

# Homage Unto Ahura Mazda

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# Chapter I

## *Thou art all in all to me, Ahura Mazda*

Thou art the foundation of my life. Thou art the lord of my body and mind and soul. I commend myself into thy hands. I give my all in thy keeping, I will consecrate my mind to thee, I will pour out my heart to thee, I will surrender my soul to thee. Thou art my creator and nourisher, my guardian and protector, my guide and friend. With thee for me, I am wise and virtuous, strong and courageous, rich and safe, happy and hopeful. Unto thee be praise and glorification now and for ever, Ahura Mazda.

I long to live in thy presence and walk in thy presence, with not a shadow between. I seek fellowship with thee and friendship with thee. I love thee with passionate devotion, my loving father.

Thou dost live in the highest heaven, they say. However high my soul scales the heights of heaven in thy search, a further height it finds that seems beyond its reach. Like a lark thirsting for the drops of rain and a fish dying for water, I am a thirst for the refreshing waters of thy love. Assuage my thirst, O Fountain of the life-giving waters of life.

Down in my heart, I will raise thee a sanctuary. There will I seek thee and find thee and greet thee in solemn silence. There will I lift my heart unto thee. There will my soul commune with thee. Grant that I may meet thee alone for the enrichment of my spiritual life.

The world grows radiant in thy presence. Thy peace descends upon my soul, my eyes are alight with it, and my face is bathed in it, when, in moments of rapturous ecstasy, I am lifted out of myself towards thee. My heart pulsates with unspeakable joy, when thou dost take me for thy friend and dost pour down thy joy into my soul and life into my life.

My life of the spirit is impoverished, when I neglect communing with thee. A tense silence holds between me and thee when I cease to meet thee and confer with thee. My spiritual vision is blurred. I cannot feel thy presence, I cannot see thy radiant face. Ill do I requit thy gratitude, when I desert thee and go over to Angra Mainyu, the Evil Spirit, and live for him. My footsteps slide on the path of wrong. Like a land bird that finds no solid object to alight upon, when it is out to sea, I am lost when I leave thee and find no place of safety for my misguided soul. Every door is slammed in my face. There is no hope unless, thou in thy infinite mercy, dost forgive my folly and guide back my faltering footsteps to thee. Quicken and strengthen my faith in thee.

Let me faithfully and steadfastly range myself on thy side. Let me be steady in the performance of the task that thou dost assign me to do. Let me not swerve a hair's breadth from the path of my duty. Let me wear out my soul in thy service, even as the candle burns itself before it gives light.

My life is wrapped up in thee and in thy protecting love. Hold me by my hands and guide me and I will follow thee wherever thou dost lead me. I will serve thee to the end of my life, till thou dost call me back from my earthly sojourn to my final rest and repose in thee. May I always find favour in thy eyes. May thy thought pervade my mind and heart. Thou art the goal of my thoughts and desires. My longing is for thee. May my heart rest in thee. I will bring to thee songs of praise and invocation. I will pray unto thee and adore thee and praise thee and invoke thee and worship thee with all my mind and all my heart and all my soul, O thou that art my all in all, Ahura Mazda.



## *Thy name is above all names, Ahura Mazda*

Thy name is above all names, the most majestic and the most sublime. The sound of thy name is the sweetest that human ear can hear. Countless persons call thee simultaneously by thy name and thou dost hear them all and respond to them all at one and the same moment. Thou art the same one God, but men give thee many names, Ahura Mazda. Many a million time more is thy august name pronounced between morn and eve in the seven zones of the earth than any other name, human or divine.

When I am in low spirits and the sorrows of life bear heavily on me, the invocation of thy name cheers me and lightens the load of my sorrow. When danger threatens me and strikes terror in my heart, when trouble chases me on my pilgrimage through the thorny path of life and fear strikes me mute, the remembrance of thy holy name lends me courage to fight my way boldly to safety. My thoughts are filled with thy image and devotion surges up in my heart, when I meditate upon thy name, Ahura Mazda.

I shall wake in the dawn with thy name on my lips, I shall begin my day's work in thy name, and I shall glorify thy name by my deeds during the day. At night-fall I shall offer my thanksgiving prayer unto thee for all thy guidance and help in my working hours and retire to sleep with thy name on my lips. When I have run my course upon earth and my life is done, vouchsafe, Ahura Mazda, that I may sink into death with thy name on my lips.

## *Thou art the creator of all, Ahura Mazda*

Creation is the free act of thy divine goodness, Ahura Mazda. When nothing was, thou alone didst live in thy sublime self-sufficiency. Thou art the father of the Amesha Spentas and the Yazatas, and the Fravashis are thine.

Thou didst clothe the heavenly realms with light and thou didst create the earth and waters and the plants and the animals and men. Thou didst determine the course of the sun and the moon and the stars and the seasons. Thou dost uphold the earth and the firmament from falling. Thou dost make the moon wax and wane and the tides to ebb and flow. Thou dost yoke swiftness to wind and clouds. Thou hast created the corporeal world and the spiritual, O Creator of all that breathes and breathes not.

Thou didst create man and breathe life in his body. Thou hast endowed him with the power of thinking and the freedom of will. Man, thou hast said, is the greatest and the best in thy creation, the redeemer of the world of imperfection with thy guidance and thy help.

Thou art the father and lord of creation and with unfailing and undivided care and protection thou dost look after the welfare of us all with the tender care of a loving father. Homage and adoration, praise and glorification be unto thee, O Heavenly Father.

## *Thou art our nearest and dearest, Ahura Mazda*

Thou art enthroned on the highest heights, thou art seated in the deepest depths, Ahura Mazda. Thou art in the immensity of space and thou art in the millionth part of the point of a needle. The world is not large enough to hold thee, the grain of sand is not small to seat thee. Thou dost swim on the waters of Vourukasha, as thou dost float on the expanse of a dewdrop. The contents of thy being are in the largest of the large and the smallest of the small, O thou that art beyond all bounds.

Thou hast thy celestial mansions in the highest heavens. Thou dost dwell upon the vast expanse of the earth and thou dost abide in the hearts of the righteous persons. Thou art transcendent and thou art infinitely more sublime and great than thy creatures. Yet art thou not so remote and ineffable as not to be approached and addressed and greeted by thy ardent worshippers. Thou art not the remote spectator of the world thou hast created. Thou art immanent and man can enter into close and loving relations with thee and own thee as his father and brother and friend.

Thou art all-pervading. There is no conceivable place where thou art not. Closer than the eyes are to the ears, or the ears are to the mouth, art thou to all that which the corporeal world thinks and speaks and does.

I need not call thee, or need I enquire where thou mayest be, for thou, my ever present companion, art with me even before I think of thee, Ahura Mazda.

## *Thou art all-good, Ahura Mazda*

Thou art the fountain of goodness, Ahura Mazda, and whatever is good in the world proceeds from thee. Thy goodness extends to the good and evil alike, for thy desire is all-beneficent. Through thy perfect goodness, dost thou take infinite care of our protection, preservation, and guidance. Discipline my soul, O Lord, to trust in thy unfailing goodness and lean upon thy goodness in weal or woe.

Thy goodness transcends my power to recount it in words. A hundred, hundred thousand years are not enough to tell the story of thy infinite goodness, O ineffable Lord. Words are but feeble expression of the grateful feelings that fill my heart. With the deep gratitude of my heart and soul. I thank thee on my knees with my whole heart and with my whole soul, O God of goodness.

When I recall the countless benefits of life that thou, in thy manifold goodness, dost confer upon me, my heart glows with devotion for thee. Let goodness be a part of my being, my very nature. Let it grow in me from day unto day. Let my goodness be habitual and instinctive. Let me think goodness, speak goodness, and do goodness. Let me hunger and thirst after goodness.

Help me to be good, but help me, my Heavenly Father, to make others good. Help me to play my part, however humble, in the diffusion of goodness. Let my prayer in deeds of goodness to others ever follow my prayer in words to thee.

I pray unto thee to make me good before I ask thee to make me great. If I cannot court greatness, my God, let me not go without goodness. Help me to be great in goodness, even though lowly I be in greatness. Mortal are greatness and glory on earth, but goodness is immortal, and goodness alone at death, will accompany my soul to heaven, Ahura Mazda.

*Though invisible thyself, thou art all-seeing,  
Ahura Mazda*

Thou art invisible and none can see thee. Invisibility is the chief characteristic of thy spirituality, Ahura Mazda. Though present everywhere, thou art unseen anywhere. Thy invisibility hides thee from all eyes, human and divine. The Amesha Spentas and Yazatas, thy archangels and angels, see thee not. The souls of the righteous dead behold thee not. In his celestial conference with thee, Zarathushtra saw thee not and Viraf, in his beatific vision, saw but the sovereign light in thy ineffable presence.

Unseen by all, thou dost see all, O All-seeing One. Nothing is hid from thee. Thou dost see my mind through and through. Though dost search the deepest depths of my heart. Thy searching eyes are ever upon me. Thou dost survey my secret thoughts. I hide them from those that are nearest to me, but I cannot hide them from thee, though thou livest farthest on high. Thou art at once remotest and closest to me, thou that livest in all space and beholdest all in both thy worlds, this and that.

Thou, Ahura Mazda, didst say unto Zarathushtra that to see a righteous person was like seeing thee. I will then strive to see thee in the righteousness of righteous persons around me. But I pray unto thee for more. Inspire me to act righteousness and own righteousness and be righteousness that, steeped in righteousness and righteousness myself, I can see thee in my righteous self.

And thou didst also say, Ahura Mazda, unto thy holy prophet that thou wert light and seeing light was to see thee. I will then piously endeavour to see and discern thee in the light that shines in the yonder heavens and down upon earth. But lighten my heart, I beseech thee, with thy illuminating presence, that prayerful of heart and upright of conduct, I may behold thee within me, without going without.

## *Thou art light, Ahura Mazda*

Thou art light, Ahura Mazda. Where thou art, there is light. Void of thee all is darkness. In thy resplendence thou dost live in thy heavenly realms and wear the starspangled heaven as thy garment. In the realm of the endless light, thou dost hold the council of thy angels and archangels, arrayed in robes of light. The august Fravashis and the souls of the righteous dead dwell in this thy all-shining, happy abode.

Thou didst create light and bathe the heavens in the light of the sun. Thou didst fill the earth with light, thou didst cover the sky with thy light and thou didst illumine the world with numberless silvern lamps at night.

The earth trembles when the sun darkens, for then from the filth and stench, dirt and damp, there are born beyond number germs and microbes, insects and mosquitoes, flies and fleas, the hideous emissaries of disease and death. These, nicknamed the daevas or demons of Angra Mainyu, invade all the seven zones of the earth to plague and to kill the creation of thy Good Spirit, Spenta Mainyu.

Then when the morn does break and the sun warms with its light and the sun-light gives warmth, there stand the spiritual Yazatas, a hundred and a thousand, to gather together and distribute the light upon the earth made by Ahura. The flaming darts of the swift-horsed Hvare Khshaeta scorch and burn the Daevas, the shafts of his sunshine fall upon the skulls of the demons, the radiant rays of the rising sun stream downward upon earth and the morning light dispels the darkness and gloom of the night.

Physical as is thy light, mental and moral and spiritual light is also thine, Ahura Mazda. Knowledge is the light of the mind, as truth is thy moral light and, righteousness the light of the spirit. Light is life, when darkness is death and life is heaven, as darkness is hell. Everything good is light. I pray for light and more light and light again for my whole being from thee, O thou Fountain of light divine.

## *Thou art the same from age to age, Ahura Mazda*

Changeless art thou, Ahura Mazda, the same now and for ever. Thou art the transcendent being moving all yet moved by none. Thou alone dost remain changeless and unaffected in the midst of the manifold changes. Everything all around waxes to wane, grows to decay, is born to die and everywhere is witnessed the ever-changing phenomena. Thou alone art never changing, O immutable Lord.

After the day the night, after the spring the summer, after the storm the calm, after health the sickness, after prosperity the adversity, after youth the old age, after life the death.

Name and fame, greatness and glory, shine but a While and fade; castles and palaces, turrets and towers raise their heads to heaven to totter and topple; thrones and empires glory in their rise, but to fall to dust forgotten.

Changeless amid changes, art thou. Unmoved mover of all art thou. The same from age to age art thou, the same to endless time art thou, the same for ever and aye shalt thou be, O immovable Ahura Mazda.

## *Thou art Ageless, Ahura Mazda*

Thou art the beginning and thou art the end of all, Ahura Mazda. Thou hadst no beginning and thou shalt know no end. Long, long ages ago, ere creation came into being through thy creative will, thou didst live in sublime solitude. When Yazatas were not, and Amesha Spentas were not and the Fravashis existed as the contents of thy divine mind, when heaven was not, and earth was not, when waters and plants were unknown, and animals and men were unheard of, thou alone wert, O thou above and beyond time.

The age of the earths and suns and moons and stars and planets on earth and of angels and archangels in heaven can be counted. Thou alone art ageless. In vain does man dream of measuring thy age. Human thought cannot reach it. Thou alone can comprehend it.

At the dawn of creation, there was rejoicing and happiness in thy divine household, for it was the birthday, the first of all birthdays, human or divine, of Vohu Manah, the first in thy creation. The angels and archangels above and men and women below, have ever since made their birthdays auspicious occasions for thanksgiving and joy. Thou art the only being who has no birthday, for there is no day of thy birth, O Giver of universal births.

Thine is Zrvan Akarana, the Boundless Time the hungerless and thirstless, ageless and deathless. Thine alone is eternity and neither the Yazatas nor the Amesha Spentas share it with thee. Born in time, they will live everlastingly. Man, born in time, has to die his bodily death before he too will live for ever.

Boundless is the ocean of eternity, bounded neither by shore nor horizon. Righteous in life and righteous in death, I long for the grand and glorious day when, breaking the mooring of the earthly life, my immortal soul will embark upon the exhilarating voyage on the waters of thy Boundless Time, Ahura Mazda.



## *Thy will is the pole star of my life, Ahura Mazda*

Work thy sovereign will and rule over all as thou willest, Ahura Mazda. Rule at thy will in sublime felicity over the waters and over the plants and over the entire creation of righteousness. I will make thy will the pole star of my life and will think and speak and do as it is thy will that I should.

I will not claim my will as mine, for wayward and erring is my will. My will functions best when it is thine. I will not will what is not thy will. I will resign my will to conform with thine.

I will not own my will as mine. It is thine to do what thou wouldst. I surrender my will to thine. I submit to thy will, mind and heart, body and soul. Direct me where thou willest and as thou willest.

Help me to know thy will and inspire me to follow thy will. Prepare me for thy will that I may do it dutifully. Let thy will abide in my heart and rule my movements from within, that I may be one at heart with thee. Zarathushtra attuned his will to thine and I will aim at doing, what he did, that my will may repose and rest in thee, Ahura Mazda.

## *My heart longs for thee, Ahura Mazda*

I need thee, only thee. I cannot do without thee, Ahura Mazda. Be thou ever near me and with me. Grant that I may live in thee and thou in me. I have everything when I have thee. Everything is mine when thou art mine. With thee by my side, I am rich in the midst of poverty, strong in my weakness, and happy in my misery. Be with me when I live and be by my side when I die, my God.

Thou dost never fail me. Help me never to stray from thee. Guide me, in thy mercy, to the straight path when, in ignorance, I lose my track and wander far from thee. Take me back into thee, kindly Lord, for I have no refuge for me other than thee.

Life is unbearable without thee, O Life of my life. I feel the void of my heart when thou art lost to me. Forlorn I feel when thou art not near me. In losing thee I lose the sweetness and joy and happiness of life. As life is dismal to the unhappy widow, bereft of her loving lord, so life turns desolate for me when thou dost leave me. As the earth is dark and dreary, when the sun refuses to light her, so lost in darkness and gloom, I roam when thou dost not shed thy light on my life.

Let me not falter in my devotion to thee. Help me to stand steadfast as rock in my loyalty to thee. Vouchsafe that I may grow from within my heart in loving likeness to thee and be holy and righteous like thee. Strengthen my resolve to think and speak and work for thee, live for thee, die for thee, thine in life and thine in death and thine in eternity, O thou Eternal One.

## *I offer thee my life, Ahura Mazda*

With homage and adoration, praise and glorification, I lay my offerings at thy feet, and dedicate my all to thee, Ahura Mazda.

What I bring unto thee and call mine is in truth thine own, for all I own is of thy rich bounty, O thou Lord of bountiful gifts. The offerings and oblations that I offer unto thee are of thy own giving, O giver of all. Thou givest them freely to me and I approach thee humbly with a handful from thy abundance as a token of my gratefulness to thee. All I have I owe thee and all I bring to thee is then thine. Yet large-heartedly thou dost delight to acknowledge it as mine. I am ever thy debtor, O benevolent Lord.

Thou dost not look for rich repasts and costly libations, preaches Zarathushtra. The innocent heart of the pious poor and the contrite heart of the sinner, he teaches, is the best offering that wins thy favour. Thou dost come sooner to the poor who lays his good thoughts, good words, and good deeds in tribute at thy altar, than to the rich who labours to greet thee with costly rituals and elaborate sacrifices. I will sacrifice truth and righteousness to thee, O righteous God.

I will give myself, body and soul, to thee. I will give thee my heart in grateful thanksgiving for thy unfailing kindness to me. I will give thee what is nearest and dearest to me, my life, even as holy Zarathushtra gave the life of his own body as an offering unto thee, Ahura Mazda.

*Thou dost bury me under the burden of thy gifts, Ahura Mazda*

From day unto day will I lift my heart in thanksgiving unto thee when I take my daily meals, O Creator, Nourisher, and Sustainer of the world.

Thou dost feed me and clothe me and provide me with all my needs. Thou, my maker, knowest my wants and freely dost thou bestow them upon me every morn. Thou dost daily fill my life with the rich blessings that I enjoy. With the deep gratitude of my grateful heart I thank thee for all that thou doest for me.

From morn to eve dost thou bury me under the burden of a hundred and one of thy precious gifts that embellish my bodily life and I am satiated with them. Feed, likewise, my soul that hungers for the food of the spirit. Moisten my soul, dry as a parched land, that thirsts for the life-giving waters of thy divinity.

I have my daily bread and I have my health and I have everything that makes my life happy on earth. I have but one longing and one aspiration now and I pray unto thee to make me worthy of it. Verily my yearning is to gain the giver of the gifts himself for me, to get thee for myself, to make thee mine, mine own, O Mazda.

## *The Amesha Spentas*

Homage unto the Amesha Spentas, the lordly and shining, the Holy Immortals, that are seven with thee, their father and creator, O Ahura Mazda. These, thy archangels sublime, are the rulers and overseers and protectors of thy creation in both the worlds. May they descend from their celestial heights to lead and guide the erring mankind.

The Amesha Spentas, sing the sacred texts, are all of one thought and one word and one deed. They the seven think and speak and do as but one and see one another's soul. May we be like unto them of one mind to think good thoughts and speak good words and do good deeds. May we be of one heart to live in concord and peace.

The exalted heavenly lords are spirits sublime. Spirit with spirit, they can commune and converse and in one accord they can work in unbroken concord. We thy mortals, thou Spirit of Spirit, are matter and spirit welded into one. Thou hast built us each a beautiful bodily mansion and loaned it for life to the spirit to live its earthly life. The mansion has windows and doors, but the spirit, through senses, sees only what senses can show. The spirit yearns to see the spirit, but the flesh veils the spirit and hides another's spirit from sight. Death will one day break upon the house of clay and, spirit disembodied, will then see the spirit. But grant, O Gracious God, that with Asha Vahishta's blazing fire of righteousness we may scorch and burn the fleshy veil, that the spirit with spirit may meet even while alive.

The flesh, with its numberless forms and colours, divides and keeps man from man apart and aloof. But the spirit is one and the same in us all. May the spirit of men and women and children that inhabit the seven zones of the earth abide in thee and live in fellowship with thee, even as the Amesha Spentas do, O thou the first and father of the seven Holy Immortals.

And now we praise and invoke you, the exalted and shining Holy Immortals of Ahura Mazda. We beseech you to come down from the highest heights of the heavens to our abodes and accept our offerings of the good thoughts of our minds and good words of our mouths and good deeds of our hands. Protect us and guide us and help us to tread, with steady steps, the steep and rugged path of life. With devotion we approach you and with love we lay before you our earthly possessions and our bodies and the very life of our bodies and our souls and all that we call our own in this world. These are our sacrificial offerings unto you, Amesha Spentas. Shed your blessings on our heads, illumine our minds with your light, fill our hearts with your joy, inflame our spirits with your love, ye Archangels of Ahura Mazda.

## *The Yazatas*

Ahura Mazda. Behind a multitude of thy Yazatas, thou dost stand the Yazataman Yazata, the Most Worshipful One. These thy angels, holy and beneficent, mighty and glorious, work in the domain assigned to them by thee. Thou dost govern through their medium. Thou hast committed the superintendence of thy universe to them. They exercise providence over thy creation. They watch over us, they guide us. They help us in steering and saving the ship of life when it is tossed on the tempestuous sea and vicious waves lash it. They lead us to the straight paths when we grow remiss in the performance of our duties.

The Yazatas, Ahura Mazda, are indicative of thy goodness and wisdom and truth and righteousness and Justice and mercy and power and perfection and of all thy thoughts and ideas and ideals.

Thou hast endowed man with the ability and power to bring the ideals to fruition. It is thy supreme gift to man. Thou hast ordained that man can rise to the heights of the angels and can become an Yazata. Help me then in my efforts to realize thy ideals. May the ideals and virtues they represent dwell in me. As the rays of the sun woo the rose to open its petals, so may they arouse emulation in me and move my heart and inspire my life and unfold my soul to their inspiration and fire me with the burning desire to be good and do good and do it from the depth of a religious impulse, Ahura Mazda.

## *Sraosha, the ever-watchful Guardian*

Thy word incarnate, Ahura Mazda, is Sraosha, the impersonation of thy religious lore. He is the celestial teacher of the Mazda-worshipping religion, even as Zarathushtra is the terrestrial. He, the wakeful and watchful, has not rested by day or by night since Spenta Mainyu and Angra Mainyu, thy Spirits twain, the Good and the Evil, created the world. Sleep has forsaken him and his eyes have not slumbered ever since the beginning of life.

Thou hast made Sraosha a mansion supported by a thousand pillars, self-lighted from within, star-spangled from without. From the wide portals of this his heavenly abode, he, the holy and victorious, well-shapen and world-increasing, the strongest, the sturdiest, and the swiftest, drives forth after sunset in his heavenly chariot, drawn by four white shining horses, fleeter than the winds, fleeter than the rain, fleeter than the winged birds, fleeter than the well-darted arrow, overtaking all and overtaken by none, towards the land of the seven rivers, Hapta Hindu.

When the shadows of the evening cover the earth and the gathering darkness proclaims the approach of the night, Sraosha, with loins girt up and with an uplifted club in his hand, guards the sleeping world against the onslaught of Aeshma, the demon of Wrath and the forces of evil.

Sraosha comes unto him whom thou Ahura Mazda dost will. May he then come unto us who long to live under his constant guardianship. Vanish from the house and the clan and the town and the country, evil of all kind, wherein Sraosha is welcomed by the righteous as a friendly, beloved, and an honoured guest. With good thoughts, good words, and good deeds, we pray, Ahura Mazda, that thy Sraosha may enter our abodes and live in our midst for our guidance and protection.

## *Sraosha in life, Sraosha in death*

Death upon earth is birth in heaven, first said he who is Zarathushtra, O giver of both life and death, Ahura Mazda. The disembodied soul is born anew in heaven. As childbirth is attended by travail and pang and the loving mother goes through suffering at delivery of the child she brings forth into the world, so is the severance of the soul from the body fraught with painful labour and agony. As a midwife lightens the suffering of the mother by her skill, even so does thy Sraosha help when earthly life's work is done, the end is nearing, life begins to wane like the passing winter and death leads the dead to the deathless life of heaven.

May kindly Sraosha, then, be near me when I sleep my last sleep upon earth, and may he gently and tenderly wake me in thy resplendent heaven. Dreary and dreadful is the way of death I have to go, and fear and anxiety fill my soul, when I embark upon my journey and know not whither to go. May Sraosha hold my hand and guide my footsteps to the unknown world.

Sraosha in life and Sraosha at death, Sraosha in this world and Sraosha in the next world, Sraosha a judge at the Bridge of Judgment and Sraosha, they say, a collaborator with thee, O Ahura Mazda, at thy final Renovation-Sraosha, thus is everywhere and everywhen. Then make me worthy through constant and conscientious observance of thy religious ordinances, of the help and guidance and protection of Sraosha, thy celestial teacher and preacher of religion, the Zaota, the sacrificing priest on high, O Gracious God.



## *The Fravashis watch our course with vigilance*

At the time of the Hamaspathmaedaya festival, when the snow begins to melt and the rivers begin to flow and the trees begin to grow and the birds begin to fly, the august, glorious and efficacious Fravashis, the Guardian Spirits of the righteous dead, wing their flight earthward from the heavenly regions. Eager and solicitous are they to know who among the living remember them and think of them, and love them and invoke them by their names and pray for their blessings.

The Fravashis represent thee, Ahura Mazda, and keep the living united with the dead. The dead are past our company, they are not past our remembrance. The Fravashis bring to us from heaven the united blessing of the dead and take our thanksgivings heavenward in turn. They live with thee and thy heavenly denizens. They want us to be righteous like them and to be one with them in the life of goodness. We commemorate the Fravashis of the righteous dead from the time of Gaya Maretan, the first man, to the time of Saoshyant, the last man. We commemorate the fravashis of men and women of all times, who, in their days, have worked for the furtherance of righteousness and have fought against wickedness.

May the Fravashis come to our abodes, girt with the blessings of righteousness, as wide as the earth, as long as the rivers, and as high as the sun. May they come to the sacrificial repast we prepare in their honour. May they be propitiated with our offerings of good thoughts and good words and good deeds and walk satisfied in our abodes and never depart offended from there. May they bless us with knowledge and health and virtuous offspring of innate wisdom and long life. May they keep watch and ward about our abodes. May they always protect us with the strength that a thousand men would use in protecting one man.

Nearer in time to Zarathushtra than we are, they have set us the pattern of our conduct. They have led exemplary lives for the emulation of their descendants of succeeding times. They have laid the foundation upon which our communal greatness is built. They have left us a priceless heritage and we cannot fully repay the debt of gratitude to our glorious ancestors. With reverence and affection, let us so live that our living may be an honour to our departed dead.

Lead us, Ahura Mazda, not to rest with glorifying the Fravashis of our ancestral dead with words of praise, but to propitiate them with an offering of our deeds of goodness and righteousness. Help us to walk in the light of their virtue, but help us still more to shine by the nobility of the character and virtues of our own.

## *The Birth of Zarathushtra*

Glorious springtime had come and wide awake was the earth from its wintry sleep. Fields and forests that seemed deadened winter long, were now blooming. Green grass carpeted the earth and warbling birds and flocks and herds made merry on the grassy ground. Blades and ears bloomed into corn and golden corn waved in fair fields. Smiling flowers shed their fragrance all around and the air was laden with the perfume of flowers. The song of birds and the whistlings of the wind in elm and oak, plane and pomegranate, walnut and mulberry trees, and the murmur of water running swiftly over the pebbles caressed the souls of the young and old.

In Airyana Vaeja, the stem-land of the Aryans, on a beautiful morn of an auspicious day, the swift-horsed sun had scattered the clouds and was shining in great splendour. The earth was bathed in his morning light. Then in a village, nestling by the river Darejya, blossomed a life divine in human flesh. A boy babe was born unto Pourushaspa of the family of the Spitamas. Ahura Mazda's light and peace descended on the happy home.

The holy child was named Zarathushtra. Light radiated from the infant prophet of God with divine effulgence. His countenance bore the impress of divinity. Righteousness was imprinted on his face. Gentle as lamb and sweet as nightingale and pure as dove and brave as lion was he, the like of whom no eye had seen, no ear had heard. Pure in body and pure in mind and pure in heart and pure in spirit, he was Mazda's incomparable gift to mankind.

Nature donned a festive garb, the sun shone with a brighter glory, trees strewed flowers on the ground, roses bloomed in luxuriant profusion, flowers and leaves and grass scented the air with sweet fragrance, creepers climbed the hedges in riotous luxuriance, the birds carolled in the air, myriads of tiny drops of the morning dew shone like pearls upon the leaves and branches of the trees, the clouds floated merrily in heaven, the winds made music in the lofty trees, joy filled the air, and the trees with their leafy tongues and the blades of grass and the grains of sand and birds and beasts and men and everything everywhere in joyous unison sang: "Hail, for to us is born the Athravan, Spitama Zarathushtra."

The hearts of men and women and children thrilled with joy and their souls were filled with rapture, and, singing jubilant songs they hastened to the house where the light of the world was now shining. The bells in the temples rang and their sound floated on the air. When there was joy and merriment all over the world of man, the world of angels fell not behind. The heavenly hosts there joined in universal rejoicings and Ahura Mazda's Abode of Song rang with the divine music of ecstasy.

Zarathushtra, thy prophet, Ahura Mazda, mirrors thee in his righteous self. He reveals thy divine image in his holy person. Thou art completely and perfectly reflected in him. May his sublime teachings enter into my life and transform me into his likeness. Enable me to make conscientious efforts to be like him and to reproduce his virtues in my own character. Teach me to live after Zarathushtra's ideals and help me to carry on his plan of life, that I may live in conscious association with him and conform my life to his ideal life, O Giver of life.

## *Temptation of Zarathushtra*

In his empire of evil, Angra Mainyu, the Evil Spirit, laid a wager that whoso of the host of hell successfully tempted Zarathushtra to his fall would be raised high in rank in the region of darkness. Buiti, the adept in the art of luring man to apostasy, took it. With a hundred devices and mischievous machinations he endeavoured to lure Zarathushtra from his constancy, but failed ignominiously. The prophet of Ahura Mazda frightened him out of his wits. Foiled in his mission, howling in terror did Buiti flee from the blessed one and precipitately took to his heels towards hell.

Burning with wrath and jealousy, Angra Mainyu resolved to wreak vengeance upon the messenger of Mazda. With sweet and beguiling voice of temptation, he accosted Zarathushtra and told him, with cunning smile on his lips, that a mere man was he, born of human parents and hopelessly incapable of withstanding his onslaughts. He, on his part, would award him with wealth that defied calculation and give him the sovereignty of the world if, in his turn, he renounced the faith of Ahura Mazda. Unto him did retort Zarathushtra that neither for the riches of the world, nor for the love of his life, nor if his breath were torn away, would he desist from the good Mazdayasnian religion.

The king of the world of wickedness, thereupon, let loose his legions of demons to assail Zarathushtra, but found him to be an impregnable rock, not to be moved. The holy one humbled them all in the dust and scattered them in flight. Howling and weeping, headlong to hell did they huddle.

Zarathushtra stupefied Angra Mainyu. The Evil Spirit groveled before Zarathushtra and crouched in abject servility to him. With heart-rending agony he bewailed and cried that Zarathushtra accomplished what all the heavenly Yazatas together were unable to do. He alone of all men, though earthy of earth, baffled him and his infernal crew.

Life, my Lord, is struggle with temptation. Temptation rages all around me and all throughout my life. Temptation compels me not. Victim of my weakness and ignorance willingly I succumb to its beguilement and allow it to drag me down from the pedestal of honor to the degradation of shame.

Let me not yield to temptation, Ahura Mazda. Let not the mettle of my heart melt before the fire of temptation. Let not my power of resistance to temptation be weakened. Let not temptation corrupt my morals. Let it not overcome me. Strengthen me to control and subdue my unruly passions that I may not fall an easy prey to temptation. Enable me to steel myself to fight temptation. When temptation assails me, give me courage, Ahura Mazda, to fight it and vanquish it and tread it beneath my feet, even as was done in his day by Zarathushtra.

## *Zarathushtra is Lord of Mankind*

Thou, Ahura Mazda, hast made Zarathushtra the lord and overseer over mankind. Like unto the radiant and glorious Tishtrya he is the beacon-light on the horizon of life and lights our path leading to thee. He is the embodiment of truth, righteousness and goodness on earth.

Zarathushtra is the polar star of man's searchings. He is the light of man's life. He is constant radiating source of ennobling influence. He radiates the atmosphere of peace and joy, hope and life all around by his immortal teachings. He is like a rock to which man can cling in the shipwreck of his life. He is the consummation in this world of righteousness that is shadowed by wickedness. He is the realized ideal of perfection in this world of imperfection. He is the fulfillment and complement of creation, the beginning and end of life. He is mankind's supremest and sublimest standard and norm for all time.

To see Zarathushtra in spirit is to see thee, Ahura Mazda. To know him is to know thee. To understand him is to understand thee. To follow him is to follow thee. To be like him is to be like thee.

I will assimilate Zarathushtra's teachings into my life. I will live devoted to him. I will make him my example in life. I will keep his sublime image engraved upon my mind. With Zarathushtra as my guiding spirit, sustaining energy, and driving will, fearlessly and courageously will I face whatever befalls and betides me. Manfully onward will I march under his banner, without flinching or faltering from stage to stage on my life's journey. In his steps will I plant my footmarks and walk the ground over which walked his blessed feet. I will live after him. I will make him my constant companion, that he, Zarathushtra, my prophet, my friend, my guardian, my guide, may be my hope, my light, my life, Ahura Mazda.

## *The passing away of Zarathushtra*

With the weight of seven and seventy years on his hoary head, Zarathushtra was seated in his oratory one summer morn, communing and conversing with his father in heaven, when the fell hand of Bratraresh fell upon his sacred person and he received his martyrdom by the sword of the Turanian.

The sepulchral silence of desolation and death descended on earth and rested, forsooth, on Airyana Vaeja, where the blessed one breathed his last. Nature now donned the dark funeral garb. Trees dropped their leaves as though untimely autumn had superseded summer. Flowers faded and withered like weeds and the sweet rose faded before it bloomed. The nightingale neglected wooing the rose and cared not to drink its sweet perfume. Listlessly lowing, the cattle crouched with tears running over their chins. The wind sobbed and sighed, moaned and wailed in sullen silence through the woods. Thus passed the dreary day.

Hvare Khshaeta's sinking sun shed his fiery tears on the horizon and died his daily death. The shades of the eventide deepened. The dark mantle of the night fell over the earth. The stars were invisible, for dismal and dark clouds had swallowed them. Darkness in hell that Viraf beheld was such as could be grasped by hand, he says. Such dense darkness now fell upon the unhappy earth.

Then, on a sudden, the weeping nature flung aside her brooding silence and the elements declared war upon man. The angels of earth and wind and water and fire expressed their wrath in thunder and lightning. They spoke through spears of Vazishta's lightning and thundered through the black, breaking clouds of Tishtrya. The storm that was sullenly brewing now broke in all its fury. The sky was overcast and the earth groaned and grumbled. The winds of Vayu howled and hissed and uprooted and rivened giant trees. Aloud did roar the thunder in the sky and onward it rolled. The rumble of the rain clouds convulsed the earth and the dark and disconsolate clouds wept bitter torrential tears and deluged the earth.

The angel hosts of Ahura Mazda sounded the trumpet call and Vayu's storm abated. The watchman of the night on high kindled a million myriad silvery candles in the sky. Then in the midst of the brilliance of the starlit sky came the bright and beautiful dawn flying on the white wings of peace and rest. A gentle wind from the regions of the south blew with fragrant perfumes. The sublime soul of the messenger of Mazda now winged its way to Garonmana to sit enthroned in the celestial council of the divine Judge.

Zarathushtra is deathless in death. He lives. When the men and women of birth and rank and valour of his day will be forgotten, when the names of his revilers and persecutors will be lost in oblivion, Zarathushtra's holy name will be revered and remembered with devotion and love till time without end. When everything all around will be dust and ashes, Zarathushtra's words will live.

Zarathushtra is even the same to us as was to our ancestors. He is our ideal today as he was to our fathers of old and as he will be to our children. He moulded the lives of our fathers and so may he mould and make our lives today and make our dear community patterned after his sublime life, Ahura Mazda.

## *Fire is the Symbol of Ahura Mazda*

Fire is the purest, grandest, and noblest emblem of thy divinity, Ahura Mazda. It is the sublimest symbol of the faith or Zarathushtra. Fire is the image made by divine hands, incomparably more sublime than any image graven by human hands. It is unsurpassed and unequalled by any in the language of symbology.

Fire is the visible sign of thee that art invisible, the flaming form of thee that art formless. It is the physical manifestation of thy spirituality, the emblem that clothes thy divinity, the representation of thy divine substance, the symbolic presentation of thyself to us.

Fire best explains thee to our mind, it shows thy semblance to our eyes. It is thy nearest substitute and most suitable object through which we can comprehend thee, that art incomprehensible. Fire expresses thy likeness, it reflects thy reality to us, and recalls thee to us when we pray.

In fire as the sublime symbol of my faith, I glory, O glorious Lord. Thou art the reality and fire is thy replica. When I bow before the fire, I worship not the fire but thee alone, Ahura Mazda. Fire is but a sacred symbol that stands for thee and reminds me of thee. I will fix my wandering thoughts on thy fire, I will concentrate my mind upon it, I will meditate daily on it. In the enlightenment of the fire I will see thee, in its inspiration, I will know thee. Verily it is said that fire is thy son, and through the son, will my soul soar unto thee, the Father.

*May thy Fire burn for ever in my house,  
Ahura Mazda*

Fire in its various manifestations, whether as the fire of the hearth on earth, or the fiery substance in the bowels of the earth, or as the genial glow of the sun in the azure vault of heaven, or the silvery sheen of the crescent moon in the sky, or the flickering brilliancy of the stars in the firmament, or in the form of the life-giving energy distributed in the entire creation, is emblematic of thee, Ahura Mazda.

The fire-temple is the symbol in stone of the Mazdayasnian religion and the athravan, the firepriest, feeds the consecrated fire with fresh fuel at every watch of the day and night. I shall raise an altar unto thy divine fire burning in my heart and make it sanctuary. My own athravan will I be and I tend the holy fire within, O thou, the supremest Athravan.

When the fire of the hearth in my house calls me to rise on the third part of the night, and exhorts me to cleanse my body and bring fuel to the fire that it may burn bright, dutifully will I do it and more I will do. With the purity of my mind and the cleanliness of my heart, will I burn incense of the good thoughts of Vohu Manah and the righteousness of Asha, with the full-hearted devotion of Armaiti, on the sacred fire flickering on the altar of my heart and kindle it into a blazing flame. May my soul rise upward unto thee, Ahura Mazda, as the flame on the altar leaps heavenward.

Thy face is hid from my sight. But thou hast said to Zarathushtra that whosoever, with pious intent, sees thy light, can see thee. I shall then keep the portals of my inner temple ajar that thou mayest step in when thou dost think me worthy of the vision of the radiance and glory of thy face. As fire consumes incense, devotion melts my heart in my adoration for thee and I am buoyed up by the hope that through thy fire and in thy fire will I see thee, with the eyes of faith, Ahura Mazda.

## *The Inner Light*

Thou art eternal light, Ahura Mazda. Thy very nature is light. Be thou my light, O Lord of light. I grope in the dark; scatter the darkness. Shed thy guiding light on my darkened path and lead me onward on my way to thy abode of eternal light. Let thy radiance fall upon me that I may live in thy light.

Like the owl that shuns the light, the sinner sees not thy light and, seeing not thy light, he sees not thee. Man veils his eyes when he looks in the face of the brilliant sun. Immeasurably brighter is thy spiritual light than the physical light of the sun. As the rose unfolds its petals to the light of the sun, so help me, Ahura Mazda, to unfold my heart to thy light by my faithful adherence to Asha's righteousness.

On the deep dark ocean of life is the barque of my life moving. Be thou by my side at the helm, I pray. Keep watch over it and guide me to steer the vessel on the waves of thy divine light to land me secure on the yonder shores of the heavenly regions.

The light that burns within the temple of my heart flickers and burns low through my carelessness. Forgive my negligence and let it not fade from my soul. Replenish it in thy unfailing kindness and inspire me to tend it with devoted care. Let thy physical light shine over me from above and let thy light spiritual dart into my soul and illumine it from within. May thy light flood my mind and my heart and inspire me to live by thy inner light, O Thou that livest in those lights highest of the high, Ahura Mazda.



## *Asha's Universal Order in the Universe*

Life upon earth reveals a smooth and graceful and an all round ordered movement. Nature has its seasonal rhythms. Spring and summer, autumn and winter, with their seasonal succession of changes, take their unvarying course. The tides rise and fall punctually. The dawn and morn and noon and evening and night go their uninterrupted daily round. The dying day gives birth to the night. The night hangs its myriad of silvery lamps to lighten the darkness. The dawn breaks to resurrect the day and the day goes the perennial round of its birth. The heavens and their glittering hosts, the sun and the moon and the stars and the planets march at a regulated pace. Immutable are the laws that govern the movements of nature and preserve its unflinching regularity. A stable order ensures the existence of the universe.

Asha is the upholder of a moral order in the inner world of man. Human life is lived the best when man's relations with his neighbours, his duty towards his fellowmen and towards the heavenly beings are regulated according to Asha's moral order of righteousness.

Help me to establish order in my inner world, Ahura Mazda, thou who art the source of all order and law. May concord and not discord, order and not disorder, righteousness and not wickedness always prevail in my inner world. May Asha Vahishta, Best Righteousness, be the upholder of my life, now and for ever.

## *The Path of Righteousness*

The Path of Asha is the Path of Righteousness. One alone is the path, it is the Path of Righteousness. All other paths are non-paths, says he who is Zarathushtra. Thou dost dwell in the straightest paths, Ahura Mazda, that lead to the paradise of the righteous.

Right is the Path of Righteousness. Wrong is the Path of Wickedness. The one leads to heaven, to hell the other. The Path of Righteousness leads to the life of eternal felicity, deviation from it spells soul's destruction for all time. It is left to man to chose whether he will walk the one and be saved or the other and be lost.

Rough and rugged is the path of life. It is best with difficulties and troubles. Temptation draws man away from the right path and waylays him in the wilderness of wrong. He is lost in the labyrinths of wickedness and is at a loss to find his way of the maze.

Protect me, Ahura Mazda, from being beguiled and led astray through tempting pitfalls and alluring snares of Angra Mainyu, the Evil Spirit. Guide me to thread my way through the by-ways of obscurity and obstacles to the straight and safe Path of Righteousness. Give me firm resolve and strong will, that with sustained efforts I can tread successfully the Path of Righteousness in the footsteps of Zarathushtra and reach the final goal, Garonmana, the abode of the righteous.

## *Righteousness is the rule of life*

Righteousness is the norm that measures the worth of man. When righteousness alights upon a serf he grows greater in worth than his master, if the master is stranger to righteousness. Greatness glories not and knowledge shines not, where righteousness dwells not. When prince and peasant are comrades upon earth in the practice of righteousness, as comrades again after death they enter the shining Garonmana and are ranked as equals in the divine court of the King of Kings of heaven and earth.

Righteousness is the prize open alike to be won by all who may. It is equally in the power of all to make it their own. Righteousness shines in rags in the cottage of the poor and shames the raiments of royalty in the palace, if righteousness dwell not there.

