

BARE OUTLINE
OF
THE ZOROASTRIAN RELIGION

Today's youngsters are multi-talented and consequently extremely hard-pressed for time. It is therefore but natural that they hardly have time to read about their religion or for that matter, little time to pray. Having been in the same predicament, several decades ago, for my own guidance after discussing our religion with some learned scholars, one of whom was (Mr. Nasikwala of Parsee Colony Dadar) and some priests, I was able to record the simple, logical and profound philosophy of the Zoroastrian Religion in a nutshell for my personal understanding.

The first question is whether one accepts the theory that the universe, the planet earth, the five elements and the life on it, plant, animal human all just existed and evolved on their own. The theory, is that everything that happens is by Chance, Accident or Coincidence. The individual who accepts this theory lives like a rudderless ship on the ocean of life drifting aimlessly. On the other hand Zarathustra has said that there is a force, namely, "Ahura Mazda" who controls everything and if one has Faith in Ahura Mazda, your ship on the ocean of life will have a direction and purpose. .

Zarathustra has said:

- That God or Ahura Mazda is a force
- That God is Omnipresent, Omnipotent, and Omniscient.
- That God created the universe, the planet earth, the five elements and all life on earth.
- That of the five elements He created, fire is the most powerful — without Fire, life would cease.
- Therefore if one wants to offer prayers to God, then one can do so through his most powerful creation — the Fire.
- Day to day life is possible only if there is Diversity. By diversity I mean the existence of extremes and opposites in physical — mental —spiritual forms. For example Strong & Weak, Intelligent & Duffer Kind & Cruel, Love & Hate. It is the existence of opposites that causes the world to function.
- Every individual is endowed with opposite qualities. The most important thing to remember is that within each individual there exists God as also the Devil. That every individual has been given the absolute right to choose for himself whether in life he would follow the path of good or evil (YASNE 32) and he alone is responsible for his actions.
- That Ahura Mazda wants every individual to become a "RATHESHTAR" or soldier in the army of God — to fight for the good and against evil.
- That every individual has to first conquer the evil within himself, and then without.
- That the Principles to conduct one's life are; Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds.
- That the most important factor in every individual's life is FAITH, without faith there cannot be any advancement in any sphere. Faith is the steppingstone for progress.

- That when an individual suffers any illness — the individual rushes to a doctor who prescribes medicine. It is the faith in the doctor and the medicine, which cures the individual.
- That when an individual is faced with an emotional problem or a tragedy, the individual turns to a friend, philosopher and guide in whom he has faith, for guidance and sympathy besides God for help. It is the faith in God and Trust in his righteousness that helps the individual through his ordeal.
- That as a corollary when an individual is in good health he takes vitamins to maintain good health. Similarly, at times when an individual is emotionally and spiritually happy, to maintain such state of well being, it is necessary to wear what all Zoroastrians are enjoined to do namely, wearing a "Sadra" which is a shield for protection against evil and recite the "Kasti" prayers which are the daily vitamins.

Having talked about our religion, I would like to exhort our youngsters never to discard the only identity of a Zoroastrian i.e. the "Sadra and Kasti", to wear it always; as far as possible, and do your Kasti at least twice daily and recite oral prayers whenever you can whilst dressing, whilst traveling, just about anywhere and any time with Faith in Ahura Mazda.

We do not want to sing "Chhaiye home Zarhosti pun vagar sadro ne Kasti"
 However, later on in years to come, you will understand that rituals and prayers that go with it are important aspects of our religion. Some day if you are fortunate hear a priest with an impressive voice and clear diction praying aloud surroundings where you can only hear the crackling of the sandalwood in the brightly burning Fire, you will be transported into another world with the sound of our prayers.

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