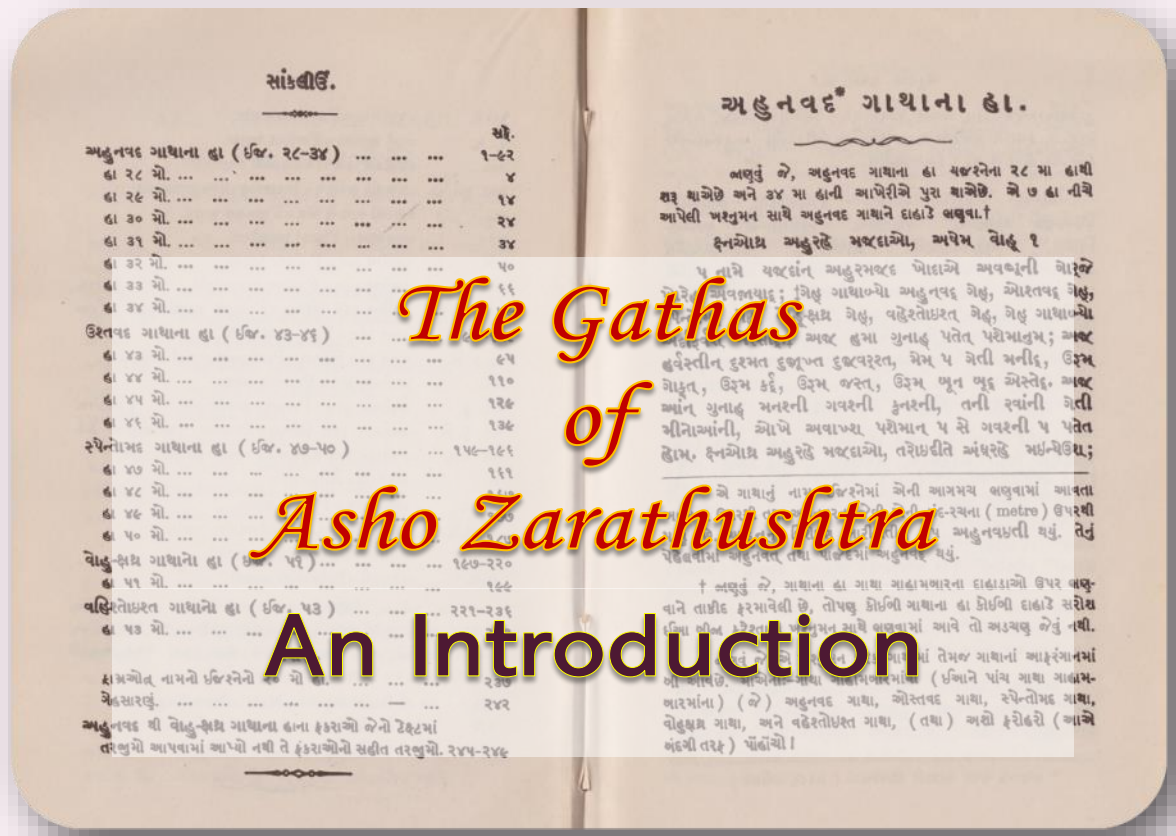


THE MAZDAYASNI CONNECTION

August 9, 2023



The Gathas of Asho Zarathushtra An Introduction

- ◆ The Gathas are Yazatas.
- ◆ The Gatha prayers emanate from the highest inspiration of Zarathushtra.
- ◆ The Gatha are arranged in an evolutionary sequence.

We recite the Gatha prayers during the five Gatha days. We do this through sheer faith, as our duty.

GATHA ARE YAZATAS

The days in the Zarathushti calendar are named after an Amesha Spenta or Yazata, whose effulgence, glory or cosmic energy is predominant on that day. The last five days of the year are presided over by the five Gathas. Therefore, the Gathas are also divine entities of the same level of divinity as the Yazatas and Amesha Spentas.

Shahenshahi Gatha days are from Aug. 11 - 15, 2023.

Before each Gatha day, we shall publish a post giving a synopsis of the Gatha - its central theme, summary of contents and significant stanzas.

This will make praying the Gatha more meaningful.