He is not great who is not great in righteousness. He is not rich who is not rich in righteousness. He is not healthy who is not healthy in righteousness. He is not heroic who is not heroic in righteousness. The best man and the greatest man and the noblest man is the righteous man.

Ahura Mazda, thou art the righteous Lord of righteousness. Bless me in thy goodness, with good thoughts of the mind and good words of the tongue and good deeds of the hands, that I may think righteousness, speak righteousness, work righteousness, and be a righteous one in the world of righteousness.

## *Righteousness is Religion*

Righteousness is the pivot around which the ethics of Zarathushtra revolves. Righteous and religious is the man or woman who is saintly and possesses noblest character.

Righteousness is thy will, Ahura Mazda. It is the rule of our duty. The law of righteousness is the norm to which man has to conform his life in this world. Good thoughts, good words, and good deeds form the ethical foundation upon which righteousness rests and the basis upon which the entire structure of the system of Mazdayasnian philosophy is reared. This noble truth, at once so pithy and simple, is accessible to all. It does not appeal to the intellectual few and leave aside the ignorant many, nor does it remain the prerogative of a few thinkers and philosophers; but it reaches all and becomes the cherished possession of the prince and peasant alike. Every child of ours imbibes the triad of good thoughts, good words, and good deeds at its mother's breast.

Rituals help our spiritual development. They are the accompaniments of religion, but not religion itself. Religion is righteousness. It rests on the individual's piety, and not on a scrupulous observance of ceremonials or a practice of elaborate lustrations.

Let rituals then inspire religious fervour and devotional piety and righteous conduct in me. I shall seek all my life to gather a store of righteousness. Its use in this world lessens not its stock and secures salvation for my soul in the next, O righteous Lord of righteousness.

## *Righteousness exemplified the best in Zarathushtra*

Purity of body and mind and spirit makes for righteousness and Zarathushtra is the purest in body and mind and spirit. Good thoughts, Good words, and good deeds strengthen righteousness and Zarathushtra, himself the embodiment of good thoughts, good words, and good deeds, best thinks and speaks and acts righteousness.

Zarathushtra lives in the atmosphere of righteousness and radiates it all around him. He is righteousness itself living in flesh for the good of mankind.

When Zarathushtra's great prophetic work is beset with untold difficulties, when he faces opposition on all sides, when friends desert his company and kinsmen abandon his cause, when the rulers of the land look upon him with suspicion and the wicked seek to compass his ruin, when friendless and forsaken, hissed and hooted, ridiculed and persecuted, he roams about the villages and towns of Iran, he turns his eager eyes to thee, Ahura Mazda. Thy help and Asha's righteousness sustain him in his hardships and trials. Reduced to the verge of the direst poverty, he seeks not earthly wealth, but imperishable wealth of the spirit, Asha's righteousness.

Zarathushtra fought for righteousness all along his life and vanquished wickedness. It fled before his consummate righteousness as darkness flees before light. Enable me to do in my humble way what Zarathushtra, did in his magnificent way and now exhorts me to do. Kindle the fire of Asha's righteousness in my heart and burn wickedness within me. Strengthen me to combat it in the world without and vanquish it, Ahura Mazda.

## *Righteousness is its own reward*

Righteousness is good. It is best for man in this world and the next. It is happiness here and felicity beyond. He lives his life best upon earth, who lives in righteousness and for righteousness.

Righteousness is the health of the soul. Cleanliness of body, purity of mind, and sanctity of soul bring bodily, mental, and spiritual health to man.

Righteousness is the purity of the soul. Good thoughts, good words, and good deeds feed righteousness. Successful struggle with evil thoughts, evil words, and evil deeds strengthen righteousness. A righteous person is a perfect man, a consummate man, a saint, a god in flesh upon earth.

Greatness has but a short life, it is righteousness alone that lives for ever. No memorial raised to man rises to the eminence that a man of goodness builds for himself in the shape of his righteousness. Not a man of birth, nor a man of wealth, nor a man of fame is great. Immeasurably greater than all in God's eyes is the man of righteousness.

I will cover my soul close with the radiant garb of righteousness, even as I put next to my skin my sudrah and kusti, the sacred shirt and girdle, the visible symbols of my faith. I will wed righteousness. I will make it my own, my nearest and dearest possession. I will hunger and thirst for righteousness, live for righteousness, work for righteousness, fight for righteousness, and die for righteousness, as the righteous of yore have done in their days. I will be righteous not for the fear of hell, but I will be righteous for the sake of righteousness, O Asha Vahishta, thou Best Righteousness.

## *Righteousness is the highest riches*

Righteousness is the best riches in the world, that can neither be valued in gold nor in diamond. It is the priceless riches that can neither be exhausted, nor stolen, nor lost. Gold and silver are dross. Man, in the end, mingles with dust and all in the world is dust. Righteousness ends not in dust for it is deathless.

Life leaves the richest at death poor, if he owns not righteousness. There comes a day or there comes a night, say the sages of yore, when the master leaves his cattle and the cattle leave their master, and the soul leaves the body. Righteousness alone, the greatest and best of all riches, accompanies the soul after death.

Fortune and wealth, one cannot have at one's will, nor can one maintain the beauty and form of the body for ever, but everyone can embrace righteousness and make it his own if he wills it.

When a man starts on a journey, with him does he take provisions and stores. Let me, likewise, furnish myself now while there is time, with the store of righteousness for the great journey of my soul, which I shall have one day to undertake and from which I shall never return, Ahura Mazda.

Enable me to learn that the man of riches in reality in this world of mine is the man of righteousness. Help me so to live my life in righteousness, that when death takes me away from my children, I may be able to bequeath to them a legacy of my righteous life for them to emulate, for it will be an inheritance for them, richer and better than any wealth and property. Teach me to be content in my poverty and inspire me to be rich in thy righteousness, O Asha Vahishta.

## *The coming of the Kingdom of Righteousness*

On force, have the mighty kingdoms of the world, ancient and modern, been built. Zarathushtra has laid the foundation of a kingdom that is to be built on the bedrock of righteousness. Zarathushtra teaches men and women how best they can work for placing wickedness in the hands of righteousness. Those who fight wickedness in their own persons and around them in the world, prepare the way for the coming of the Kingdom of Righteousness, which is also the Kingdom of Ahura Mazda.

The Kingdom of Righteousness will come when every individual in his or her own capacity will embrace and act righteousness and will make the world of humanity gravitate towards Asha's righteousness. The happy day of the advent of the wished-for kingdom will dawn over the world, when righteousness will vanquish wickedness, when wickedness will be no more, and righteousness will wholly pervade the universe.

Zarathushtra has laid the foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness and has assigned man the stupendous task of building and establishing and completing it. It is left to man to bring that day near or keep it at a distance. It is in his hands to accomplish it now or keep it long in the coming. Zarathushtra is in earnest and eager to hasten its advent. With repeated emphasis does he assert that the Kingdom of Righteousness is near at hand, if only mankind sets about zealously and strenuously to inaugurate it. Passionately does he exhort all not to waver and not to be staggered by the formidable nature of the task, but to aspire to work and struggle and fight for it with body and mind and heart and soul.

Zarathushtra and the righteous ones of all ages have lived and worked and fought for the furtherance of righteousness and the decrease of wickedness. Help me, Ahura Mazda, to be one of the righteous ones of all time. Strengthen me to work for the active propagation of righteousness and to wage a relentless and successful war against wickedness, that I may prove a worthy worker in the inauguration of thy Kingdom of Righteousness.



## Prayer is the heavenward soaring of *the soul on wordy wings*

Man has always prayed. He is a praying animal. Prayer was born with Gaya Maretan, the first man, it will live up to the time of Saoshyant, the last man to be born upon earth. It is instinctive and innate. It is the inborn urge in man like breathing and thinking and speaking. It is an inalienable accompaniment of human mind.

Prayer ever grows in depth, in fervour, in devotion, in selflessness, in spirituality. Prayer begins with the magic spells of the savage and ends with the sublime songs of the sage. Prayer outgrows man.

Prayer is the expression in words of the pious feelings of the heart, its devotional overflow. It is the breath of the soul. It is the fellowship and communion with Ahura Mazda. It is the noblest expression of thought in words, sublime speech of the spirit, an audible utterance of the heart, and a verbal expression of noble sentiments and feelings. Righteous thinking is prayer.

Through prayer does man convey his feelings of joy and sorrow, gratitude and love, hope and fear. In his hunger and thirst for the divine grace, man lays down through prayer his grievances before his creator, confesses his guilt, craves for help, and seeks mercy.

Prayer is the great discipline for man. It is a striving, a seeking for something beyond man's weak self, higher than himself, a will, a power, a strength, an ideal which man does not possess, but longs to attain.

Help me, Ahura Mazda, to cultivate the habit of prayer. Enable me to know thy will. I pray, that I may conform my impulses to its demands. I will pray with concentration of my mind and I will pray with all my soul. I will pray to thee in words of devotion with all my heart and I will pray to thee in silence, for thou dost hear my prayer even in thought. Thou dost read my thoughts and measure my feelings and know my aspirations. I will pray, Ahura Mazda, that prayer may lift me to thee, and make me thine.

## *Teach me to pray, Ahura Mazda*

Prayer transforms my inner life, Ahura Mazda. It creates me anew. I rise from my prayer refreshed and strong, active in body and agile of mind, enlivened of heart and quickened in spirit. I rise a better man with a radiant countenance, purified thought, tranquil mind, clear heart and buoyant spirit. I pass into religious exaltation.

Let me not pray amiss and let me not say my prayer perfunctorily. I cannot pray amid the distractions of my mind. Help me to control my mind and bring it back from aimless wanderings and recall it in thy presence and concentrate on thee. Give me strength to pray with a single and an undivided mind.

Incline thy ear unto me, Ahura Mazda, when I pray. Feeble are my words, but they rise spontaneously from my heart. I will pray with devotion swelling up from my heart to my lips. My lips will speak the language of my heart and express with my tongue what is hidden in my heart. My heart and soul go out to thee in prayer.

I shall not neglect my prayers, for it starves my higher nature and spells my spiritual impoverishment. I will begin and end my day with prayer and with devotion behind my prayer. I will pray with a resolve to lead a righteous and a Zoroastrian life, Ahura Mazda.

## *The Family Prayer*

Our fathers have worshipped thee, Ahura Mazda, in this house and we worship thee now and will worship thee as our strength holds out, O Father Eternal.

Unto thee we raise our hearts in praise and adoration, Ahura Mazda. Our devotion for thee animates our hearts. We will open our hearts every morn unto thee, when thy radiant sun shows his shining face and sheds his light upon our house. Lend thy kindly ear to our daily prayer.

In this house may life throb with health and happiness and prosperity and peace and concord and contentment and humility and devotion and piety and purity and truth and righteousness. Give us a long life and a useful life. Help us to diffuse cheer and joy and hope among the young and the old in our house.

May the Fravashis of the righteous keep their nightly vigil over our house. May they enter our house attended by blessings, as wide as the earth, as long as the river, and as high as the sun. May the Amesha Spentas and the Yazatas bless our family with their august presence. And may thou, above all, be with us and near us by night, and we will raise our hands and bend our knees and bow our heads to offer thee prayer of gratitude and worship thee in the citadel of our hearts.

Open our eyes to our daily duties and help us in their loyal performance. Fill our minds with thy thoughts and thy ideals. Elevate our ideals, help us to live up to them and lead us from day unto day to be near their realization, O thou Divine Householder.

## *Prayer for the Dead*

Death of our dear ones destroys the radiant joy of our home and plunges us in deep distress. We look unto thee, Ahura Mazda, for the relief of our grief and comfort of our hearts. Time can soften our sorrow, it cannot efface the loving memory of our dead from our minds. We worship their pious memory and it is the one gleam of sunshine in our lives shadowed by sorrow.

Death has freed them from the material bondage. They have shed their frail earthly clay and departed this life to live hereafter in the realm of the spirit. Their earthly work is done and they have laid down the burden that pressed heavily on them. From the din and dust and storm of life's struggle they have gone to the deathless world of peace and rest where light fades not and happiness fails not. Our beloved have died in body to live in spirit a life higher and nobler than our thoughts can measure and minds can conceive. They rest in everlasting peace and joy with thee.

Though lost to us, our dead have not forsaken us. They cannot forget us, as we do not forget them. Though the seven zones divide us and the boundless space part us, they, the spirits, are above and beyond space. They are near us and with us, and see us through our bodily veil. Death has silenced them. They speak not with tongues. They have cast off the vesture of flesh and their souls hold their communion with our souls. They care for us, they feel for us, and they bless us. They long for us and love us, as we long for them and love them. They are ours, as we are theirs. Death has not dissolved our union.

Thou, Ahura Mazda, has called them to thyself. We commend them into thy hands. Have compassion upon their human infirmities. Absolve them from the errors of their mortal life. If they have sinned in thought and word and deed, spare them in thy mercy. Gather them into thy fold. Admit them in the fellowship of thy blessed dead. Let thy light shine upon them. May they rest in thee in the shining, all-happy paradise of the righteous.

## *Life is thy greatest gift, Ahura Mazda*

Unquenchable is the thirst for life. A myriad of men and women pray unto thee, Ahura Mazda, every moment for happy life and full life and joyful life and long life. Man loves life and he wishes to live a hundred lives and his will is not yet satisfied. An unconquerable urge to live a full and a useful life distinguishes man from animal. This inborn urge drives him to strive for what seems to be beyond his reach and stimulates human progress. It is good and great and glorious indeed to live, O Lord of life.

The longest of life upon earth is but a breath, it is true. But life, though short, has untold possibilities. Life is not fortuitous. It is designed and has a purpose. Let me take life in earnest and let me not while it away. Help me to understand life, that I may be able to live and live as it is thy will, O Ahura Mazda. Help me to throw myself actively and selflessly and strenuously into the thick of life for the furtherance of the world of righteousness and the decrease of the world of wickedness.

Giver of life and giver of the gifts of life, I thank thee for health and happiness and all that makes life livable on earth. None can raise me a memorial equal to the one that I can set up in my lifetime by my life devoted to the service of thee and thine upon earth. Help me so to live, my God, that when death extinguishes my life, I may yet live upon earth in my good thoughts and good words and good deeds when my soul dwells with thee in heaven.

## *Life is a blend of contradictions*

Life were insipid, Creator of the material world, if thou didst give everything for the asking. Life with no zest to achieve, no zeal to strive, no effort to get, no obstacle to overcome, and no hardship to encounter would be dull indeed. Life of all joy and happiness, with never a shadow of sorrow and misery, would be monotonous and would weary us, Ahura Mazda.

Life is kind to us and life is cruel to us, life sits light upon us and life sits heavy upon us, life is sunshine and life is darkness, life is joy and life is sorrow, life blooms and blossoms and withers and fades. Life upon earth, O Lord of life, is a blend of contradictions.

Life and suffering are inseparable and the world is a rough enough place to live. Endow me with undaunted courage to weather the storms of life and to scatter the clouds when they darken the horizon of life. When the barque of my soul, sailing the sea of life, glides not smoothly on the stream, but drifts upon the stormy billows of life and is on the brink of breaking under the tumult of life, thou, O Master Mariner, embolden me to steer it skillfully and patiently to the haven of safety.

When danger confronts me in life, strengthen me to face it bravely. Life is an uphill fight; enable me to fight it valiantly and win through it. When the burden of life weighs heavily upon me, strengthen me to bear the yoke patiently and ungrudgingly. Never unduly elated at triumph and never unduly depressed at failure, never unduly joyful when life smiles upon me and never unduly sorrowful when life frowns at me, help me, Ahura Mazda, ever to live my life with philosophic calm.

## *Life is Service*

Zarathushtra drew the lowly and lonely, the needy and neglected towards him and embraced them in his sympathetic heart. The noblest of men and women have always been willing servants of society. They have given the best of their time and energy and all to serve their fellow human beings. They have thought little of themselves and much of others. With a total disregard of personal comfort and rest, they have worn out their lives in the service of others. Men and women, noble and great, there have always been, who would willingly sacrifice their lives a hundred times over in the service of humanity. They have labored to bring sunshine in the lives of their fellowmen. They have lived and died in the unremitting service of mankind.

Enthuse me, Ahura Mazda, to consecrate myself to a life of service. Inspire me to live my life to sanctify the life of men. Help me to bear the burden of my brethren and relieve their bare needs. Enable me to make any one human life happy by a single hair's breadth between dawn and dusk every day. Strengthen me to bear aloft the light of knowledge, to do ameliorative work to further health, to right the wrongs, to straighten the crooked, to assuage the sufferings, to spread truth, to lessen the sorrow, and gloom of my neighbors, to fight falsehood and injustice, vice and wickedness, disease and death.

Teach me, divine Teacher, to place service before self. Let me wear myself thin in service to thy children, Ahura Mazda. Let my heart go out to all that suffer in thy great and good world. Lead me to deny myself so that my neighbor may not stand in want of anything while I have something I call my own. Let me rejoice in sharing with thy needy what little I have. Let me not live for self alone, but inspire me to live for all. Let my goodness help others to be good. Let me serve with body and mind and heart and soul, for the service of man is thy worship in deeds, Ahura Mazda.

## *Life is Pleasure*

Life is pleasure, they say, who preach that human self is nothing more than the sum total of desires and appetites and passions and the object of life is to attain their gratification. They live well, who derive maximum of pleasure out of life. Let all therefore enjoy as long as life endures.

There are those who find pleasure in the satisfaction of emotional desires, organic impulses, and bestial instincts. Life is a riotous revel of merrymaking, and they experience great joy in its frivolities. The morally degenerate are slaves to unruly passions and sensuous desires, and they seek vulgar gratification in profligate pleasures, in drinking places, gambling houses, and brothels. Pleasure for these consists in the peccadilloes of the prodigal and the joys of sensuality, in sumptuous feasting and reveling in drinking bouts, and in the gratification of instincts uncontrolled by intelligence. The more the vulgar desires and appetites are gratified, the greater is their clamor for more and they plunge deeper and deeper in the mire of moral filth, until they sink down to utter degradation and ruin.

Protect me, O Protector thou, from such a mental disposition which leads man to live on the scale of animals. Insatiable is human appetite for pleasure and no pleasure satisfies man for all time. From pleasure to pleasure man passes, but knows no abiding satisfaction. Assailed by desires and appetites, he cannot meet the demands of all, and his unsatisfied desires and ungratified appetites make his life more miserable. Guide me to see, O thou my Guide, that self-indulgence brings physical exhaustion and leaves no spiritual resources to sustain life. Teach me to discern that neither is pleasure the supreme end of life nor the highest good. Life has loftier purpose than pleasure indeed, I avow, Ahura Mazda.



## *Life is duty*

Religion is duty and life is duty. The sense of duty is ingrained in man. Man owes duty to his creator and the creator's creatures. God's will is man's duty. Life is a pledge to the giver of life to do life's duties.

Let me not neglect or fail to do my duty. Let me not disregard or deviate from my duty. Let me not swerve or shrink from my duty. Let me not shirk the duties that I have to perform in life.

Let me discharge my duty to the best of my ability and power. Let me do my duty as duty demands and dictates. Let me be watchful of my duty. Let me do my duty willingly and cheerfully, justly and faithfully. Let me follow with alacrity where duty leads me. Let me sacrifice my comfort and happiness and my personal considerations to duty. Let me remember that respectful regard to the rights of others is my duty.

I will consecrate my life to duty. Guide me to tread the rough and rugged path of my duty, Ahura Mazda. Show me my duty and help me to do it to the day of my death. Let me die with the happy consciousness that I have done my life's duty and done it well.

## *The cynic rails at life*

Life laughs and jeers at us, says the cynic. Life is a huge hoax, a joke, a mockery, a gamble, an illusion, a blank despair. It is a lottery, he avers, where a hundred thousand draw blanks when one draws a prize. Life is shadowy and ephemeral, a dream overtaken by death on the very heels of its birth. It has neither meaning nor purpose and yet man has to wade his weary way through this miserable world.

Nature makes so many mistakes. She gives us without the least discrimination strong or weak, healthy or diseased bodies, bright or dull minds, and virtuous or vicious souls. God has some grudge against man or else he would not throw him at birth into the whirlpool of life to swim or sink. Men and women are the puppets driven hither and thither by him as his playthings. He stamps vice and sin upon human souls at birth and then punishes them.

The icy wind of death drives before it men and women and children into nothingness like the autumn wind blowing leaves that were green but yesterday and have dried and dropped today. Death turns man into a clod to be trodden by wayfarers. His dust does not rest at one place for the wind blows it all around. Man lauds the worth of his hero to the skies, but the hand of time passes the duster on his writings and they vanish. Time obliterates the memorials that man raises to human vanity.

The cynic sees only the dark side of life, I avow, Ahura Mazda, and gives a merciless expression to it. He vents the bitterness of his morbid mind upon life. His is the melancholy view of life and he preaches its dark despair. Good and great men die not even upon earth. They live in the grateful memory of posterity. The sun sets, it is true, but it rises again. Man dies but in body but lives for ever in spirit. Life is dust in body, but a matchless jewel in spirit. Let not man wail and moan on the miseries of his own creation when life is so full of joy and hope.

It is a boon to live, says Zarathushtra. My prophet teaches me to enliven my mind with sunny cheerfulness, to be gay of heart and buoyant of spirit. Help me, Ahura Mazda, to say Yea to life with overflowing cheerfulness and overplus joy.

## *The Cynic at war with the world*

The cynic harps upon the woeful in life and habitually grumbles and groans that this is the world of vanity and woe. Some unskillful god has created this world, the worst possible of worlds that could have been created.

There is so much of pain and suffering, inequity and wrong, depravity and degradation, baseness and pettiness, malice and envy, hatred and jealousy, crime and sin, they aver, that man is lost in the wilderness of sorrow and sin. The consciousness of their human imperfections, and the existence of physical and social and moral evil heavily press them down. They cannot scatter the dark clouds of melancholy that hang over their heads. Suffering and sorrow shadow all waking hours of their lives, despair of life takes hold of their spirits, and bitterness fills their hearts. Nature, for them, has but one season, and that is autumn. They know no springtime. Life upon earth is a prolonged agony. And now when man is thrown down upon such a world and as there is no escape from it, it is proper that man should face it with courage and get as much out of it as it can give. To enjoy, to be happy, to derive pleasure, even from this world of a thousand woes is wisdom. The real art of living lies in acquiring as much pleasure as could be had, even from the world, which nurses so much evil.

Thus does the existence of evil in the world breed a spirit of defiance and contempt in man of skeptical intellect, nonchalant disposition, and cynical nature. Ever at war with the world, he complains and kicks when death confronts him, and gives up his ghost with curse on his lips upon the world, and unreconciled with thee, its creator.

Save me, Ahura Mazda, from morbid mood and melancholy temperament, that I may not burden my life with futile anxieties and multiply my miseries. Let me not nurse grief and brood over the dark side of life when its bright side preponderates so glaringly over the dark. Thou hast provided joy in abundance and made life livable for all. May I live and die in peace with thee and thy world, is my fervent prayer unto thee, my creator and protector.

## *Life is hard and honest work*

Man is born to work and prosper, not to rest and rust. Ahura Mazda is the eternal worker. He has never known rest. Neither has Sraosha, nor have the Amesha Spentas and the Yazatas and the Fravashis. They will all work till time without end. Animals on land and birds in the air and fishes in the water work and live their lives. Providence does not put morsels in their mouths. Work is the law of life, for the poor and the rich alike.

Man cannot live without eating and drinking and he cannot do without working. Work is his duty and an inevitable accompaniment of his life. Ahura Mazda created the world with its boundless natural resources. Man's work of a millennium and more has developed them and shaped the destiny of the world. Cultures and civilizations are the monuments of man's work.

Work conduces to the vigor and health of the body and the mind. Work done willingly and enthusiastically takes away pain from the toil. Work brings the good things of the world to man. It gives him independence, enhances his self-respect and builds his character.

Blessed is the hand that works and blessed is the mind that wills it. Life is elevated when vigorous and honest work is associated with it.

Give me strength and vigor and endurance, Ahura Mazda, to work with a cheerful heart and a resolute will all life long.

## *Great is the dignity of work*

It is never below the dignity of any one to work by his own hands, Ahura Mazda. There is no shame to put one's hand at the plough, there is no shame to set one's shoulder to the wheel, there is no shame to dig a trench, there is no shame to work as a cook or a servant or a maid or to do any menial work. But there is shame indeed where a stout hand of an able-bodied man or woman is outstretched to accept a dole in the face of the remunerative work waiting for all who may work.

It is humiliating to slumber in sloth and repose and rest, when there is time to work and to toil. It is loss of manhood and womanhood to eat one's bread not earned by one's honest work. Sweeter is the simple bread won by the sweat of one's brow, than the rich bread bestowed upon one by the hand of charity.

Teach me, Ahura Mazda, never to shirk my daily work. Let me not grudge and groan in the face of hard work waiting for me, but enthuse me to do it willingly and whole-heartedly.

The work of the industrious and enterprising of my good co-religionists often supports the idlers and sluggards along with the disabled and the needy. May it never be my misfortune to be one of them, my merciful God. Inspire me to value my independence and self-respect and to strive for their preservation in the midst of my poverty and want, Ahura Mazda.

## *I glory in activity, Ahura Mazda*

"Up with your feet and up with your hands and keep your minds in readiness to do lawful and timely deeds and for the undoing of unlawful and untimely deeds," exhorts us he who is Zarathushtra, thy prophet, Ahura Mazda. Life, he says, is activity. Industry is a priceless virtue. An active life of hard and honest work is the ideal life. Man's nature warrants it; his being demands it. Passivity is weakness; it is deviation from active duty. Everything in a Zoroastrian cries out for action and still more action.

Thought is noble, but action, thought out with caution and done with firmness is nobler. Not thought but action is the final word. To live is to act and. to work. Let me act with purpose and with decision and let me strive to do all that I can and do it with might and main.

The vagrant sports away his life and the aimless one sleeps it away and the idler dreams it away. Ennui becomes intolerable to such persons living lifeless lives. They encumber the earth with their useless lives. Lead them, O Lord, to fight ennui with work and save them from sinking into soul-killing lethargy.

Give me an active mind that is averse to slovenliness. Give me bodily vigor and intellectual. Give me strength to endure my labor and enure me to fatigue and hard toil. Give me energy to work with insatiable activity. Give me industrious habits and make me resolute in action. Let me wear out myself in hard and strenuous activity than rust in indolence, Ahura Mazda.

By activity and industry man rises from obscurity to eminence. Help me, Ahura Mazda, to make my way in the world and work my way upward in life and and make a place for myself and toil up the heights and fight my way to the front ranks by honest industry and effort and grit.

Let me rejoice in my activity, find pleasure in it, and be happy with it. Let me be up and doing and let me work actively and strenuously while yet I may and let me die in harness when it pleases thee to call me back to heaven, Ahura Mazda.

## *Let me not lack will, O Mazda*

The man of character and the man of talents and the man of intellect accomplish great things in the world, but it is the man of resolute and indomitable and energetic will that towers above all and works wonders. He rouses peoples from their lethargy, acquaints them with their latent powers, radiates a hopeful and heroic spirit among the irresolute, inspires confidence in them, instills courage in the timid, and injects burning zeal in them to dare and do great deeds. Eagerly do they flock round his banner and follow him wheresoever he chooses to lead them.

Such a one of irrepressible will walks with an assured air of success in grappling with any difficulty that confronts him. His driving enthusiasm enables him to fight his way unscathed through all trials and tribulations. The unbounded faith in his own capacity emboldens him to move heaven and earth to accomplish with success what seems impossible to his neighbors. With confidence and courage, he successfully drives the world onward on its march.

Let me not be diffident and of wavering will, Ahura Mazda. Let my will be based on truth and rectitude. Let it be swayed by reason and selflessness. Let me cultivate my will-power and be of firm and inflexible will. Let me walk with self-confidence, erect with my head held high. Let me hold fast and look up and Push ahead to overcome hardships. Let me bravely sweep past all obstacles and pave my way to success. Give me strength and vigor and courage and firmness to work my will for the fulfillment of the mission of my life as thou hast willed, Ahura Mazda.

## *Progress is the Zoroastrian watchword*

Progress is the rule of life. Progressive movement is the law of the universe. Life presses on and onward in its incessant march. Life is progress.

Progress is the glorious unfolding of the design of Providence. The world works out its great purpose and moves towards a definite goal.

The history of the world is the history of its progress. Nothing under heaven is complete and perfect. Everything moves towards completion and perfection.

Progress is the prerogative of man alone, Angels, above him, need no progress, for Ahura Mazda has enthroned them on the highest heights of perfection. Animals, below him, know no progress, for the gift to word progress is not vouchsafed unto them.

Onward by day and onward by night moves the human caravan without rest or respite. Ever on the move, strives to reach its destiny. In natural course, progress paces with slow and steady steps. At other times, convulsions and upheavals, physical and social, political and economic, precipitate its forward march. Progress may pause and halt awhile, when arrested and retarded, but ever unfailingly to resume its interrupted journey.

In progress hast thou ingrained, Ahura Mazda, our hope for the betterment of our future. We gather in the present the harvest prepared by the noble efforts of our ancestors in the past. Never can we let die the past. Let not, however, grow in us the habit of always turning back to the past, but guide us ever to look ahead. For when heavily weighs on us the dead hand of the past, it hampers our progress. Lead us to see that hollow is our boast that our forefathers were great and glorious, if in our turn, complacently we, live on past reputation and reap and flourish on past achievements. Inspire us to dare and do what our fathers did in their days. Embolden us to face and fight obstacles and hardships. Enthuse us for hard and strenuous effort to move with the times. Progress is the most salient trait of the Zoroastrian character. Help us to further the progress of our community even by a fraction of a footstep each day that we live upon earth and keep ourselves abreast of progress, Ahura Mazda.



## *Let me rise early with bright Ushah's dawn*

Let me rise with the dawn. Let me cleanse my body with the purifying waters of Ardvi Sura and purify my spirit with prayer and be ready for my daily tasks before the rising sun calls me to duty.

Let me not waste my precious early hours in drowsiness. I turn in my bed a dozen times. Each time I try to leave it, each time, with renewed fondness, I hug it again. In vain then later in the day, I run to overtake the time that is lost. Defeated I return from the chase.

Every morning and evening I pray for long life. But I forget that I have it in my power to win longevity of life for me, if I but rise early instead of sleeping away my priceless early morning hours. Thus can I easily gain a couple of hours a day and live full five and seventy years and more in my life of three scores and ten.

Most splendid are the glories of nature at dawn. And at no hour of the day or night, is nature so charming and sweet, fragrant and refreshing, invigorating and inspiring, as when the shining Ushah, borne in her brilliant chariot drawn by four ruddy steeds comes upon the earth and awakens all.

Let me not shorten the short span of my life by sleeping longer than my physical nature demands. Let me not be in bed when the vigilant watchman of the night is out to put out the dying night's flickering candles hanging' in the sky above. Let me not shame my manhood by lolling and lounging in bed, when the cocks in the neighborhood are crowing to one another, when the wide awake cattle, eager to be let out from their stalls, are lowing, and the birds are filling the air with their sweet carols to proclaim the dawning of the day.

At dawn when the mind is fresh and receptive and troubled not by distractions that the day's diverse duties bring, I shall spend an hour in quiet, alone with thee, and commune with thee and lay out the plan of my work of the day that is dawning, under thy guidance and inspiration, Ahura Mazda.

## *Give us the sleep of the innocent*

Ahura Mazda, Artist Divine, thou didst divide the day into morn and noon, evening and night, and made waiting for active duties of life and sleep for timely repose. Thy Sraosha keep his vigil from dusk to dawn and we rest in his keeping, after the day's labor and work.

Many and marvelous are the bounties thou hast showered upon thy creatures and sweet is the sleep that sustains the beasts and the birds and mankind against fatigue. After the fret and fever of the day, kindly sleep restores our tired limbs, relieves languor, recruits strength, repairs the wastage of the body, and lubricates the cogs and wheels of the bodily machine. It recuperates the brain, refreshes the overwrought mind, distraught with care and anxiety, cures the troubles of the waking hours, confers respite from sorrow and gloom, brings healing to the wounded of heart, gives a soothing draught of forgetfulness of grief and misfortune, and affords a momentary escape from life when its hard realities press heavily upon us. Thus does it prepare us to shoulder the manifold duties of the dawning day.

Nestled like a child in its bed, steals one the sleep of the innocent. When sleep steals over his body he drops to a heavy sleep the moment his head touches the pillow and sinks into sound sleep without nightmare or dream. Another lies twisting and turning all night in his bed, turning the events of the day in his mind. Anxiety and care chase away his sleep and he sleeps only in snatches. Yet another cannot sleep a wink, for he sleeps the sleep of the guilty. Long and late hours he lolls and lies in his bed to sleep off the effects of night's dissipation.

May thy Sraosha keep his watch over me and protect me while I sleep. May he help me to take my fill of peaceful sleep, that refreshed and anew, I may rise at the first streak of dawn to toil hard and with diligence for the furtherance of thy world of goodness, Mazda mine.

## *Bushyansta, the slothful*

Thou didst ordain, Ahura, the night for all to rest and commissioned thy Sraosha to guard the sleeping world. Peacefully we sleep and peaceful dreams attend us for thy ever-wakeful angel guards us.

At the break of the dawn, Atar, the genius of the fire of the hearth, sounds his warning voice against the stratagem of Bushyansta, the slothful. The enemy of the wakeful world casts her spell over the sleeping world that men and women may sleep inordinately long and lie long in laziness.

Parodarsh, vigilant cock of Sraosha, lifts up his voice and the cocks, all around, crow to each other from house to house exhorting all to wake up.

Sweeter is sleep in the third part of the night than at any other time. Stealthily does Bushyansta come and kiss the eyelids of those that are deep in sleep. Sweetly she sings her tempting song, that time it is not yet to wake and work, and lulls them again to sleep and sleep unduly long. So great is the charm of the sluggish music, that in vain do the bedfellows struggle and strive and yawn, but they cannot fully open their eyes to the break of the dawn. They stretch their hands and they lengthen their legs, they rub their drowsy eyes and they pull the bed sheet again over the face. They grumble and they grieve, they woefully lament the impending death of the night, and lazily mumble and mutter their faltering prayer, that the birth of the day may, a little bit longer, be delayed.

Help me, my God, in my struggle with Bushyansta to shake off my sloth that the precious hours of the morn may not be stolen from me. I shall cleanse my body and with fire, fed with sandalwood, burning before me, I shall open my day by worshipping thee with purity of body and purity of mind and purity of soul. I shall kindle the fire within my heart, that lay flaring and flickering during the night. Bright may it blaze to brighten my mind and quicken my heart and steel my will that, alert and active, I may strenuously take up my rising day's duties, Ahura Mazda.

## *Man eats to live; He lives not to eat*

Man who eats not, has no strength to work for righteousness and fight against wickedness. Man must therefore eat. A healthy and a strong body is indispensable for the soul to live strenuous life upon the earth. Wholesome food is the first essential to prevent the body from languishing and to give it the necessary strength. Fasting forms no part of the faith of Zarathushtra, and the Zoroastrian calendar has no days of fast. It is a sin to fast from food, say the sacred books.

Modern man eats more than he needs. He stocks his tables with delicious courses and sweets and delicacies and luscious wines. He makes a god of his belly and feeds him with heavy and rich offerings to satiety.

Food and drink are for bodily nourishment. Inordinate use of food and drink ruins man's health of the body and impairs the powers of his mind. It is better to leave the dinner table with an appetite not appeased to its fullness, than to overfeed oneself and surfeit the stomach with an excess of food and drink. An intemperate and gluttonous diet breeds grievous infirmities and frightful sicknesses.

Zarathushtra's religion stands not for total abstinence but for rigid temperance. It allows the temperate use of stimulants as an aid to health and for festive occasions and ceremonial purposes. Drink, not evil in itself, becomes evil when man is addicted to heavy indulgence in drinking, drinks to intoxication and loses his reason and wits in his wine cup. Drunkenness, thus, is evil and the drunkard drinks himself to destruction. A gluttonous wine-bibber is as bad as a gluttonous eater. All excess is evil.

Teach me, Ahura Mazda, to make a temperate use of the good things of life that thou hast showered in abundance upon man. Temperance in food and temperance in drink is the guardian and protector of the health of the body and the mind. I will fare on frugal meals and be temperate in what I eat and what I drink, O thou giver of food and drink.

## *Agriculture is man's noblest profession*

Ahura Mazda sent Zarathushtra for the support and care and guidance of the tillers of the land. Agriculture is the staple industry of mankind. Culture and civilization begin when man, attached to the soil, enters into the settled pursuits of agriculture. He furthers human progress and happiness. Life on the fields gives health and vigor to the body. It refreshes the mind and exhilarates the spirit.

The industrious agriculturist who tills the earth by his diligence, reaps the rich fruits of life. He is a watchful, diligent person, sleeping little, the first to leave his cottage at the break of day and last to enter it in the evening, toiling hard from dawn till dark.

Whoso cultivates the land with the left arm and the right, and the right arm and the left, unto him does the earth give corn and fruit and food. The indolent who cultivates not the earth, has to stand begging at the door of persons possessed of profusion of the products of the earth and, into his outstretched hands, do they cast the refuse and the crumbs of the stale bread.

He sows righteousness, who sows corn. He strengthens the religion of Mazda to progress with the feet of a hundred men. The farmer who grows crops and feeds hungry mouths, enables them to lead an active and useful and righteous life. When corn does grow and is pounded and when the flour is kneaded for bread, the demons of sloth and destitution and misery do start and sweat, cough and faint, scorch their jaws, and flee and fly, says Zarathushtra.

The agriculturist lives in brotherhood with nature, He befriends earth and heavens, grass and trees, wind and waters. He lives in company of cows and oxen, goats and sheep, horses and camels, dogs and fowls and birds. He ploughs the land and breaks the clods with his hoe in the furrows. Nature smiles on his field and the seeds sprout and the stalks bear grain. He harvests the corn in sheaves. He beats the grain with flails and winnows it. Mother earth fills his barns and he thrives on her bounty. He thatches his hut with straw and grass and beneath its shelter lives a frugal and contented and happy life with his dear ones.

Nature around him is instinct with pulsating life. Concourse with heaven is not distant and dim. The spirits of the earth and plants and waters and the sun and moon and stars live near him and around him and with him. With the piety of his heart, he prepares a feast in their honor and invokes them to come down to the sacred repast. And willingly they come, accompanied by the Fravashis that are the guardian spirits of the righteous dead. Devoutly does he offer them the first fruits of the harvest. Propitiated and satisfied, invisibly they stand by the young and old of their supplicants and guard them, protect them, comfort them, cheer them, and bless them, they the heavenly beings of Ahura Mazda.

## *May Tishtrya's rain bring fruition to our fields*

Thou, Ahura Mazda, hast created Tishtrya, the radiant, glorious star genius of the rain, the lord of all other stars, for the fertility of the fields and farms and all other lands. Men and beasts and birds and plants and trees and rivers and streams and thirsty earth look eagerly and entreatingly to the rising of the star Tishtrya, that, in gushing torrents, he may send a flood of rain to fertilize their lands and bestow riches upon the earth. The farmer yearns for the refreshing showers of Tishtrya to water his parched fields, the gardener looks for a shower to brighten the foliage. With rich harvests does the land smile, when the rain Yazata favors it with his fertilizing waters. The drops of the rain of Tishtrya are like watery seeds that the benevolent sky scatters over the fields and spreads fertility all around.

Apaosha, the adversary of Tishtrya, struggles to keep back the rain and to hold the earth in clutch through famine and drought. In vain do we pray for the rain. A relentless heaven rains not and the land bears no crops. The desert wind scatters the clouds that look black and frown with angry look. The crashes of thunder and flashing lightnings and storm prevent the rains from coming. Disaster stares us in the face.

Then when in heart-felt humility we pray unto thee, Ahura Mazda, thou hear our supplications and impart renewed strength to Tishtrya in his war against the elements. Up rises the bright and glorious Tishtrya from the sea Vourukasha. The atmosphere absorbs water that evaporates from the seas and the land. Vapors rise above and the wind of Vayu, laden with moisture, blows over the hills and hillocks and mountains that raise their proud heads to the sky. There do the clouds rest on the stony bosoms. As the shepherd-dog drives the woolly sheep, so does the wind of Vayu drive the heavy laden clouds before it. The thick dark clouds bearing water swim in heaven. Tishtrya compresses them even as a man squeezes the sponges fined with water. The clouds now pour heavily in sheets, the silver bars of the torrential rain pelt down on the big-seeded corn fields and the small-seeded pasture field and the orchards and the land everywhere that grow food and fodder for men and beasts.

Hail unto Tishtrya who rains his fertilizing blessings over the earth. The fields do smile and trees do rejoice and the animals are gladdened. To the sound of the patter of raindrops on the leaves of the trees do the birds sing their melodious songs. Let us then sing to the greatness and glory of the lord our God and pray unto him in thankfulness.

## *Give me bodily health, I pray*

Health is happiness. It is the greatest blessing of life. With health, life has everything, without it, it has nothing. Health is the richest possession of man upon earth. Blank and empty is life when it is bereft of health. Dead is the joy in life, where health is lacking. Nor birth, nor wealth, nor rank, nor power, aught avails, if thy Airyaman withholds health from man, Ahura Mazda. Everything is naught, where health is not.

Man appreciates not things that providence showers upon him unsought and in plenty. He values it at its proper worth, when he loses it awhile. When health fails man, and the body fails to do his bidding, life becomes tasteless and tedious to him and depression of spirit hangs over him. Then on his bed of sickness, he curses his existence and yearns for health.

Keep me healthy and sound and strong in body to the day of my death, Ahura Mazda. When old age creeps on me and health begins to fail, I will hourly pray unto thee to give me the soundness and strength of the body that once were mine, even as Rustom, the rider of matchless Rakhsh, prayed unto thee in the hour of his need to give him back the strength, from the surfeit of which he had suffered in his youth and from which thou hadst relieved him at his prayerful request.

Health gives liveliness and cheerfulness, superabundant energy and exuberant optimism. Give me soundness and vigor and agility of body to work strenuously for the furtherance of good and to carry on a vigorous warfare against evil. Give me, I beseech thee, O Giver of health, a healthy body to nurture a healthy mind to enable me to lead an active and industrious Zoroastrian life in the discharge of my life's duties.

## *Our community*

Thirteen long centuries ago, when the Kian Glory fled past our ancestors for ever, when the crown and scepter of the great Sassanian empire fell, when the fame and fortune of the greatest kingdom of the day left them, when friendless and forlorn they stood and knew not where to turn, thou our eternal friend, stood by them in the darkest day of their need, O Ahura Mazda. Thou didst uphold them and take them beneath thy protecting wings and stay with them in the woeful time of their misfortune. Thou didst lead them under thy guiding star to this our land of adoption and become their refuge and their rock of stay.

Fugitives forlorn they came from distant shores and thou didst sustain them in their plight and cheer them and help them to begin life anew amid strange surroundings. Thou didst inspire them to strenuous, hard work and, never faltering, never failing, never despairing, with unbending will, unbounded zeal, and undying hope they strove and struggled, toiled and labored under the scorching sun and malarial swamps, and thou didst crown their active and diligent life with success.

