separate volumes.
(Word by word translation and taavil, the mystical content, of the respective Gathas).

Journals and Periodicals

1. '*Frashogard*'.
(Edited by Ervad Phiroze Masani. Went on for about 30 years).
2. *Parsi Avaz*.
(Edited by Jehangir Chiniwalla - 1947 to 1974).
3. *Dini Avaz*.
(Published once in two months from Bombay in English and Gujarati. Current).
4. *The Mazdeyasnie Connection*.
(Published once in two months from California in English and Gujarati - 1982 to present).