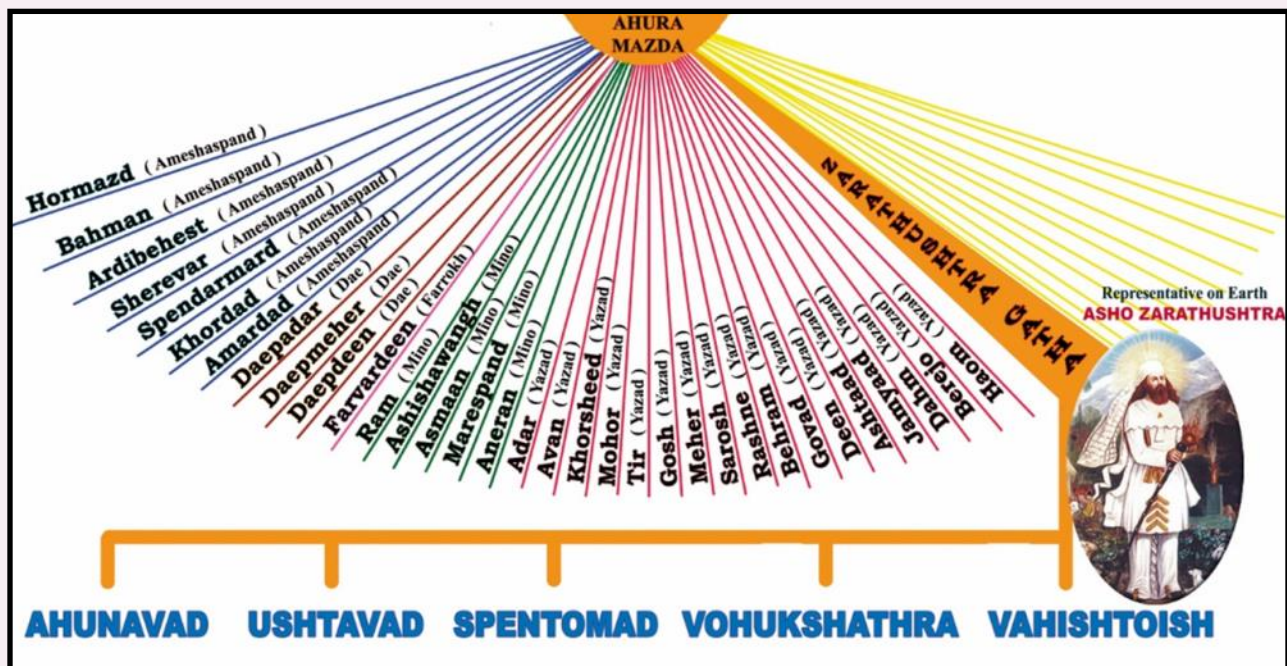
Yazatas and Amesha Spentas are Divine Beings manifested by Ahura Mazda for the creation and sustenance of the universe. Academics consider them as abstract attributes or qualities of Ahura Mazda – but they are more than that. They are living, conscious Divine Beings assigned specific tasks and functions by their Creator. Our extant scriptures contain manthra compositions in their honor. We attune ourselves with Yazatas and Amesha Spentas by reciting their respective Yashts or by reciting their *karda* (manthra paragraph) in rituals such as the *Afringan* (*jashan*). The sentence or paragraph which effects this attunement is called the *khshnuman*. The Yashts enumerate the tasks and functions of the corresponding Yazata or Amesha Spenta. The Gathas, likewise, are first and foremost Yazatas. We attune ourselves with them by reciting the respective Gatha composition.

The *khshnuman* is the same for all five Gathas:

We attune with Ahura Mazda, the Amesha Spentas and the Gatha which:

- give spiritual progress (growth, development, evolution) (*spentābyo*),
- possess the divine authority and power of Ahura Mazda (*ratu-khshathrābyo*), and
- emanate from Asha – Ahura Mazda’s Law (*ashaonibyō*);

We attune with Ahunavad, Ushtavad, Spentomad, Vohukshathra and Vahishtoish Gatha, the lords of righteousness.



COMMENTARY ON THE GATHA

Yasna Hā 55 is a commentary on the Gatha and Staota Yasna. It enumerates the benefits that accrue from reciting the Gathas and other manthra that are composed as per the laws of Staota Yasna.

The Gatha lift the human consciousness to the divine height of Ahuramazda, deliver the consciousness from the bonds of evil (*harethra-vaitishcha*), accelerate the good and retard the evil (*pathra-vaitishcha*), provide spiritual food (*mainyush kherethāoscha*) and raiment (*vastremcha*) for our soul (Hā 55.2).

The Gatha give us courage, success, happiness (a happy energy which keeps the body and the mind free from sins), rectification of the *Kehrpa* and the *Chakhras*. They accelerate faith and Divine progress, restore perfect balance, and give good Yazatic energy (the intelligence of Vohumana's *Baodhang*), garments of righteousness, lawful energy and ever-increasing spiritual knowledge (Hā 55.3).

CONTENTS IN GENERAL

Gathas form part of the 72 chapters of the Yasna, which is one of our Holy Scriptures. The manthra compositions of the Gatha are mystic verses (*guzra senghāongho* Y.48.3) having not one but multiple layers of meanings and several layers of understanding beneath the explicit and literal meaning. Each Gatha contains one or more chapters called Av. *hāiti*, Phl. *hāt*, Parsi-Gujarati *Hā*. They are numbered according to their position in the Yasna, which contains 72 Hās. Each Hā, in turn, is made up of stanzas. The first Hā of every Gatha contains a key stanza which is recited twice. The same stanza is again recited twice at the end of each Hā.

Gatha	Hā (Chapter number in the Yasna)	No. of Stanzas
Preamble		1
Ahunavaiti or Ahunavad	28-34	100
Ushtavaiti or Ushtavad	43-46	66
Spentamainyu or Spentomad	47-50	41
Vohu-Khshathra	51	22
Vahishtoisht	53	9
Total:		239

MAIN THEME AND SEQUENCE

The five Gathas have an evolutionary sequence, a ladder of spiritual advancement of man, beginning from Ahunavad and ending with Vahishtoisht. The name of each Gatha by itself depicts a certain spiritual position. The key stanza of each Gatha lays down its quintessence and defines the central theme of the whole Gatha.

PREAMBLE

The first stanza of Gatha Ahunavaiti or Ahunavad (numbered 28.0) is the preamble to the Gatha. It declares that the Gatha prayers originated from the highest inspiration (illumination, enlightenment) of Asho Zarathushtra and their recitation results in the spiritual progress and evolution of the entire creation towards Ahura Mazda.

The thoughts, words and deeds of Asho Zarathushtra are of the highest inspiration. The Amesha Spentas presented the Gatha for the spiritual development of the Creation. Salutations to you, O Gatha! (Hā 28.0) ■