Our fathers have built the noble heritage from age to age by their patient labor, incessant efforts, hazardous adventures. They have worked near and they have worked afar, they have lived lonely lives in far-flung countries, they have sailed distant seas and have enriched our community by wealth they brought by land and sea. They have sown and we reap; they have gathered and we use.

Our fathers struggled with poverty and with honest, hard work amassed riches. Faithfully following the noble precepts of holy Zarathushtra, they gave to the poor and the needy, they gave for the healing of the mind. They gave, and they gave freely to all, counting not caste or creed, and they made the appellation 'Parsi' to mean charity. They have raised us to our present estate and made us what we are today.

Our fathers have done their duty; help us, O Heavenly Father, to do ours. Give us agile bodies, active minds, and quickened hearts to play our part even as they have played theirs. Keep us ever watchful to guard our morals and the glorious edifice of our communal character that we may never besmirch the fair name of our community. With the humility of the mind and devotion of the heart and prayer of the spirit at our command, we commend our community, smallest of small among nations, to thy unflinching care and protection and guidance, Ahura Mazda, now and for ever.



## *Our communal characteristics*

Our racial heritage, our temperamental endowment, and vicissitudes of time have built our communal characteristics, Ahura Mazda.

We take life cheerfully and strive to make the most of it. We are full of life and gay of disposition. We are boisterous and obtrusive, talkative and vivacious, amiable and jovial, lively and impulsive, virile and industrious, loud of laughter and given to light pleasantry, rich in humor and romantic by nature, mercurial of temperament and matter-of-fact people, with little of poetry and much less of philosophy about us.

We are hospitable and generous and kindly and sympathetic to the sufferings of our neighbors. We are free with, our purse and liberal of hand. We are generous and benevolent. Freely do we give vast sums for philanthropic purposes. The virtue of charity, preached by Zarathushtra, has been built into the tissues of every individual's being. We are eager to throw ourselves in the affray of others to assuage their wrongs and sufferings.

Help us to preserve Ahura Mazda, what strengthens and elevates our morale and to eliminate that which weakens and lowers it. Truth and probity, hard and industrious life, ardor of enterprise, and thirst for adventure, hopefulness and helpfulness were the characteristics that made our ancestors great. Inspire us with the zeal to emulate them and to work for the glory of our dear community.

## *Our culture is exotic*

Thou, Ahura Mazda, art the divine artist who hast designed and built and sculptured and painted thy sublime nature that speaks to us and sings to us and inspires us and elevates us. Real greatness of a people consists not in its hoarded wealth or its territorial possessions as in the accumulated treasure of the cultivated qualities of its mind and the virtues of its heart. Culture is the fertile efflorescence of the human mind in the arts and sciences of life. It is man's most matchless achievement.

Our culture is exotic, receptive and imitative. It threatens to atrophy our communal soul. We have lost our country and we have lost our kingdom. Avesta and Pahlavi and Pazend, our ancient languages, are dead and our literature indited in these tongues has mostly perished. In ruin lie at Persepolis and Pasargad and Behistan and around, the marvels of our national monuments that speak of the past greatness and grandeur and glory of our dear fatherland. In the loss of our cultural achievements, we have lost our all, O Lord.

Help us to create anew our indigenous culture under a new sky, that can nourish and invigorate our spirits to noble deeds, refine our nature, ennoble our character, and exalt our communal life. Give us passionate love for literature and arts and sciences. Give us richness of imagination and originality of intellect. Give us minds endowed with the keenest intellect and give us betimes a genius for the artistic creations of the mind. Give us the gift of creating great works of art and poetry, the masterpieces of music and painting. Give us for our sons and daughters, thinkers and writers, poets and artists, painters and musicians, sculptors and scientists who can contribute our community's share to the immortal cultural heritage of humanity, we pray, Ahura Mazda.

## *Time is life*

Time is Zurvan Akarana, the boundless Time, Ahura Mazda. From it hast thou carved out Zurvan Daregho-khvadhata, the Time of Long Duration of our world. Eons count not in the eternity of time and a millennium is but a moment. The period of man's life in eternity is like a flash of thy lightning that expires the moment it is born. The longest span of human life is a breathing space in time everlasting.

Time is hungerless and thirstless, ageless and deathless. Everything upon earth lives in time and time alone is above and beyond everything. Time is invincible. It wears out everything and conquers all. As the wind and water wear out the strongest edifices, so does time eat the mightiest monuments raised by man. Time devours and destroys all, it reduces all to dust. Nothing can stop it in its remorseless course.

Time moves with hurrying steps. It flies on the swiftest wings and flies faster than the wind. Nothing is faster than the flight of time. Time escapes all and nothing in the world, can overtake it and none can turn it back in its flight.

Time can neither be borrowed nor bought. Misspent time is wasted time. Health and rank and position and anything and everything lost in the world can be restored and regained. Lost time alone can never be recalled and never be made to return.

Time is life and time ill spent is life wasted away. Let me not squander my time. Lead me, Ahura Mazda, to make the best use of the days of my life, that time well spent may lengthen my life, short as it is.

## *Today is my own, perchance tomorrow may never come*

Yesterday is past beyond recall. Today only is mine. Let me make the best use of it as it is my sure possession. Tomorrow has shadowy existence. It may or may not dawn for me. I may be dead and gone before it is born. Let me put procrastination far from me, when it comes with silent steps to steal my time. Let me not put off today's work till tomorrow and let me not leave undone what can be done today.

Time gives birth every morning to the day and the day brings boundless opportunities and boundless potentialities. I can compress all my life work in this one day, and concentrate my whole life in it, if I willed. Let my thoughts and words and deeds of the day be such as they will out-live the day; make the history of my life. This day of mine is my life. Let me utilize every hour and every minute and every second so that I may live a whole life in this one day, that is, today.

Time is more valuable than the costliest thing in the world. Teach me, Ahura Mazda, to make the utmost use of my time between minutes and months, hours and years of my life.

Swiftly flow the waters of the river of time. May the bark of my life glide smoothly on its stream, that I may steer it to the shore of safety. Time leaves furrows on man's face and writes wrinkles on his brow. Each passing day in life hastens death near. Let me not trifle away and waste my today. Help me to live today fully and nobly and selflessly and leave tomorrow to its fate, Ahura Mazda.

## *Faith works wonders*

Faith is the belief in the unknown, as belief is the faith in the known. Faith soars the highest heaven and dives to the deepest depth. Faith knows no bound and breaks through all barriers. Faith reads the secrets of the earth and deciphers the mysteries of heaven. Faith knows all and sees all. Faith asks not for facts, demands not proofs, and seeks no evidence. Faith thinks not, cogitates not and reasons not. Faith believes and believes wholly and unreservedly. Faith knows no "No"; it knows only "Yes". Faith makes the weak strong and the timid brave. Faith heals, faith creates, and faith moves mountains. Faith is power, a talisman that works wonders.

Faith is assertive and aggressive, authoritative and arbitrary, adamant and unreasonable, static and firm as a rock. Credulity is faith's failing and with credulity for its companion, faith believes what is possible and impossible, credible and incredible, anything and everything.

Omnipotent is faith, but not eternal. Faith is secure when reason is asleep. The child is angelic, for it knows not guilt and is shadowed not by sin. But the child does not always remain the child. With the breaking of the dawn of its mind, it ceases to be child. So is the childlike faith roused by reason and disturbed by doubt. Doubt is active, it seeks and ventures and risks. It lets not faith take everything on trust, it questions it at every turn and lets it not rest in the passivity of belief. Doubt, in its struggle, spells death of faith.

When doubt assails me and faith grows dim and fails me, lead me, Ahura Mazda, from destructive doubt to reasoned faith. Let my faith be wedded to reason and let it be based on conviction. Give me faith and more faith, but not the blind faith. Give me the seeing and discerning faith of thy Armaiti and save me from the weakness of a credulous mind. O Vahishta Manah, Thou Best Mind.

## *Forlorn is life without faith in thee, Ahura Mazda*

Replenish and restore my faith when it grows dim and light, Ahura Mazda, for life loses its luster when it loses its faith. Life is resplendent and rich when the fire on the altar of faith is aflame in my heart.

Make me not wavering and weak in my faith in myself. Let my faith in human nature never be shaken, despite the disappointments and disillusionments I court in my dealings with my fellowmen. And above all, let not my faith in thee falter and fail and die, for the death of my faith in thee is the death of the life of my spirit.

Faith rends the veil that hides thee from my sight and opens the heavenly gates for me. Bathed in the light of thy faith, my soul sees its way to thee and flies on the wings of faith to heaven, the highest of the high, Garonmana, where thou dost dwell in thy glory.

My religion rests on my faith in thee and I can pray unto thee when I have my faith in thee. Prayer is lifeless when I lose my faith in thee. In full faith, therefore, will I pray unto thee and with unswerving faith will I serve the days and nights that I live upon earth and faithfully will I commit myself into thy hands to do with me as thou thinkest best, Ahura Mazda.

## *Youth is the spring of life*

When life is young, it is bright and easy and gay. The very atmosphere is full of enthusiasm and energy and youth is crowded with events that shape man's whole life thereafter.

Youth is buoyant and hopeful, cheerful and venturesome, confident and courageous, ambitious and enterprising. Youth is fraught with unlimited potentiality to accomplish great and wonderful things. The lure of life's adventure seems a glowing romance and a sweet, long poem to youthful life. Youth, in its vision, thinks it can grasp the rainbow.

Life is full of sport in the boisterous gaiety of youth. The desire for pleasure is strongest in youth. Festive youth yearns for the full enjoyment of life and in its misguided moments throws itself headlong in the whirling dissipations and wastes itself by riotous indulgence of vice and vulgarity.

Man thinks faded youth as life's paradise lost and grudges not giving a heavy price if he can buy and regain it. Growing age broods over passing youth and longs to live youthful days again. In vain does withering youth labor to prolong its beauty by appliances of art, by padding and painting, trappings and trimmings. Youth, none the less, ages and fades.

Youth thinks the spring of its life will not end and dreams not of its decay and death. Exuberant life swarms in the spring and blooms in a forest of riotous foliage, yet the autumn turns out to be the deathbed of the spring and winter its grave. So does the autumn of life steal slowly with silent steps and heralds the end of its spring. Though nature rejoices in the yearly return of the spring, man knows but one spring and youth, once lost, can never be regained.

Strengthen me, Ahura Mazda, to resist the temptation to give in to the dissipation of youth. Help me so to live my youth that the memory of an ill-spent youth may not cloud my mind, when I am on the down-hill road and my life is ebbing and nearing its end. Help me, instead to live in so wise that the recollection of my virtuous youth may sweeten my old age and fill the closing period of my life with happiness.

## *Give me a peaceful old age*

Age turns man's dark hair white and he stoops under the weight of his years. The vigor of his body declines, and he loses the fire and brilliance of life. The blood loses its warmth and courses with difficulty in his veins. Age live more by brain than by body. Age subdues man's passions that assailed his youth and stressed the struggle of his inner life. Cool they are now and asleep and leave him at rest. The hopes and ambitions now cease. He has reached the limit of his activities. His life's work is done and it is time for him to repose and rest.

Over again does he live in his old age the doings of his youth and like a cow that listlessly chews its cud, he leisurely ruminates over the merit or demerit of the doings of the life he leaves behind. Contented and peaceful is he if his youth has been wisely lived. Unhappy and restless, he ruefully reaps, if wildly his youth has sown. Sorrowful and penitent, he expiates the wrongs of his youth and invokes Ahura Mazda's help to redeem the wasted years of his life.

Man reaps after death the reward and retribution in heaven of the harvest he sows in his life upon earth, it is true, but even before he embarks upon his heavenly journey, he experiences happiness or misery in his old age as his youth and manhood have been good or evil.

The wailing winds weep for the waning of the year whom old age has overtaken. The end of the autumn is the beginning of the end of the year. The autumnal wind denudes the trees of their leaves and winter lays the dying year on the deathbed of dry leaves. So does nature take back in man's old age what she gave him at birth, tooth after tooth and hair after hair. Encroaching death ends all.

Even with three score years and more on his hoary head, man believes not he is growing old, such is the lure of life.

I pray for long life, Ahura Mazda, but a life in which the vigor of my body and mind of my youth and my manhood may linger long and keep afar the feebleness of age. Enfold me in thy loving warmth when life enters its wintry age. When, at last, blood in my veins courses with difficulty, and infirmity lays me down upon bed, enable me, O merciful Lord, to peacefully sleep into death without suffering and struggle.



## *The torments of a guilty conscience*

Daena is thine, Ahura Mazda. It is thy divine voice that whispers and speaks to me through my conscience. It is the guardian and watchman of my morals and thy moral law is engraved on its tablet. It is thy vicegerent in me that approves and attests, commends and condemns, warns and, guides, censures and reproaches me all throughout my wakeful hours.

Infallible and incorruptible judge is Daena and daily have I to stand before its tribunal. Incontrovertible are its findings. My rights and wrongs are mirrored in my conscience. With guilt on my conscience, my face reflects vividly the inward conflict and my eyes reveal the inner torment. The awkward sense of self-condemnation makes me feel odious in eyes. Great is the discord and great is the divergence between the demand of my conscience and the life I lead.

I am at peace with the world, but not at peace with my conscience, for a fierce struggle goes on in the depths of my soul. My inner world is torn by the conflict. Beneath my calm exterior, the tempest is raging within. My conscience reproaches and persecutes me and does not leave me at rest. The torments and tortures of my conscience are not less painful than the sufferings of the wicked souls in hell as described by Viraf. Blackened with guilt and sin, my conscience makes my heart as ugly and dark as hell.

I can silence my mouth. I cannot silence my conscience. It defies my attempts to subdue and stifle the still voice in which it speaks. I cannot break away from its condemnation of my conduct. In vain do I struggle to flee from it. It chases me and I cannot escape. I bolt and barricade the door of my inner chamber and I assure myself that there is none therein beside myself. But the eternal sentinel, I discover, stands at the gate, ever watchful of his duty.

In turning away from my conscience, I exile myself from thee; Ahura Mazda. Bitter is the consciousness of my alienation from thee. I cannot bear the pain of my separation from thee. Leave me not alone, for then I am lost. With penitent heart, I seek thy forgiveness, O thou great Forgiver. Take me back into thy fold. Enable me to hear the gentle voice that steals on my ears. Inspire me to live my life loyally and faithfully according to the wise counsels of my conscience and win its approbation of my conduct. Make my conscience stainless and clear as the mid-day light, Ahura Mazda.

## *The will to sin is sin*

Sinlessness is struggle. It is triumph in the war waged against temptation to sin. The sinful act is a sin indeed, but the very will to sin, the inclination to sin, the intention to sin, is also sin. The will to sin may not be realized, the inclination to sin may not succeed, and the intention to sin may not be put into practice. Some hindrance, some interruption, some fear of detection may arrest or frustrate the commitment of sin, yet the sin, has already originated.

Will is the parent of sin. Sin begins with the sinful thought, whether sinful word or sinful deed is its outcome or not. Sin is there as soon as the soul sanctions it and gives consent to it, even if some circumstance prevents its accomplishment. The resolve to sin is as much a sin as sin in word or deed. The soul sins, when it shows its willingness to sin. The soil of the spirit is already soiled and stained, when it receives the seed of sin in its midst, even when the seed may sprout not and bloom not.

Mithra and Sraosha and Rashnu, thy heavenly judges, Ahura Mazda, judge not appearances and outward results. They hold the soul accountable for the merest contemplation and approval of sin.

Help me to conquer my weakness to succumb to sinful inclination. Strengthen me to suppress the sinful thought when it assails me and, ever-vigilant, to crush it the moment it comes creeping to take hold of my heart. Enable me to preserve my soul stainless and pure from the pollution of sinful thought, Ahura Mazda.

## *Create in me the penitent spirit, Ahura Mazda*

Not to sin is better than to expiate sin, I avow, Ahura Mazda. But if I have sinned through weakness of the flesh or ignorance or thoughtlessness or otherwise, I seek thy indulgence towards my human frailty. Teach me to atone for my sin, for atonement stunts the growth of sin and withers it like a tree.

If I have sinned against thy will, I repent. If I have sinned knowingly or unknowingly, I repent. If I have merely contemplated sin or if I have actually committed it, I repent. If I have sinned in thought or word or deed, I repent. If I have sinned pertaining to this world or the next, I repent. If I have left undone, what I should have done or done what I should not have done, of all such sins of omission and commission, I repent. I prostrate myself before thee in penitential prayer.

I plead guilty. I stand condemned before thee. I grieve over my sin. I mourn it. I have erred and I have fallen. I confess. I have given thee cause for offence. My sin has incurred thy condemnation. My sin weighs heavy on my heart. I cry my eyes out and my eyes rain tears. Loud confession with lips and bathing my face with a torrent of tears is of no avail, if my heart is not affected. But my penitence is not of mere words and tears. It comes from the deepest depths of contrite heart. Deep is the anguish I go through. I cannot exclude the painful memories of my sin from my thoughts. I lay sleepless at night. My penitent heart eats itself away. A wave of remorse and penitence surges through my heart. I pray for the remission of my sin. Hear in thy mercy the cry of my penitent heart, O Merciful Lord.

## *I pray for forgiveness on my knees*

Sin poisons the spring of my life. It hides the truth from me and deadens my heart to virtue. Sin is the death of my spirit. Let me daily die to sin. I abjure sin. I turn away from it. I forsake my sinful past. I foreswear it. I expiate my transgression with sincere resolve to redeem my sinful past by good deeds onward from now. I will fight and break and conquer my will to sin any more. My repentance has worked a change of my heart. It will produce amendment in my conduct. The fire of my sincere penitence will cleanse my heart of its impurity. Let my penitence sweep away sin from my heart even as a powerful wind sweeps over the plain and carries away everything with it. Let my sin be absolved, for I will amend my way and sin no more.

With bruised and broken heart, I seek thy forgiveness. Forgive my sins, for unbounded is thy mercy, thou that art all compassion and forgiveness, Ahura Mazda. Give me thy hand to help me out from the mire of sin into which I have slipped and sunk. Put me on the right track from where I have wandered away. Help me to repair the wrong, while yet there is time. Take me back to thee and restore me to thy fellowship. I cannot bear my life bereft of thee. I will not fast from food and emaciate my body, but I will fast indeed from sin and make my soul full of health, as taught by my Lord Zarathushtra.

## *Who loses character, he loses all*

Ahura Mazda, thou dost create man; thou dost not create his character. It is man's own creation. Man is its maker and it springs from within him. It is his inestimable personal acquisition.

Good thoughts, good words, and good deeds form character. It is the outward manifestation of man's inner life regulated by the moral order of Asha. It is the symbolic representation of Daena's religion practiced and lived by man. When truth and righteousness and virtue are woven together on the loom of life, they make for character.

Man of character outshines men of talents and birth and fortune, and outlives them all. Character is greater than genius. When intellect weds character it becomes matchless. It loses its luster when, alienated from character, it stands by itself. Character alone exalts. It makes a peasant more honored than a prince.

The beauty of character surpasses all other beauties. Character shines with greater brilliance than does the diamond. Character commands respect and trust of all as nothing in the world does.

The weakening and loss of man's character brings his fall. It is the end of his life. Man leaves his all at death behind. Character alone endures and the man of character takes it with him to heaven.

Individual character builds communal character. Great is my community and great is the reputation of its character. Enable me, Ahura Mazda, to contribute my mite to the preservation and growth of the renowned Parsi character.

I have everything when I have character. It is the greatest possession of my life. I can have name and fame, health and happiness for money. I cannot purchase character for gold. Then help me, O Lord, to mould and make my character after thy pattern. Give me forceful character and strong character and spotless character and character, clear as crystal, and thou wilt have given me the best in thy power to give, O Giver Divine.

## *Decay of morals brings dissolution of society*

Zarathushtra inculcates the simplicity of life and our early ancestors were brought up in simple habits of life. They lived a frugal, contented, and a happy life.

When they became conquerors of vast territories and built the mightiest empires of their days, the influx of riches from conquered countries bred in them lassitude, a love of ease and an aptitude for enjoyment and luxury. A life of self-indulgence, unbridled luxury and indolence deprived the virile classes of their former virility. The people could not escape the contagion of the luxury and vice of nobility. They emulated court luxuries and abandoned themselves to unbridled indulgence which rendered them effeminate. The love of simplicity was replaced by a feverish worship of pleasure. Social disintegration, moral laxity, and disunion plunged the country into a chronic state of civil war and sapped the vitals of the mighty empire. Decay of morals usually brings dissolution of society and they contributed, in the main, to the downfall of the great Achaemenian and Sassanian empires of Zoroastrian Iran.

Catastrophic tragedy overtook our ancestors at Nihavand and Qadisiya and we lost the kingdom and country we had called our own for long. Time's rough hands handled us roughly. It makes our flesh creep and blood curdle in our veins to remember the hardships that followed. Thou wert our shield in the days of our troubles and our only stay and strength, Ahura Mazda. Thou didst enable us to outlive our trials and tribulations.

Teach us to be wise through the lessons of our history. Help us to learn from the failures of our forefathers. Thou dost know our weaknesses. Let not our small community be torn with factions. Teach us to live as comrades all, in willing fellowship and loving fraternity, in brotherly helpfulness and cooperation. Inspire us to live in mutual understanding and trust and peace.

Into thy hands, Ahura Mazda, we commit ourselves. Let thy guiding hand lead our lives. May the life of thy Spenta Mainyu, Holy Spirit, surge within the hearts of the young and old of our dear community and express itself in our communal virtue.

## *Vice is a canker that eats into the vitals of life*

Man can soar higher than man, he can sink lower than animal. In his higher nature, man is like unto angel. His lower nature, he shares with animal. When the senses are asleep in childhood, children are innocent as the white lilies.

When the sex in man is awakened, vice struggles to come on the wings of youthful vigor. Passions and appetites clamor for satisfaction. When man fails to suppress the tumult of the senses and masters not his passions, his passions master him in turn and he becomes a willful slave and a prisoner in the trammels of his passions. He is now out to wildly enjoy life while it lasts and takes to bad ways. He succumbs to the allurements of the senses and sinks deep into the vortex of dissipation. Dark passions plunge him headlong into the gulf of vice, and he abandons himself to voluptuous and vicious pleasures and to loathsome lust. Vice debases him and drags him down to the life of a sensual beast and he wallows in the slough of swinish sensuality. Vice sets its ineffable print on his face, exhausts his vigor, breaks his health, blasts his character, and hastens his premature death.

Stronger and fairer in body and brighter and purer in mind would mankind have been, had vice poisoned not the springs of man's life. To vice of ages are due a considerable proportion of the deformity of body and derangement of mind and a host of foul diseases.

Public opinion is an effective check upon morals and keeps many from vice. Conscience condemns the vicious person and bites at his heart, but callous when he grows, he feels not its qualms. Hardened in vice, such a one becomes a daeva or demon in flesh during life and dies a demon in the end, says Zarathushtra.

Teach me to shun vice as plague, Ahura Mazda. Give me strength to wrestle with and root out vicious thoughts and inclinations, when they struggle to obtain a lodging in my mind. Enable me to stem the temptations of the flesh. When unruly passions storm the citadel of my soul, help me to grapple with them and overcome them. Kindle my heart with thy holy flame and consume my vicious passions to ashes. Let vice never have any hold upon me. Make me ever solicitous of my virtuous conduct and enable me always to hold fast to virtue, Ahura Mazda.

## *Truth is the supremest virtue*

Great is the glory of truth. It shines like the star Tishtrya. Truth is the queen of virtues. Truth is the good Mazda-worshipping religion.

Truth is truth always and ever to the day of doom. Truth is omnipotent and immortal. Truth is one and thou art Truth, Ahura Mazda.

Simple and straightforward is the language that truth speaks. It needs not rhetorical embellishment. It shines in its innate simplicity. Never crooked and never zigzag, with no by-ways in which a traveler may lose himself, straight is the path of truth.

Truth knows no racial or geographical boundaries. Truth is ever the same for all. Truth blinds Druj, the demon of falsehood, as light blinds the owl. To be truthful is to be courageous, for falsehood is cowardice.

Truth walks with halting steps and falsehood flies on swiftest wings. Truth builds and creates, falsehood breaks and destroys. Man of truth is trusted and honored by all. The liar needs must invent two more lies to uphold his one and, from deep to deeper in the slough of falsehood, he sinks. Zarathushtra concentrates Angra Mainyu's evil in falsehood. He, the Evil Spirit, is falsehood himself.

Truth may be stifled and smothered for a time, but not for all time. Truth to falsehood is like oil to water. Forced under the stinking water of falsehood, like oil, on the surface, it will swim, while down like water will falsehood drop.

United by the bond of truth, flourishes society. Falsehood strikes at the root of mutual trust and hastens its fall. Noted for their probity, the ancient Persians, our illustrious ancestors, taught their youths the rigid adherence to truth as the first and foremost lesson of life.

My God, give me a passionate longing for truth and give me a feeling of repulsion from falsehood. Give me courage to be true. Guide me to think the truth and speak the truth and act the truth. Put me on the right track when my steps do swerve and stray from Rashnu's straight path. Incline me to walk steadfast on Mithra's shining path of truth. Strengthen me to fight falsehood with the weapons of truth. Let me love truth for truth's sake. Let all I speak and what I speak and when I speak be wholly true. Let my mouth speak only that which my heart feels. Let me be true to myself and let me be true to thee and thine, O Lord of truth.



## *Demoralizing dole*

Thou hast kindled the spark of mercy, O merciful God, in human hearts to succor thy poor whom old age has disabled to work and chronic disease has rendered invalids.

When charity, however, becomes indiscriminate in the hands of the tender-hearted people, who aimlessly dole out largess all around, it tends to encourage subsidized idleness. It spells moral degradation, undermines the spirit of self-help and independence, damps the ardor and enthusiasm for enterprise and adventure, and breaks the morale of those that stretch out their hands to receive the demoralizing dole.

Bless me, O Lord of benevolence, with the unbending spirit of self-reliance. Give me undying faith and robust confidence in myself. Let me not distrust my inborn strength and my inner resources. Let not the enervating thought of doubting myself and my powers ever cross my mind. Teach me to live by my own efforts and to fight my way successfully through the hard struggle of life.

Help me to earn my own living and eat my bread. O Giver of daily bread, earned in the sweat of my brows. Let me be content with half the bread of my own earning than have a whole given by others. Let me go hungry awhile, but let me never beg for my bread. Let me eat sparingly and clothe scantily and dwell in a lowly cottage and deny myself the comforts of life than support myself by my neighbor's help.

Man, says Zarathushtra, is the sole arbiter of his destiny. None can help him to win salvation for his soul and none can likewise help him in this world, if he struggles not strenuously to help himself by an active and industrious life. Let me not look for help from without, when within me lies the inexhaustible store to redeem my poverty.

Priceless is the treasure of self-respect. It is better to die in honor, with self-respect intact, than to live in shame with its loss. Let me be poor and penniless, but help me as long as I live to preserve the dignity of my manhood, Ahura Mazda.

## *Chastity is the complement of womanly virtues*

Ahura Mazda's Good Spirit, Spenta Mainyu, moulds and makes many a new human being a day in his heavenly workshop. The sublimest specimen of his workmanship is the woman of chastity. A chaste woman is the noblest and the most ideal woman, the queen of the world's womankind.

Great in the nobility and pride of race, is the community where chastity abounds. Chastity is the best armor of womanhood. Chastity and modesty are the most precious ear-rings that a woman can wear.

Chastity is more delicate than the most delicate plant that grows upon earth. It cannot bear and survive the slightest touch of a lustful hand. Inviolable chastity is the treasure of woman. Loss of chastity is the loss of womanhood. One lapse of chastity spells its ruin for all time. Once lost, it is ever lost. The smallest speck on the whiteness of chastity spoils it for ever.

May there be born unto our families daughters as chaste and pure and modest and graceful as the most chaste daughters of Mashyoi, the first woman, that have ever lived upon the seven zones of the earth. May they be as chaste as jasmine. May their souls be as pure and white as snow. May thy Ashi Vanghuhi, the guardian of womanly virtues and sanctity of matrimony, guide and guard and protect our women with loving care, Ahura Mazda. May she ever be the honored and loved guest in the abodes of the Mazdayasnians.

*Contented with what I have,  
but discontented with what I am*

A contented thought is best for man, preaches Zarathushtra. Life needs not many things to be happy. Contentment makes life happy, because it is satisfied with but few things.

To desire and not to have the desire fulfilled, to want and not to have the want satisfied, bring unhappiness. Contentment desires not and wants not and therefore it is happy. Whoso desires more and even more, knows no contentment and is always unhappy.

A contented mind is at peace with itself. Contentment is happy in its belief that it has what it wants and cheerfully enjoys what little it has. Contentment gives satisfaction, joy, and happiness to man. Contentment has enough to make life happy and therefore it asks not for more. Contentment gives independence and self-sufficiency and self-reliance.

The poor who are contented with what little they have, are happy. The rich covet more and still more, and with contentment not their possession, they are unhappy in the midst of their abundance. Impregnable is the fortress of contentment.

Contentment is a virtue as it enables man to bear with the hardships of life. It ceases to be so, when man passively reconciles himself to squalor and starvation, when he should strive to fight them; to feel resignation, where he should revolt; to suffer meekly, where he should struggle valiantly; to submit passively to social injustice and inequity where he should take courage in both hands and fight against them to redeem himself. Discontent with undesirable condition goads man to effort and exertion to better his lot. Discontent accelerates human progress.

Let not discontent press heavily upon my heart and make my life miserable. Let contentment be my wealth. With a contented mind and a contented heart, I will be at peace with the world. With contentment within me, I will patiently work during the day, and the day's duty done, peacefully will I sink upon the pillow at night and soundly will I sleep till dawn. Let me not, however, be content to remain where I am and what I am. Help me to strive and endeavor my utmost to rise above my position in life and better my prospects, Ahura Mazda.

## *Let me not run into debt*

Debt is a disease that undermines health and morals. It destroys the peace of mind, domestic happiness, and the joy in living. It is the grave of independence and honor and happiness. It demoralizes and disgraces, discredits and enslaves. It gnaws at the vitals of life, cripples energy and enthusiasm, crushes enterprise and ambition. It embarrasses and harasses, degrades and grinds, tortures and kills.

Idleness and prodigality and vanity augment debt, industry and thrift and integrity pay debt.

Let me most scrupulously pay my debt, if I have my debt to pay. Let me not evade paying my debt under any excuse. Let me contract my expenses, let me do without luxuries, let me dispense with necessities, let me reduce my wants, and let me live on the lowest scale, but let me always hasten to the house of the lender of the loan to pay him his due.

However heavy a load man may carry on his back, it is lighter than load of debt. Poverty is bearable when it is bereft of debt. Untold grief and remorse are in store for him who has the borrowing habit. Like unto the man sunk in the quagmire of mud in the rainy season, he finds it difficult to extricate himself from the ditch of debt.

Let me bear with privation and poverty and let me live ill-fed and ill-clad, than borrow my neighbor's money to meet my daily needs. Let me feed myself on half the bread, earned by honest labor than thrive on the whole, bought of borrowed money. Let me sleep without my meal and rise hungry in the morning, than go to bed with my stomach filled with food purchased with money that is not mine.

Enable me, O Bountiful Lord, to free myself soon from the bondage of indebtedness, if perchance, I happen to be involved in debt. But better by far, I beseech thee, save me at all from running into debt.

## *Teach me to practice economy in my expenses*

Thou dost give me so much and thou dost ask so little of me, O Bountiful Lord. Thou dost gratify my slightest wish. I pray for that which my heart seeks and, out of thy boundless generosity, thou dost give it to me. So free and bounteous art thou with thy gifts. Thou, Ahura Mazda, hast commanded in thy wisdom that I should make a temperate use of the good things of life, but never should waste the smallest thing, even so much as the weight of the thread that a maid lets fall in spinning. Thus thou hast further explained.

Teach me, Ahura Mazda, to practice economy in my household expenses. Economy and thrift and frugality leave something behind, which is my family's potential wealth. Frugality keeps me far from indebtedness and brings me independence. It is a provision against unforeseen contingencies. Let me be industrious both in earning and in economy. Let my thrift keep pace with my earning. Difficult it is to make money, but easy by far to spend it. To every one source of income, there are twice two and more of expenditure.

Let me live upon what little I have. Let not ostentation infatuate me to live above my circumstances and beyond my means.

Let my expenditure be ordered and regulated, well-planned and well-proportioned. Teach me the art of making one silver piece do the work of two. Let me ever be cautious to see that my expenditure exceeds not my income. Let me contract and curtail my expenses. Let me not spend all that I earn. Teach me to spend wisely and well, and less than I earn. Let me make money with the diligence of both hands free, but let me always spend with the tightened fist of just one hand alone.

Teach me the habit of saving. Let me save something from what little I have, for saving itself is an income. Let me daily spare and save a little pile of my money, that of itself it may make up a large one in the end. Let me not waste, that I may not want. It is wisdom to rave, when it is folly to waste. Let more of Ashi Vanghuhi's wealth enter my abode at the rising dawn than what leaves it at the closing day, Ahura Mazda.

## *Straight and smooth is the path of honesty*

Honesty that comes out unscathed from the fiery ordeal of temptation is like unto gold that is purified by fire. Honesty has nothing to hide from others. It does not labor to seem what it is not. It does not practice dissimulation. It moves with a frank mind and an open heart. It walks erect, with head uplifted. It looks straight in the face with courage. It shines in its simplicity. It is the strongest armor that shields one who dons it against the ills of life.

Life would be easy and happy, if men and women were mutually honest.

A true Zoroastrian is the man of honesty. He speaks and does what he thinks, no more, no less. He means what he says. His word has the value of a bond. He creates confidence in those with whom he deals and everyone relies upon his word. Universally trusted in life, he, the honest man, is respected wherever he goes. He is a safe friend, an agreeable companion, and a trustworthy partner. True to man, he is true to thee Ahura Mazda.

Honesty is everything in the life of an individual, and so it is in the life of a people. The Persians of yore were noted for their probity. Let me, their dutiful descendant, be like unto them. The fire of the Yazata Atar, burning in the household hearth, is grieved when food earned by dishonest means is cooked upon it. Let me eat my daily bread ever by my honest work. Give me honest intention in all I do and lead me to practice honesty all my life. Honesty is a lovable virtue at all seasons of life. Help me, Ahura Mazda, to be honest in the bright days of my prosperity, as in the dark days of adversity, if ever it assails me. No title is so honorable to its holder, as to be acclaimed honest by all. May I be worthy of this enviable distinction in my life. O, Thou most honored on earth as in heaven.

## *Happiness unto him who gives happiness unto others*

Unquenchable is man's thirst for happiness, Ahura Mazda. In this thine wide world, there is enough room for all to live and food to eat and good things of life to enjoy and be happy. At the gray dawn of history, Zarathushtra gave thy message to mankind that the individual's happiness depended upon the happiness of all, and gave out thy golden rule that happiness came to him who gave happiness to others.

In this world of joy and sorrow, happiness and misery, life would be intolerable if it were not for the sympathy, kindness, and affection of man for man. Unbearable is the burden of life when unaided. It loses its crushing weight when men live in fellowship with their fellowmen and share one another's burden. Life is incomplete when man lives for his own self, oblivious of the happiness of others. Life is best lived when it is lived for others. Thus preached our beloved prophet, the first among thy holy prophets to teach this universal truth.

Thy sainted souls of all time and clime have loved others more than themselves and have held that the greatest pleasure of life consisted in making others happy. They have lived for others, worked for others, spent their lives for others, risked their all for others, endured everything for others, and died for others, that their fellow human beings may be happy.

Give us wisdom, O Wise One, to see that our interests are served the best by working for the common welfare, in cooperation for the common good. Teach us to seek our happiness in the happiness of all, to regard the sorrows and sufferings of others as ours and to hasten to assuage them. Enable us to see that we are all fellow-mariners steering the common barque across the sea of life and that a common fate to swim or sink awaits us. Inspire us to feel that common is our goal to reach and common our ideal to realize in thy divine dispensation.

Strengthen us to stand united in thee, one with another, and be mindful of the eternal fact that we are brothers and sisters all and belong to one great human family and are children of one father that art thou, Ahura Mazda.

## *Humility sheds luster on greatness*

Proud as a peacock, strutted Snavidhka, with foolish boast he babbled: "Young I am still, not of full age, if ever to full age I grow, I will make the earth a wheel and I will make the heaven a chariot. I will bring Spenta Mainyu down from the shining paradise and I will drag Angra Mainyu out from the stinking hell. They will draw my chariot, both Good and Evil Spirits, if the manly-minded Keresaspa would not kill me." But the manly-minded Keresaspa humbled his pride and humiliated him and did kill him with an end to his life, with destruction of his being.

Pride feeds on vanity and thrives on birth and rank and riches and power. The proud of purse and possession know not how fickle and fleeting is all fortune. Sure as the flower that blossoms but to fade, so do the proud rise to their fall. Pride brings the fall of the great on earth, as it overthrows the angels in heaven. The humble, in the end, are exalted, when the proud are humiliated.

Humility has sympathy and mercy and gentleness and self-sacrifice for its comrades, pride is harnessed to harshness and impudence and callousness and selfishness. Humility is the prime virtue for frail humanity. The humble of heart ask forgiveness for the wrongs of life. Pride declines to bend its knees and bow its head to pray and to repent, and man cannot do without either. If ever in pride I indulge, let me be proud of my honor and goodness in the world.

Humility moves in simplicity and beautiful it looks. Pride plods in the trappings and trimmings of affectation and ugly still it remains. Richness shines the more in the garb of humility than in the raiments of pride. Humility is fairer in rags than pride in the garments of gold.

Let me not with pride look upon what I have accomplished, let me with humility look to what lies before me still to be achieved. Let me hide my worth than expose it. Let me not be proud and inaccessible to the poor and the lowly, when I sit on the seat of authority. Teach me to be humble to the great and the small, to the rich and the poor all alike. Make me meek in mind and humble of heart and inspire me to emulate Zarathushtra's graceful humility, Ahura Mazda.



## *Life is rich in simplicity*

In the midst of the direst need and want, there is a surfeit of the gaiety and frivolity of the dazzling life of society, the glare and glamour of rich dresses and priceless jewelry and ostentatious parade of the gorgeous finery. Many a hungry mouth can be fed from the leavings of the sumptuous tables of the rich and many a naked body can be clothed from the superfluous frillings and trimmings of their fine raiments that serve for the costly display.

Vain and shallow, showy and pretentious is the barbaric display of pomp and position. Real greatness lies in the pure and simple life. Upright simplicity outshines, in true luster, vulgar ostentation. In his simplicity, man attains to greatness by the virtues of his heart. Life wears sublime majesty in the nobility and innocence of its simplicity.

Let me not practice affectation to seem great. Let me not labor to seem what I am not. Let not people take me for what I truly am not. Let me seem what I am and let the world take me for what I am in my honest simplicity.

Good and great ones of all ages and climes have lived their great lives in simplicity. Help me, O God, to emulate them. Let me dine on frugal meals and let me don simple clothes. Help me to observe austere simplicity in my habits, simplicity of heart, and simplicity of character. Let me love simplicity in all things and let me always live in dignified simplicity, Ahura Mazda.

## *Let none nurse intolerance*

Intolerance and bigotry and dogmatism are the bitterest enemies of religion upon earth. They make religion a tyrant, a persecutor, a veritable daeva, the demoniac perversion of angelic religion.

The frog croaks that his well is the whole world and the bigot boasts that his is the only inspired and perfect religion. The truth and the whole truth is exclusively garnered in his religion, he avers. His religion is the crown and culmination of all religions, his religion is ordained to be the universal religion of mankind and salvation is possible only through his religion, he adds.

All bigotry is blind and stupid and savage. Sectarian bigotry is as bad as inter-religious bigotry. Bigotry stifles reason and the bigot, in his frenzy, is out to force all to believe what he believes.

All religions come from one and the only God, who makes himself known by many a name. From the same source, like the tributaries of a river, they flow. All religions make man equally good upon earth and with equal safety do they conduct his soul to heaven. One alone is truth and all religions teach this truth, for religion itself is truth.

All open their hearts to the same God. All unbosom their hearts to the same God. All seek refuge in the same God. All concentrate their thoughts on the same God. All seek fellowship with the same God. All yearn to be united unto the same God. All commend their souls into the hands of the same God.

Man has no right to demand that his neighbor shall address God after his pattern and shall pray in his own way and worship according to his liking and sacrifice unto God in the manner he does.

No thinking man's own idea of God and religion, at all times and in ill conditions of life, is ever the same. For everybody's views on religion, then, it is not possible ever to be alike. Monotonous would our world become, if all thought equally and in the same way without ever differing in religious beliefs and practices from one another. Nature shines in her luxuriant glory because of the wide variety of her form and colour and beauty. So do there bloom and blossom in the garden of the spirit pervading mankind, foliage and flowers of all shades and grades of devotion and religious emotions.

Teach me, my God, to see that I have no right to impose my own way of thinking upon others. Teach me to acknowledge and honor the right of all to pray and worship and sacrifice in their own way. Let me not be a purist and regard those as irreligious who regard not formalism. Keep me free from sectarian spirit, and give me strength to root out from my heart bigotry and fanatic zeal. Teach me to discern true religion from religiosity. Fill my mind and heart, Ahura Mazda, with the spirit of toleration.

## *Teach me elegance and sweetness of manners, Ahura Mazda*

Man is mirrored in his manners and his worth is valued according to his manners. A well-bred man is a man of good and gentle manners. It is not birth or rank or wealth that makes a lady or a gentleman. A peasant can be a gentleman, as a peasant-woman can be a lady. Nobility of character dwells equally well in a villa or a chateau, as in a cottage or a garret. Talents and valor and wealth rise in worth with good manners and good manners from character. This world were paradise, if all who inhabit it were genteel men and genteel women.

Let me not be vulgar and vain, proud and rude. Let me polish the roughness and rudeness of my manners. Let me be courteous in speech and with life sweetened by good manners, let me convey cheer and pleasure and happiness to all whom I meet.

Let me be affable and amiable of disposition. Let my manners be charming and pleasing and spontaneous and simple. Let me bear like a gentleman. Let me behave with propriety of manners and with deference to the feelings of others.

Help me, to maintain unblemished my honor, spotless my reputation, and unscathed the glorious name of my dear community.

Zarathushtra, at the gray dawn of history, was the first gentleman. A gentleman is world's good citizen, thy good man, and a good Zoroastrian, Ahura Mazda.

## *Scandal is a heinous sin, says Zarathushtra*

Zarathushtra brands scandal or slander, backbiting or calumny as an inexpiable sin. Scandal creeps and crawls like a loathsome reptile or flies like a winged snake. Upon swift wings does it fly from mouth to mouth. It grows wild like weeds and finds its widest currency. Scandal wallows in mire and swamp and flings mud on all passers-by. Scandal aims at dishonoring innocent persons, robbing them of their good names, wounding their fame, blighting their reputation, blasting their character. Scandal is a mean and mendacious art to bring about the degradation and downfall of the innocent against whom an evil-wishing person has a grudge or to whom he feels dislike.

Scandal accuses, condemns, traduces, maligns, and blasphemes in one breath and is out to murder reputations. Scandal is allied to cowardice. It dares not face its victim. It lurks and skulks in its hovel and assails him at his back and spits its venom on him from behind.

Sharper than the edge of a spear or sword is the dart of scandal. It stabs and wounds and lacerates and kills. Scandal sings and sears and scorches and burns. It bites like a serpent and stings like an adder.

Nothing in the world can restrain a slanderous tongue. It spares none. Sage and saint cannot escape it. Virtue and chastity are not secure against its onslaught.

Scandal thrives on human weakness. Foul and filthy in its nature, it finds its place among the graceful and great. Credulous ear is ever eager to believe anything and everything poured into it. The idle tongue of the talebearer wags and many a one is ever at hand to lend an easy ear and believe and credit the scandal. There are those that enjoy talking scandal as a means of killing time and find a malicious delight in giving currency to it. Scandal, thus, fills the air in human society, civilized and refined.

Recounting the ghastly spectacle of the vision vouchsafed him of hell, Viraf relates that a backbiter's soul is attacked from the rear for such a sinner indulges in secret calumnies at the back of his victim in this world. The tongue of a slanderer, he says, is gnawed by serpents and scorpions and the noxious creatures of inferno.

Teach us to be listless and deaf to the tales of calumny they tell. Strengthen our will to refuse them a lodgment in our minds. Foul and stinking is the breath of the scandalmonger. Keep us always free from its contamination. Guard and protect our community from the canker of scandal that eats its heart, Ahura Mazda.

## *Poverty protected by virtue*

Life, to a vast majority, is a disinheritance. Providence feeds some to the fill, but leaves many even without their daily feed. Few are born with silver spoons in their mouths, when many enter the world without even wooden ladles. The poor have more mouths than they can fill.

Poverty fetters ambition and stifles the latent powers of the poor to rise to greatness. Many who can rise to eminence, live unknown and die unrecognized. Poverty stifles genius.

The poor are doomed to a sordid grind of bare existence. They earn barest wages enough to enable them to live for endless and cheerless toil. Abject poverty breeds destitution, wretchedness, squalor, and crime. It casts orphans upon the world, throws women on the streets of great cities, and drives able-bodied persons to steal and rob and murder. Born and bred in the lap of poverty, the poor live lives of bleak misery. They have not enough nourishing food that they can put some flesh on their bones. Mothers with hollow eyes and sunken cheeks and emaciated with disease, press their babes to their dry breasts. Wringing their hands in utter helplessness and despair at their unbearable misery, the poor eat their morsels moistened by their tears.

Nature stands by the poor in the country and helps them to endure poverty better than in large, industrial towns. It gives them fresh air and sunshine in abundance. They drink the sweet scent of the earth and the green trees and dead leaves that fall upon the ground. They feel kinship with nature who showers blessings upon them, which are denied to the poor living in the chawls of big towns. Industry rears squalid population. Both man and nature combine to make life of the poor miserable in towns. Here they live in the midst of the squalor of congested quarters. Here they are herded together, men, women, and children, within the walls of windowless rooms, oblivious of the needs of physical hygiene and devoid of the sense of moral decency. Here they live in the midst of blinding smoke belching from the factory chimneys. Here they live in a drab and dreary environment. The misery of the poor, all over the world, beggars language. Our civilization is not sufficiently civil.

Zarathushtra is moved by the sight of poverty and his heart aches with pity for them. He exhorts all to think of the poor and to help them and ameliorate their condition. Enable me to do my duty towards thy poor, Ahura Mazda, and to lighten the load of their sufferings. If it pleases thee that I should live my life in poverty, enable me to endure it patiently and bravely. Teach me to see that there is no shame in honest poverty. Let me not bring poverty over myself by indolence or extravagance or intemperance in life. Let me be poor in purse, if such is thy will, but help me to be rich in spirit and to protect my poverty by Asha's righteousness, O thou Protector and Sustainer of the poor.

## *Wealth is a mirage*

Our age has made wealth the end and aim of life. A frenzied struggle is witnessed all around to accumulate wealth. With the unquenchable passion for wealth, people strain every nerve at a breaking point to grasp it.

Thou, Mazda, hast planned plenty for all and poverty for none, but man has reversed this order and made plenty for few and poverty for many. Few have much, when many have little or nothing. Fortune sits on the foreheads of the rich and they share the world between them. They have all that life can give and they never know what it is to want money. They spend money as freely as if it were water.

The luxurious dwellings and sumptuous banquets and fine raiments of the rich mock the mud huts of the poor and their coarse food and tatters and rags. The rich eat the dainties at a banquet, whose cost would provide a feast to a score of poor persons that seldom know two meals a day. The parings of the rich can enrich the poor. Gilded chandeliers brighten their rooms that are warmed by the fire burning on the blazing hearth. They lounge on the green lawn in the cool of the night and spend their summer on the hills or at the watering places. They imbibe sparkling wine filled in golden cups. Fondly they indulge their children in every caprice of theirs. They live a round of incessant gaieties and spend their wealth in revelry. Filled to satiety, they go to bed, while the poor sleep on their empty stomachs.

The foolish among the rich give themselves airs of superiority on the strength of their wealth. They flaunt ostentation and arrogance in the face of the poor. Their proud disdain burn into the hearts of the poor like hot iron. The feasting and enjoyments of the rich in the midst of the worldwide privations and sufferings give provocation.

But wealth in itself is not happiness and the rich are not always happy because they have wealth. The poor struggle with poverty, the rich with ennui. Time hangs heavily on their hands. Chronic dyspeptic are many among the rich and they know not happiness. Supplied though they are with every possible material want, but with health not their own, they feel themselves more wretched than the poor but healthy of their servants. In the midst of a glut of the good things of life, they experience desolation and emptiness of spirit. In vain do they woo sleep and toss in their beds, while the poor sleep like logs and rise refreshed in the morn.

A parasite is wealth. It is futile and foolish to reckon upon fickle fortune. Like a bird flying from tree to tree, wealth stays not long with any. When death presents its peremptory summons and the heart stops moving and the eyes are closed and the body does not stir and the soul leaves the body, neither does the soul carry the wealth to the other world, nor does the body bear the rich load to the Tower of Silence, where vultures perch on the walls waiting as rivals to tear and devour the worthless body between themselves.

Teach the rich that are in our midst, Ahura Mazda, that wealth shines where the rich are humble and kind. Man honors not and praises not thy sun for its height and its brilliance, but because of the bounty it bestows and the blessings it showers upon the earth. The rich are not great for their riches, but they are great, when they wisely and generously use their wealth to succor the poor and the needy.

## *Man alone thinks and thoughts make man*

Marvelous is the power of thought. Thinking is as natural to man as breathing. Thought has lifted man above the level of the animal world. It has raised him from the savage to the civilized state in life. Man's thought rules the world. The power to think is man's most precious right and his proudest privilege.

Thought is the seed of speech and action. When the seed is sound and strong, it germinates and sprouts and blossoms in the harvest of fine words and deeds.

Man learns by seeing and hearing and reading the book of nature and studying human nature, but he learns the best by thinking. What he has pondered and thought over fills his mind and enriches it with lasting knowledge.

He lives best who thinks best. Let me then think for myself and let me never think through others. I may have my work done by others for me, but let me never get my thinking done for me by others. Let me think and think well and think deep, let me always think.

Let me be a man of learning, but let me also be a thinker of original thoughts and creative thoughts. Let reason mould and regulate and control my thinking. Give me a thinking habit and give me clear thinking, before I venture upon bold thinking and profound thinking, Ahura Mazda.

Let me think good thoughts and great thoughts and noble thoughts and gentle thoughts and beautiful thoughts and virtuous thoughts, and let them all build my character.

Vohu Manah is thy Good Thought, Ahura Mazda. Let him nurture my mind with his good thoughts. Let good thoughts alone ripen into words and deeds and let evil thoughts of Aka Manah wither and perish. Let righteous thoughts and devotional thoughts be my constant companions. Let my pious thoughts, concentrated on thee, be my silent daily prayer, Ahura Mazda.

## *Credulity thinks not, reasons not, but believes*

Credulity sees not and hears not and cogitates not. It is the child-mind that refuses to grow. It thrives where ignorance, superstition, and fear lull man's intellect to sleep. It cares not for reflection, discrimination, and judgment. It just believes without any consideration of the possibility or otherwise of a question. It is wedded to an exuberance of unbalanced and unreasoned faith. It is the negation of the scientific way of thinking.

Credulity is the failing of well-meaning visionaries, pious zealots, and ardent enthusiasts. Extraordinary is the appetite of the credulous for the marvelous. Glibly and greedily they swallow vague stories and fabulous tales as truth. They take flashes of vague thoughts as inspiration and visions as verities. They invest legends and myths with a symbolic significance. They give credence to the incredible, foolish and the false. There is nothing so illogical and absurd that the credulous will not believe. They always believe and believe too easily and too readily and too much.

Let me not live in a fairyland, nor in a dream land. Let me live in the world of reality and face hard facts of life. Above all, let me be a man of practical, common sense. Thinking is thy most matchless gift to man, Ahura Mazda. Teach me how to think and lead me to think in accordance with the recognized canons of the method of reasoning. Endow me with the gift of clear and accurate thinking, sense of proportion, critical acumen, sound judgment, and historical sense. Enable me to make the best and the truest and the most profitable use of thinking in my life, O thou Prime Thinker.



## *Superstition is based on baseless fear*

Superstition is the irrational interpretation of life by the savage mind. It is born of ignorance and fear and thrives the most where reason is asleep. The superstitious mind lacks balance. It makes a fool of the wise man.

Superstition bends its knees to gods and demons alike. It is the ignorant handmaid of religion. Religion is based on the reasoned belief in the eternal verities of life. Superstition, on the other hand, is the irrational belief in anything and everything. It is the surfeit of religion.

The mischief wrought by superstition is mostly confined to the ignorant and the people of feeble intelligence. Popular education is destined to give a death-blow to superstition. Yet often does it fail to kill it among persons in whom the superstitious habit of mind is strong and the caveman within them rules supreme. Many men and women with trained intellects find it difficult to free themselves from superstitious ideas indelibly engraved upon their imagination and superstitious fears implanted in their minds that are nursed upon superstition from infancy. Superstitious regard for lucky and unlucky days, for omens and portents, for signs and apparitions and the like cannot be discarded by them in the daily affairs of life.

Superstition encrusts religion with primitive beliefs of infant humanity and profanes its pristine purity. Religion carries the dead weight of the superstitious accretions.

I am sore afraid in my weakness, from the ghosts of my own imagination, that haunt me and rob me of the peace of my mind. I Fear the foes that have no existence outside my imagination. Superstition makes me timid and fatalistic and drives me to bow my head and bend my knees to gods that are no gods.

Thus have I been disloyal to thee, Ahura Mazda, my only true God. I have been ungrateful to thee; I have lied unto thee. In my folly have I shown a lack of confidence in thee and thy unfailing power to protect me against all the ills of life. I repent and seek thy forgiveness, O Merciful One.

Direct my faltering feet back to thee. Be thou my strength when weakness and fear oppress me and threaten to overpower me. I am safe under thy protecting wing. I find no rest save in thee. Strengthen my faith in thee. Let my devotion for thee fill my whole being, that I may worship thee and thee alone, Ahura Mazda.

## *Prepared to face death*

Peremptory is the summons of death; none can resist it. When the hour sounds and death knocks at the door, nothing in the world can keep it out. Not priest, nor prince, nor peasant can ever retard the hour of death. Grim death is ever at man's heels. It is closer to him than his shadow.

A sudden shadow falls upon the house and, prowling with padded feet and walking with stealthy steps, Astovidhotu, the deadly bone-divider, comes lurking in every corner of the house. He pounces upon his unfortunate victim, unaware of his impending doom, and carries him away from his happy household.

Let me not forget that my present life is a prelude to the future life and that it is a pilgrimage of short duration to a higher life, soon to begin. Let me not in my ignorance and intoxication of the pride of youth, remain encircled in the heat of passion and enchained in the bond of desires, and forget the transitoriness and death of the body. Let me not be indifferent to my fate when I see my fellow-beings snatched away daily from the earth. Help me to remember, O thou unerring Reminder, that my own turn may come at any moment and, though faring sumptuously in the forenoon, my fall may come in the afternoon.

Vouchsafe, O my Companion in death as in life, that I may count every day as a forward footstep towards death and live every day as if it were my last, that, fully prepared to face death, I may meet the end of my life upon earth with calm and placid face and with a smile upon my lips.

## *Death the harvester*

Death the grim harvester is heedless of the seasons of life. Old age and sickness provide a rich harvest for it. As the frosty wind cuts off the buds that have not yet blossomed and flowered, so does death fall as a noiseless shadow upon sprouting human seedlings and blows its withering wind upon them. Its darkness closes on them and they freeze in its icy embrace and fade away in angelic childhood.

Like the farmer that mows down grass in the field, death swings its sickle and takes away vast numbers in the heyday of their summer. Still others it strikes mercilessly in the full vigor of their lives, before their life-work is finished and they have enjoyed the greatness they have built.

Thou hast ordained in thy wisdom, O Wise Lord, that men cannot die at their will. There are those that have well borne the burden of life and it is time for them to rest. Death to them is sweeter than life and in vain do they long for liberating death. They should have long since shaken the dust from off their feet and gone the way their fathers had gone. But still do they live and live to see the younger ones of their households snatched from them in the morning of their lives. In bed do they linger suffering excruciating agonies of pain. When the beatings of the wings of the tantalizing death are heard at last, death seems to be stalking with cruel slowness leisurely moving with feet of lead and leaves them long writhing in the convulsions of the fading life.

Help me, Ahura Mazda, to be strong in virtue, robust in righteousness, and undaunted in goodness that I may make light of death and frighten and fight it and go on strenuously working every day and every hour of my short life for furtherance of goodness in thy world. Grant in thy mercy, that when death may in the end triumph over me and cast its dismal shadow on my face and close my eyes forever to the world, I may peacefully resign myself in the arms of eternal sleep in supreme satisfaction of having played my part well during the short span of my life.

## *Console the disconsolate, Ahura Mazda*

Great is the gloom that death casts around us. Time fails to soften the sorrows and heal the wounds of those that are disconsolate by temperament. Endowed with deep emotional nature and gentle feelings, they cannot forget the dear ones that are torn from them. They cannot be comforted by consoling words.

Death lacerates the heart of fond parents by snatching away from their bosom their only child that was the apple of their eyes. The devoted wife in the neighborhood is deprived of her doting husband, who was the idol of her heart and was all that she most loved on earth. Life seems to be empty and hollow to yet another father who has lost his youthful son, who was the joy of his heart and pride of his life.

The bereaved grieve and weep, sigh and sob, cry and pray that thou, their God, may give them back their dear ones, who had shared their joys and sorrows at the fire hearth, but thou dost not give them back. The dead have gone to the world from where there is no return.

With the passing away of their beloved ones, flowers seem to have lost their fragrance, life is shorn of its sweetness, the world has lost its light, and everything around seems to be dead to them.

The dead do not pass out of the lives of their sorrowing survivors. The music of their voices lingers in their minds, their images float before their vision, their faces haunt them during the day, and they dream them at night. If they walk in the garden they think they see the airy figures of their dear ones under the shade of the pine trees, if they turn aside they feel they are followed by the ghosts of their dead, if they close the door of their abodes they think they hear the dead knocking at their doors, if they open the doors they hear the retreating steps of the dead.

Heal the wounds, I pray, of their bruised and broken hearts, thou the Compassionate Healer. Wipe away the hot tears that drench their eyes swollen with weeping. Give them courage when sorrow has cast them down. Sustain them in their grief and give them strength to bear their suffering. Sorely do they need thy sympathy and pity. Comfort them with thy soothing protection. By day and by night, they moan to thee for they have none but thee for their refuge. Be by their side, Ahura Mazda, that forlorn in life as they are, they may lean on thee, their loving Father, in their loneliness.

## *Give me a painless death, Ahura Mazda*

Killing is the kiss of death, its embrace, extinction. The bravest heart quails to look it in the face and trembles at its sight. The strong in body and robust in mind and defiant of spirit and undaunted in courage, that think they can make light of death and frighten and fight death itself, are in the end overpowered by the all conquering death.

Like camels padding softly in the sand, cowardly death walks with deadened steps. Used to stratagem, he lurks in silence and works by ambush and surprisal. He pounces upon his victim who now lies helplessly tossing in bed, fighting in vain to keep off death's icy hands circling round his neck to smother and squeeze out his life. Death's ghastly pallor comes over his livid face, the breath begins to rattle laboriously in the throat, his voice is stilled, he stares with sightless eyes, his dear ones around him watch with bated breath his every breath fearing it to be his last, the convulsions of the body, at grip with soul struggling to leave it, grow keener, life gradually ebbs out of him, it dries up in his veins, the heart ceases its beating, and he gives up his ghost. Triumphant death prostrates him in the dust.

When my body begins to break, and my mind becomes feeble, when my eyesight fails and hearing fades, when the lamp of my life burns low and weak in life and limb I grow; then when certain death sounds its fatal summons, give me strength and courage to discharge life's last debt, Ahura Mazda. When the day of my toil is over and the night calls me to rest, let not the evening twilight be longer and leave me not lingering on my sick-bed. When my life does hang on a thin thread and I live on the brink of the grave suffering unbearable pain, hasten, in thy mercy, O Merciful Lord, death the deliverer and command him not to kill me inch by inch but to give me a speedy, painless death.

## *The Tower of Silence*

The iron gate turns heavily upon its hinges with a jarring noise and dead enters the Tower of Silence. No roof the charnel-house has, no balcony, no corridor, no parlour. A circular enclosure, open to the sky, dreary and dreadful, it gives its inmates but a bare stony bed, with no pillow and no covering. On this grim house of gloom and darkness have settled desolation and death forever.

Hither are borne men and women and children, high and low, rich and poor, laymen and priest, friend and foe, master and servant, brave and coward and philanthropist and miser, strong and weak, beautiful and ugly, and righteous and wicked. In this abode of oblivion sleep wealth with poverty, honor with shame, wisdom with folly, greatness with littleness, virtue with vice. Unequal in life, all lie equal in death. No mine, no thine, no his, no hers, all inseparable and undistinguishable, sleep side by side, partners and equals. Death levels here the high and low alike.

The ghastly and greedy vultures, arrayed on the round, high walls, are screaming and screeching and struggling and scrambling to pounce upon the new-coming guest of the dismal, dark place. Soon will they wildly scratch and scrape and tear with claws and beaks the corpse limb from limb. They will feast on the flesh tended with tender care and fatted with sumptuous food. They will make a meal of the flesh and crack the bones to suck the marrow from within. Denuded of the flesh, the dried bones of all classes and ranks will then jumble in a medley in the common well of obscurity, to crumble into dust by heat and cold and winds and rains, aided by time. The greatest and the mightiest and the best and the fairest will thus turn into a handful of dust and end in sepulchral nothingness.

Teach us all, O Teacher Divine, our varied lessons, humility to the haughty, solace and comfort to the poor and down-trodden, and a warning to the young and old that, bereft of goodness, hollow and empty are the pride of birth and pomp of power, and boast of beauty and arrogance of riches, a mockery of human vanity.

## *The belief in immortality*

Death is the final doom, says the skeptic, and there is no beyond. Life is but the beginning of death and death is everything. From oblivion we come and to oblivion we return. We play our part and are away forever. All joy and sorrow, success and failure, love and hate, fame and shame, peace and strife, happiness and misery--all, all but lead to stillness and darkness and death. This life is all in all and let us live it fully

and sumptuously. This lovely world with its hundred joys and pleasures is enough for us and there is no need of yearning for another which does not exist. To sacrifice joy on earth in the hope of felicity in heaven is to give up the substance for the shadow.

Such insipid and cold disbelief of the skeptic chills the heart, blights the nobility of human nature, and corrodes the spirit where it becomes the article of faith.

Zarathushtra, my prophet, is the first among mortals to teach mankind unequivocally that all is not lost when life is lost and death is not the end of life. Two different worlds there are, he affirms, this the earthly or the corporeal, other the heavenly or the spiritual. Body and soul form two constituents in the formation of man. The soul exists for the short span of its life on earth in the tenement of the body, and with the crumbling of the material frame into dust, wings its flight heavenward. The bodily death does not mean the death of the soul, for it is immortal. Death then, is not the end of man's life and he lives in heaven in spirit to reap the harvest of its life upon earth. The anomalies of earthly life find their final adjustment in heaven, so says he who is our prophet sublime.

Strengthen my faith in the life hereafter, Ahura Mazda, thou in whom man's faith finds its consummate strength. Fill my mind and heart with the hope of the life of spirit in heaven with thee, for it gives meaning to this life, inculcates in me a robust faith in thy goodness and sustains me now when I live my life of the body.

## *Daena, conscience escorts the soul to the world of the dead*

Daena, the moral and religious conscience of man accompanies the soul, after his bodily death, to the next world. It leads the soul to the abode of weal or woe, according to the righteous or wicked life led by the soul upon earth.

On the dawn of the fourth day after death, the soul of the righteous person makes its triumphal ascent to heaven. A sweet-scented wind, sweeter by far than any which the soul ever inhaled on earth, gently flaps its wings in its face and wafts perfume all around.

There appears then to the soul its own daena, in the shape of a damsel of unsurpassed beauty, the fairest of the fair in the world, the like of which the soul had neither seen nor heard tell of in the material world. It is the impersonation of the soul's own good thoughts, good words, and good deeds in life, the true reflex of its character. Thus does the soul of the righteous person advance to the realms of beatitude.

On the dreadful and dreary path, on the other hand, marches the soul of the wicked one, led by its daena. The soul, during life, was refractory to the wise counsels of its conscience and the conscience now denounces it to the Divine Judge. The torment of its life upon earth was sufficient expiation of its wrong. But that is not the-end of its suffering. Eating at its heart, daena made its earthly life unbearable and it still pursues the wicked soul as its terrible avenger.

Through the bitter and biting and foul-scented wind blowing from the northern regions, the unfortunate soul now passes. As the personification of its evil thoughts, evil words, and evil deeds its daena now appears before it in the shape of an ugly old woman. Mercilessly it taunts the soul for its wicked life and delivers it to the world Of darkness.

Give me wisdom, O God, to see that I am undone, if I follow not the dictates of my daena and break away from it. Let me dutifully refer the guidance of the actions of my life to my daena. Let me always hear its still, sound voice and faithfully follow its lead, that my guardian and guide on earth, my daena may willingly escort me at last to thee in heaven Ahura Mazda.



## *Joyous welcome awaits the righteous in heaven*

Heaven is the best and the shining and the all happy abode of the righteous. So bright is its light that words can describe it not, nor tongue can tell. Beyond compare is the bliss that the denizens of heaven enjoy. It is the place of eternal peace and rest and joy.

Ahura Mazda, the Great King of heaven, sits enthroned in Garonmana, the Abode of Song. In these realms of eternal light, stand round the resplendent throne of the lord God, the Holy Immortals and the Adorable Ones, the Amesha Spentas and the Yazatas, the Fravashis the unfailing friends and guardians of the saintly souls of the dead, all clad in robes of pure, white hue.

With the golden key in his hands Asha guards the gates of heaven. Heaven is the gift of Asha to those who, wedded to his righteousness in life, walk the path of Righteousness, the only true path of life upon earth.

Heaven is my birthplace and to heaven will I make my homeward journey, when death liberates me from my earthly bonds. Steep is the ascent to heaven. With truthful and virtuous conduct will I lighten my soul that easily it can climb the highest heights of heaven. Faithful to the pious memory of the dead, I will pay them my dutiful homage and I will bring to them sacrificial offerings of good thoughts and good words and good deeds. In their love for me will they receive me with open arms, when death releases me for my return to my heavenly home. Vohu Manah, the premier of heaven, arrayed in dazzling bright, rises from his golden throne and welcomes every righteous soul with the words: "Hail thee, thou that cometh from the world, perishable to that which is imperishable." Help me, I pray, to be one of the happy group of the righteous to join thy heavenly hosts, Ahura Mazda.

There is heaven, Ahura Mazda, wherever thou art. To be with thee is to be in heaven. I need not then wait till death brings me to greet thee. Verily earth itself is heaven for me, when thou, in thy goodness, dost take me in thy fold. My heart is my heaven, when thou dost abide there. When I walk with thee, I tread the golden pavement of paradise. O, leave me not then, my lord, for garden is wilderness and nectar is poison and light is darkness, if thou dost depart from me. Let me live with thee while alive and let me live with thee again when I am dead, in heaven in life, in heaven in death, always and ever in heaven, O Heavenly Father.

## *War is mass insanity*

Life is struggle. Thou, Ahura Mazda, has ordained that man shall always fight ignorance, destitution, disease and vice. Man, in his madness, fights man instead. Man is all men's brother, as woman is all women's sister. Yet every man is against his fellow-men and a neighbor gnashes his teeth on his neighbor. Man has organized the world on a war basis. Wars have been chronic in history and races have destroyed races. Predatory passion has masqueraded as patriotism. Man has sung to the military glory, has long regarded war as a tonic for peoples and, in his folly, considered it as a biological necessity. The weak have always lived in fear of the strong and the fear of the coming invader has always frozen the blood in the veins of the frightened weak.

War is the worst scourge that destroys men, money, and morals. Nations are periodically sacrificing the blood and treasure of their countries in war. When man precipitates war, he falls from his natural state. He relapses into barbarism. War turns him overnight to his primitive savagery. It debases his manhood. From the angel that he aspires to be in peace, he is on the downward path of becoming a demon. War makes him as pugnacious as a savage. He throws off all restraints that society puts upon him. Conventions that serve splendidly to regulate human affairs in times of peace, are torn up. Hideous savagery is exhibited in war and man's savage rage knows no bounds. Man fights with the fury and ferocity of wild beasts.

Man measures not man in modern warfare in strength and strategy. Valor fights not valor, machine fights man. War is the greatest crime man perpetrates against man. It is a great gamble in life and wealth of the nations of the world. It leaves empty beds in millions of houses. It empties the abodes of men that the graves may be filled. Angra Mainyu, the Evil Spirit, reaps his richest harvests on the battlefields. War withers the flower of nations. It upsets the equilibrium of sexes by eliminating males. It destroys the healthy and the strong among the male population and leaves the weak and crippled to propagate a nation of weaklings.

Flushed by victory, the arrogant victor imposes upon the vanquished an iniquitous and unrighteous peace of vengeance, which sows the seeds of a new war. Nations have turned the world into a cauldron of boiling and burning passions, rancorous racial hatred and jealousy, stirred and sharpened by distrust and suspicion that gnaw the vitals of mankind.

Lead the nations of the world to realize that war is an anachronism, Ahura Mazda. Let the wisdom of supplanting the principle of arbitrament of arms by that of the arbitrament of law seize the imagination of the rulers. Let them understand the advisability of resorting to negotiations to settle international disputes. Let all see the folly of holding the glamour and romance of war before the youths of the world. Let everybody see that modern war is ruinous to all and profitable to none. It is the war of universal extermination. International cooperation alone can save the world from disruption and ruin toward which it is rushing headlong.

Men have now ceased fighting over religion as they did in ancient times. May the day dawn soon over the world when nations may cease fighting over nationalism, political and economic.

## *The priceless boon of peace*

Peace is what man prays for by day and by night. Peace he seeks for himself on earth during life and peace for his soul in heaven when dead. Life of avarice and envy destroys peace in this world, life of vice and sin in the next world.

Peace nurtures cultures and civilizations. All law and order and justice and prosperity and progress cease, when peace flees from the land.

Sad is the commentary on human affairs that, due to mutual distrust, suspicion, jealousy, peace is not possible unless nations keep themselves prepared for war. Peace turns out to be a respite to sharpen the sword and, aided by science, plan with diabolic ingenuity a war more deadly and destructive than ever before.

Man's hope of lasting peace between the nations of the world remains still but a pious sentiment, a dream. Lead men and women of all nations to live like brothers and sisters in amity. Lead the rulers of nations to establish the reign of fraternity and peace. May mutual understanding smite misunderstanding, may concord smite discord. May the new era of the brotherhood of man and the federation of the world dawn upon the earth and may lasting peace come unto the peoples of the world, is the universal prayer unto thee of the suffering humanity, Ahura Mazda.

## *The Spring*

Mithra's daylight breaks across high Alburz and rends the veil of the bleak winter's night. The dark and cold night is dead and the morn has dawned upon the earth with light and warmth. The snow will now melt on the mountains and life-giving waters of the rivers and brooks will flow. Everything everywhere is green where all was gray but yesterday. The sweet, smiling Spring, the season's youngest and fairest and best, is born. We greet her with welcome song and joyful heart.

The icy silence of the frosty winter is broken and the fields and forests are alive with the buzzing sound of new life. The storm and strife of winter have ended and cheer and peace have come. Foliage and flower are springing up where all was dreary and dry. The sleeping buds and bushes are awake and seeds and plants are rising. Blades of tender grass and green sprouts and opening buds spring to birth and the earth dons the garment of green. The earth is strewn with fragrant flowers of gay and glowing colors and the trees are arrayed with blooming boughs and blossoms. The branches are clothed with leaves and loaded with luscious fruits. The fields that were bare are waving with rich harvests of golden grain. The orchards and vineyard are crowned with fruit-bearing trees that bend under the burden of bounteous fruits. The farmer grows fodder and food in abundance for beasts and birds and men. The shepherd leads his flocks to pastures green, where grass does wave in gladsome glee.

The hills and vales and dales are ringing with joy and the birds fill the air with vernal melodies. Come, ye worshippers of Mazda, let us sing our song of praise to the Lord of Spring in grateful strain.

May the dawning of the spring give us bodily vigor and awake in us zeal and fervor for our daily duties, may it shed light of knowledge and wisdom upon our minds, may it flood our hearts with the warmth of righteousness, and may it bring life sublime to our spirits, O Ahura Mazda.

## *Jamshid-i-Nauruz*

To Boundless Time, O Ahura Mazda, is born a babe this day. The earth has run her yearly round and the sun enters the vernal equinox with majestic grandeur. Jamshid of Kingly Glory was first among mankind to celebrate this, the festal day of the spring, amid universal thanksgiving and feasting and rejoicing, and named it Nauruz or the New Year's Day.

We bow our heads in thankfulness to thee that this national festival of the Golden Age of Iran has survived the ravages of time and remains to this day as an undying memorial to the great and glorious king.

Nature showers her bounteous gifts all around and hails this auspicious day. The earth wears the green of spring-time and glories in regaining her youthful beauty. New life is buzzing everywhere and everything is throbbing with budding life. The hedges and groves resound with the ravishing and sweet melodies of a myriad winged inhabitants of the air, who wish all sentient creatures nature's Happy New Year.

Health and happiness such as mankind had never known abounded in the glorious reign of the renowned king and old age and death, they say, were unknown in the land. Thou alone, O Ever-living Lord, dost not age and dost not die. All that are born do blossom and bloom, but to wither and fade like leaves of the tree. Vouchsafe, in thy mercy, that untimely old age and untimely death may not overtake us. May the budding season bring for us soundness of body and vigor of mind, may the mellow rays of the new sun quicken our hearts, and may the vernal beacon-light lead our souls on the path of the new life that opens with Jamshid-i-Nauruz.

## *Life glides on the joyous wings of Hope*

Thou hast ingrained hope in the human breast, Ahura Mazda. Life is livable as long as there is a flicker of hope. Man hopes as long as he breathes. Hope lives with life and dies with death.

Man always hopes. If reality of life fails to give him hope, desperately does he cling to anything, even illusion, if happy illusion lends him hope, for life without hope is a living death.

Hope is fruitful and creative. Hope is an asset upon which we can draw. It is our potential health and wealth and happiness and everything which we have not but hope to have. Hope is something in hand, it is possession in the making. When nothing we have, we have hope at least, O Lord.

Hope gives generously and freely. In our poverty it points to wealth, in our sickness it shows us coming

health, in our sorrow it whispers of joy awaiting us, in our darkness it speaks to us of the dawning light. Hope enables us to endure the hardships of life with courage and contentment. It emboldens us to encounter difficulties and overcome obstacles. Hope sustains and stimulates, comforts and cheers, encourages and inspires us. It engenders in us patience and perseverance.

Let us then hope, and hope wisely. Let not our hopes be disproportionately high, lest the frustration of extravagant hopes and the foundering of wild dreams drive us to despair.

When hope leaves our breasts and fades away, we are chilled to the heart and despair fills our souls. Despair is blank and barren and bankrupt. It is an end, devoid of any future. A beacon of thy hope alone can lighten the gloom of our despair, O merciful God.

Let us not mourn over the sorrows of yesterday, forgetful of the joys that tomorrow has in store for us. Let us not gloat over the dead yesterday of despair, when tomorrow is dawning with tidings full of hope.

Thou, Ahura Mazda, art hope itself. Thy religion is based on hope, Zarathushtra gives us thy message of Hope--hope in the ultimate triumph of good over evil and hope in the destruction of the Kingdom of Wickedness and the coming of thy Kingdom of Righteousness.

A divine destiny awaits us. We will not abandon our hope, nor let it die within us. Our hearts will harbor undying hope, O thou Giver and Sustainer of hope.

## *Ashirvad sanctifies the union of two hearts*

We invoke thy blessings, Ahura Mazda, upon the bridegroom and the bride on this the auspicious day of their wedding. May the Ashirvad ceremony sanctify the union of their hearts. Inspire them to lay the wise counsel of Zarathushtra to heart and live the life of Vohu Manah's good thoughts, of Armaiti's devotion, and to strive to lovingly excel each other in the practice of Asha's righteousness, that their wedded life may be blessed with domestic happiness to the end of their lives.

The twain in one are joined today. May their right hands be tied by the bond of love in lasting union. May the mind of one blend with the mind of the other and heart be in tune with the heart. May the twin spirits be a composite spirit in joy and sorrow, success and failure, prosperity and adversity. May the two come nearer to each other in good thoughts and good words and good deeds from day unto day.

May each transmit something good of each to the other. May each take the best that is in the other and give something better than the best. May each give of one's goodness what the other lacks and give mutual completion to each other in life.

Locked up in the embrace of the wedded love, may they live for each other, may they share each other's feelings, may they lighten each other's load of life, and may they live in the loving fellowship of minds and hearts. May each elevate and embellish what nature has endowed the other. With the hearts knitted together, may the two be whole world to each other. May each one be the life of the other. May he be hers and she be his wholly for all the days of their lives. May each cleave faithfully unto each in body and mind and spirit as the creeper that twines its tendrils round the tall tree. May better than the good come unto them. May it be so even as we pray, Ahura Mazda.

## *Bless our king, Ahura Mazda*

Thou, Ahura Mazda, art the sovereign lord of thy creation. Every head bows and every knee bends, upon earth and in heaven at the mention of thy name, O King of Kings.

Vouchsafe that our gracious king may trustfully place himself under thy guidance and, with the help of his wise councilors and able administrators, rule over his vast subjects with equity and justice.

Help him to bear the burden of the troubles and anxieties of his people. Strengthen him to work for the protection of the poor and the needy and the wronged. Inspire him to live the life of loving service for the weal and welfare of his subjects.

May our king be glorious as Jamshid and good as Faridun and great as Darius and just as Noshirvan.

Lay thy hands, O King Divine, on the head of our noble king in blessing. Give him health and vigor of body and alertness of mind and nobility of heart and a happy life and an illustrious life and a long life. Amen.



## **Chapter II**

## *Let thy love shine upon me, Ahura Mazda*

Look unto me, my loving Lord. Incline thy face unto me. Thy joy fills me. Thou art my hope, my comfort, my peace, my all. My heart knows no rest until it reposes in thee. My mind is in accord with thy mind, my heart is in tune with thy heart. When thou to me art calling, I will hear thy sweet voice that whispers in my ear and follow thee that I and thee may go our ways together. Thou hast planted love in my heart, that I may love thee with my whole being and my whole heart. My life is wrapped up in thee and in thy protecting love. In flame my heart by thy love and kindle it with thy burning love for me.

Let thy grace surround me. Let me find the divine in me and let me love it all life long. Let the flame of thy love ever burn bright in my heart and never be quenched. I fear nothing so much as the loss of thy love. Tasteless and joyless are the sweets of life without thy love.

Dark is the soul that loves not. Love is light. Thou art love, for thou art light. May the softening influence of love be all around me. Let me love thee and let me love thine. Let me give my love to others and let me pour out my love all around. If man loved his fellow men half so well as thou dost love mankind, O God of Love, this world were paradise.

I honour thee with my lips, I embrace thee with my heart. I love thee with my spirit. I long to see thy eyes turned on me, to hear thy voice fall on my ears. I will fix my affections on thee. My heart aches for thee. I long for the favour and glow of thy love.

Barren as the desert becomes my heart, when the fertilizing waters of thy love cease to flow and the fount of my heart gets dry. Let the waters of the fountain of thy love flow in my heart. Let me drink the life-giving water from the fount of thy love and quench the thirst of my soul.

One minute of thy vision is worth all years of life. I will wear my heart away, that I can have thy beatific vision and live in thy loving presence. With love will I steadfastly cleave unto thee all the days of my life and make these mine, mine very own, O Mazda Ahura.

## *Nothing do I need when I have thee, Ahura Mazda*

I address myself to thee, Ahura Mazda, to whom all worship is due. With outstretched arms and open mind and my whole heart, I greet thee in spirit. I will not turn my gaze from thee. My eyes and my ears and my mind and my heart are all lifted up to thee. Lift up thy countenance upon me and make thy face to shine upon me. Thy look sets my soul aflame. I set thy radiant face before me and a gleam of sunshine steals into the darkness of my heart, even as the light of the sun chases away the darkness and gloom of the night. Thy image is engraven in my breast. I give my all to thee. I give myself to thee, both body and soul, wholly and completely, as Zarathushtra did.

My heart speaks of thee. My heart yearns for thee with a yearning, which is never stilled. Nothing in the world can satisfy my hunger and thirst for thee. Thou art the one that can assuage it by becoming mine, my most precious possession, greater and grander, lovelier and dearer by far than the life of my body and the life of my spirit. My joy is in thee, my refuge is in thee, my peace is in thee. Whatever befalls and betides me, I will never leave thee. Let me live before thee and with thee and in thy sight, I humbly pray to thee.

All my life is built round thee. There is nothing to live for, if thou dost leave me. It is life for me, when I gain thee. It is death for me, when I lose thee. Of what avail are the treasures of the world, when thou art lost to me. In spite of my rank and power, I feel wretched when my heart cannot cling to thee. Empty is my house and empty is my heart without thee. When thou art gone the wide world seems empty. Alone and lonely I roam. Abide with me then, O thou God of gods, by day and by night, in life and in death.

First and last my hope is set in thee. Thou art the goodness of the good and wisdom of the wise. Thou art the anchor of rest to my weary soul. Help me to cast my anchor in thy secure haven and I am saved. When thou dost descend into my soul, joy fills my whole being my eyes glow, I look radiant as the sun, my life takes on a brilliant colour and I am at peace with the world. Truth shines on my mind and righteousness burns in my breast, when thou dost dwell in my heart. Thou art all and I am thine. Thou art all and when thou art mine, all is mine, Ahura Mazda.

## *Draw me ever and anon nearer thee, Ahura Mazda*

My beloved prophet Zarathushtra has said, Ahura Mazda, that those who seek thee with pure mind and pure heart, find thee. I long for thee and with purity of mind and purity of heart I now come seeking thee. I will concentrate my thoughts upon thee. Let me find thee and I will be ever thine, thy steward, thy servant, thy soldier to fight for the Kingdom of Righteousness.

By day and by night will I strive to come nearer unto thee. Help me to be drawn nearer unto thee. Let nothing separate me from thee. Let me not live apart from thee. Thou dost lovingly abide in me. Let me then faithfully abide in thee. The sense of thy nearness cheers me, the assurance of thy presence strengthens me. It is well with me, when I am thine and thou art mine. I will not belong to thee in part. I will be wholly thine. May thou be all mine and may I be all thine in life and in death, always and ever thine.

I have enough, more than enough, when I have thee for me. I find everything in thee. In thee I have all that my heart can wish. With thee anything is everything. Health and wealth and happiness and name and fame are nothing without thee. With thee I have all these and more. I need nothing, when thou art mine. With thee as mine, the whole world is mine.

Thou Lord, my God, dost not pride in keeping thyself aloof and distant in thy awful majesty. Zarathushtra saw thee and spoke to thee and greeted thee and so can I. Fill my heart with thy presence, that it may bring the bright gleam of sunshine to me. Let thy Armaiti fill the cup of her devotion for my soul to drink deep, that drunk with nectar, I may be drawn nearer unto thee, Ahura Mazda.

*Desolate hearts, aweary of the world,  
seek refuge in thee, Ahura Mazda*

Life has its sorrows and its griefs, as it has its joys and pleasures. The moment one tentacle of an octopus is cut off, it grows another. Even so trials and tribulations of one kind or another wear out human hearts. Adversity afflicts some, difficulties depress others and sickness and death distress all. The meek and the reticent suffer silently. They groan and moan and suppress their sighs and sorrows and breathe them not into any human ear. They suffer in solitude.

Death is the grief beyond all griefs. The hearts of fond parents are lacerated by death's severance. In the death of their only son, the last ray of light that brightened their lives, recedes. Tears bring but little relief, when the heart is wounded to the death. Bowed down by bereavement, they are lost in gloom brooding. The melancholy mood oppresses them. The hero who has bravely bearded grim death on a hundred battlefields, finds that his dear ones have departed this life at short intervals, leaving him alone to mourn their untimely death. He has none but his own self for company. He feels his isolation bitterly. A sharp shiver runs through his body and makes the blood freeze in his veins. Sorrow lies heavily upon his heart. And now that he is down, his adversaries trample on him.

An unforeseen calamity casts a blight upon another. Agony overwhelms his soul. The tears rise in his throat and break out in a burst of convulsive sobbing. He weeps a torrent of tears. He mourns the misfortune of his life. In dismal darkness is his night shrouded and there is no sign of the dawning morn that may bring light to cheer him. He cannot hold on to hope, for he has lost his grip on it. He becomes weary of his life.

The man in the seat of power finds himself betrayed by those whom he trusted with his honour. He falls disgraced. His friends and admirers desert him. The snobs and toadies and flunkies who flattered him flee from him. The recollection of his lost grandeur, when he was at the zenith of his fame, touches him to the quick. His hair turns gray overnight. The lines of his face deepen. His face becomes haggard. He loses vigor. He grows old in spirit. His heart is deeply grieved. He prays that the earth beneath his feet may open her mouth and swallow him.

What another thought honey in his life proved to be but gall. Financial crisis ruins him. It shatters his nerves and depresses his mind and breaks his heart. The darkness of despondency settles upon his heart. The sad memory of his wealth he had amassed tortures him. Bowed down in spirit, he lives in black despair. His fondest hope fades. His ambition is balked. No twilight of hope is there to drive away the darkness of despair. Worn out, he sinks to rest. For long hours he lies awake brooding tortured with memories of his lost riches. The doleful sound of the hooting of an owl terrifies him. Sinister dreams frighten him, when he sleeps. His day is done, he thinks. Death, he believes, would be mercy to him. Sick of life, he prays for merciful death, but death does not come to him.

Thou, Ahura Mazda, art the eternal refuge of the weak and the weary and the wronged. Thou alone dost take them with tender care to thy bosom and wipe away their tears. Thou art their incomparable comfort in their sorrow. Dark and empty is the world to them without thee. Thy sublime peace possesses their souls, when they put themselves in thy hands and become thy care.

When the hardships of life threaten to overbear and overpower me, give me courage, my Lord, to play the man. Let me not groan under my miseries. Let me not hopelessly and helplessly fall in the slough of despond. Embolden me to fight my misfortune. Let not mental worry and weariness of life conquer me. If nothing avails, help me to forget my sad plight by abstracting myself completely from my present painful condition, and live awhile in the new world of ideas in company of sages and seers, that the light of the morn may break in upon the darkness and gloom of my heart and lighten my grief.

I put my trust in thee, for thou art the stay and support of all, O Most Trustworthy Lord. When misfortune overwhelms me, thou art my safest and surest refuge and hiding place. I resign myself unto thee. I come to thee for I have nowhere else to go. Thou and thou alone art my refuge where I can flee in times of my trouble. In thee only can I find my abiding peace and rest. I am safe, when I repose upon thee. I am secure, when I rest in thee. Thou art my unfailing refuge in weal or woe, Ahura Mazda.

*I will live for thee, Ahura Mazda,  
all the days of my life*

My life is an infinitesimal part of the life which embraces all time, and all space. Yet thou dost always lovingly keep me by thy side secure under thy sheltering care. Thou dost not forsake me, even, when forgetful of thy innumerable favors, I forsake thee and fall away from thee. My friends and kins may give me up, but thou dost never. When all in the world fail me, thou never dost fail me. Safe am I always in thy arms. Thou dost always do thy part towards me, even though I neglect to do mine towards thee.

Thou art the knower of all. Not a leaf falls, but thou knowest it. Thou tellest the number of trees and the leaves upon the trees. Thou knowest the number of the molecules of sand upon earth and thou countest the number of stars overhead. Thou knowest me better than I know myself. Help me then from day unto day, if it but be a little better to know thee and understand thee and comprehend thee. Help me with my whole mind and whole heart and whole soul to think of thee and nothing but thee and to be but a moment with thee, that I can realize thee.

Everything that my eyes light upon reveals thy glory. Thy name is written in the human heart. I will glorify thy name. I will magnify thy name. I will engrave thy name on the tablet of my mind; I will carve thy name on the panel of my heart; that night and day, thy name may remind me of thee; I will brood on thy name. A hundred times will I repeat thy name in my life and rest not until I realize the true nature of thy divinity.

I will do what pleaseth thee. I will do what thou wouldst have me do. Thou art ever eager to make thy will known to me, if I but listened to thee. I will do thy will. I will not let my will run counter to thine. I will make my will run parallel to thine. I will obey thee in word and deed. I will come withersoever thou dost call me. Say what thou willeth and command what thou willeth and I will obey thee. For everything that thou willeth, works for my good.

I will dedicate my body and mind and heart and soul unto thee. My life and my body and my soul and everything I call mine are thine. They belong to thee and thee alone. I dedicate them all to thee. I lay them at thy feet. Cheerfully and voluntarily will I offer myself up to thee. To thy care and keeping will I commit myself.

Zarathushtra lived unto thee and died unto thee. So will I, most gracious God.

*Zarathushtra is thy mirror, in whom  
we see thee, Ahura Mazda*

Zarathushtra alone of all mortals, sayest thou Ahura Mazda, first knew thee as thou art and heard thy words and brought the glad tidings of hope to the troubled world. He came with Asha's Righteousness writ upon his banner and sounded the trumpet and with the clarion call commanded all to don their armor to fight wickedness.

Alarmed at the advent of the prophet of the Good Spirit, the Evil Spirit, tempted Ahura Mazda's chosen one. Nothing beneath the sky could tempt Zarathushtra. He fought temptation and conquered it. With burning indignation, deep earnestness and transparent sympathy, he fired the spirit of his hearers and kindled fiery enthusiasm in their hearts to fight evil. Aflame with the fire of Asha, he proclaimed the Mazda-worshipping religion to our fathers.

Zarathushtra lived the perfect life upon earth to be an example for all. He spoke as man had never spoken. He spoke with Ahura Mazda's voice holy words of wondrous wisdom. He gave himself to all. He befriended outcasts and beggars abandoned by society. He grieved for the griefs not his own. He sorrowed for the sorrows of others. He saved those on the verge of being lost. He worked for the redemption of mankind.

Zarathushtra exhibited joyous and hopeful enthusiasm. He radiated happiness all around. His presence breathed ineffable kindness. His soft and persuasive eloquence touched the soft chords of his hearers. They honored him, loved him and adored him. They threw themselves at his feet. They worshipped his very shadow. They believed that his touch transmitted to them the divine grace.

Zarathushtra loved Ahura Mazda with unfailing devotion. He symbolized perfect manhood in his person. He has died not in death. He lives for ever, the everlasting beacon light of hope to mankind on the Path of Righteousness. He is ever-young and his message is ever new. He is Ahura Mazda's glory of all time.

I will strive to live the life of Zarathushtra, who mirrored Ahura Mazda's image in his holy person. From day unto day will I endeavor to be more and more conformed to his likeness. Faithfully and devoutly will I tread in his footsteps, that I may be influenced by his consummate life, be a worthy heir of his sublime inheritance and have a vestige of his in me.

Leaning on Zarathushtra in life, will I rest in Zarathushtra in death. True unto Zarathushtra in life, true unto Zarathushtra will I be in death. Like-minded with Zarathushtra will I be. A Zoroastrian life will I live and a Zoroastrian death will I die, Ahura Mazda.



## *My Navjote makes me a Mazda-worshipping Zoroastrian*

### *Confessions of the Faith*

Born of Parsi parents, I was Parsi up to this day. The Navjot or the ceremony of the investiture of Sudrah and Kusti, the sacred shirt and girdle, performed this day admits me as a member in the religious fold of my community.

White is the colour, symbolic of purity. The white shirt I wear next to the skin will now onward remind me of my life-long duty to preserve the purity of my body and mind, heart and soul. Purity, for man, says my prophet Zarathushtra, is the best acquisition in life. Purity is life. The sacred shirt is the vestment of purity. The sacred girdle circumvents my waist three times. With it have I girded my loins, in the faithful service of my creator. The material form of my Sudrah and Kusti clothes spiritual significance. Sudrah and Kusti will make up my distinguishing and characteristic costume, indispensable to the day of my death, as a true follower of the Mazda-worshipping religion of Zarathushtra.

I confess myself a Mazdayasnian. From this day will I make thy religion, Ahura Mazda, not an accident in my life, not a mere pastime. It will be the dearest, best and most cherished religion to me. It will be everything to me. It will be my life. I will live it and I will live for it.

Thou art the source of all goodness. Thou art all goodness. My hope is ever in thee and in thy goodness. Help me to grow daily in goodness. Let me add unto each day something good done by me, O thou my most gracious God of goodness. Thou art the symbol of perfection. Let me daily move onward in the attainment of perfection. Thou art wise beyond all wisdom. Thy all-seeing eyes are ever fixed upon me. Thou dost ever keep me in thy sight. Thou art never weary watching me and guarding me by day and by night. My most secret thoughts are open to thee, my innermost desires are known to thee. Thou art the light of the world. Let the light of thy fire burning in my heart illumine my inner world. Shed thy light on my mind and in my heart, that enlightened by thee, I can know thee and understand thee. Thou knowest what is good for me. Innumerable are the gifts that thou dost shower upon me from the abundance of thy goodness. Thou dost give my soul superb grace. Thou art my hope, my final refuge, rest and repose. Thou art the beginning and end of my being. Thou hast created me as thine. Help me to remain as thine in life and in death.

I confess myself a Zoroastrian. Zarathushtra, thy divine messenger and my most beloved prophet, best mirrors thee, Ahura Mazda. I will follow in his wake and do as he did. Strengthen me to perform my duties as a devoted and faithful follower of Zarathushtra, as his sublime religion enjoins on me.

The beautiful edifice of my religion is raised on the foundation of good thoughts, good words, and good deeds. I will fill my mind with good thoughts. I will think good thoughts. I will speak good words and I will do good deeds. I will always walk on the Path of Righteousness, which my blessed prophet teaches me, is the only true path. Truth will be my armor in life.

Prayer is my soul's communion with thee, Ahura Mazda. I pray the best when I act thy religion the best. Steadfast in my devotion to thee and ever true to thee, I will walk in the paths of thy

commandments and keep thy commandments as Zarathushtra has taught me. Ever will I live in conformity to thy will.

I abjure all evil thoughts, evil words and evil deeds. I will abstain from sinning in thought and word and deed. Strict will be the discipline that I will impose on myself and will always approach thee without any guilt on my soul. If perchance in my ignorance or weakness or recklessness, I offend thee and grieve thee and fall away from thee, on my knees will I repent all my sins committed knowingly or unknowingly. Merciful art thou. Deliver me from the bondage of sin. Forgive my sins and help me to cleanse my heart from every taint of sin. Help me to dispel the fogs of sin that hide thy face from me, that I may see thee and know thee. Though thy offender, my forgiving Father, take me back, for I am thine.

Life puts alluring temptation in my way. In the constant conflict of choice between good and evil, help me my Lord, to make the right choice and fight temptation. When thy revelation flooded the holy soul of Zarathushtra, and he entered upon his prophetic mission, in vain did the Evil Spirit strive and struggle to tempt him. Thy chosen one fought temptation and trampled upon it. Temptation fought and defeated, adds to the strength of my character. On no account will I parley with temptation. When temptation assails me, I will fight it and defeat it, with all my will and all my might.

Evil shadows human life. Evil begets evil. The best way to further the good in life is to fight evil. Zarathushtra preaches his militant ethical ideal to wage a relentless war against evil. A true Zoroastrian need no promise of a reward in heaven to arouse his ardour for doing good. He abjures not evil, because he fears future punishment. Man cannot be made to love Ahura Mazda by the threat of hell, but he can be made to hate hell for the love of Ahura Mazda. As a soldier takes the oath of fealty to the king, so is every Zoroastrian arrayed on the side of the King of Kings to fight a stubborn fight, a courageous fight, a heroic fight and die fighting like man against squalor, destitution, disease, falsehood, inequity, vice and wickedness.

Angra Mainyu, the Evil Spirit, is up to some mischief. He grinds his teeth and yells with rage at me. With evil thoughts and evil desires and evil passions, more numerous than the grains of sand, he swoops down to assail me. With passionate hatred and vehement denunciation will I fight his evil brood. I will fight Angra Mainyu hand to hand and foot to foot and hurl him headlong and ground him beneath my heels. I will keep him at bay, I who am the worshipper of Ahura Mazda and follower of Zarathushtra.

## *Conventional religion loses its pristine purity*

Religion is the way of life that the soul has to live upon earth. It is the ascending effort of man towards perfection. In its pristine purity it is the most effective, cohesive force for mankind. It aims at building a world fellowship of men and women on the spiritual foundation.

Religion in its origin, embraces all alike and works for unity. Institutional religion founded upon rituals and sacrifices raises barriers of socio-religious exclusiveness between man and man and becomes exclusive and divisive. Dogmas and doctrines founded on primitive usages and customs, animistic practices and observances become religion, where truth alone should be religion.

Orthodoxy is wedded to fixity. Earnest piety of the orthodox has done incalculable harm in the name of religion all throughout history. Infatuation for formalism is mistaken for genuine religion. It is easier to follow outward observances and ceremonial practices that have acquired pseudo-religious importance and to revel in ritualistic performances, than to act according to the inward promptings of conscience. When emotions are uncontrolled by intellect, sentiment smothers judgment. Dogmatists think not with their brains. They assert with vehemence what their hearts aver and lose the substance in their eager pursuit of the shadow of religion.

Sectarian bigotry believes there is no truth outside its own belief. We quarrel with bitter acrimony over socio-religious practices, rituals and customs. Emotions are roused to fever heat. We fly into great tempers. Bitter polemics stir the community to its depths. Endless dissensions and acrimonious disputations daily eat into the life of our dear community.

The soul feasts with joyous ecstasy upon the sweet memories on the pious life that it has lived upon the earth and not upon the rich repasts consecrated by the living on its behalf. In the world of the dead, merit alone counts; worth alone wins. Rich rituals and burnt offerings brighten not the path to paradise.

Give us wisdom, Ahura Mazda, to see that the world our fathers lived in is not the same world that we live in today. It has moved onward and progressed and changed. Its problems have changed, and its mode of life has changed beyond recognition. The world of infant humanity has blossomed into blooming youth. Lead us, O Lord, to see that true religion is based upon human heart and Asha's righteousness alone is that true religion.

## *Let not my faith in thee be feeble and faint, Ahura Mazda*

Faith is belief in the unseen and unknown. The fabric of religion lives by faith. Faith is the foundation of prayer, as belief is the foundation of religion. Faith beholds light in darkness. Faith soars above time and space. Faith knows no bounds. Faith soars unscaled heights and dives into unfathomable depths.

Faith does not rear its abode on the rock of reason. It is born of intuition. The stars of faith and reason seldom shine together on mental horizon. Faith sees and hears more than reason does. Reason leaves a vacuum in the life of the spirit and chills. Faith warms the heart with hope. Faith is passive, patient and calm. Reason is active, alert and restless.

Faith believes, ventures and accomplishes. Men have moved the world with indomitable faith and blazed their paths to success. Faith gives men zest to do their duty. It inspires them to work with passionate zeal. It gives them steadfast courage to fight heroically against obstacles. It inspires them not to slack their will, till they win their objective and enthralls them to stake their lives in the struggle to fulfil their mission in life.

Superstition clouds reasons and it abdicates. Faith does then sink into credulity. Fancy wings its flight in the realm of imagination and imagination scales the heights of fairy land. Fantasies born of overwrought imagination are taken as spiritual visions. Myths and fables win belief. Vague theories are valued higher than hard realities. Credulous faith degenerates into morbid mysticism and mysticism in its downward trend degenerates into charlatanism of table-rapping, spirit conjuring and spiritualistic seances.

When doubt does assail me, lead me, Ahura Mazda, on the proper path to resume research, that inquiry may end in certainty. Guide me through the wilderness of doubt and disbelief. Let not destructive doubt corrode and kill the life of the spirit in me. When disturbing doubt threatens my faith in thee, let me repose on thy bosom.

Let my eyes of faith penetrate and rend the vicious veil that hides thy face from my eyes of flesh. Faith enables me to understand thee and see thee and commune with thee and live with thee. Let me not lose my faith in thee. Feed my faith. It is my faithlessness that comes between me and thee. When tumult and tempest rage in my mind and in my heart, faith in thee helps me to find the path of peace. Faith in thee supports me, when I am overcome by the weariness of the world. Unshakable is my trust stayed on thee. I trust myself in thy hands. I confide in thee.

I implant my feet firm on the rock of faith. Give me faith to endure whatsoever may betide me. Let nothing shake my faith in human nature. Help me to know myself and have faith in myself. With determined will and unflinching faith, will I hope in thee and believe in thee and trust in thee and cling to thee, that the flame of faith in thee kindled by Zarathushtra in my heart may ever burn bright, Ahura Mazda.

## *Let me not pray by listless rote*

Prayer is the most potent means of loving fellowship between me and thee, Ahura Mazda. It opens the gate of my inner temple to let thee in. Heavy of heart, I kneel to pray and I rise with a lightened heart, when I have unburdened it to thee. I rise with a tranquil mind and a radiant countenance and a clean breast and with heightened zeal and buoyant spirit. Prayer brings me a sensation of relief. Great indeed is the efficacy of prayer. I suffer from the poverty of my soul, when I neglect it.

Unruly feelings and wandering thoughts crowd and clamor to break the stillness and quiet of my mind. I will fight them and rout them. I will silence the tumult of the flesh. I will not pray fitfully and indifferently. I will not offer a distracted prayer. I will pray with concentration and sustained thought. I will not pray amiss and listlessly mutter the Manthras.

My lips voice my supplications. When my lips are silent, my heart takes their place and whispers. Thou needest not sound. Thou dost hear the silent breathing of my prayerful heart.

A noble thought is a prayer. An earnest desire is a prayer. A pious longing is a prayer. Sincere sighing of a penitent heart is a prayer. Honest labor is a prayer. Right living is a prayer.

I pray, for I cannot but pray. Prayer sustains me. In the freshness of the rising dawn, I will begin my day's work with prayer. I tune with my soul, my heart will sing the song of praise with adoration to thee. My life is not long enough to sing thy praise in full. With purity of mind and holiness of heart, I bow to thee, in prayer. I will pray to thee with devotion for thee setting my heart on fire, Ahura Mazda.

*Righteousness paves the path that lies between me and thee,  
Ahura Mazda*

I praise and honor and adore the Fravashis of those men and women of all climes and of all times, who, pure like fire and chaste like snow, have lived for righteousness. Girt with the armor of righteousness, they have fought against wickedness. Their lives have been lives of one long martyrdom. They rose to greatness through suffering for the cause of righteousness. May the noble example of their unflinching confidence in themselves animate myself to face hardships and overcome obstacles and walk steadfastly on the Path of Righteousness under thy guidance, Ahura Mazda.

Righteousness lies not in the scrupulous observance of conventionalized socio-religious customs, nor in the performance of elaborate rituals. Life of good thoughts and good words and good deeds alone makes for righteousness. It makes my character fragrant as flower.

Righteousness, like wickedness, is of my own making. Neither is innate in me. The soil of the Kingdom of Righteousness is in the human heart. Heaven, they say, is above and beyond. I will live heavenly life upon earth and bring down heaven in my heart. Brick by brick will I build the tower of righteousness and day by day will I rise higher and higher to reach it. I will make Asha Vahishta's righteousness reign supreme within me.

Far better it is to walk the rugged Path of Righteousness and win happiness as reward than tread the smooth path of wickedness and reap suffering as retribution. Wickedness will finally quail and fall prostrate before righteousness. I will labor to hasten that consummation and contribute my might to the advent of the Kingdom of Righteousness.

I will, feed my life of the body with bread and I will feed my life of the spirit with righteousness. Health and wealth, name and fame may forsake me, but righteousness never. Everything dies. Righteousness alone does not die. Righteousness is richer than riches. Willingly will I let go riches to preserve my righteousness. I will clothe myself in the raiments of righteousness. I will thirst after righteousness. I will not swerve from the Path of Righteousness. I will love righteousness with a lifelong passion. I will follow righteousness like its shadow. My soul will weave the pattern of righteousness on the loom of my life. I will set my feet firmly on the Path of Righteousness for this is the one Path that takes me nearer to thee, Ahura Mazda.

*Mazda's Soldier am I to fight wickedness  
and to work for the Kingdom of Righteousness*

Thou, Ahura Mazda, hast given me this strong and healthy body. It is appended to my soul. It is the citadel of my soul. Material is my body, when spiritual is the soul. My body will one day turn to dust and my soul will wing its way heavenward to render an account of its life upon earth. The soul cannot soar in shackles. Thou hast sown the seeds of virtue in my soul. With the help of my body will I live the life of virtue for the eternal welfare of my soul. More precious is the spiritual self than its bodily raiment.

Angra Mainyu, the Evil Spirit, is the enemy of man. He lets loose his hordes of evil thoughts and unholy desires and vicious passions upon him. Life is a warfare on the part of man with these emissaries of evil. Spenta Mainyu, the Good Spirit, is the friend of man. He helps man in his struggle with evil. It is man's mission in life to fight evil and vanquish it and lay low the Father of Evil.

Strong is Angra Mainyu, but Spenta Mainyu, Ahura Mazda's Holy Spirit, is stronger. I will cleanse my mind of the evil thoughts of the Evil Spirit. I will purge my heart of the evil passions. With strength and courage will I fight evil and keep all evil away from me. I will not let evil thoughts master my mind and evil desires rule my heart.

I will think nothing and speak nothing and do nothing that may offend thee, Ahura Mazda. I will adore thee with all the strength of my being. I will worship thee as long as there is breath in my body. Feed my mind with wisdom and my soul with virtue. Strengthened in character, I will work for righteousness and fight against wickedness.

This life on earth is not all. For anything done amiss, I know, I have to give answer at the Bridge of Judgment, where souls reap as they have sown, good being meted out for good and evil for evil, measure for measure, unto thoughts and words and deeds.

Gold shines the brightest in fire. Righteousness shines the brightest in the all-purifying fire of Asha that thou, Ahura Mazda, hast kindled in my heart. I will live righteousness as Asha gives me to see righteousness.

Thou, Ahura Mazda, has appointed me a fellow worker with thee to co-operate in the mighty work of ushering in the Kingdom of Righteousness. Unmindful of trials and tribulations, sorrows and sufferings, will I work for righteousness and fight against wickedness. Everything at last, will be as thy divine decree has ordained. Truth and righteousness will triumph upon falsehood and wickedness and thy Kingdom of Righteousness will come upon the earth Ahura Mazda.

## *Let me not die with a sin on my soul, Ahura Mazda*

Sin screens thy fair face, Ahura Mazda, from me, as the cloud hides the sun from sight. The mists of sin veil thy light and I grope in darkness. Sin severs me from thee as wide as earth from heaven. Sin enthralls my soul and deadens it to thee.

Zarathushtra taught me the way of life and counseled me to make the best use of it. In my waywardness, I have strayed and sinned. The choice was mine to make or mar my future. My prophet willed that I should so live that, master of myself in full freedom, I may breathe my last. I chose otherwise and lured and led astray on the path of wickedness, blindly and wrecklessly I willed and worked my doom.

Mazda, my Merciful Maker! I have done what I should have left undone. When I should have remembered thee, I have forgotten thee. When I should have been loyal to thee, I have been disloyal to thee. When I should have followed thee, I have forsaken thee. When I should have been like thee, I have been unlike thee. I have sold myself to sin. In vain do I now lap my sin at the threshold of Angra Mainyu, the Evil Spirit. Sin throve in the miasma of my mind. Grievously have I sinned against heaven and against thee and sin is the death of the spirit.

Forlorn do I wander with a heavy load of sin weighing me down. Let me fly to thy bosom to get into communion with thee. I come to thee, for I have nowhere else to go. Thou and thou alone can save me, for there is none but thee. Who but thee can raise me and put me back on the right track. Help me to retrieve myself, before I am lost on the way that leads to woe. I look to thee to listen to the cry of my agonized heart. In my folly did I flee from thee and I have suffered. My life is undone. I come back chastened to thee. I surrender myself completely and unconditionally. I commend myself to thy care. Do with me as it pleases thee. I approach thee in all humility. I bow my head and sink on my knees and humble my heart. Heal me of my infirmity, scatter the gloom and darkness of sin within me. Let the penitence of my inmost heart purge my sins. Forgive in thy mercy, whatsoever that thou dost find amiss in me. I have suffered for my sinful past. Let the sufferings purify my mind and let my penitence cheer my heart for my hopeful future.

The fire of my sincere penitence has now consumed and burnt my sins. I have now cleansed the stains of sin from my heart and my soul. I will not transgress thy laws. I will not fall into sin again. I will make war upon sin. Delivered from the bondage of sin, I will consecrate anew my life unto thee.

I confessed to thee and I prayed to thee to pardon my sins and thou didst forgive them. I returned to thee as thy prodigal son. Thou didst not turn away thy face from me, but kinder than the kindest parent, thou, my ever loving Lord, didst embrace me and take me back to thee, as if I had not wronged thee, disowned thee. Thy peace now descends upon my spirit and thy joy fills my heart. From this hour I am thine, my All-Forgiving Father.



## *Man is man, for he has freedom of will*

Ahura Mazda's two primeval Spirits made their own choice of Good and Evil. The Holy Spirit chose Righteousness. Not so the Evil Spirit. He chose Wickedness. The Yazatas are free and the Amesha Spentas are free. They fall not from their creator. Ahura Mazda has honored man the most by conferring upon him Freedom of Will. This paramount gift of God to man puts him in the rank of angels.

Ahura Mazda has created man free to think as he wills, speak as he wills and do as he wills. He has left it in man's power to choose right or wrong. Man would not be man without freedom to do evil. Man's goodness gains in grace, for he is endowed with the Freedom of Will to do evil. With man comes morality in this world. Freedom of Will is the foundation of human morals. Inconceivable is morality without it. Virtue and vice owe their existence to man's Free Will. What would they be if man's Freedom of Will were not? Man is a free agent. He chooses right or wrong of his own volition. His is the choice and his is the responsibility. He is the builder of his destiny, master of his fortune, good or bad.

Thou, my Creator, hast made me master of my will. It is my will that makes my thoughts and words and deeds good or evil. My will shapes and dictates my actions in life. Its command in my inner world is complete. My will is the absolute sovereign in the kingdom of my life upon earth. If it rules: "Let it be so." Then it is so. There is none, neither nature, nor Providence to countermand it. So hast thou ordained in thy sublime wisdom.

My beloved prophet Zarathushtra has taught me what I ought to think and speak and do that is best for my welfare in this life and the next, but has left me free to think and speak and do as I like. The choice and decision are mine and mine alone.

If then, Ahura Mazda, I make thy never-erring will the norm of my will and if I conform my will to thy will, it is because I will it so. It is my reasoned and deliberate choice. It is in me to conform my will to thine and I do it so willingly. I make thy will mine, because such is my will. Peace and joy fill my heart when, of my own accord I suffer thy will to work in me. Freely, then, will I blend my will with thine. Of my own free will, will I walk the world in thy way and not in my way, that I may be happy now and for ever, O Thou ever and anon my own.

## *Thou art the fountain of mercy, Ahura Mazda*

Thou dost pour down all the sublime riches of thy boundless mercy. Thou art the merciful father of the fatherless and friendless who look to thee for comfort and support. Thou art all-powerful, as thou art all-merciful. Mercy wedded to power gives it grace. Thou art just, but thou dost temper thy justice with mercy. Thy mercy outshines thy justice. Unspeakable are thy mercies, O Merciful Lord.

Zarathushtra fondly folded to his heart all those whose eyes were tired by tears and whose hearts were worn by sighs. He felt the sorrows and sufferings of the destitute and downtrodden. The sad look of the lean, emaciated poor pierced his feeling heart. It warmed to their sufferings and bled in sorrow for them. His soft heart went out in pity to the worn and weary and all the days of his life he strove to refresh them with the sweet waters of his mercy.

I weary thee, Ahura Mazda, by day and by night with my troubles, and despite my shortcomings, thou of compassionate heart, dost deal mercifully with me. Thou dost mercifully look upon me and thy eyes shed compassion. Thou dost incline thy ears to the whispers of my aching heart.

Let me never pass unmoved when my neighbor's sorrow stares in my face. Let me feel his sorrow. Let my heart be soft and warm and never hard and cold to the woes of others. Let it be soft as wax and not hard as stone. Let me never grow callous and pitiless at the piteous sight of pain and misery. Let pity be lodged in my heart. Mercy makes me tender of heart. It makes me gentle and genial. I profit by the kindly deeds of mercy that I do. I may not have power to rule, I may not have power to judge but it is in my power to show mercy to all who need it. I pray for thy mercy upon me and I will be merciful to thine, O Thou Everlasting Fount of Mercy.

## *Endurance is the prime sustaining virtue*

Zarathushtra beseeches Ahura Mazda to bless him with the virtues of endurance and durability. Equipped with these formidable weapons, he confronted all opposition and silently and heroically bore persecution. He shirked not his stupendous responsibility and abandoned not his sublime mission. He remained cheerful and optimistic and with unwavering confidence in the success of his work, held on and held fast and pressed on and struggled and wrestled with hardships and worked his way through a thousand obstacles. He retraced not his steps, but with undying hope in his final victory, he bravely endured a life of sore trials. He suffered, yet he strove and he struggled, until he became invulnerable in his power of endurance and durability and emerged triumphant in the end.

Unavoidable are hardships and misfortunes, trials and tribulations, sorrows and sufferings in life. To endure and to bear them patiently and bravely is to conquer them and to come out the victor from the struggle. Endurance with patience and fortitude is all-acquisitive. Unassailable is the power of endurance. Victory belongs to him that endures the most and lasts the longest. Endurance and durability are the best and most formidable weapons in the armory of the battle of life. They are mightier than armed strength and triumph in the end by disbanding and disarming and dislodging all misfortune.

Give me, thou my Most Enduring Ahura, the sustaining power that enables me patiently to suffer and endure the woes of life. Let my power of endurance be inexhaustible. Let me never lose heart. Let me never bend nor break nor ever know retreat. Let me steel myself and harden myself to fight the battles of life. Let me inure myself to sorrows and sufferings and let me not bend beneath the blasts of misfortune. Let me fight them to the finish, never counting the cost, never dreaming of failure, always and ever with unshakable conviction of success.

The Pipal tree whose roots go deep in the ground, defies the blasts of the wind. Like unto it, give me staying power, rooted to the position in my life. Sturdy and stalwart, let me stand firm as an impregnable rock. Let me stand unperturbed and immovable and dauntlessly defy the fury of the storms of life. Let me endure the most and hold out the longest to brave the buffetings of life, even as my holy prophet Zarathushtra did.

## *Let not anger enslave me, Ahura Mazda*

Aeshma, the Demon of Wrath, is the impetuous assailant of man. He stirs up strife and hostility and spreads discord and disturbances. Anger breeds vindictiveness and revenge.

When anger puts man out of his wits, he is all on fire with excitement. He flies to anger, flings prudence to the winds and forgets himself. His eyes flash frantic fury, his teeth gnash, his breast flames with fierce passions, his heart leaps to his throat, his lips utter unspeakable words, and, in his unbridled rage, he does unnamable deeds. Fierce of face, he looks beastly and brutish. His anger shows him to others in bad form. It makes him ridiculous in their sight. He loses his self-dignity.

He repents, when his fit of temper cools and he returns to reason and is once again in his sober mood. But even though he may give his life itself he cannot recall the fiery words he spoke nor retrieve the wrong he did. Anger hurts him more than one against whom he ventilated his angry feelings.

Help me, Ahura Mazda, to bear with circumstances that provoke my anger. Give me patience and forbearance even under provocation. Let me forget offences committed by my neighbor against me. Teach me to forgive, as I would be forgiven. Enable me to take words of violence with equanimity. Let me not dwell upon the wrong done me. Let not harsh words of my opponent rankle in my heart. Let me disarm his anger by my affable disposition.

Let me not be out of humor. Let me not wax wrath with anyone. Help me not to speak or do anything until the heat of my excitement is cooled and my anger has subsided. Let the fire of my anger be extinguished before it begins to burn. Help me to bridle my passion. Save me from the weakness of ill temper and help me to put a curb on it. Enable me to control my movements and let me always have a grip over myself.

Keep me always in the best of tempers. Give me the calm repose of mind and a meek and mild spirit and a serene and unruffled temper, that I may master my anger, control it and conquer it and rule it, Ahura Mazda.

## *We pray for unity, communal, national and international*

All men and women are members of one human species, one common stock, one family. The indissoluble bond of common humanity unites them all. They are children of one common father. Brothers and sisters are they all and are interdependent in life. What is good for anyone is good for everyone. They prosper and they progress, when they trust one another and behave with one another with brotherly and sisterly love.

Life is full of trials and tribulations and unity gives them all strength to cope with them. It brings harmony and peace within their country and gives them security against outside aggression. Common interest and common hopes, common aspirations and common destiny lead them all to combine and co-operate with one another. United by the bond of mutual trust, minds confer with minds and hearts work with hearts and they reap happiness.

When dissension in their ranks divide them and petty strifes keep them asunder, they are weakened and they suffer. Bitter enmities, mean jealousies and rancorous hatred gnaw their vitals. Everyone is up against everyone else.

The peoples of the world live upon a volcano. Strong, rapacious nations crush weak nations. Armed with the deadly weapons of modern science, war has now become the most dreadful and diabolical in all history. In vain does the lasting peace hover above the distracted world. It finds not a place to land. May everything that is discordant and leads to the chronic disturbance of peace among peoples perish, we pray.

Thou dost love all. Thou hast commanded that we should love one another as thou dost, that we may be one with one another and with thee, our lord. Thou hast poured thy love in every human heart that men and women may mutually love one another and live as brothers and sisters, bound by the indestructible bond of unity. Help us all to work for communal and national and international unity that transcends all divisions and breaks all barriers of caste and colour and creed. We long for the dawning of the day when man shall take man to his heart and woman shall take woman to her heart and walk on earth as brothers and sisters, united in thee, Ahura Mazda, thou Father of all mankind.

## *Fill me with thy Light, Ahura Mazda*

Ineffable light art thou, Ahura Mazda. Light is the manifestation of thee. Thou hast filled the world with a million marvels, fair and bright. With thy glad-some light, man can scan the marvels that thou hast wrought. Beauty appeals to the aesthetic nature of man. But the world were not beautiful to behold, were it not for thy light. Thy resplendent light makes thy creation luminous and charming to look at, O Thou, the perennial Fountain of Light.

When the day breaks over the earth and the sun of Hvarekhshaeta burns with splendor, the daylight dispels and destroys disease and death and burns all crimes and sins of darkness, as the fire burns fuel and reduces it to cinders. Falsehood and vice and wickedness flee before thy light like owls and bats that flee before the light of the sun. The sun and the moon and the stars give us their light, but thou art the light that light them to lighten the world. The sun rises daily to set. Thou art the eternal sun that knoweth no setting. Thou dost shine upon earth and thou dost shine in heaven. Thou dost shine upon our minds and thou dost shine in our hearts. Thou art the all-illuminating sun that shines everywhere and everywhen.

With the death of daylight, life is steeped in darkness. When thy light shines not in my heart, there is darkness in my inner world. When the dawn breaks and disperses darkness all life is bathed in sunlight. When thou dost lift the black clouds that hang over the sky of my life and thy light shines in my heart, the darkness of gloom and melancholy flees. Thou dost then hold me by the hand and lead me out of darkness into light. Lighten my path when I am in darkness, O Thou that art Light of all Lights.

Thou art the light of my mind and my heart and my soul. Let the radiant ray of thy resplendent light shine upon my mind and illuminate it. Shed thy light into my heart. Be thou the light of my soul, that I may walk by the light and never lose my way of life. Thou hast kindled thy light that burns in my heart. This burning and blazing flame on the alter of my heart is my Self and thy own Reflection. May it ever burn and blaze and brighten my life, Ahura Mazda.

## *Abject poverty rails against ostentatious riches*

Poverty entails untold misery upon the earth. Life gives nothing at all to countless millions of children that are born and condemns them at the very moment of their birth to live in physical and moral wretchedness. They are born for sorrow and suffering. Life does not hold many happy days for them. The shadow of destitution hangs over their hovels. Fierce and remorseless is their struggle to win their daily bread. Starvation stares in their eyes. From sunrise to sunset they are on their legs for the merest pittance. Soaked in sweat, they toil and moil with their stooped shoulders and shrunken bodies. They have many more mouths to feed than the scanty food they have in the larder. They go to bed hungry on many more nights than filled. They lay on their beds of mattress or on bare floor at night. They snuggle together in a blanket, if they have one and whimper.

The poor in this world of plenty are in perpetual agony. Abject poverty mercilessly grinds down the masses. They have no wherewithal to lodge and clothe and feed and are without the barest means of sustaining life. The starving mothers could not give their breasts to their children. They slave all their lives, yet know not the joys of wholesome existence. The cold wind and frost of poverty withers them. Desperate is their plight and slowly do they starve to death. Condemned to live in the midst of dirt and filth and disease, they die of starvation and they die neglected. Famine and plague kill them like flies. Harrowing are the stories of the destitute. No wonder the poor everywhere are embittered against the whole world.

The mother earth can nourish with ease all that live upon her gentle bosom. Science and machine can make the world a good place to live in for every man and woman and child. They can relieve all men and children of undue hard labor and drudgery and leave them leisure to develop their mind. Mass production by machine can provide something for everyone in the world. Yet countless millions starve in the midst of plenty and are haunted by the specter of destitution. Man's maladjustments bring starvation for swarming millions and fattening in unbounded luxuries for a small number of parasites. Life to those who amass colossal fortunes by corrupt means is a perpetual revel. They feed fastidiously and live luxuriously. They use their riches in riotous waste.

Thou Ahura Mazda, hast made the poor and the rich of common clay. Thou hast not made the rich of gold dust. Thou hast not ordained that the kernel should be for the rich and the husks should be for poor. Sad is the spectacle of poverty increasing in the world with the advancement of civilization. O Thou our Eternal Guide on the path of progress, lead erring mankind to make poverty, in the light of new knowledge only a cursed memory.

## *Divine is ideal friendship*

From the time that the journey of his life begins, man likes not to be lonely. His loneliness frightens him. He is afraid to look into it. Crushing is the burden of solitude. Heavy is the load of life that weighs down his spirit, if all alone he has to bear it. Often is the firmament overcast and the clouds gather over his head. Dreary darkness falls upon him and weariness of spirit takes possession of him. Ever in search is he of some one who shares the unbearable burden of life and sustains him in his direst straits.

In living together with his kith and kin, man finds courage and comfort. When they work in unison, they become stronger and better able to go through rough times. Light becomes the burden and easy the yoke of life. Then does life take a brilliant color. They find safety to sail the sea of life in one and the same boat. Mutual love and common interest bind them together. The bond between them is the closest.

Next in worth to man's love to his relatives, is his attachment to his friends. Friendly love knits them together. Relatives are born; friends are made. Man's acquaintance begins with those who come across his path. From acquaintance is born familiarity between persons actuated by same motives and from familiarity grows friendship that ardently seeks alliance based on mutual trust.

A friend is a staff upon whom one can lean. He is a tower of strength in one's weakness, a solace in sorrow, a reliable counsel and a priceless asset at all times.

Let me face life with my friend with joint fervor and wisdom. Let us two bear each other's joys and sorrows and give help and receive help. Let us trust and confide in each other. Let us open our minds and open our hearts to each other.

Let us be everything to each other. With close intimacy of friendship, let our two hearts grow into one. United in the bond of friendship, let us two act as one. Let us make each other's interests and concerns our own. Adversity is the touchstone of friendship. In prosperity and in adversity, whether good or ill betide, let us not forsake each other unto our dying day. Let us be inseparable in weal or woe.

Let us bear with each other's infirmities and forgive each other's failings. Let us never fail to give each other his due. Let us each give his heart to gain the heart of the other. Let us live like brothers. Let us believe that in the death of his friend, he that remains behind loses his other self. Happy is the land where abundance of congenial friendship is found. True friendship is the Lord God's delicious boon.

Thou art he, Ahura Mazda, whom Zarathushtra, when friendless and forlorn, implored to help him as a friend would help his friend. When his kith and kin disowned him and his wavering followers forsook him, thou, his ever true friend stood by his side and helped him.

We seek thee, as Zarathushtra sought thee. We lift up our hands unto thee in invocation seeking thy friendship. Everything works for the best, when we have thee for our friend. Be thou our friend this day and all the days of our life, O Thou, never-failing Friend of ours.



## *Let me fight and live down my misfortunes*

The farmer knows not what the year will bring forth on his field. Men know not what will befall them. Many a misfortune comes upon men unawares. When fortune plays them false, difficulties assault them from all sides and dangers come from all directions. Life heaps woe upon woe on them. Misfortune weighs heavily upon their minds and depress their spirits. They cannot bear the troubles that gather about them. They bend and break beneath the yoke of misfortune. Life to them is a long-drawn agony.

Tenderhearted persons cannot get over their misfortunes that overtake them. Grief eats and devours their hearts. They drain the cut of sorrow to the dregs. Their eyes are always dim with tears. They wring their hands and beat their breasts and sob their hearts out. They weep to relieve the pent up passions of their hearts. They cry unto thee, Ahura Mazda, flee unto thee and fall at thy feet and between their misfortune. Thou dost call them by their names and fold them in thy arms and whisper words of comfort in their ears and soothe them into quietude.

The anguish of the miserable of the world is such as would break heart of stone. Hard would be the heart that would not break at the sight of their woe. Callous would be the heart that would not weep when they weep. Thou, Ahura Mazda, has put pity in the hearts of men and women, who are ready to shed tears of genuine sympathy for the miserable and help them and lift the unbearable burden of their sorrow and suffering.

Many of the misfortunes of men arise from their idleness and extravagance and misconduct. Many that have seen better days waste their fortunes in wanton pleasure and debasing sensualities of gluttonous feasting and carousing. Much of the destitution and wretchedness of the poor and the needy are due to social maladjustments.

Thou, Ahura Mazda, dost hear the agony of the hearts of the miserable. Thy arms are always open to receive and comfort them. Thou dost lay thy hand upon the deep wounds of their hearts and pour thy health-restoring balm upon them that their heartache may leave them. Thou art the joy of the sorrowing and the suffering.

Misfortunes add years to my age. When adversity afflicts me and difficulties depress me and trouble distress me and calamities cast me down, lead me, my merciful God, by thy hand and support me by thy arm. When visitations of sorrows and sufferings wear out my heart, help me to uphold it with thy strength. Thou art my sure shelter and shield in the days of my misfortune.

Give me patience to bear misfortune that I may be fated to endure. Embolden me to rise above my misfortune and to bear it with fortitude. Let me walk fearless in the thick of misfortune. Help me to play the man in the face of misfortune, Ahura Mazda.

*Let me scatter the dark clouds of gloom  
and radiate cheer*

Stress of hard circumstances and sad experiences and sorrows and sufferings breeds gloom in man and breaks his nerves. He quails under misfortune and sinks into despondency. Despondency paralyses his will, eats his heart, and poisons his life. Brooding over his sufferings increases his torment.

When depression steals over my spirits and disappointment sours me and embitters me, prevent me then, thou great Comforter, from seeking morbid peace by brooding discontentedly upon my melancholy. Let me not be moody and morose in spirit. Let me not be subject to periodic elation and depression. Let not morbid gloom overpower me. When gloom hangs over my heart and dark despair tortures me and spreads her wings around me, let me not be abandoned to despair, but strengthen me to fight it and shake it off from me. Spare me always from the strain of pessimism, my God.

Let me not brood over my worries. Let me not tremble at them. Let me forget them and bury them in my work. When I feel weary of life, cheer me and enthuse me and hearten me. Help me to be excellent in spirit. Refresh and revive my drooping spirit. Let me smile and let me laugh that I can keep up my spirit.

Let the warm sunshine of joy melt the snow of sorrow that chills my heart. Cheer is fragrant, cheer is blossom, cheer is enlivening, cheer is sunshine for the weary. Let cheerfulness be my constant companion in my daily industry and work. Bless me with the exuberance of vitality that makes life cheerful.

The grass and the trees and the wind and the waves and the birds, all sing and smile and laugh. Let me join in the chorus and do what the whole nature does. Let my heart be filled with the rapturous joys of life and sing with gaiety. Let my soul be aflame with unbounded joy. Let tumultuous joy thrill my heart.

Let me always be jovial and pleasant. Give me physical, mental, and spiritual overflowing of enthusiasm that makes life's cup brimful of joy and cheer.

Laugh is stimulant. Laugh is tonic. Cheer and joy and laughter conduce to health and vigor and happiness. Let me then laugh and let me laugh lustily. Let me laugh until my chest shakes with hilarity.

Let me spread cheer all around that gloom and sorrow may wither and perish. Let me smile that others may smile. Let me laugh that others may laugh. Help me to attain to thy divine joy, that I may communicate my joy to others and brighten and sweeten their lives, Ahura Mazda.

## *Courage makes me man, Ahura Mazda*

Timid and wavering, hesitating and vacillating is the man without courage. He succumbs to the weakness of too ready subservience. He broods over his difficulties and his courage flinches, when the storms of life break upon his head. His knees smite one another, his heart begins to thump and stand still with fear, his body shakes like a reed, his hairs stand upon his head, his tongue cleaves to the roof of his mouth, he stammers and stutters and he cannot speak. Without courage he gropes in darkness in life.

Courage begets strength by struggle with hardships. Courage grows from fighting danger and over coming obstacles. When our ancestors came to this country to live a life anew amid unknown surroundings, they showed courage that bended not to misfortune. They looked danger in the face and fought it bravely and undauntedly. They showed courage in the face of odds. They steeled their courage and courage lighted their path of life in the new land. They held nothing impossible of achievement before their unbounded self-confidence and courage. They had a love of adventure and enterprise in their very bones. They dared and did marvelous deeds and with courage they pressed onward. With grit and resolute will, they forged their way ahead and thou, Ahura Mazda, their guide and guardian, didst lead them up the ascents of progress.

Let not the jolts and jostles of life unnerve me. When I feel my world slipping away under my feet, help me not to rebut and retrace my steps. Let me not give up and lie down, but let me strive and struggle and fight with courage as becomes man. Let not my spirit fail me. Let me show a courageous defiance to hardships and let me triumph against them.

Help me to realize the limitless latent possibilities that lie within me. Enable me to keep an unperturbed mind in the midst of trials and tribulations. Give me courage to compose myself to mental calm. With the serene strength of the spirit within me, let me scale courageously the top of the mountain or go down the dangerous steep to win my prize of life.

Give me the wisdom, O Wise Lord, to know the truth and give me the courage to stand by the truth, unfettered and undeterred by fear. Give me courage of my convictions. Let me not lack courage to speak what is true and to do what is right. Give me the courage to speak my mind unequivocally. Give me the courage to say Yes, when I know myself to be in the right. Give me the courage to say No in face of unpopularity staring at me. Give me moral courage to face obloquy. Let come what may, give me courage to say my say, when I am in the right, Ahura Mazda.

*Let me not forget thee when fortune smiles on me, Ahura Mazda*

Thou, Ahura Mazda, didst desire me to follow thee faithfully. But forgetfulness fell upon me and I failed thee. The stately swan arches his neck with majestic pride. Drunk with the pride of my prosperity and sitting in the lap of luxury, I fluttered from pleasure to pleasure, basking in the joys of frivolous life, and sported away my days. In my folly, I forgot that, even with his fortune, man was not self-sufficient. With thee, man is everything. Without thee he is nothing. Leaning upon thee, he stands. Leaving thee, he falls. I left thee and I fell.

I brought evil upon myself. Unforeseen misfortune overtook me. I began to feel distrust of myself. My mind became ill at ease with itself. My heart was sore with sorrow. I staggered and I stumbled like a blind man. Life began to hang heavily on my hand. Adversity now drove me to my knees. Bowed down by fear, I fled unto thee and thou, my merciful Lord, didst take me under thy protecting wings. Thou didst take me by the hand and raise me when I had fallen.

The sanctuary of my heart, meanwhile, had fallen into ruin. Thou didst help me to repair it. Enthroned once again in my penitent heart thou didst make thyself known to me and knowing thee, I knew and understood thy kinship with me. I resigned myself into thy hands to do me as it seemed most meet to thee. Thou didst help me to retrieve my past. A sense of peace and joy now fills me. I thank thee out of my grateful heart.

Let me not forget thee in times of happiness and turn to thee only in the day of trouble, when I am in deep distress. Let me always look to thee and come to thee. Let me not be unworthy of thy bounty and thy kindness. Thou art ever the hope of the hopeless the comfort of the comfortless, the help of the helpless, thou, that art all to all at all times, Ahura Mazda.

## *Let me make a name for me in my life*

On his wedding day, is invoked upon the bridegroom the blessing that he may make a name for himself greater than one made by his father for himself. Thy devotee beseeches thee through thy fire, that thou shouldst help him to win name and fame for himself in life. In the rock inscriptions at Mount Behistun, records King Darius that he strove all his life to make the name 'Parsi' famous far and wide in the world.

The love of making a name for himself while living and the desire of posthumous fame is natural and instinctive to man. It is a spur to his life to do something great and glorious that benefits mankind.

History commemorates the names of those who have left their indelible mark on earth by their great and glorious deeds. Let the names of these great departed influence my life and inspire me to walk in their footsteps and enthuse me to do noble deeds. Let me contribute my mite in furthering the happiness all around me. Let my life bring lasting glory to my dear community that has given me birth.

If I have inherited name, let me faithfully preserve it and further it. It is difficult to make a name, but it is more difficult to retain it. If I have not inherited name, then let me create it by my honest life of usefulness and service.

When I have made a name for myself, let me not give myself airs of superiority. Let me not be drunk with the sense of power and glory. Let me in all humility bow in gratitude to the Giver of name and fame. Capricious are the plaudits of the public. My glory may flee and my laurels may fade, if wisdom leaves me.

Help me so to live nobly and graciously, Ahura Mazda, that I may be honored and loved while alive and my name may be honored and loved when I am dead and posterity may not willingly let my name die, but enshrine it in its loving memory.

## *The seemingly blind and the hearingly deaf*

The Kavis and the Karapans, the seemingly blind and the hearingly deaf, who worked as exorcists and cast out demons and with charlatanism prospered among the ignorant and superstitious, thwarted Zarathushtra's prophetic work and incited people to oppose him. They refused to see the new light that would dispel darkness and closed their ears to the wise counsels of the prophet.

There are Kavis and Karapans to be found always and everywhere, who from conceit and vanity do not see and do not hear. They pass as learned men with their vacant brains. They deceive credulous people with ostentation of learning. They play the pedant and parade their little learning. Lacking substance, they live by show. They fondly believe they have what in fact they have not. Puffed up by pride, they fancy themselves wiser than all. They give themselves airs of importance, which they do not possess. They hold others in slight estimation. They play on the emotions of the mob and gratify their ears by popular applause. They cannot shake themselves free of the obsession of self-conceit and self-delusion.

None is so blind as the person who has eyes to see and yet will not see. None is so deaf as the person who has ears to hear and will not hear. Let me not be inflamed and infatuated by the vain idea of my intellectual greatness. Let me not overrate my worth. Let me find out my own deficiencies and remedy them. Let not my mind feed upon conceit and delusion. Let me not deceive myself. Let not perverseness take root in my nature. Let me humble myself before the learned and the wise.

Thou, Ahura Mazda, hast given me eyes to see and ears to hear. Let me see and let me hear with all humility and enlighten my mind. Help me to develop the gifts with which thou hast endowed me at birth. Let them not be wasted. Let me meekly seek knowledge and let my knowledge deepen into wisdom.

## *Man's duty is to work for the perfection of the world*

Many in this life forget that they have a mission to fulfil and a duty to discharge. Idlers lounge on the lawn, the negligent spend their time in merry making and the epicures live for the chase of pleasure and amusement, before thou Ahura Mazda, dost give them a rude awakening to reality and rouse them to duty. Many there are who think the burden of duty that falls on them unbearable and are tempted to throw it off, when thou dost give them strength to bear it and zeal to carry it along.

Let me not look to my duty as an unpleasant burden. Let me not do duty grudgingly. Let me not lag, when I hear the call of duty. Let no power on earth force me to relinquish what is my duty. Let me not shirk my duty. Let me not rest half way. Let me never neglect the duty assigned to me.

Awaken me to my responsibility that I may be true to my vocation. Let me work out everything for myself. Let me do my work with my own hands and look not to others to do what is my duty to do. Guard me, O Guardian Divine, from neglecting little things, for creatures mountain high to the littleness of a mole all play their assigned parts in thy providence.

Show me my duty and I will consecrate my life to it. Endow me with the right sense of duty. Help me to discern my duty and I will do it with diligence. Quicken my sense of duty and I will faithfully and fearlessly tread its rugged path. Let thy guiding hand lead my life. Command what thou willeth and thou wilt ever find me ready to do thy bidding and to loyally perform my appointed task as a pleasant duty. I will do my duty, because it is my duty. Duty is its own reward.

To work for mankind is to work for thy glory, my God. Thou hast owned men as thy fellow-worker in the stupendous task of perfecting the world according to the plan laid out by thee at the beginning of creation. Help me to do my duty with alacrity and with dauntless courage in the face of difficulties, even though the heavens fall. Doing my duty is the ideal of my life. I will do my duty all the days of my life, that when I have lived my day and am old, I may peacefully sit down to collect and ponder over my doings of life at the close of my earthly career. Then when the time comes for thee to take me back in thy loving arms and when thou dost call me to render the account of my stewardship, I may come to thee as came those that diligently did their duties that their callings demanded and proved themselves to be thy Saoshyants, the perfectors of thy world, Ahura Mazda.

## *Virtue is the health of the soul, as vice is its disease*

He lives best, who lives virtuously. Orderly, well-balanced life is virtuous life. Virtue shines equally bright in a palace or in a cottage. Virtue in rags makes the rags rich. Glittering raiments affect not virtue. The soul looks at its best when it is clad in virtue. With the death of man, everything he dies to him. Virtue only survives his bodily death. Knowledge shines, but virtue outshines it. Virtue is the light of the soul, as knowledge is the light of the mind. Virtue is woman's matchless jewel. It is man's incomparable wealth. Virtue is the most fragrant flower paradise planted on earth. Virtue is the vivifying spirit of religion.

There is no contagion equal to that of vice. Like a snake unfolding his black coils to attack his victim, vice opens its war upon man's soul. Man's slumbering passions are roused. The storm of passions agitates his mind. The passions run high. They are incited. The war in man's inner world rages at its fever height. Passions burst their bounds and enslave man's reason, the seed of vice germinates and man loses himself in vice. He lives his life more in terms of the senses than of the mind. The only pleasures in life that he knows now are those of the senses. His morals decay. Voluptuous luxury eats at his heart. Day by day he slides deeper and deeper into the yawning abyss of vice. He carouses all night long to sate his animal passions. He plunges himself into the slough of sensuality. He floats on the dirty waters of vice. He sinks into the mire of stinking filth akin to the slime and stench of a sewer that has burst. Vice breeds corruption to which both his body and soul succumb. His heart stoops to the deepest depths of baseness. Even at his worst, if he strives and struggles to subdue the carnal in him, he is not past hope of saving himself. But none can save him, if he does not save himself. He violates Mazda's commandments without compunction and turns a moral wreck. He drags those depending upon him down in his own ruin.

Let me not seek and judge my neighbor's faults. Erring myself, I have no right to judge my erring neighbor. Let me not talk slander about others. Let me turn my gaze within me to see if vice lurks at my own door. If there is just one wolf prowling at the gate of the fold which has a thousand sheep, the life of all is in danger. Let me watch and protect my soul from the germs of its disease. Let me fight them and kill them if there are any, before they overpower my soul and bring its decay. Let me not condemn my neighbor as sinner, arrogating saintly virtues to me. Let me never forsake virtue and let me never court vice and I am saved.

Let me be virtuous, but let me not rest by being virtuous myself. My active duty as a true Zoroastrian is to make incessant effort to widen the vista of virtue around me. Let me not again be satisfied by abstaining from vice, but let me actively fight and scourge vice wherever it is found.

Virtuously will I live my life not for the lure of any reward, nor for the fear of censure of public opinion or the ultimate retribution in the next life. I will be virtuous, because I must. I will embrace virtue and live virtuous life, for virtue's own sake, for the sake of human dignity, Ahura Mazda.



## *Give me strength, Ahura Mazda, to do my bit in life*

Weak and erring is man and weak and erring I am. Great are my infirmities and shortcomings and imperfections. Thou art my maker and thou knowest my weaknesses. Weak are my resolutions. Cure me of my weakness. Let me know my weakness. Look mercifully upon my weakness and frailty. Let not my weakness be the fault of my character. Let me not fall into wickedness through weakness of my conduct. My weakness needs thy support. Thou art the strength of the weak. Thou my redeemer dost lift me up when my strength fails me and I fall in my weakness. Thou dost uphold me by thy strong hand and I fall not. Thou art the unfailing strength in the hour of my weakness. Strongest of the strong art thou, when I am all weakness. Where can I find the tower of strength as powerful as thee, Ahura Mazda.

Give me strength to wrestle with wickedness with a resolute will. In dim distance may be my goal. Like the ever-receding horizon that eludes my grasp, my hands may fail to reach it. Yet my incessant efforts and strivings to reach it strengthen and build my character. Give me patience, when success is long in the coming.

Let me not, owing to my weakness, resignedly plod along year after year in mediocrity. When opportunity calls me, let not my weakness come in my way. Strengthen me, not to shirk my responsibility. Let my response be prompt and strong. Strengthen me to encounter thrilling adventures. With self-confidence and enthusiasm, ambition and strong faith in thee, let me be drawn in the whirl and swish of adventure and enterprise. Strengthen me to be drawn across the seas by the hope of bettering my future and to dig out treasures, hid deep in the bowels of the earth. The struggle to get a thing enhances its worth and increases the delight when I succeed in possessing it. The swimmer battles with the waves that dash over him. Strengthen me to fight like him the obstacles that come in my way to success in life.

The feeble leans on his staff to walk. Strengthen me to be a staff to the feeble to lean upon and to help them to walk the rugged path of life. Strengthened by thee, let me succour and support thy weak in the world, O Thou that art the tallest tower of strength, Ahura Mazda.

## *Healthy body, peaceful mind and joyful heart make for happiness*

To live is to desire. The senses create in man diverse desires. Gratification of desires give pleasure, happiness. There are pleasures of the body and the pleasures of the mind that are harmless and there are others by their side that are harmful. Man has to discriminate between those that bring happiness and those that end in unhappiness. The chameleon changes colors frequently. When man hankers after anything and everything that senses bring to him and succumbs to the temptation of evil desires, he throws himself headlong in the scorching fire of sin and suffers like the moth that runs into a candle and perishes. Man has to liberate himself from the bondage of evil desires.

Desire in itself is not evil, says Zarathushtra. Desire is an incentive to actions and stimulant to an active life. The active life of hard work and industry is the Zoroastrian life. The prophet of Ancient Iran teaches not the extinction of desires. He teaches to regulate and moderate them.

Our human nature always craves for what we do not possess. All our desires are not satisfied, all wishes are not fulfilled, all ambitions are not realized. Then, in our ignorance, we consider ourselves unhappy. Yet in this life of polarity, if we never came across disappointment and despair and never knew want and sorrow and suffering, in short, if one and all of our innocent and wise desires were fulfilled and we were all happy, we could certainly not live in this world. Unbearable would be the burden of enuie and boredom.

Man's prime requirements to be happy are a sound body and a clear brain. The healthy mind goes hand in hand with the healthy body. The soul of a man may be daring and eager to work for righteousness and to fight wickedness within him and without. But if the body is sickly and weak, man cannot lead a strenuous life of self-sacrifice and service. Health ensures the vigorous joys of life. What avails wealth, when the health of the body goes amiss!

When man is overwrought with work and wearied by his daily toil, he rests or he turns to games and sports and music and drama and a host of innocent diversions that bring him relaxation after physical fatigue and he is happy. The man who has passionate fondness for rational pursuits, seeks intellectual pleasures of the mind that make him happy. To the man of pure conscience, faithful discharge of duty is happiness.

Happiness is the harmony of the body and mind and heart. Happiness is man's harmonious relation to his environments. The source of happiness is within man. Where calm are the passions and conflicting desires clamour not for satisfaction, there is happiness. Where wrinkles of sorrow ruffle not the smooth surface of the heart and the heart is not bowed down by the unbearable weight of suffering, there is happiness. Where the health of the body and the peace of the mind and the Joy of the heart meet together, there is happiness. Sublime peace in the inner world of man is happiness.

Happiness grows in degree, as it widens and spreads among the many. Happiness, the greatest, that this earth can ever give, is his who promotes the happiness of others. It is the happiness past all thought. No words can describe it. No hand can pen it. The blessed giver of happiness unto others is lifted into the realm of spiritual ecstasy.

When all his heart's desires are met, man's joy is heightened. He basks in happiness. He beams with happiness. His heart swells with happiness. He lives an eternity of happiness in a few such moments, when life seems to be crowded in those few fortunate moments. His memory loves to linger around these happy moments he has lived.

Zarathushtra asks man so to live that he may get great satisfaction out of living and he may be happy. An ideal Zoroastrian home is a living paradise upon earth, where happiness fades not.

When my body is ailing and my mind is weary and my heart is aching, I pray thee, Ahura Mazda, to apply thy healing balm to them. Then, in thy mercy, dost thou cure me and I am happy. Thou art ever glad to gladden my heart. Whatever I desire is in thee. In thee is health and peace and joy. Thou dost always will my happiness. I owe thee all that makes my life happy. Thou hast blessed me with a powerful physique and a healthy mind in a healthy body. My heart thrills to the rhythmical beat of my bodily organ.

My happiness in life is in thy keeping. Thou art the strength of my body and peace of my mind and joy of my heart. Blessed be thy name, O Blessed One, thou that dost lavish thy blessings of happiness on me.

## *Fate weaves not the web of events in man's life*

Superstitious fatalism teaches that man is not a free agent who can shape the actions of his life. The movements of the stars regulate them. Inexorable and inevitable is fate. It holds universal sway. Nothing can alter what fate has set down. Immutable and irrevocable is the decree of fate. Everything happens as fate wills. Fate imposes its decree on man and man has to obey its commands. Fate raises man to fame and fate drags him down to shame. Man rises to eminence through fate and sinks into oblivion through fate. He prospers and triumphs whom fate befriends. None can escape his fate. What has been fated will take place. Vain are all effort and striving to defy the doings of fate, for fate is all-powerful.

Such superstitious belief in fate inculcates resignation in man to accept with folded hands whatever befalls his lot. It is paralysing. It cripples man's activities, blights his ardor, kills his ambition, cramps his progress and stifles his spirit. It breeds pessimism and cowardice in man. Life loses its meaning, if man cannot direct the deeds of his life independently and shape his destiny as he wills.

Thou, Ahura Mazda, hast endowed man with the freedom of will that man can be the maker of his fate. So teaches us Zarathushtra thy prophet. True to his teachings, I will be master of my destiny. I will not succumb to the superstitious regard for omens and portents and lucky and unlucky days. I will not invoke fate to cover my weakness and wrong. I will fight fate and let it not play me pranks. Fate is nothing. My hard and honest work and strenuous effort is everything. Success and prosperity are all products of my own industry. I will not be disappointed and disheartened, when I fail at times in my endeavor to better my position in life. With iron determination will I dare and do my duty conscientiously. I will always have confidence in myself. I will believe in myself and rely on my own resources and have pride of independence. I will make the best of myself. I will be true to myself. I will be at ease with myself and others in life. I will not lack stability. I will be my own self. I will rely on my own self. I will not induce the powers to change the course of events. With my own labor will I gradually and tenaciously work up my way to name and fame. The stars and planets and the constellations do not decide my fate. I myself am the maker of my fate and master, under thy guidance and protection, Ahura Mazda.

## *Music is devotional handmaid of religion*

Music softens sorrows, alleviates pain and allays grief. It calms the agitated and oppressed mind. The soothing strain of music gives relief to man pressed with anxiety. It is the healing balm to the bruised and broken heart.

Music warms feelings. It swells the breast with gentle loving emotions. It touches the inner chord of the heart and vibrates. It lightens labour, restrains wrath, disarms evil passion. It kindles kindly sentiments. It melts hardest hearts, softens and tames ferocious beasts. It pleases and thrills, it moves and inspires, it cheers, and charms, fascinates and enchants. It awakens a thrill of gladness and causes the heart to overflow with rapturous joy. Music is the heavenborn boon to man. Music is divine.

Music lifts the mind and fastens it upon the divine in man. It wakes the slumbering soul to its destiny and lifts it heavenward on the wings of tender emotions. It floods the recesses of the spirit with hopeful enthusiasm. It is the devotional accompaniment of religion. It is the emotional prayer of the heart. It nurses and nourishes Asha's life of concord and harmony in man. Music creates religious fervour.

Music is the greatest of the fine arts. It is the most refined and sweetened language of man. The finest and fairest, gentlest and loveliest expression of human speech is song. The early sages and seers skilled in the art of music, have clothed their sublime thoughts in songs. Zarathushtra spoke not his speech, but sang his hymns. The Gathas are his sublime songs. His disciples interpret best his message to mankind, when they sing in rhythmic, melodious verse. The highest heaven, where dwell with thee the Yazatas and the Amesha Spentas, the Fravashis and souls of the righteous, is thy Garonmana, the Abode of Song, Ahura Mazda.

Thou, Ahura Mazda, art the first and foremost musician. There is thy music all around if we have but ears to listen. Thou dost sing through the whispers of the wind in the trees, through the murmurs of the waters in the brooks, through the beaks of the birds and through human mouths. Thy creation is a song sublime, O thou divine Songster of heaven and earth.

## *I will love truth and live truth with a lifelong passion*

Truth is the paramount virtue. It embraces and embodies other virtues within its fold. It is the all-inclusive virtue. Beautiful and sublime is truth. It is divine. Knowledge is truth and goodness is truth and religion is truth and God, the giver of all, is truth. To love truth and to love God, are one and the same. Nothing is like unto truth for man. Nothing is above truth for man. Truth is all in all for man. The essence of truth is straightforwardness and light. Invulnerable is truth. All conquering truth always triumphs in the end. Truth dies not. It is immortal.

Let my life be a continual quest for truth. Let me spend myself to the utmost in search of truth. Let me believe and live in truth, even as Ahura Mazda dwells in truth. Let me best discern between truth and untruth. With unfaltering love of truth, let my heart feel the truth and let my lips speak the truth. Let me speak what, thou Ahura Mazda, wouldst have me to speak.

Truth is courage. Let me not shrink from testifying to truth. Let me, with courage, speak out facts without flinching. Let me make a clean breast of things and speak out what I think truth.

Truth is the best armour to fight evil in life. I will tread the path of life with the torch of truth ever ablaze in my hand. From dawn to dusk, I will be true both in words and in deeds.

Zarathushtra is the mirror that reflects best thy truth, Ahura Mazda. He loved truth, he lived for truth, he suffered for truth and he died for truth. With my whole heart will I love truth for truth's sake at all times and in all circumstances. I will hold truth dearer than life. Ever will I be ready to sacrifice my life to truth even as he, my blessed prophet, did in his days, Ahura Mazda.

## *I will die to falsehood that I may live to truth*

Darius the Great concentrates all evil in Drauga, "Falsehood". He advises his successors to beware of falsehood and to fight it and destroy it wherever it is found, if they wished their kingdom to prosper and live. The Ancient Persians, my illustrious forbears held Falsehood as most disgraceful and as the embodiment of all wickedness.

Falsehood is cowardly and mean, foul and filthy. It saps the foundation of human dignity. It is the parent of vices and sins. It ruins man's reputation, blasts his honour and throws him to the lowest depth of degradation. When the tide of falsehood comes rolling in and sweeps all barriers, it debases morals and breaks the edifice of communal character to pieces. Falsehood paves the way to perdition.

The man that lies is not frank. He has not the openness of heart. He speaks something which his heart disowns and his breast disavows. He dissembles and strives to seem what he is not. He lies, yet affects the air of a truthful man. He thinks one way and speaks another. He does not, what he professes. He is forced to invent ten falsehoods to cover and explain away his one. When his falsehood is found out, he forfeits confidence ever after. The habitual liar, who speaks one thing, when he means another, is neither believed nor trusted. He loses himself on the by-ways when he is bound for the onward path of life.

I will not let my tongue tell a lie. I will not let the false words pass my lips. I will speak nothing more nor less than what my heart thinks and my mind believes. With inveterate hostility to falsehood and deep detestation of it, I will fight it with every fiber of my being and trample on it.

Thou, Ahura Mazda, offered choice between truth and falsehood to thy two Primeval Spirits, Spenta Mainyu and Angra Mainyu. The Good Spirit chose truth and the Evil Spirit wooed falsehood as his sphere of action. Since then does falsehood stalk about in defiance upon earth. But truth will ultimately smite falsehood and triumph. The light of truth will drive the darkness of falsehood out of the world. When falsehood will fall and truth will reign supreme, the earth will be paradise as thou hast willed of yore, Ahura Mazda.

## *Let me cultivate diligence*

To live is to work and work hard. Man was born to work actively and strenuously by the sweat of his diligent work. He lives at his best when he has some work to accomplish, something great and good to aim at, some ideal to realize, something to strive for, some cause to serve or some mission to fight for. Work and activity prevent bodily and mental powers from sinking into inertia. Life awakens needs and the struggle to supply and satisfy them gives zest to life.

Happiness comes to those who willingly and enthusiastically lead active and industrious life of hard work. Want and destitution flee from the house wherein live men and women who earnestly and industriously labor for their living. Active and hard industry is fruitful of rich rewards. Prosperity treads on the heels of sustained labor.

Providence has buried deep in the bowels of the earth untold treasures. Men dig hard and move heaven and earth to get them out. Insensible to cold and hunger and fatigue, they explore the earth to produce order out of chaos. They, go where no man's foot has ever trod, and span and scale the highest heights of heaven. Such adventurous and enterprising men enrich humanity and advance civilization. The patient efforts and painful gropings to unravel the secrets of nature develop the capacities of the mind. More invigorating and exhilarating is the strenuous endeavor to gain an object than its achievement.

Let me not sleep away my time like a sluggard. Let me not saunter and lounge as listlessly as a straying beast. Let me not neglect my opportunity, nor waste my time. Let me hasten to my duty. Let me not dream and pray for the prize I covet. Let me be up and strive with all my might and all my energy to win it and win it I shall. Let me not be a passive fatalist or a visionary. Let me not cry for the moon and hanker after what is humanly impossible. Let me not be content by taking what comes my way by itself. Let me create opportunities and let me have ambition to spur me to work hard and make my way against all odds to a higher position in life than I hold. Let me not helplessly drift upon the tumultuous billows of the sea of life. Let me fight the stormy wind and the waves and steer my ship of life safe to anchorage. Let me fight obstacles with the body, physically pitting myself against hardships, bracing myself against difficulties. The fight for doing great things serves as a tonic to my spirit. Let me be the fighter knowing no respite. Let me be strong in spirit, even when I be weak in body.

Save me from self-indulgence that weakens and ruins hardy habits. I will not brand manual labor with the stigma of inferiority. I will weed the soil, plough the furrows and sow the seeds, if circumstances so demand. Diligence makes my task easy. Let me plan out my designs carefully and execute them with vigor. Let me keep doing. Let me bestir myself to honest and intelligent industry. Let me persevere with constancy and grapple with difficulties in my undertakings. Give me unbounded capacities to take pains. Let me work hardest, to the best of my ability and power and in the quickest manner possible. Let me give my whole life to my work. Undaunted by failure, let me go on with my work. Work becomes a fatigue when done unwillingly. Let me work diligently and cheerfully. Let me look to my work with pleasure.

When inertia grips me, wake me from it. Help me to shake off my labor. Let me act with alacrity and with resolute will. Help me to unfold and develop my latent faculties. Give me an idea in my mind and a will to back it. Give me an ideal that raises before me an imagery higher and loftier than my mind holds. Let me live up to the ideal. Let the fire of idealism burning in my heart be



ablaze and find vent in the life of romance and adventure and enterprise. Let me be busy from dawn to dusk and let me work all my life, while yet I may, Ahura Mazda.

## *Let me live my time aright*

Zrvan Akarana, 'Boundless Time' ever was with Ahura Mazda. Infinite alone is Time in this finite world. Time knows no birth. It ever was and it ever shall be.

Time rolls its incessant course. The caravan of Time is ever on the forward move. Never does it turn backward. Countless are its stages on the endless path of the life of the universe. Immeasurable itself, Time measures all earthly movements.

Time of limited duration is allotted to man's life. Short is his life upon earth. His time is ever a-flying. It is fast a-dying. There is no recalling the past time. It is irreclaimable. None can bid time to return. Misspent time cannot be redeemed.

Omnivorous is Time. The tooth of Time gnaws everything. Time wears away the mightiest monuments. It devours all and knows no satiation. The hero of a hundred battles triumphs over his foes, but the all-conquering Time vanquishes him in the end.

Silent and stealthy is the footfall of Time. With light and short steps does Time walk in man's joy and happiness. Slowly and heavily it moves in his sorrow and misery. A day then seems a year to the man of sorrow.

At dawn does Parodarsh, the Heavenly Cock, upbraid man for the late hours he sleeps. Short is man's life, he reminds him and urges him to lengthen it by saving time. Time has no meaning for birds that fly in the sky and the beasts that roam in the fields and the fishes that swim in the waters. But it has all the meaning for man. Life, not animal but human, has man to live. Animal exists, when man lives.

Time is man's most precious possession. He celebrates his birthday and counts his years. Let him as well keep count of his months and weeks, days and hours of every passing year. Never can man say that he has time enough.

Time takes away man's vigor and beauty and health. It leaves furrows on his face and makes him gray of hair. When the fleeting time of his youth passes away, his old age mirrors his youthful past and gives him back the reflection of what he has been in his youth. Time well-lived in youth gives man sweet memories to look back upon, when he grows old.

The time of my youthful past is beyond recall. The present is mine. I have lived my past well, hence it overshadows not my present. Let me have the sound sense of the value of time. Let me be solicitous about my time. Let me not trifle with my time, nor be lavish of it. Let me remember at all hours of the day that every passing day brings me nearer to the time when my journey upon earth will end and its heavenward move will begin.

Thou dost live in eternity, Ahura Mazda. I live in time. Time is nothing unto thee. It is everything to me. When I have time, I have everything. When I waste my time, I waste my life. Time best employed is life best lived.

## *Avarice is ever needy and ever greedy*

Always hungry and always thirsty is the victim of avarice. He knows no satiation. He is devoid of the sense of proportion. The more he acquires, the more he requires. The more he gets, the more he covets. He does not want what he has not. He is out to increase his own by usurping as much as he can of others. He craves for anything and everything, somebody's, anybody's, everybody's. He habitually covets something of another. He has more than he can use. Abundant and overflowing surplus and superfluous, out of all proportion to his needs are his possessions. But his hoarding instinct lets him not stop or halt. Ever on the move is he for more and more than more.

Like barren sandy soil, he sucks and absorbs, but never yields. There is joy in giving but the man of avarice never gives. His hand always takes, never gives. That happiness is not his. None so miserable as he. He hoards everything and parts with nothing. He cannot use, cannot enjoy and cannot derive happiness from his hoarded wealth. Avarice does not seek wealth as a means to happiness, but as an end in itself. The avaricious man heaps up wealth not to use, not to enjoy, not to give, but just to keep it. He has undying lust for accumulation.

Covetousness leads its victim to lie and cheat. With avarice as the most raping, unruly passion in his breast, man grabs and grasps, loots and usurps his neighbor's property. He breathes gold, dreams gold and lives for gold. He feeds his eyes on the ever-growing pile of gold. His one and only food is gold.

Age weakens passions and vices. Invincible is avarice. Irreclaimable is the victim of avarice. He dies in the midst of his hoarded wealth and leaves it behind him.

Avarice has been the ruling passion of kings and virile races. They have always regarded their weak neighbor's possessions as theirs and the whole world as theirs. War-like nations make the world bankrupt, leaving ruin on mankind, and turn civilization into a nightmare. May mankind emerge wiser from the purging fire of the colossal war. May the lust of avarice in the hearts of individuals and nations perish. May the poison of avarice never be inoculated in my veins and may I ever live in contentment, Ahura Mazda.

## *Worth and not birth imparts true nobility*

With pride and gratefulness do I look backward to my early illustrious ancestors in Ancient Iran and to my renowned forebears in India, who have made my community and its glory by their memorable achievements. Priceless is the inheritance of their exemplary lives. Ennobling are the cherished memories of their illustrious names. Never will I behave in a way as to tarnish the glorious name of my community. Not in mere words will I boast of my renowned ancestry. I will revive in me the virtues that, shone in my fathers and which made them great. So will I live my life that my deeds may recall theirs.

High character and nobility of life are better than high birth and nobility of birth. If I have nothing more of my own acquiring to recommend me to others than only the pride of my Kianian blue blood and the prestige of lineage, I have not lived well. Birth stands for mere accident. Worth relies upon real achievement.

I will not lean upon the famous names of my ancestors. I will not vaunt a renowned lineage. I will not live by the fame of my fathers. I will lay the firm foundation of the fortress of the fame of my family by my own praiseworthy accomplishments. By my own honest efforts and virtuous conduct will I strive to deserve name and fame. By the life of my own good and great deeds and by the merit of my own, will I create and build a name for me that history may record with honor.

Help me, Ahura Mazda, to be great in myself by my own worth. Help me to shine by virtue of my own. Help me to leave for my descendants, what my ancestors have left for me.

## *Merit makes man*

Meek and unassuming is true merit. As credit creates confidence and counts for wealth in business and banking, so is man's merit valued highly in this world. It is merit alone that opens the portals of paradise for man's soul in the world to come. Merit is more praiseworthy than birth and rank. Merit wins praise and admiration of men in this world and of angels in the next. Real merit requires not recommendation. Merit is not merchandise that can be bribed and sold.

Men of great merit often live among their fellowmen, who remain unconscious of their merits and neglect and fail to reward them. Posterity recognizes their merit and values it at its proper worth. Their names, thereafter, live on the living lips of the young and old and their fame fades not.

Let me rise in my life by my worth. Let me prosper by my merit. Let me depend upon my personal merit to win the prize of life and not upon the favor of another. Let me honorably win my rank and title in due recognition of my merit. If my merit remains concealed and its recognition is delayed, let me have patience in the hope that if I deserve rightly, it cannot but be discovered some day and win recognition.

Thou, Ahura Mazda, art the final arbiter of human lives. In thy own good time, thou dost unfailingly reward all merit. Help me to do my duty and be worthy of thy reward. Give me what I deserve and teach me to deserve what thou givest me. Let my merit speak in both thy worlds.

## *Gratitude is my sacred duty*

Let gratitude, my Lord God, be instinctive and natural with me. Let me have a grateful mind and a grateful heart. Let me never be poor and beggarly in returning and paying thanks where due. Let me never forget the least good that anyone has done to me. Let me never return evil for good. Let not the sin of ingratitude ever burden my back.

Filial gratitude is due to their parents from their dutiful children. A hundred times more it is due from mankind unto thee, the Heavenly father of all.

With my mind filled with grateful thoughts and my heart replete with gratitude, I thank thee for the bounties with which thou dost load me day and night. Daily do I come to thy door abegging and thou dost not send me back with empty hands. Thou art the author of all my prosperity. Thou dost fill my cup to overflowing. Great is my indebtedness to thee. I owe thee everything. Unlimited are the favors that thou dost confer upon me. All blessings flow from thee. With thankful heart I approach thee. Even my heartfelt gratitude cannot fully repay thy debt. My language fails me and I have not sufficient words to express my sense of deep gratitude to thee for all that thou dost for me. My heart thanks thee before my mouth can speak the feeble words of thanks. When it is not in my power to fully repay all that is thy due, even will I live in loving obedience to thee and serve thee and work for thee and thy loving children. Unto thee be my thanks and thanks again, Ahura Mazda, now and for ever.

*Let me turn jealousy, rooted in my heart,  
into healthy emulation*

Jealousy is selfish and covetous, blind and malignant, mean and cowardly, vindictive and cruel. It implies inferiority on the part of the person who nurses it. It broods over its inferiority and prostrates itself in impotence.

The jealous person is petty-minded. He cannot behold greatness in another. He hates his greatness to which he himself cannot rise. He cannot hear his praise. He runs him down, he blasphemes him, disparages him. The fire of jealousy burns in his heart, when he sees his neighbor win, what he himself aspired to get but failed. He resents his success. He cannot tolerate the advantage that his antagonist has over him. He cannot bear to see him surpass him. His feeling of self-importance is hurt. He chafes under the consciousness that by his superior efforts and merit his neighbor got, what he failed to get. He becomes envious and intrigues to snatch what the other holds in his hands. He hates him and is eager to harm him, if he can. He gives vent to every passing gust of passion. His heart throbs with jealousy. His jealousy reacts upon himself and makes him miserable. It tears his heart and eats into his soul. It robs him of the peace of his mind and the quite of his soul.

Let me not harbor jealousy. Let me not indulge it. Help me, Ahura Mazda, to strangle jealousy at its birth, before it grows strong and holds me in its clutches and ruins me.

Let me not be jealous of greatness. Let me not envy the prosperity of another. Let me not grudge him what I possess not. I need not be jealous of the good fortune of my neighbor. Let me not envy merit in another. Let me acknowledge his merit. Let me emulate him. Let me recognize his worth. Let me imitate it.

Emulation is a spur to action. It creates the spirit of adventure and enterprise. With the passion for emulation kindled in me, let me strive by my honest work and strenuous effort and unfailing perseverance to equal my neighbor or even to excel him by fair means, if I can. With added zest in life, let me enter into healthy rivalry with my successful neighbor to rise to his eminence, to rise above him and go beyond him in the achievement of greatness in life.

## *Woman is the mother of human race*

Seated under the Tree of Life all alone, was Mashya, the First Man. Morose and moody and melancholy was he. Oppressive and killing was his solitude in this strange, new world. He dreaded life. He cursed his existence. Then did Spenta Mainyu, Ahura Mazda's superb Fashioner of mortal clay, take compassion on him and made Mashyani, the First Woman. Mashya took Mashyani as his wife. With his life-mate Mashya set up his first human household upon earth.

When Spenta Mainyu made man, he was acclaimed in the heavenly world as a good architect. When, with softer and finer clay and with unprecedented craftsmanship he made woman, he was hailed by all as the best and matchless Moulder of all time. Woman is the marvel of creation. Unrivalled and unequalled in form and beauty is she in this wide world of the seven zones. She is the blooming flower in the garden of life that breathes perfume all around.

Woman is the teacher of gentility to man. She helps man to grow in moral height. She is the sustaining power of the life of man. Much has she that man has not. Man is not man until woman breathes manhood in him. She is the life of man. She has genius to love and she loves more intensely and more faithfully than man. In the virtues of the heart, she excels man. She is more patient and enduring than man. She suffers silently and hides her grief in her bosom and smothers her tears. She comforts and she soothes. She dispels the darkness of the depressed spirits around her. Wilderness would this world be without woman. There is freshness and there is sweetness, where woman steps in. When life becomes a-weary, woman makes it a-cheery.

Man delights to lay at the feet of woman all that he wins from the world. The fanatic iconoclast turns docile idol-worshipper, when he approaches woman, the eternal idol of humanity in flesh.

Life becomes livable for man, for woman shares it. Woman is the helpmate of man. She is not his drudge or chattel. Woman, again, is not man in the making. She has not to ape man and grow mannish. Woman is woman and always and ever woman. Wifehood and motherhood are her most sacred functions. As a prudent wife and a loving mother, she forgets her own self for the tender love of her dear ones and trains her children to virtue.

Gentle and tender and delicate is womanly virtue. The slightest waft of vicious wind soils and withers it. Chastity is woman's priceless wealth. Purer than pearl and brighter than diamond is Asha Vanghuhi's chaste woman. Give us, Ahura Mazda, woman as chaste as Hvovi, as loving as Rodabeh, as devoted as Tehmina, as virtuous as Firangiz, as faithful as Manijeh, as pure as Pouruchisti and as brave as Gurdafrid.



## *Children are nearer heaven than we are*

Fresh from the land of the angels, the child is angelic at birth. It is godlike. The soul enters the body of a child and it sleeps its childhood. The reason sleeps. The conscience sleeps. The child exists. It has not yet begun to live a reasoned, responsible life. The child is innocent, for it knows no guile. It is pure, for it has come not across impurity. It is angelic; for it has faced not the demon lurking within it. The flower of life has not yet budded and blossomed. Innocent, pure and angelic is childhood. To see children is to see the Yazatas and Amesha Spentas, the Angels and Archangels of Ahura Mazda.

Nature abounds in many a charming object, but none so sweet as a child. Children fill our eyes with light and our hearts with delight. They gladden and they brighten our homes with their bright faces and happy smiles and sweet prattlings. They amuse us and cheer us and enliven us. Incomparable is the joy to fondle them and love them and play with them. Children in their budding tender life, are the poetry and song of human life.

Childhood has no past. The present and the future are the two seasons of children. They dream not of the future. The present is all their life. No care, no anxiety, no fear have they. Life to them is joy and sunshine, frolic and fun.

Childhood is the season of planting seeds that will blossom into rich harvest. As the farmer anxiously awaits the nature of the season's crops, so do fond parents look year after year how the child-mind develops and the child-soul unfolds. The child is the man and the children are the nation of the morrow. One day will the nation be as children grown up to maturity, will make it.

As the rose bud unfolds its petals to the beams of the rising sun, so does blooming youth outgrow its childhood and with wide awake reason and conscience assumes the responsibilities of life.

Now begins the journey on the rough and rugged path of life of hope and despair, joy and sorrow, success and failure, honor and shame, happiness or misery. Blank was the tablet of the soul in childhood. Youth now begins to record its daily doings and creates its history. Childhood was unsoiled by the vulgarities of the world. Youth now lives and works in the midst of temptation and vice. The light of reason brightens the paths of his life and the inner, infallible, divine voice guides him. The child was the angel by birth. Man or woman has to live the angelic life and fighting evil and living for good, has to become angel on his or her own merit.

The child is every parent's hope. All long to live in their children. Give us children of sound minds in sound bodies, who may grow up to be men and women of brilliant career and pure character, diligent and honest, upright and true, wise and virtuous, patriotic and selfless, and live and work for thee and thine, Ahura Mazda.

## *Heavenly is the happy wedlock*

On this auspicious day, in the presence of this august assemblage, the groom has plighted his marriage troth to the bride. The hands of N and M are joined and the marriage ceremony has solemnized their union. Put thy hands upon their heads, Ahura Mazda, and shower thy blessings on the matrimonial alliance which binds them by the sacred bond of mutual fidelity, that their nuptial union may be happy and lifelong.

The two have this day become one. Let them love each other faithfully, wholly and unceasingly. Let each to each dedicate one's dear self with the deepest love. Let them jointly share the ups and downs of life and with one mind seek their relief. Let each one rely upon the other as upon one's own self. Let each give his or her heart to gain the heart of the other. Let the husband be all the world to the wife and let the wife be all the world to the husband. Let their love for each other well up and flood their hearts. Let their hearts beat together as if in one body. Let each one reign in the other's heart. Let the pulse of his heart beat in her heart and the pulse of her heart beat in his heart. Let there be complete harmony between their souls. Let their two harmonious souls melt into one. Let each seek each one's completion in another. Let them move after one another like shadows. In life or death let each one's place be by the side of the other. Long may they live and after the longest of the long life allotted to human kind, may they both go hand in hand to the highest heaven.

May husband and wife work in consort like the dual Yazatas of Ahura Mazda. May Asha's righteousness reign supreme in their abode. May they be blessed with children with big brains and large hearts and virtuous souls. May their happy Zoroastrian home be a heaven upon earth.

## *Mother nature kisses away my melancholy*

Life without cheer is unbearable affliction and life often leaves me cheerless. Sorrow weighs down my life and unhappiness darkens it. Gloom descends upon me and I am a prey to dark depression. Afflicted with lowness of spirits and subject to dark moods, I brood on the disappointment of life. Grievous becomes the pain at my heart and, sunk in deep gloom, I seek an outlet for my misery in tears and weep my heart out, but they help me not. My outlook on life becomes clouded and I feel forlorn and forgotten.

But thou my ever-loving Father dost not forget me. Thou dost inspire me to seek forgetfulness of my misfortune in the soothing company of thy bountiful nature. Thou dost comfort me with the hope that nature will make me forget the griefs and sorrows I am hard beset with. Thy words of solace touch the sweet springs of my nature and my heart begins to beat glad.

Far from the toil and turmoil of the world of man and far from the din of town, through the silence of fields and forests I thread my way and in the solemn quietude, where no echo disturbs the solitude I greet nature and commune with her on the beauty and glory of her phenomena. In the deep solitude of woods I meet nature in her virgin purity as thou, Ahura Mazda, made her and man has not marred her. Here I feast my eyes on the beauties of nature. My imagination revels in the luxuriance of climate. Winged birds flutter in the air, small animals caper on the carpet of green grass and weeds, kissed by the sun during the day and by the moon during the night, and big animals roam through the woods and wilds. Flowers exhale sweet aroma and perfume.

Nature soothes the sorrow of my heart and imparts peace and rest and quiet to my troubled mind that in vain did I seek elsewhere. Nature puts pleasant sights and lovely sounds all along the path of my life, if but my eyes and ears were watchful and attentive.

I was broken and thy nature made me whole, Ahura Mazda.

## *Nature teaches and nature inspires*

Nature is the primal teacher, preacher and inspirator. Nature leads man to invent and nature inspires him to create works of arts and sciences. Nature fills man's mind with creative thoughts and ideas.

When pictograph was not and hieroglyph was not and cuneiform was not and alphabet was not and language was not, nature became the prophet and law giver to the primeval man and his progeny. The Book of Nature became the prototype of the Sacred Books of the world. Man's primeval religion was the religion of nature.

Every pebble and every particle of sand and every drop of water gives a lesson to learn. Nature rears multitudes of men of talents and from among them moulds and makes at rare intervals some masterminds, geniuses, the finest flowers in the garden of knowledge. Genius, the erstwhile consummate pupil of nature, observes and contemplates and reasons and understands and finally masters nature. Genius fathoms the meaning of life, solves the eternal enigmas of existence and reveals the secrets of nature to mankind. The light of genius illumines the minds of men and women.

Of wondrous workmanship is nature. Best masterpiece in art is nature. Divine commandments are all written in colors of matchless beauty in the Book of Nature. It has the message on every page for all who read it with an inquiring mind.

Omnipresent nature reveals thee, Ahura Mazda, as the first artist and the first painter and the first sculptor, as it reveals thee, as good and great and glorious. Nature is thy first marvelous Epic.

Daily will I read and meditate on the Book of Nature, wide open for my good. I will commune with nature and I will speak to nature. My mind revels in luxuriance of images and thoughts and ideas and reveries. Nature gives me deep draught of inspiration to drink. Nature speaks to me, nature enlightens me, nature inspires me. Inspired by nature, I will converse with thee and through nature, I will greet thee, Father of Nature.

## *Seasons of nature and seasons of life*

Spring is the queen of the seasons. It is the youth of the year and ever brimful of hopes is youth. The snow begins to melt, rivers begin to flow, birds begin to fly and the plants begin to grow. Spring revives new life and new spirit all around. Fresh and sweet, bright and blooming, delightful and lovely, charming and smiling is the beautiful spring. With spring with us, we are lively and cheerful, hopeful and happy.

Nature's heart is warmed and it throbs with new life. Wilderness blossoms into a garden. The floods of sunshine bathe the blossoms and the trees bend under the burden of their fruits. Freshness breathes in fields and forests. The earth is clothed with the green garment. Fields are waving with golden harvest. The verdant pastures and the luxuriance of vegetation cover the earth. Nature paints in exquisite colors and manifold hues scenes of evanescent beauty. The fragrance of flowers scent the air. The perfumed wind caresses the faces of all.

The wind sings lullabies and rocks birds nestling in trees to sleep. The winged songsters of brilliant plumage twitter in the trees and sing their delightful melodies among luxuriant thickets. The nightingale keeps her vigil over the budding rose at night and the rose sleeps its infant sleep. The sweet fragrance of the rose woos the nightingale into love. Laden with honey they gather among the wild flowers, the busy bees wing their way to their hives. On the golden branch of the pomegranate tree sits the butterfly with superbly woven and delicately painted wings. Pleasing is the soft sound of the rustle of a squirrel yonder in the bushes and shrubs.

With the azure dome above my head, with the green lawn beneath my feet, let me ramble and run, jump and romp, laugh and sing, in this wide world of joy and cheer, mirth and merriment. Nature in spring is my companion and trees and birds and animals are my friends. Let me live close to nature under the turquoise sky and speak with animals and sing with birds. When all nature sings to thee and flowers and trees and streams and rivers all their melodies do sing. Lord, let me not lag behind. Rouse me to play my noble part worthy of my humanity. Let me be alive to the multifarious charms of nature, when she is at her best in the spring. Let me drink at the fountain of sweetness and loveliness of nature, that nature may beguile my care and chase away my anxieties and enliven and gladden my heart.

Wearing the golden garment planned and prepared by the Spring, comes the leafy Summer. The orchards and fields and forests are in full bloom. The clouds float in the sweet azure of the vaulted sky. The earth and grass and trees make the air all perfume. The Summer sun blazes down upon the earth with burning heat and the towns and the villages swelter in heat. Parched lands thirst for water. Heavy clouds cap the mountain crests. The crashing thunders of Apaosha are heard and the blinding lightning of Spenzagra illuminates the dark forests. The clouds of Tishtrya burst and the rain drops fall. The rain falls in a thin drizzle and the rain falls in torrents. Rain soaks our clothes and drenches the earth. The earth bears fruit and corn. The vegetable and flower seeds bud and blossom in the sunshine. Nature displays her boundless benevolence towards animals and men and they thrive on the plenty that the mother earth yields.

Then sets in the leafless Autumn. The autumnal fog hangs thickly over the landscape. The killing frost wind withers and kills the buds of flowers and plants and fruit trees. Frosty winds whistle through leafless boughs and their melancholy meanings are heard all around. Feebleness of age

now creeps over the year and on the eve of its life, in halting and faltering steps, does it move onward on its downward seasonal journey.

From his dreary abode in the northern regions, now comes Winter. A heavy mist hangs over the plains. Winter lays his icy hand on earth. Snow falls on the crests of the mountains. The branches of trees are clothed in glittering snow-frozen crystals. Blinding blizzards and heavy snowstorms chill the animal world to the bone and the teeth do chatter and the bodies do shiver with unbearable cold. Vegetation is frozen to death in the snow. With faded light and departed glory, aged and crippled, breathless and lifeless, falls old year in the darkness of the wintry night and dies.

The year dies, but to be reborn year after year. I die but once and know not rebirth. The pleasures on which I set my heart in the Spring of my life flee from me. The glamour of gaiety departs never to return. Save me, thou Savior, my God, from early sinking into the feebleness of old age. Let not my life lose its savor for me, when in the Winter of my life, I feel my strength diminishing. Let not my temper be ruffled. Youth heals the wounds of the heart. Help me long to retain the youthful vigor of my mind, when my body grows old. Let not the ardor of my youthful soul be quenched, when the Autumn and Winter of my life overtake me.

Seasons come and seasons go. From Spring to Summer and Summer to Autumn and Autumn to Winter, the seasons march. As it is with nature, so it is with human life.

In the Autumn and Winter of my life, I reap what I have sown in the Spring and Summer of my life. Help me to live my youthful seasons well, that I may live in peace in the closing seasons of my life, Ahura Mazda.

## *Hvarekhshaeta, the sun, is the King of the day*

Marvelous and endless is thy Universe, Creator divine. There are worlds besides our world and suns besides our glorious sun. Every one of the distant suns is larger than our sun, and has planetary bodies revolving round it in their fixed orbits.

From above the mountain Hara Berezaiti rises the imperishable, radiant, swift-horsed sun. The sun darts his light and rends the dark veil of night. The rising sun dispels the fog and dissolves the mists. The fiery streaks of the sun flush upon the earth. Nature dons resplendent robe when the bright sun rises in august majesty and appears before the world in his fiery garment. The sun dispenses his light over the seven zones of the earth.

The sun's warmth animates and enlivens. The sun floods and bathes the earth with his golden light. His infinite rays stream downward upon the earth. The sun gives light to the world and kisses the plants and trees into life. Towns and villages are all ablaze with the shining sun and men and women are out for industry and enterprise and adventure all the livelong day to create culture and civilization.

The sun shines upon the good and evil, fair and ugly, pure and impure, clean and filthy, and his all-purifying light cleanses all. The light of the sun scorches and burns all filth and stench and defiling and decaying matter.

When the sun has run his daily course marked out for him, feeble grows the sunshine and the last rays fade into twilight. The glow of the setting sun crimsons the sky in the west and, at sundown, the glorious sun sinks into the sea or hides behind the horizon.

Let me sit in the warm sunlight and bask in the sunshine and drink in the sunshine. All creation turns with joy to the light of the sun. Child of light am I. Thou my Maker art the Light of Lights. The resplendent light of thy countenance cheers me. Illumine my mind and inflame my heart with the light of thy sun. Give me a sunny temperament.

Thou hast made thy sun the lord of light upon the earth. He is the maker of seasons and sovereign of time. He is the King of the Day. In him do I see thee and greet thee, for he, visible sun, is the resplendent image of thee that art invisible, Ahura Mazda.

## *Maonghah, the moon, is the Queen of night*

When Hvarekshaetra the sun's daylight fades into the dusk and he dies his daily death, his far-famed collaborator Mithra reigns supreme between dusk and twilight. When dusk sinks into dark, the shades of night fall over the earth and her dark mantle covers it. In the dense darkness of the night, dead silence sleeps over the earth and towns and villages are wrapped in slumber. Black is the darkness in the dead of night and shadows take shape and frighten all. With darkness of the night all around, it becomes as silent as a grave.

Then does Maonghah, the bright moon, the heavenly queen of Night rise in her silvery splendor and sweeps majestically through the cloudless sky. She floods and bathes the earth with her white and soft and shining and shimmering and cool light and makes it lovely and beautiful, charming and smiling in her resplendent glory. The moon waxes and the moon wanes. The moon swells the seas and retards the seas. She makes the tides rise and flow, fall and ebb. Pleasant it is to watch the clouds weave a fleecy veil for the covering of the moon's face or the moon struggling to extricate herself from the clouds or when the moon serenely sails the brilliant sky or the light of the moon that the passing clouds let shine fitfully or when the moon bashfully peeps through a rent in the clouds that hang over her or the quivering of the beams of the moon on the waters of the sea or the beams trembling on the leaves of the trees. The moon stares at me with her cold eyes and her soft beams caressingly play on my face.

Myriads of twinkling stars that accompany the Queen of Night brighten and adorn the blue vault of heaven and display the pomp pageant and the glories of the starlit sky.

Then does Parodarsh, the ever vigilant cock of paradise, the messenger of dawn, crow his joyous greetings to Ushah, the dawn. The brilliant dawn intervenes between the night that is dying and the day that is springing to birth. The bright dawn smiles on the drowsy earth. Ushah's dawn bathes the earth with her silvery light. The stars are now extinguished to herald the advent of the King of Day and the Queen of Night retires to rest.

Thou Ahura Mazda, hast created the night for rest. Sleep and dreamless sleep that knows and feels nothing but sleep is the nature's best restorative that rejuvenates brain cells and tissues and prepares man for the next day's work. Thou hast set thy multimillion sentinels to watch thy sleeping world. Thou hast written the story of thy creation in shining silvery words. Thou hast bedecked the sky with the robe of glittering jewels more shining than diamonds. The myriads of stars that illuminate thy sky are the glittering eyes of thy numberless angels. The sparkling stars display thy resplendent glory with Maonghah, the Queen of Night, Ahura Mazda.



## *Strengthen me to fight Evil, Ahura Mazda*

Man harbors within his breast the Good Spirit and the Evil Spirit alike. The ghastly, shadowy forms of his vicious thoughts, sensuous passions, carnal desires, termed Daevas and Draujas, Demons and Fiends, the brood of darkness, fill the atmosphere around him. He carries them on his shoulders.

Angra Mainyu, the Evil Spirit, the sovereign of the infernal world, steals furtive glances at man. He watches him with his eyes as bright and blazing as the burning coals in the dark. He follows at man's heels and like a hound is he on the trail. He is out to bring forward division of man against himself and to wreak his worst upon him.

Just as the cat catches the mouse, puts him down on the ground, lets it move, puts its paw over it, frees it again, lets it run, catches it again and thus amusing herself for some time, she makes a meal of her victim at last, even so does Angra Mainyu decoy man by his beguiling voice, lure him, fondle him, cajole him, until when the beast in man awakens and flares up and he is caught in the snare of the vile hunter. Man then becomes the favorite of the Evil Spirit and bows at his feet at his bidding. When passion rules his actions, he becomes a slave, bound hand and foot, in the bondage of sin. Angra Mainyu becomes his master. Man belongs to him. He is his. No more is he himself. O that he would yet light his beguiler and save himself from the clutches of the Evil One, free himself from his snare, become himself again, his own master and regain his manhood!

Help me Ahura Mazda, to fight and overcome evil in its very first attempt to assail me. Let me not dally with it, lest it conquers me and then regression turns difficult for me. Let me extinguish the spark of evil before it sets my soul on fire. Let me flee from evil as from a wild beast, if I cannot fight it. But better still give me courage to face evil and fight it and overcome it.

I will fight evil thoughts and evil desires and evil passions. I will cast out all evil thoughts from my mind and evil passions from my heart and deliver myself from evil, Ahura Mazda.

## *Life is based on the law of polarity*

Spenta Mainyu, the Good Spirit, and Angra Mainyu, the Evil Spirit, are inveterate foes. With the advent of man upon earth, the warfare between them has begun. It will end in the defeat of the Evil Spirit, when human life upon earth will end. The Evil Spirit deranges what the Good Spirit has arranged, frustrates what he has willed, levels down what he has raised, breaks what he has constructed and destroys what he has created.

Human nature, likewise is based on the law of contrast and conflict. Irreconcilable opposites exist side by side in human nature. Vohu Manah, the Good Mind, and Aka Manah, the Evil Mind, are the two principles poised against each other in man. Vohu Manah with his good thoughts and Aka Manah with his evil thoughts are wrestling within man. The clinging creeper of evil has wound itself around the tree of goodness and chokes its life. Struggle is the fundamental fact of man's life. Man is a human being and an animal, a civilized man and a savage, an angel and a demon in one. Every human being carries his Angra Mainyu in his heart. Life is a long battle. Man has to fight evil within himself and in the world without. He has to seek the enemy, shake his fist at him, wage war with him, bravely face his attacks, intrepidly risk his all and subdue the evil in his nature.

Life is neither all gaiety, nor all gloom. The world is not heaven, nor is it hell. The rose has its thorns and prickles. The fairest of flowers has its canker. The orchard produces sweet and sour, wholesome and poisonous fruit. Splendor and squalor, fragrance and filth, beauty and ugliness, sumptuousness and want, health and sickness, happiness and misery, exist side by side in this world of contrasts.

Life is not easy living. It is very hard indeed. Life does not always glide on cheerful wings. It glides not smoothly like a stream. Often has man to steer the vessel of life over angry seas. The nut cannot be had without breaking the hard shell. Life is a ceaseless fight. All have to fight. Victory sometimes comes easily. At other times it eludes man's grasp and he has to fight more strenuously.

The world is not a resort of pleasure for man to disport. Man is lost in the labyrinth of life. Hard and harsh are the ways of life. Crushing are the cares and anxieties of life. Providence has given man a resourceful mind and strong arms and strong shoulders and strong feet that, ungrudgingly and bravely and patiently, he may bear the burden of his life himself and stand firm without falling.

Thou Spenta Mainyu, art the author of my life. Thou hast breathed into me the breath of life. Tempestuous is the sea of life. Unflinchingly will I fight the stormy billows of Aka Manah's evil thoughts and with unerring rudder of Vohu Manah's good thoughts, will I steer the ship of my life to the port of safety.

With a purpose higher and nobler than my own self-interest, will I live my life upon earth. Daily will I fight to weaken the power of the Evil Spirit and to hasten his defeat. I will live the life of good thoughts and good words and good deeds. I will strive to convert Zarathushtra's ideal of life into the practical. I will successfully struggle to realize the sublime ideal of my beloved prophet. I will live pure life-Zoroastrian life, that thy life may pervade my inner life-Spenta Mainyu, thou Good Spirit of Ahura Mazda.

## *Blasphemous it is to term non-Zoroastrians as darvands*

All flesh is one and whole mankind shares its oneness. Flesh in its make knows no degree of purity and righteousness. Religion imparts not exclusive holiness to its adherents. Purity of thought and purity of words and purity of deeds, regardless of caste or colour or creed, make men and women holy or unholy, righteous or wicked. Not birth in any particular religious fold, but worth and worth alone counts in the court of God, who is one and the same God of all mankind, though known by many and different names.

All religions teach that mankind is the one family of God and all men and women, to whatever religion they belong, are brothers and sisters. Religions, in their pristine purity, preach unity. At later periods in the history of religions, when conventional socio-religious customs and observations and practices pass for religion, theologies and dogmas begin to work more as separative influences than as factors of unity. Tradition, in its proverbial tyranny, compels all to conform to conventional, socio-religious creed.

In our exaggerated notion of our religious piety, we have learnt to attach impurity to any intercourse with non-Zoroastrians while we pray or perform ceremonies. The proximity of men and women of alien faiths, we brand as impure. The merest touch of theirs is defiling and the veriest of their shadow spells pollution to all our holy things. Unknowingly have we come to know and speak and write of all non-Zoroastrians as darvands.

Darvand, in its original Avestan form 'dregvant' means 'wicked.' It is an ethical appellation of unrighteous persons. Angra Mainyu, the Evil Spirit, is a 'dregvant' or 'darvand' or wicked, as Spenta Mainyu, the Good Spirit, is 'ashavan' or righteous.

Thou Ahura Mazda, dost recognize only two classes among mankind, the 'ashavan' or righteous and the 'dregvant,' 'darvand' or wicked to whatever religion they may belong. Those alone among Zoroastrians, who think good thoughts, speak good words and do good deeds are 'ashavan' or righteous in thy sight. Those who don Sudrah and Kusti, the sacred shirt and girdle, and call themselves the Mazda worshipping Zoroastrians yet think evil thoughts and speak evil words and do evil deeds, are 'darvands' or wicked. Those that profess to be good Mazdayasnians, but whose conduct gives the lie to their profession, are themselves 'darvands,' wicked indeed.

## *Give me insatiable avidity for learning, Ahura Mazda*

Give me the will to know and the will to learn, Ahura Mazda. Let me be learning all my life. Let me be a life-long student. Let me study as an ardent and not as a dilettante. Let me always be looking for information and instruction from anywhere and everywhere. Spare me from conflicting passions, but let one single intellectual passion to know and to learn always drive me in life. Let me revel in intellectual pleasures.

At rare intervals are born some men who are touched by the magic wand of genius. These gifted thinkers leave their priceless legacies to posterity. Ours is the matchless heritage of knowledge gained and garnered by the sages of the past. The past is dead, but not before inscribing its achievements upon our minds, which we cannot and will not wipe clean. Its creative thought is ever with us to give us mental exaltation.

Literature endures when the triumphs of marble and bronze perish. It is the greatest intellectual stimulant. No pleasure is as great and noble as that of reading. It exerts inspiring influence over my mind. Books inform and instruct and elevate and amuse and soothe and cheer. They are the priceless repositories of knowledge. With books as my companions, I greet the sages of all ages and hold intercourse with the best brains of all times and places. I make myself contemporary with them and hold converse with them.

Let me not read amiss. Let me read with purpose. Let me read what is worth reading. Let me read to exercise my mind and to keep it fresh and healthy. Let me read and let me reflect on what I read and let me make it mine. Let not books think for me. Let me think for myself. Let my reading replenish my intellect and elevate my mind. Let it fill my mind with great thoughts and lofty ideals and noble aspirations.

Help me to gain a thorough mastery over the language in which I write. Give me lucidity of thought and clarity of expression. Let me write with the pen of an inspired one. Help me to create and help me to produce works of knowledge that may live and live long, Ahura Mazda.

## *It is given to man alone to accumulate knowledge*

Ahura Mazda has kindled the divine flame of illuminating light in man's mind. Reason is the prerogative of man. It raises him above the beasts. Animals live by instinct. With reason as the eye of his soul and as his guide to steer the bark of his life, man creates culture and civilization and progresses towards perfection.

Ahura Mazda has ordained that mind shall not lie fallow. Man has to cultivate it and seed it that knowledge may grow upon its soil. Knowledge ploughs its bright way through the darkness of Ignorance. It gives all-seeing eyes to man's soul to see the light veiled in the clouds.

Knowledge is as ancient as time. It knows no death. It is inviolate and invincible. It rules the world. It is man's highest acquisition. It is priceless. It is the only treasure that is stolen not and burns not and rusts not and decays not and dies not. Man of knowledge is richer than the richest of men and more powerful than the most powerful potentate. Knowledge gives man wings to fly to the four corners of the earth and soar to the highest heavens to unravel the secrets of life. It is man's unfailing and life-long friend, his surest and safest guide in life.

Ahura Mazda lighted the torch of knowledge when man first set his foot upon earth. Numberless persons have from generation to generation lighted their lamps at its flame, but the eternal torch goes on burning the same as ever.

Man hides his wealth and jewels. Knowledge is not meant for concealment, nor for hoarding. It is to be sought for from anywhere and to be freely distributed everywhere. It may be imparted to a million people from sunrise to sunset and it will know no decrease. Inexhaustible is the store of knowledge.

Endow me with a brain, my kindly Creator, in which the light burns bright. Give me an orderly mind, an active mind and a comprehensive mind, animated by curiosity and inquisitiveness to know and learn. Enlighten my understanding. Let reason rule my conduct. Let me live in the realm of intellect.

If I know anything, I know how little I know of the immeasurable that lies before me to know. Let me own my ignorance with humility that I may move onward on the path of knowledge. Let me not be arrogant of my knowledge. Let me never think that I know enough. Let me ever crave for more knowledge than I have. Let me consecrate my soul to knowledge. Let me be poor in purse, but rich in knowledge. Let me bear aloft the torch of knowledge, O thou All knowing One.

## *Let wisdom lead me in life*

No price can count the worth of wisdom. It is more precious than diamonds. Name and fame, health and wealth can be bought. Wisdom alone has patiently to be sought. Wisdom's vision is clear and serene. Wisdom is sublime.

Wisdom has foresight and forethought and foreknowledge. Nothing escapes the vigilant eyes of wisdom. Seeing with spying eyes and hearing with prying ears and with the gaping curiosity of a sightseer, wisdom inspects and infers, reflects and philosophizes, weighs and discerns, compares and contrasts, accepts and rejects, from what knowledge has gathered and garnered. Wisdom is the discerning exercise of knowledge. Neither deep learning, nor profound knowledge is wisdom. Judicious use of knowledge makes for wisdom.

Vohu Manah symbolizes Ahura Mazda's wisdom and goodness. These twin virtues of Vohu Manah make man perfect. Let my thoughts turn where Vohu Manah's wisdom abides, that I may be both wise and good.

If I am not gifted with Vohu Manah's innate wisdom, help me Ahura Mazda, to shine with my acquired wisdom. Let wisdom be my constant companion and guide. Help me to use my knowledge with discretion and common sense. Let Vohu Manah's wisdom lead me to see the issues before me with a clear and cool mind. Let me not be carried away by the enthusiasm of the moment. Let me think and think deeply and work out the details of the plan before I leap into action. Let not the pride of my knowledge intoxicate me. Let me court wisdom's humility. Let wisdom which is the knowledge of true life, rule and regulate my life. Let wisdom guide me to see things as thou seest them, O thou Most Wise Mazda Ahura.

## *Let me nurture my mind with Vohu Manah's good thoughts*

Thought gives form and colour to words and deeds. As are the thoughts, so are the words and deeds. Words and deeds are but reflections of thoughts. Man becomes good or evil, as he thinks.

Thought is the seed of words and deeds. The fruit is of the seed. Thistles cannot produce roses. Good and evil thoughts germinate in the mind, just as seeds that fall on the field do. Vohu Manah's thoughts beget good words and good deeds, when Aka Manah's thoughts originate evil words and evil deeds. Like the noxious weeds that spoil the ground in which they take root, vicious passions and sinful inclinations blight the soil of the mind. When the seed is sown, it requires suitable soil in which it may germinate well. Human mind, likewise, requires to be cleansed of all impurity. Every vestige of evil is to be removed from it, that the seeds of good thoughts may find congenial soil for growth.

Good thoughts are the fragrant flowers that grow in the garden of Vohu Manah and make life good. All goodness witnessed in the world is the product of the good thoughts that have stirred the breasts of godlike persons of all ages. Good thoughts die not. They are eternal. They hasten the final perfection of the world of man.

Vohu Manah came to Zarathushtra and imprinted himself upon his mind. May he come to me, I pray, and implant his good thoughts within me. May he govern my mind and regulate my thoughts. May he ever be the welcome guest in my mind.

I am distraught, Ahura Mazda, between the thoughts of Vohu Manah, Good Mind, and Aka Manah, Evil Mind. May the fire of Asha Vahishta burning in my heart scorch and burn the vicious thoughts and vulgar passions of Evil Mind. May Good Mind scatter my evil thoughts like morning dew. Let my evil thoughts die before they find their way into words and deeds. Let not my mind be besmirched with evil thoughts.

As the bird hatches her brood in her nest, so will I carefully nurture and nourish good thoughts in my mind. I will let good thoughts alone enter my mind. I will make them my constant companions. I will let my good thoughts alone live and find expression in words and deeds. I will think good thoughts and live good thoughts. I will attune my life to good thoughts.

I will make Vohu Manah's thoughts my habitual thoughts. I will fill my mind with Vohu Manah's thoughts. I will make Vohu Manah the keeper of my thoughts. The path of Vohu Manah's good thoughts leads me to thee, Ahura Mazda. I will make my good thoughts rise heavenward that I may come to thee, O Thou First Thinker of good thoughts.

## *Let me speak thy words, Ahura Mazda*

Zarathushtra, thou Ahura Mazda sayeth, was the first of mortals who heard thy words. He, thy prophet, spoke thy words, unheard by mankind, to our forbears at the dawn of history in Zoroastrian Iran of undying glory.

In thy boundless creation, man is an atom of dust, but the dust that lives and thinks and speaks. The faculty of speech distinguishes man from animals. Man is a thinking and speaking animal. Speech is man's prerogative. It is thy greatest gift to man.

Language is vocalized breath. It is the vehicle of thought. Man clothes his thoughts with speech, and speech is the expression of man's thoughts and feelings. Man communicates his thoughts with the word of mouth or in writing.

Let me speak nothing but what is true and good and pleasant. Let me not speak ill of anyone. Let me not permit false and foul words to pass my lips. Let me not speak words that hurt and wound and stab the hearts of others. Let me not abuse my precious power of speech. Let me not speak words that have more heat and less light. Let me not be hasty with my words. Let not words move faster than my wit.

Let me think before I speak. Let me speak, when I have something to speak. Let me speak words that have more sense than sound. Let my thought take wings in words that make others think. Let me speak words with the tongue of a wise man. Let me speak words that carry conviction. With the sense of expediency, let me speak the right word at the right moment. Let reason rule and regulate my words. Let me speak words that soothe a troubled mind and heal a broken heart. Let me speak with grace. When I loosen my tongue, let it always be to speak good words and kind words and wise words and righteous words. Let only my good thoughts blossom into speech. Let my mouth speak what my heart feels and wishes me to speak.

My thought is my own. My words that give expression to it are no longer mine. I can conceal my thought. My speech reveals my character. Let me speak not then, what on later reflection I feel I had better not spoken. No power on earth or in heaven can efface the ill-spoken word.

Blessed art thou, my God, who dost hear my words from on high. Thine am I to speak as it pleaseth thee. I will speak what is well-pleasing to thy ears to hear. Suffer not my lips to utter Un-Zoroastrian words, Ahura Mazda.



*May thy divine glory dart its radiant rays on our community,  
Ahura Mazda*

When the sons and daughters of Airyanavaeja migrated southwards and settled on the plateau of Iran, the Aryan Glory, mounted high on the lofty heights of Alburz was the wonder of the world. Then when they established their sovereignty, the Kingly Glory came unto their Kings.

The Pishdad and the Kianian, the Achaemenian and the Sasanian empires rose and fell in succession. The kings of these mighty empires wore the resplendent robes of the Kingly Glory. It was the shining symbol of the greatness and power of the Persian Empire. It filled Iran with riches, spiritual and temporal. It shone bright and lighted the path of the progress of the Iranians. Their fame passed from mouth to mouth for generations. It was glory then to be known as an Iranian, a Persian.

The bravest fall and the mightiest fall. The great and glorious Zoroastrian Persian Empire fell and the Kingly Glory fled with eagle wings. The empire is dead, the visible signs and symbols of the Kingly Glory lie in ruins or buried in the dust. But glorious deeds die not. Deathless is Glory. It lives.

The Glory came unto the early Parsi settlers in this, their new land of all hope. It guided and guarded, protected and preserved our fugitive fathers. With patience and perseverance and endurance and industry and enterprise, they passed through privations and hardships and obstacles and trials and tribulations, and paved their way to prosperity. Undauntedly they climbed the steep tower of Glory and wore the Glory of our Iranian ancestors. Their illustrious names are recorded in illuminated characters in the pages of Parsi history. The great are dead and gone, but the Glory sits for ever on their names.

May there be born, O Thou possessed of Divine Glory, good and great men and women in our small community in all the coming epochs in its life, who may live through their undying deeds of glory. May they live for the community and work for the community that the community may live as long as time lasts, crowned with the laurels of deathless Glory.

## *Life is incomplete without death*

When Spenta Mainyu and Angra Mainyu, the two Primeval Spirits of Ahura Mazda, first met together, they created life and non-life. Life and Death are twins. There is lurking death, where there is life upon earth. Life and death are inseparable and indivisible. Death is life's inevitable accompaniment and culmination. Apart from death, life is inconceivable.

Life and death are inveterate foes. Life is ever on the watch against the incessant onslaughts of invincible death to extinguish it. Death hungers for life, feeds upon life and is ever a-hungry for more morsels. Death, the greatest glutton, holds unending festival and knows no satiation. None is ever so busy as death. He knows no holiday and no days of rest.

Life makes history. Death is blank. Life knows the present and the past and the future. Death knows but the present. Death, is death, as darkness is darkness. Death knows no life as darkness knows no light. Death will die, when mortal life will die at the Renovation.

Death conquers, but to be conquered in turn by life spiritual. Life dies in body; it dies not in spirit. Death ends the life of the flesh, when the life of the spirit lives for ever. The soul that animated the body, now wings its way heavenward.

Death confers life's liberty. Death in this world is but the name for the life in the next world. It is the life anew in the other world. Zadomarg, life and death, is the chamber with gates of life and death confronting each other. From one gate man enters and it is life for him; from another he departs and it is death for him. Death's door is but an entrance to another and higher life.

Death is deliverance to the incurably weary and happiness to the hopelessly miserable. Death brings the weary days of the sorrowing and suffering to an end. Death thus heals where life does not and gives peace to the dead which life yielded him not. Death soothes the mourners that they lose one another down upon earth to meet again on high in heaven. The thought that the survivors will one day join the dead consoles and brings respite from grief. Their departed dead rest in the yonder world and they will soon be gathered to them.

If death is to come, death will come and nothing upon earth or in heaven will stay it. Let me then be prepared to meet it. Death can kill my bodily life, it cannot destroy my spiritual life. Let me therefore live for the spirit, the life of the spirit faithfully and dutifully that I can force death to grovel at my feet. Death upon earth provides me with ascension towards thee, to live with thee and in thee, O thou Giver of Life and Death, Ahura Mazda.

## *Let me live well, that I may die well*

I know not the day when death will conquer me. Yet I cannot live with peace, if the knowledge of the day of my death were given me. I will die one day in body, I know, but help me my God, never to die in spirit.

Teach me to live and teach me to die, O Thou Dispenser of life and death. I am born good. If I turn evil, I am false to my own self and to thee. Help me, then, to die good, if not better.

Death is life asleep. It is the going to sleep at night without awaking in the morning. It is the sleep that knows no end. So it is with the lifeless body lying upon its dying bed. Death liberates the soul and it embarks upon its journey heavenward to make up its accounts with the heavenly judge.

Heaven's happiness is not won with ease. The memory of having lived well sheds joy unto the righteous soul of one. Dismal death gives glimpses of ghastly future to the soul of another that has not lived well. His memory runs over the years of ill-spent life and he sighs and he weeps for the woeful future that stares him in the face. Now when the shadow of the coming calamity deepens, an excruciating agony tortures him, and standing on the brink of the dark abyss of death, he cries: "O that I had lived well, that I could have died well."

Thy holy men and women of all times, Ahura Mazda, that have lived well and died well have feared not death. They have faced it with contempt. They have bravely gone to the scaffold, bared their necks to the guillotine and cheerfully faced death that their honor he saved. They have been willing to die over and over again for their good name.

Death with honor is sweeter than life with shame. I will live my life well and nobly and honorably, that I may leave the world without a stigma on my name.

Unto death will I be faithful unto thee, my Father Divine. So truly a Zoroastrian life will I live, that when the race of my life is run and work upon earth is done, when my solemn hour comes at last and I am face to face with death, death then will have no terror for me and its fear shall not shine in my eyes. I will face death with equanimity.

Then when I am charmed into lasting sleep, my last sleep will be the sleep of the innocent, with a smile on my face. Peacefully will I resign my self in thy loving care and protection. Then will my soul wing its flight to thee, Ahura Mazda and I and thee will stand face to face together. May it then come to pass that thy words of greeting me may be: "Hail Thee! Thou that hast died well, for thou hast lived well."

## *Help me to die, when I cannot live*

Death the hunter is out with his hound to kill ruthlessly and recklessly anyone and everyone that meets him on the way. This inexorable enemy of man cuts short many lives full of promise in their prime and takes them away before they have so much as seen the least of life.

Many and varied are the ghastly ways of his killing. An overwhelming large number of his victims die a mercilessly lingering and excruciating death.

With noiseless footfall comes death. He comes on the tiptoe and the chill of death takes possession of his victim. The pallor of death falls on his face. The dazed victim stares with vacant eyes. The eyes that shone light lose luster. They sink deep into their sockets. Light fails and vision is blurred. The eyelids droop. The senses flee and wits grow dim and the memory fails. The brain is benumbed, and reason is eclipsed. Limbs grow stiff. The body begins to stiffen in final contraction. A rattling sound comes from the throat. The patient passes into a coma. He does not come out of the delirium and happily therefore, he knows not that he is suffering. The blood in his veins dries up. The breath of life begins to ebb from the veins. The last convulsion of the body gripped in the agony of dissolution begins, breath comes in great gasps, the pulse ceases to beat, the heart stands still, bodily mechanism ceases to function and falls to pieces.

Nothing can bring back warmth into his body. The light will not come back to his eyes, the pulse will not begin anew to throb and the heart will not resume beating. None will now breathe the breath of life back into his body. He is now a lifeless lump of clay. He is dead and the dead is dust.

When weakness grows upon me and age is slowly creeping over me, when I begin to fail in health, when the decay of my physical powers creeps over me, when life is ebbing and the beginning of the end is in sight, let it not be prolonged and painful. Let merciful nature relieve me from suffering. Let not the dreaded shade of death hang darkening over me. Let me not long await the oncoming of death.

Life flickers out like the light of the candle that lightens my death-chamber. Let not the flickering light burn laboriously in gasping flames near extinction. Let my life be extinguished, as swiftly as a candle is blown out by the blast of a powerful wind.

Help me to die a death, my God, without agony and without pain. When I lie down to die, let it be with peace of death over my face. Let me sleep the sleep of my death and let me peacefully go to my lasting rest.

## *My birthday is my most auspicious day*

Birth is the perpetuation of the ancestral lineage. Our renowned fathers of yore observed and honored their natal anniversaries, their birthdays, above all other days and festively celebrated them. Today is the day of my birth. With grateful heart I thank thee, my Father Divine, for thy numerous favors and mercies during the past year. With heartfelt satisfaction I look behind to the year I have lived. I have lived it as thou didst wish me to live. With hopeful eyes do I now look to the coming year.

My birthday today reminds me that my life is shortened by a year. I have untangled the threads of the mystery of life. Life is not a shadow and not a dream. It is a tremendous reality. Short as the span of my life is, I will make the best use of every moment of my waking life. I accept life on its own terms. Favored of fortune or bereft of it, the accident of my birth will not determine my career. I will make my own way through life. On this auspicious day in my life I resolve that I will make my life all anew. I will make it good and great by my own effort and my own worth. I will live the dawning year to the glory of my illustrious Iranian ancestors. True to the ideal of Zoroastrian life, so will I mould and make my life that it may do honor to my beloved Parsi community and the dear country of my birth.

May troubles and anxieties and sorrow and sickness flee from my house. May peace and quiet and joy and health enter my abode. May truth and virtue and righteousness rout and dispel falsehood and vice and wickedness from my home.

Let my coming birthdays appear as brilliant and as joyful as they seemed to me in my youth. May Hvare-Khshaeta's sun shine for many a year to come to declare my happy birthdays. Lay thy hands, Ahura Mazda, upon my head on this my birthday and shower thy blessings of happy life and healthy life and good life and long life.

## *Let us love our adopted motherland*

Thou, Ahura Mazda, hast put love of one's country in every human breast. Thou hast made the land of his birth dear to man. Airyana Vaeja, the stemland of the Aryans, was the best of all lands, says the Vendidad, that thou didst create. Airyana, Iran became the primitive fatherland of our ancestors:

Here was made our history for two thousands years and more. Our great empire fell in the seventh century, leaving us the priceless patrimony of the heroic deeds and noble ideals of our Iranian forebears. The proud memories and sweet recollections of the unforgettable achievements of the Pishdadians and Kianians, Achaemenians and Sasanians still cheer us and enthuse us and inspire us.

When our National greatness and glory were lost beyond recall, thou, in thy mercy, didst not forsake us. Thou didst guide a noble band of exiles to the hospitable shores of this hoary land. The hymn to Sraosha recited by us for some three thousand years has familiarized us with Hapta Hindu or Sapta Sindhu, the land of the seven rivers. Our fugitive fathers adopted this country as our new Home. This was twelve hundred years ago. Here have our fathers lived and died and their ashes lie mingled in the Indian soil.

India is our common motherland and we of various castes and creeds are all her children. Patriotism is colorless and creedless. It is the common civic religion that unites all races and communities of the country under one flag and one destiny. Let us always pray for the union of hearts, that good-will may reign supreme between the various communities of diverse faiths and weld them into one Indian Nation. Let Indian nationality be founded on the political unity of the peoples that inhabit this country.

A millennium and more ago our fathers, the early settlers in India, hailed this country as their new native land. Let us then live not exclusively our communal life, but let us live as a part of the great Indian nation that is in the making. Let us serve our country to the best of our ability. Let us sacrifice our good to the good of our country. Let our private interests yield to the public interests. As citizens of the soil, let us pledge our all to the common good of the country. Let us work with all our heart and all our soul for the advancement of the country. Great was India's past; greater is to be her future. Let us contribute our share to the making of her future greatness.

India is the land of our hope and happiness. Our lives belong to our country. We will work to promote the well-being of our country. We will love India, we will serve India, we will stand by India, we will sacrifice our all for India, for India is ours, our own now and for evermore.

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The Sermon commencing under the Title-head of "Let us love our adopted motherland" shown above, was written in 1945 by the late author.

Since 14th August 1947, members of the Parsee Community, who remained in the Area ceded to Pakistan, have since treated Pakistan as their land of adoption and hence their Motherland and accordingly wherever the word "India" appears "Pakistan" should be read.

## **Chapter III**

## *Bare Thy face to me, I beseech Thee, Ahura Mazda*

I am seized with unquenchable longing to behold thee face to face, my blessed Lord. I long to see thy blessed self. I yearn to meet thy good self. I long to hold close communion with thee. This longing for thee and yearning after thee has been the innate human nature with me.

I cannot lift the veil that shrouds thee from my perception. I cannot break the barriers that divide me from thee. Thou dost fill both the heavens and the earth. Stupendous is the height of the heavens. Infinite is the width of the earth. I find thee difficult of approach.

Zarathushtra, my beloved prophet, inspires me with hopeful words in my search for thee. He shows me thy light that can brighten my pathway and guide my footsteps to thee. I need not scale the heights of the heavens, he says, nor travel along the highways of the world to find thee. With purity of mind and holiness of heart, he assures me, I can find thee on the highway of my own heart. He leads me to bend all my thoughts upon thee. To meditate on thee. He teaches me so to attune my mind to thee that it may be bathed with thy divine wisdom. He entuses me to fill my heart with such deep devotion for thee, that it may get drunk with thy divine love.

So do I do, as my loving master commands me to do. I now lay my hand on my heart and I hear thee speaking to me through its throbs. Thy bright face is ever before me, as I think of thee and walk the Path of Righteousness.

Untold peace of mind and unbounded joy of heart have now come into my life, since I know that I am not alone, but that thou art with me and dost hold my heart in thy loving hands, Ahura Mazda.



*Bless me, Ahura Mazda, with Thy beatific vision*

Thou alone, Ahura Mazda, dost know me as I really am. Help me, then to know myself and understand myself, that I may learn to recognize thee and realize thee. The passionate longing of my soul is to greet thee. Thou hast become the supremest object of my desire. Love for thee has taken possession of my heart. I long to attain unto thee. With whole of my mind and whole of my heart, I think of thee and nothing but thee.

When I think of thee and meditate upon thee, the thought of seeing thee and being with thee surges in upon me. I long to come to thee and in the fullness of time, I hope, by thy grace, to come to thee. But in abundance of thy love for me, thou didst thyself come down to me. When I did approach thee one step, thou didst approach me ten steps.

So gracious art thou, that thou dost embrace me as thy equal, thy bosom friend. Thou dost give thyself to me. Now, therefore, do I know thee as never before I knew thee.

From now onward will I deny myself that I may live for thee. I will die to myself that I may live in thee. I will live in thy conscious presence and be thine for ever, Ahura Mazda.

*Thou art the friend of all mankind,  
time without end, Ahura Mazda*

Blessed I become when thou dost take me as thy friend. Great is my delight when, thou my friend, dost hold me in close embrace and take me near thy bosom in friendship. Life in this world is livable only in thy company. I put my trust in thee, even as a child trusts its father. I place my hand in thine. Let thy hand guide me.

Many are my infirmities. Give me strength to bear the burden of life I have taken upon myself. When fate plays pranks on me, I am bewildered. A thick wall of separation stands between me and thee and I am undone. Soon I am wearied of life, when thou art not near me. Destitute of life-sustaining means I become without thee.

Be always with me and never leave me alone, I beseech thee. I will breakdown all barriers of reticence between me and thee. I will not hide anything from thee. I will speak out freely to thee. I will lay bare my soul to thee as friend to friend. Strengthened by thy friendship and with thee for my guide I cannot go astray. When thou art my guardian, no harm can come to me. I need thy guidance and protection for all my life. Thou dost guide me in my waking hours. Thou dost guard me when I am sleeping.

Birds sing their daily hymns to thee. In my filial language will my soul sing hymns of praise to thee. With songs of adoration I will call on thee. I will pour out my life to thee. I will not set thy image further from me. Bethink thee of me who am all thine own. Thou hast made me of the same spirit as thou art.

I will live with thee all the days of the year in thy blessed company and not only on fixed days of sacred feasts and festivals. I will not rest by making thee my casual acquaintance. I will make thee my constant companion. I will stake my all to win thy friendship. I and thee are one and I yearn to talk my heart out to thee.

When I find it difficult to climb to heaven to greet thee, thou dost come down to earth to greet me. Thou, my friend, dost hold the key to the chamber of my heart. When I and thou are roofed together and thou dost make thy home in my heart, I see thee face to face. Then art thou as close to me as my breathing. Happy in thy friendship, I draw near unto thee. Ever will I strive to keep thee as my friend, Ahura Mazda.

## *Let thy peace ever reign in my heart, Ahura Mazda*

The beauties of nature around me make me forget the nervous tension of the busy, work-a-day world. They make me think of thee and when I think of thee my heart warms to thee. It is aglow with devotion for thee. Thy divine peace descends upon me from on high.

Life is no bed of roses. Weary is the path of my life. Storm is raging in my bosom. Terrible is the struggle going on in my inner world. My heart quails, my soul sinks. Disquiet fills my mind. Sorely am I tired in spirit. In my melancholy mood, my heart cries out to thee. I lay before thee all my fears and sorrows. I will lay bare my inmost soul before thee. What is my life without thee? Draw me closer to thyself. In my sore distress come to me, my Divine Savior, and lend me thy shelter. My soul finds no peace till it reposes on thee. With thy peace with me, I am happy.

Thou dost exalt him, whom hard times have trodden under foot. Thou dost take him to thyself who finds not a place in this wide world to lay his head. Thou dost sorrow with the sorrowing and suffering, with a heart of true compassion. When they see thee coming to their help, thy sight fills them with peace.

Thou didst breathe the breath of life into me. In my ignorance I knew it not that I and thou wert one. Thou didst help me to know myself that in the end I may know thee. Forlorn and friendless, at my wit's end, I felt I was nothing. Then didst thou fill me with new hope, and encouragement and enthusiasm that I can be something. The marvelous change that thou hast wrought within me has made a new man of me. I yearn to make my peace with thee.

Thou dost speak through my mind words of eternal wisdom. Thou dost sing out of my heart songs of divine peace. Let me listen to thy voice and let me live my life of inner peace. Lay thy biasing upon me. When thou dost shed thy peace in my heart and when my conscience is at peace, I am at peace with all about me, nay with all the wide world. Trustfully in peace, will I repose in thy embrace, Ahura Mazda.

## *I will go thy way, Ahura Mazda*

Angra Mainyu, the Evil Spirit's one desire is that man should not recognize him and appraise him at his true value. He lurked about me to beguile me into the wrong path. I saw not his deception. My Fravashi, Guardian Spirit, warned me against the danger. But as in vain does the ploughman goad his ox to turn the furrow, and it is recalcitrant, so I hearkened not to the voice of my inner infallible guide. Weak in the moment of temptation, I followed the Evil Spirit. I deviated from the Path of Righteousness, which is thy Path. I missed thy company and was lost in the wilderness of wickedness. I knew not what to do. My spirit began to brood, for misfortune was lying ahead of me. Disquiet became my heart, until it would again find rest in thee. Unbearable now was my sorrow that I separated from thee.

Thou couldst do without me. Thou didst need me not. Yet thou didst pity me. Thou wouldst not leave me lonely and lost. Thou didst take me by my hand and put me on the right path again.

I will now hush the beguiling voice of Angra Mainyu. I will silence the storm of passions. I will smother vicious thoughts. I will sweep the ground of my heart of all impurities, that then in the serene and pure atmosphere I can hear thee speak to me. I will now never yield to the Arch-enemy of mankind. Valiantly will I fight him and vanquish him.

Now that I have found thee again, never will I leave thee. Ever will I be in thy keeping. Thou dost always guide me aright and I shall walk in the light that thou givest me. I will not draw near thee with my lips, when my heart was far away from thee. I will be what thou wouldst have me to be.

I will not now go my way and let thee go thy way. Thy way and my way will be one and same. We two will be on common ground. Abreast we two will walk our way, Ahura Mazda.

*Fully will I adjust my will to thy will,  
Ahura Mazda*

Let me will what thou willest me to will. Work thy will in me. I will accept thy will as law and submit to it. My lip-loyalty to thee does not mean anything. It counts for nothing. Doing thy will, living according to thy will, is everything. I will do all that thou willest me to do. I will keep thy commandments with all my will. I will conform my life to thy will. Every day in my life, I will do what is pleasing to thee and refrain from doing what is displeasing to thee. Help me to restrain my wayward will.

Infallible is thy divine will. What thou dost win, is always good, for thou, the Sovereign Lord of mankind without a second, art All-good thyself. Thou wert the same yesterday. Thou art the same to-day and thou will be the same for ever. The creation came into being with thy will. I see thy designing will and ordaining hand in everything.

Things always come about as thou dost will. What thou doest is always the best in the end. Thou dost work thy will upon me. Do unto me as thou willest. In flame my will with love for thee. I will do all that thou willest me to do. Let me see the right, let me understand the right and let me have the will to do the right.

With my hands uplifted, my head bent low, I will sink on my knees and bow to thy will. I will think and speak and do as thou wouldst have me to do. Enlighten me with thy will, that I may make it known all around me.

My life is built around thee. Let thy will dominate my will. I will not live my life as I will, but as thou dost will. Faithfully will I comply with thy will. Let thy will govern my will. Let my will be merged in thy will and become one with it. With the fullness of my heart I will always do thy will, Ahura Mazda.

*Great is thy justice, but greater still is thy mercy, Ahura Mazda*

Men and women are but waifs and strays in life, unless thou in thy mercy, dost take them by their hands and lead them on the path of safety. Thou art the strength in man's weakness hope in his despair and joy in his sorrow. Thou dost take pity on him and heal his broken heart. In anguish does the suffering soul yearn to come to thee seeking comfort. Thou, who art the savior of the lost, dost hear the longing cry of the sorrowing and suffering allover the world. Merciful art thou even to the sinner, who throws himself upon thy mercy.

In the strifes and struggles of life when trials and tribulations broke me, thou didst show compassion on me and made me whole. Thou didst come to me, when I was forlorn and forsaken. Emboldened by thy soothing song, bravely did I face the storms that tossed around me. When unbearable became the burden of my troubles, thou didst lighten my load. I am comforted and happy now, that thou merciful father art near me.

Never is thy hand heavy upon me. Thou, my Lord God, knoweth it right well how helpless and hopeless I am in my sorrow's dark hour. Through the tears of sorrow my eyes then entreat thee for mercy. Thou dost kiss my tears away. When I supplicate thee for protection, thou dost become my refuge and sustain me in my sorrow.

Unlimited are thy mercies, O thou that art the Fountain of Mercy. Try as I may, I can never requite thee in full for the manifold deeds of thy mercy, Ahura Mazda.

## *When I have thee, I have everything, Ahura Mazda*

I pray not for paradise, for I am already in paradise, when I am with thee. Thou art my happiness-present and future. I pray not for thy paradise. I pray for thee. When I feel at one with thee, it is enough for me. I have no other longing. One am I with thee. I and thou art one. I am not other than thee.

When I turn my face to the sun in yonder heaven or look at the fire on the altar, it is only because I see thee in the sun and in the fire. My heartfelt prayer brings me into closer communion with thee and affirms my oneness with thee. With thee in prayer, I see and apprehend goodness and truth and righteousness.

My heart becomes desolate when thou dost leave it. All aflame does it glow with the longing to be one with thee. In my pious moments, I see it filled with thy image. I live my real life when, with all my being, I enter into thy life. Thou art not remote from me. Thou art ever near me. Never am I alone, for thou art with me and within me. Thy divine life throbs in my being.

I seek fellowship with thee. I will not let thee remain inexpressible and incomprehensible. I will comprehend thee. I will commune with thee. I will hear thee. I will see thee. I will absorb thy knowledge into my being. I will approach thee. I will realize thee. I will be one with thee. I will give up myself to gain thee for me.

As the ivy twines its tendrils about the oak, so will I cling round thee all my life. Whatever betide, I shall always be by thy side and with thee abide, Ahura Mazda.

## *Thou, Ahura Mazda, art my all*

Thou art my incomparable possession. When I have thee, I have everything for everything is thine, yea, thine alone. I will give myself to thee, as verily thou dost give thyself to me. My heart is ever with thee. Thou art everything to me. I can do everything when thou art with me. I cannot do anything without thee.

Let my faith in thee be as firmly founded as on a rock. Let me begin my day with the thought of thee and let my thoughts come back to thee when my day's work is done. Thou art reflected in the mirror of my spiritual consciousness. Let my soul repose upon thy bosom and be united with thee.

Let me have thee and possess thee as mine for ever. Let me become One With thee. Let nothing separate me from thee. In the days of my prosperity and in the nights of my adversity, always and ever, will I long for thee and come after thee. I will raise my voice of praise and glorification to thee. I will invoke thee by thy name which is above every name. When thou dost hear my feeble voice, do thou my loving Lord, seek me out and draw nigh unto me. When I draw nearest and become dearest to thee, my heart is filled with ravishing delight. Unbounded is my happiness, when I am thine and thou art mine, Ahura Mazda.



## *Unite me to thyself by thy love, Ahura Mazda*

Thou hast planted the seed of love in human heart. It is the strongest passion of his soul. It is dearer than all that he holds dear in this world. Everything is empty, when the heart is empty. Unhappy is the heart that has not thy love to cling to. It is lonely. It is wretched despite the glitter of gold dazzling the eyes. Let my heart be aflame with my love for thee. Strengthened by my love for thee, my soul rises to thee.

All love is lovely for it flows from thee that art the fountain of love. Thou hast lit a flame of love for thee within my heart. As the fire upon the altar burns the sandalwood, so let the fire burning within me consume my heart with my love for thee. I will love thee when I am favored of fortune. I will love thee the more ardently, when fortune fails me. I will love thee. I will love thy name. I will love thy works. I will let my love for thee well up within my heart, that I may be immersed in it.

With more tender and gentle love thou dost rear me than the fond mother that nurses her child on her knee. Thou art the Lord whose love for thy children knows no bounds. Nothing have I to fear when safe I am in thy loving arms. Unfathomable is the depth of thy love for me. Verily, it is undying. Thy sublime love for me transforms my life into pure gold. When the waters of thy love flood my heart and fill it and bathe my soul, fully, then, do I share thy love.

The love lies at the core of my being. Thou dost manifest thyself in me as love. Thy loving eyes shine and beam on me. When I have thy love for me, I am thine own beloved, I need no more from thee. Thou dost love me and I will give thee back my love. I will make my love for thee the image of thy love for me, Ahura Mazda.

## *Let thy love possess my soul, Ahura Mazda*

As the nightingale sings to the rose in a transport of delight, so will I weave the songs of my love for thee. Then listen, my beloved Lord, unto the songs I sing. I will come to thee with my hymns of praise and glorification. I will eulogize thee with my songs of adoration. I will sound my sweet melodies of devotion to thee. With the fullness of my heart, I will pray unto thee, whom all do pray. I long to live in thy love, as long as my life may last. Every drop of water in the sea has salt. So let thy love be in every part of my being, O Thou that art the God of Love.

My mind is purified and my heart is sanctified, when love for thee possesses my soul. I will bask in the sunshine of thy divine love. I will drink my fill at the fount of thy love, till my spirit be satiated. I will fly to thee on the shining wings of love and devotion of my soul. I will make my love for thee the deepest passion of my life. Willingly will I give up my all for my love for thee.

When thou art with me on life's weary way, the bright ray of thy love illuminates it. My life centers in my love for thee. Like the love-lorn lark, I cannot live without thy love. My spirit is afire with love for thee. Let thy love enfold me. No trouble, no difficulty, nothing in the world will separate me from thy love. Unfaltering is my love for thee. I love thee. I love thee with all my heart. I love thee with love divine and long to make thee mine. A longing possesses me to hasten to thee with my pure mind and holy heart, to meet thee and greet thee and to embrace thee, O thou Fountain of Divine Love.

*Thou dost never fail me.  
Help me never to fail thee, Ahura Mazda*

When all else fail, thou dost never fail. Often do I fail to answer thy call, but thou dost never fail to answer my call. Thou dost answer me whenever I call thee in my joy or sorrow. Since the day that thou didst plant my feet on the mother earth, thou dost shepherd me along the path of safety. Ever quick are thy ears to hear my supplications.

Thou, my ever-forgiving Father, never dost turn thy face from me, even when, in my folly, I fail thee. Thou dost gently draw me to thyself. Thou dost lovingly take me by my hand and bring me back to thee and put me anew on the right path. Ever kind and ever gentle, thou dost guide me all my days.

Thou dost never part from me. It is I who leave thee. Thou dost know me just as I am. My mind has eyes to see thee and ears to hear thee. In my folly I became blind to thy sight. I became deaf to thy voice. I disappointed thee. I came not to thee when required. I failed thee. I went astray and I suffered. Now I fall on my knees and seek thy forgiveness. Thou dost always open my eyes and my ears. Then do I both behold thee and see thee.

Weak and lonely am I now without thee. Give ear to this my earnest call. Turn thy eyes hitherward. Beckon me back to thee with thy loving voice. Restore me to thee. I belong to thee. I am thine. When thou wilt take me back, I will not leave thee again. I will not fail thee. I will not stray far from thee. I will follow thee withersoever thou wilt lead me. I will do whatsoever thou dost desire me to do.

I know that I have but to come to thee, for thou art so overwhelmingly kind, that thou dost ever stand ready to receive me. When thou dost speak to me and smile on me, all my cares flee. I become strong in thy strength, when thou, Ahura Mazda, dost live in my heart.

*I will give thee my very best -- myself,  
Ahura Mazda*

Who am I to give thee anything? What have I that I can give thee? Verily nothing have I to give to the giver of all. My heart alone is all that I can call my own and willingly will I dedicate it to thee.

In my simplicity I thought that I pleased thee by dedicating to thee offerings and libations. In my ignorance I believed that my wrongs and evil can be redeemed by costly ceremonials performed by my dutiful descendants after my death. I knew not that thou dost not delight in rich repasts and costly load of sandalwood.

Thou dost not like any sacrifices and gifts beyond the sacrifice of my contrite heart. All that thou dost desire are the good thoughts of my mind and devotion of my heart. I will give all I call mine and devotion to thy lifelong service. Help me to live my life in thy service. I will live my life of service to thee through my life of service to thy mankind. My service will ever be bereft of all self-seeking.

Thou dost not deny me anything. Thou dost pour down thy grace upon me. My language leaves me, my words fail me, when I begin to render my thanks to thee. All that I have is thine. All that is, is from thee and in thee. I bow down in obeisance before thee. Thou art my life. Thou art more than life to me. Thou art everything to me. Thou art my very self. May my thoughts devout wing their way unto thee. May my songs of devotion that glorify thee and magnify thee, reach thee. May thy blessings descend on me. May they be mine. Make me thine for evermore, Ahura Mazda.

## *Boundless is thy bounty, Ahura Mazda*

Unbounded is thy abundance, O Bountiful Lord. Thou art never tired giving from it. Many million hearts cry out to thee daily to give them what the world gives them not and thou, in thy mercy, dost help them to their share of thy bounty.

We rise hungry in the morning. Thou dost not suffer us sleep hungry at night. Thou dost never say nay when we lift our hearts to thee and pray for anything. Unasked dost thou supply us in abundance with things we need most. Thou dost heed our wants. None is known to go with empty hands from thy door. Thou dost flood us day and night with the fullness of thy bounties.

Unbounded is thy munificence. It outruns our capacity to receive. None there is that passeth thee in thy benevolence, O thou of bountiful heart. Thou art he who dost give and give freely and give always and ever. Thou dost give us what thou deemest best for us. Thou dost fill our cups to overflowing. So bountifully does thou deal with us, that thou dost give us all that we had to have and more.

Countless are the blessings that thou has bestowed upon us. What blessings now remain that thou hast not showered upon us. Hundreds, yea, thousands of thy blessings day and night, with fond heart dost thou shower upon us from on high.

Our language fails us to give adequate expression to our feelings of gratitude. We owe thee a debt, which we can never liquidate. We bow our heads and bend our knees under the burden of thy endless blessings, Ahura Mazda.

*In my sore need I come to thee for help,  
Ahura Mazda*

My life is a great trust thou hast committed to me. Help me to discharge it aright. Help me to shoulder the heavy burden of life's responsibilities. Thy helping arm is my only stay, when life's difficulties loom large around me. When I sail over life's stormy sea, I am safe only when thou art at the helm to steer the ship.

When life's trials and tribulations surge around me, when sad news breaks my spirit, when misfortunes drive me to despair, when the depression of spirit steals on me, when heavy and desolate grows my heart, when dark is the cloud of depression on my soul, my courage flags and fails me and weak and weary and wavering I become. When I grope in the darkness, look where I may, I find none who can rescue me from my overwhelming difficulties.

As the hungry heart clamors for food and the parched lips thirst for water, so does my soul look eagerly to thee for help, for nothing than thy own help can deliver me out of difficulties. Thou art my final hold, when I have nothing to hold in my unbearable trouble. Hearken unto the cry of my soul and be my help.

Into thy hands I put myself, for thou dost stretch out thy hands and help all who beseech thee for help. Braver becomes the spirit of the brave, when thy protecting wings cover him. Spread, then, thy sheltering wings over me for protection, my kindly savior.

Strong and powerful have I become, since I have been in league with thee and thou dost guard and guide me with ever watchful care, Ahura Mazda.

*It is my own fault, if I know not thee,  
Ahura Mazda*

Seven or nine heavens, vaulting one above another, they say, is Garonmana, thy celestial Abode of Songs. From there dost thou come down to thy worshippers in all thy grandeur, when they supplicate thee and invoke thee. But, in all humility, I feel and know thy nearness. Thy throne is not in supernal regions, higher above than the highest mountain upon the earth. Verily, it is in the human heart. Thou art not external to the world. Thou art not beyond reach. With purity of mind and Purity of heart, man can know thee and see thee and apprehend thee.

When I know thee, I know myself better. When I understand thee, I understand myself better. Rapt in contemplation of thee, with devotion I will approach thee. I will hold converse with thee. I will let thy holy words sink deep into my heart. Out of the fullness of my heart, I will speak to thee. I will lose myself in thee, that I may gain thee. Lovingly, I will commend my soul into thy hands, O thou Supreme Soul.

As I wake in the morning, my first thought will always be thine. As I sleep at night, my last thought will always be thine. All during my waking hours, I will live in thy presence and live for thee. I will let my thoughts be inspired by thee, my words be dictated to thee and my deeds be guided by thee. Thou dost demand from me deeds and not mere words. I will lay the offerings of my good deeds at thy feet.

I will think thy thoughts and speak thy words and do thy deeds all day long. I will strive to know thee and live up to my knowledge of thee. May I be worthy to win thy grace. May I be happy to touch the hem of thy divine garments. I will open my heart to drink at the fountain of thy holy spring. Inspire me, thy devotee, with thy holiness. Then, am I blest for ever, Ahura Mazda.

*Let my faith in thee stand firmer than ever,  
Ahura Mazda*

I believe, because I cannot help believing. Let me doubt with inquiring spirit, what I cannot honestly believe. Let me believe whole-heartedly, what I cannot sincerely doubt. Thou dost pull me out safe, when I am in danger of drowning myself in the deep sea of doubt.

Belief in thee gives meaning to existence, lends colour to life. When I have faith in thee, I have all the riches of the world. Few, then, are my wants. Happy I am with what little that life gives me. Nothing do I need beyond the barest necessities. Thou dost inspire me with contentment, which is a feeling to see everything in nothing.

Unwavering and unfaltering is my faith in thee. Let it never be shaken. Unswerving faith in thy goodness gives me peace of mind and peace of heart. It matters little what I believe and what I say, but it matters much what I am. Man is an angel in embryo, a god in the making. Faith in thee inspires me to tread the path of thy angels. Faith in thee is a matter of course with me. I lean on the crutch of faith. Thou hast but to command and I am ready with a cheerful heart to follow thee and live with thee in faith, Ahura Mazda.



*Through Zarathushtra didst thou speak,  
Ahura Mazda*

Zarathushtra of the family of Spitamas first heard thee, Ahura Mazda. No sublime words were heard aforetime like those which he spoke in thy name in Ancient Iran.

The seemingly blind and the hearingly deaf laughed Zarathushtra to scorn and held him up to the ridicule of all. He was forsaken by the faint-hearted. He was driven from place to place with his early disciples. Like prophets all, Zarathushtra, lived and suffered for all mankind. When, at the age of seventy a fanatic felon killed him, he fell and died for all mankind.

All the long years of his life, Zarathushtra carried the blessed message of Ahura Mazda to the souls of his hearers. He strove to set right the erring world's wrongs. He worked for the succour and salvation of mankind. He gave up his all for the good of all.

Zarathushtra, the most blessed among the blessed of the seven zones, stored unexcelled wisdom and holiness in him. I will do what the beloved messenger of Ahura Mazda says to me, for what he says is the best. I will let his sublime ideal seize my imagination.

I will make my sincere faith in him the pivot of my life. I will make his life the ideal of my life and will strive to do what he did. His ideal beckons me to the beatitude of the great God. I will endeavour to go forward and rise upward towards it.

Zarathushtra asked thee, Ahura Mazda, to help him as one friend helps another. So do I crave thy help. By day and by night, wherever I happen to be, I will think of thee and dream of thee. Faithfully will I let thy image occupy my soul. Thou art my shield and armour. When burdened with care and anxiety, there is none but thee to soothe and sustain me. With thee with me, my life turns heavenly on earth.

Zarathushtra has admitted me in the fellowship of Zoroastrianism, which is the most cheerful, buoyant, optimistic, hopeful, youthful religion. He alone is a true Zoroastrian, who truly walks the way of life, pleasing to thee, shown us by Zarathushtra. Others call themselves so but in vain. Dutifully and devoutly will I follow his steps till the end of my life and will be a true worshipper of the Mazdayasnian Zoroastrian religion.

## *I will follow the path blazed by Zarathushtra*

Zarathushtra best reveals thee, Ahura Mazda, to mankind. One of mind with Amesha Spentas, the Archangels, he spoke with the tongue of the Amesha Spentas. He was beloved of both men and angels. His sublime life became an unfailing source of solace and comfort of all. His heart beat in sympathy with the throbs of the aching hearts of all. He was the sublime benefactor of mankind.

Zarathushtra exemplifies in his noble life truth in its purest effulgence. His good thoughts, good words and good deeds bore the stamp of divinity. Though he was the greatest among mortals around him, humbly did he hold himself less than the least of all.

Fortified in God the Father, he laughed at all vicissitudes of life. In my helplessness and hopelessness, will I clutch hold of Zarathushtra and make him my guide on life's weary way.

Willingly will I let my heart respond to the call of Zarathushtra to walk on the Path of Righteousness on which he walked and which the good men and women of all ages have trodden in his footsteps. Willingly will I follow his steps and tread the path he trod, for by no other path, Ahura Mazda, can I come to thee and greet thee.

I will make Zarathushtra the basis of my life, the pole star of my life. I will make him my spiritual guide. I will make him my shining light that will enable me to see thee, Ahura Mazda, by the light with which he saw thee.

My one supreme, innermost desire in life is to keep his bright, inspiring image ever before my mind's eye. May Zarathushtra, my beloved prophet, ever live in my heart and guide me and lead me to thee is my fervent prayer, Ahura Mazda.

*Let me mould and shape my life in  
Zarathushtra's likeness*

Thou, the Creator, has never left mankind without religion. Thy sages and seers have, through their wisdom and holiness, evolved religions. Then hast thou sent from time to time thy prophets as founders of their respective religions. Thou, Ahura Mazda, didst single out Zarathushtra from among mankind to be thy first messenger, in point of time at the grey dawn of history to found his religion upon the earth. Ever blessed be he that he came from thee to show us the path of life.

Zarathustra loved mankind; more than he loved himself. He made the happiness of others dearer to him than his own. Encumbered with cares and anxieties, forsaken and deserted and persecuted, he did not give himself to fits of despondency, nor did he let melancholy seize him, nor did he let his loneliness weigh down his spirit, but with indomitable courage in face of misfortunes, he fought and promulgated thy faith all his life and ultimately met with cruel death for us at the hands of those that were seemingly blind and hearingly deaf.

Let me overcome life's buffetings as my beloved prophet did. Let me not sink into despair. Let me don the armour of righteousness and fight wickedness that it may never have dominion over me. I will serve Zarathushtra in righteousness all the days of my life. So will I live my life according to the teachings and guidance of Zarathushtra that when in old age, I look back upon the years that are spent, I may not be disappointed with my life. I will fill my mind with his wisdom and my heart with his love.

I will be generous and genial to all about me as Zarathushtra was in his life. I will give as much of myself to him as I could give to none. I will let his thought completely possess me. I will make his religion part of my very being. I will consecrate myself to his life. I will endeavour, Ahura Mazda, to become more and more like Zarathushtra every day.

## *Let me hearken to the promptings of my conscience*

The gentle voice of my Daena, conscience, tells me what is good and what is evil. Let me listen to it and discern between right and wrong. Let me hold fast that which my unerring conscience tells me is good and right.

Thou, Ahura Mazda; hast set thy vigilant watch in my heart. The shepherd dog smells the wolf that is sneaking about the yard in the stillness of the night. He barks and wakes the master of the flocks. So does my ever wakeful and ever watchful conscience warn me in time of the guile and mischievous machinations of the Evil Spirit.

Let me not do what my conscience tells me is wrong. Let me not be deaf to the voice of my conscience. Let me not temper with my conscience. Let me beware when conscience lifts a warning finger and sounds the alarm.

My conscience rebukes me for my backslidings, when I go astray from the one path thou, my Divine Lawgiver, hast prescribed for me. Deeply, then, do the pangs of my conscience cut. Tortured by the qualms of conscience, I know not inner peace by day and by night. The bitings of my conscience hound me to living hell.

Name and fame, greatness and glory, riches and power are nought, for they last not. When all will be dust at death, my Daena, character alone, moulded and made good or evil by good thoughts, good words and good deeds or evil thoughts, evil words and evil deeds will accompany my soul to the world beyond and good or evil fate will greet it accordingly. If my soul has won the approbation of my Daena during life, she will plead for it at the seat of judgement. If my soul has not listened to her voice, she will bear witness against it before the divine judges Mehr, Sarosh and Rashna that it heeded not her warnings and wandered from the path of Righteousness.

Always will I do what my conscience tells me to be right. So faithfully will I behave that my Daena, conscience, will bear me witness that I have been true to thee, Ahura Mazda.

## *Knowledge illumines my understanding*

It is wise for me to confess my ignorance. Successful struggle with ignorance gives me knowledge. Let me close my mind to all outside hinderance and interruption. Let me read to think. Let me be a thinker and a serious thinker. Let me never be content with what I know. Let me never rest. Let me ever be on the march on the path of knowledge. Let me ever be a seeker of knowledge. Let my heart ache to know.

Let me cast away the heavy clouds of doubt. Let me doubt, but doubt to inquire and ascertain and to acquire subsequent certitude. Unlimited is the capacity for the growth of my mental faculties. Let me digest and assimilate the subjects of my study. Let me not cram books. Let me think out everything for myself. Let me find out everything for myself. Let me see everything for myself.

Receptive and retentative memory that gathers information and mechanically retails it when required is not knowledge. Let nothing paralyse and deaden my mental faculties. Let nothing blight my mental growth, but foster it and develop it.

Let not my imagination run away with me. Help me to differentiate fiction from facts. Help me to distinguish dreams from realities. Let not my intellect be led astray by credulous reasoning. Let me think out the end before I begin. Let me have the vision of the completed whole. Help me to dress my thoughts and to give expression to them in as perfect and inspiring language as possible, Ahura Mazda.

## *I shall cultivate a passionate carving for Knowledge*

Let the passion of learning ever grow in me. Let me learn with a consuming passion. Ignorance darkens my understanding. Illumine my mind, Ahura Mazda, as the sun illumines the world. Enable my understanding to fathom the depths of knowledge.

There is heartache in my inner world when my reason leaves it hungry and thirsty. Let me read. Let me muse over the sayings and writings of the sages of old. Let me gather facts and gain knowledge. But let me do more. Let me think.

Let me not, in pursuit of knowledge, be a visionary or a dreamer. Let me not indulge in visions. Let me not be a sentimental, impractical idealist, lest I be led away into the wilderness of puerile superstition.

If the ideal is in truth the real, then, my Lord, keep me back from the visionary hallucination and lead to the truly real. Let not my mind make futile attempts to find out truth wholly by intuition and not by dialectics. Let me not labour to create mystical state by means of intense mental religious emotion to create an ecstatic state of mind. Let me beware of the charlatans and pseudo-apostles who, themselves victims of delusion or working deception, blindfold the ignorant and superstitious, the fickle and feeble-minded.

Give me clarity of vision. Sharpen my wits. Let not my imagination hold its undivided sway. Let me sift the true from the false and work upon the facts that emerge. Teach me to separate critically wheat from chaff and find facts. Help me to see with my mind's eye what my bodily eyes behold not. Give me power to visualize before my eyes what my mind thinks out. Let me not always fill my mind with the knowledge of others. Let me strive to know for myself. Let my learning pave the way to wisdom, O my All-knowing Lord.

## *Let thy light illumine my mind, Ahura Mazda*

When twilight merges into darkness, when the light of the sun is buried in the bosom of night, I see not. I see only in light. Thou alone that art light thyself, dost see eve through the thickest darkness. Thou dost fill my soul with sunshine, when all around darkness shadows my path. Where can I turn for light in my dark hour, but to thee. Darkness flees before thy word, for thy words are light. Thy word is the religion that thy holy torchbearer, Zarathushtra, gave me. Let the radiance of the light of his religion that fails not, illumine the path of my life.

Enchanting is the smile of the spring. It charms away the memory of cold and fog. Dark is my flesh and I cannot see thee with my eyes of flesh. When thy light shines on me, I see thee with my soul in my eyes. Let thy light sublime flow from above and suffuse my soul. Bathed in thy celestial light, I see thee, wheresoever I turn.

The light of the countenance shines upon me. There is sunshine in my heart. Ever will I keep the light bright that thou hast kindled in my heart. It fills my whole being with thy splendour. Devoutly will I give this light to those who grope in darkness. It will enable them to see thy light and walk by it. Girt with the armour of light, I will fight mental and moral darkness all around.

Thou, yea, thou alone, art light. Thou, invisible, dost become visible to me in the light. My soul, ever yearning to greet thee, now greets thee in thy light that radiates around me, Ahura Mazda.

## *Thou art the hope of the hopeless, Ahura Mazda*

Hope buoys me up. Hope raises the banner under which victory can be won. I am happy when the bright ray of hope shines upon me. Often is hope doomed to disappointment. I become upholder of a forlorn hope. Me bright hope gives way to despair. My long cherished hope grows dim and fades. It is dashed to the ground. It dies.

Let me not entertain wild hopes. Let me not waste my time and energy in pursuit of what is unattainable. Let me not be lured with false hopes. Let not the obsession of grief overwhelm me. Save me from being drowned in the waters of dark despair.

Thou art as near me as my ownself. The footfall of an ant is not beyond thy hearing. Thou dost hear my sigh, when I weep for the vanished hope. In the face of danger, when my mind is filled with dark forebodings and my heart with sorrow, thou dost ask me to hold on unto the end. When I think hopes have I none, thou dost come to my help and cheer me with the words that the life of hope is still before me. Thou dost give me hope when everything seems full of despair and I come to thee with faltering steps.

When my cherished hope is not fulfilled, let not disappointment deflect me from the path of my duty. Let me bravely meet the hardships and obstacles I have to face before I reach the haven of my hope. Give me the patience to match my steps that lie between my hope and its fulfilment.

Faith in thee gives me hope and urges me to hold fast, when I am on the brink of falling. In thee is my final hope. On thee will I set my hopes all life long, for ever art thou the hope of all; Ahura Mazda.



## *Thy joy fills the world from end to end, Ahura Mazda*

Human spirit thrills with rapture when man gazes on the beautiful nature. Gardens and orchards, farms and fields ring with the sweet, sonorous songs of the beautiful birds, attired in lovely plumage. The winds waft the fragrance of the fields all around. From flower to flower does the busy bee hit to gather the nectar. The clouds play the game of hide and seek and amuse the sightseers. Bathed in the waters of joy that well up from his heart, man goes into peals of laughter rising to the sublime heights of emotion. Beyond compare is the joy that man finds in this world of a thousand wonders, when he lives in communion with nature.

Much of the sorrow seen in the world is of man's own making. Great is man's inhumanity to man. Human life would be more joyful, if selfishness and avarice, jealousy and mutual distrust, envy and hatred between races and races, nations and nations created not unnatural sorrow.

Sore is my spirit troubled, my strength fails me, when I am lost on life's highway. Wakeful and restless I lay in bed. Troubled by the fitful fever of life, I seek refuge in thee. Thou dost smooth away my worries and anxieties. There is joy, wherever, thou art, for thou art the fountain of joy. Void of thee, life knows no joy. Let thy joy replace my sorrow. When thou dost fill my breast with joy, I feel every face I encounter, flushed with joy.

Precarious is the joy that life gives me. It lasts not long. What joy thou dost give me lasts longer than long. It is beyond compare. My heart, then, is swelled with unspeakable joy. So great is my joy that I have never known its like. Fill my life with joy that shall endure, Ahura Mazda.

*Let my good thoughts regulate my words and deeds,  
Ahura Mazda*

Neither mountains separate me from thee, nor oceans keep me far from thee. My own evil thoughts keep me aloof from thee. The evil thoughts that emanate from the depths tempt me. Help me to force Akoman's evil thoughts to sleep, the sleep of death. I will not let my evil thoughts hide thee, Ahura Mazda, from my sight. I will not let my evil words veil thee from my mind. I will not let my evil deeds screen thee from my heart.

I will wake at dawn with Vohuman's good thoughts. I will plant the seeds of goodness in the garden of my mind and cultivate it and water it and weed it, until they grow into fragrant thoughts. As the wind of Vayu stirs the trees, so will I make Vohuman's thoughts stir my soul. I will invoke Vohuman to put good thoughts into my mind. I will think Vohuman's good thoughts. I will live Vohuman's good thoughts in every fiber of my being. I will let Vohuman's good thoughts find expression in my words and deeds.

As thy loyal subject, O King of Kings, faithfully and dutifully will I lay at thy feet my yearly tribute of good thoughts and good words and good deeds.

*When I pray aright, thou dost answer my prayers,  
Ahura Mazda*

With the ascending bright flames of the sacred fire on the altar, my prayers rise upward and ascend unto Garonmana, the Abode of Song, the celestial residence of thee, Ahura Mazda and thy angels and archangels and the Fravashis of the righteous dead. Thou dost come down from the highest heaven to listen to the songs of devotion of thy devotee dwelling upon the earth.

Thou art a spirit and I will pray unto thee in spirit. Thou dost dwell in my heart and in the temple of my heart will I pray to thee. In prayer, with sincerity, will I open out my heart to thee with all its longings and hopes and fears. I will consecrate my mind on thee, I will surrender my will to thee, I will dedicate my heart to thee. I yearn for the peace of my soul.

I will not pray to thee with my lips, when my heart is far from thee. I will not recite my Yashts, hymns, chapter by chapter, with parrot-like, flawless accuracy. My heart will always be wedded to my words. With affection and love my soul will go out to thee, when I pray.

My head shall bow and knee shall bend and with purity of mind and purity of heart, will I make my prayer unto thee. The uplifted hands with which I pray unto thee will ever be free from the taint of deeds that are not pleasing to thee.

I will glorify thee with the songs of praise. Prayer brings to me confidence and courage, hope and strength. When I pray unto thee in the citadel of my soul, thou dost hear my prayer and fulfil my heart's desire and satisfy my soul's longing. Hearken unto my prayer, I humbly beseech thee, Ahura Mazda.

## *Let the light of Asha's Righteousness shine in my heart*

The fabric of life with its warp and wool is woven upon the loom of righteousness. I will don the robe of righteousness and girt myself with the girdle of righteousness that I can fight wickedness like heroes.

Let me never, in my frailty, turn from the Path of Righteousness and go astray. I will not let righteousness be ever estranged from me. I will not think a thought, speak a word and do a deed that savored in the least of unrighteousness. I will not corrupt my mind by the company of those who abandon themselves to wickedness. I will not let unrighteousness get mastery over me. I will never live for the gratification of my senses only. The senses of my body of clay veil thee, Ahura Mazda, from my sight, as the clouds veil the sun. Righteous living rends the veil and reveals thy face to me. When I walk on the Path of Wickedness, I am dead to thee. Help me to retrace my steps and return to the Path of Righteousness, that I may be reborn to thee and live as thine.

I will clothe myself in the garment of righteousness. Righteousness is not a commodity that could be bought for a price in the market. On the twin wings of Vohuman's knowledge and Armaiti's devotion, will I wing my flight on the Path of Righteousness to reach the abode of my Heavenly Father on high.

Righteousness will be the ideal I will set before myself in life and will always try to live up to it and attain it. Straight is the Path of Righteousness. Neither will I turn to right nor left, but onward will I tread the straight path. I will control the totality of my life from youth to old age by Asha's law of righteousness. Righteousness is the one path that leads my soul to eternal felicity. In righteousness, Ahura Mazda, will I knit together my soul with thine.

## *Put me thou on the track of truth, Ahura Mazda*

Give me the will and ability to find out truth, thou that art the Fountain of Truth. Across error lies the way to truth. If I fall in my fight for truth, help me to rise and fight again, till I have vanquished falsehood. Truth may be worsted awhile but it will ultimately triumph. Let not my lips ever lie. Let truth be ever on my lips. Let me speak truth with my whole heart.

Let it never be said about me that often do I promise, but seldom do I make my words good. Let me fulfil in deed, what I say in word. Let me never live a life of untruth. Let me make truthfulness the backbone of my life, that all may count my word as sure as a bond. Let me instinctively turn to the moral light of truth, as the plant turns to physical light. Let me see the light of truth.

Let me not let my days glide on in fleeting pleasures. In my unrestrained fascination for things outward, let me not neglect things inward. Let me work daily from daylight to dark in search of truth. Let me not yield to any obstacle and hardship that come in my way. Let my inquisitiveness and longing to find out and know the truth become a habit with me. Let me discover myself. Let me see my wrongs and follies and falsehoods, that I may leave them.

Truth accumulates from generation to generation and grows. My earnest desire in life is to know the truth. I hunger and thirst with all my heart to know the truth. Knowing the truth, I will swerve not by one hair's breadth from the path of truth that I have determined to tread.

Lead me into thy truth, Ahura Mazda. Fill my soul with the light of thy truth. Truth is religion and thou art truth, I will make my heart the temple of thy truth. When thou wilt come to me, thou wilt find the image of thy truth engraved in my heart O thou, my Great God.

## *Nature mirrors thy face for us, Ahura Mazda*

Nature has endowed the world with multifarious beauties all around. The delights and beauties of nature enliven the imagination and elevate the soul. Let me go outdoor and walk and run and roam and exercise my limbs and take fresh air. Nature is the reservoir of health. Let me drink its elixir. One draught of nature's elixir is better than a dozen doses of any other drink.

Beautiful are the golden bars of the brilliant sun that fall upon the earth. Nature seems beautiful in the glow of the sunset. When the sun goes down, the stillness falls on the land. None can paint in brilliant hues as nature does with matchless skill at sunset.

Great is the bounty of the mother earth. It feeds us and clothes us and provides us profusely with our bodily needs. The earth nourishes our body during life and shelters us when dead.

It is pleasant to sit under a mango tree and to breathe and drink the fresh and fragrant air or hear the wind now stirring the branches. The soft breeze of Vayu's wind sing sweet lullabies and nature sinks into sleep, to sleep the deep of the night. Faintly does the wind moan through the trees and round the hills and dies away to stillness.

It is refreshing to hear the soothing murmurs of the bubbling brook, the flow of a prattling brook, the murmur and ripple of the brook or the splash of the waters of the fountain.

Soothing is the sight of the ocean caressing the sandy shore or the gulls rocking smoothly on the waves of the blue expanse of water. The sea swells and surges. The waves break into foam on the beach. Each succeeding wave swells the rising tide higher and higher. It is amusing to see a mighty wave coming with pride and arrogance, threatening to engulf us, when all of a sudden it loses its strength, breaks at our feet and retreats in haste to hide its shame. Sorrowing and sighing, murmuring and moaning the ebbing waters depart.

Let me not be blind to the marvels of nature. When nature smiles softly around me and speaks and sings to me, let me enjoy it like the birds that sing and beat their wings for joy. I can never be alone with nature speaking to me.

Whole nature is saturated with the divine life of the creator. All nature is aglow with his presence. Thou, Ahura Mazda, dost clothe thyself in the resplendent garment of nature. Thou art reflected in thy creation. I find thee in the stars and the moon and the sun and the earth and trees and the waters and all around me. I greet thee in all universe, thou, who dost reveal thyself in thy nature and are glorified in thy nature.

## *Let not life ever lose its zest for me, Ahura Mazda*

Let the joy of living fill my heart to overflowing. Let it grow with the growth of the years of my life. Let me always say yea to life. Let me give to life at least as much as, life gives to me. Give me life, Thou Creator mine, lively and long, useful and joyful. Lengthen the days of my life and let me take the greatest pains in whatever I do in my pilgrimage through life.

Difficult is the path that I have to tread in life. Help me to steer the ship of life safely through the tempestuous torrents of life. Let the conquering spirit within me be ever alert and alive. Let me be active and agile and always on the move.

Give me an overflowing of both physical and spiritual vitality. Let me throw myself wholeheartedly into my work. Let me take up my daily work cheerfully and enthusiastically in whatever sphere of action my work may lie. Let me consecrate all my energies to the noble cause of serving others.

Let not life ever lose its meaning for me. Let me never lose confidence in myself. Let me not lose joy in life, when I am old. Let not the weight of years destroy my zest for life. Let my outlook on life widen. Let my interest in life deepen.

Help me to discover the latent possibilities that slumber in my inner world. Guide me to rouse them to pulsating life and enthuse me to work for their realization. Help me to develop the virtues of durability and endurance beyond the ordinary. Give me the gift of infusing my enthusiasm in the minds and spirits of my children, that my happy household may be aglow with the joys of life.

Help me to steadfastly put my hand to the plough and work with courage and perseverance and unflinching zest. Enthuse me to go onward with every fibre of my being with my mission in life, that life may be an example to others, Ahura Mazda.

## *Let not my outlook on life be darkened, Ahura Mazda*

Life is not all spring-time. It is fiery summer and freezing winter and fading autumn too. Corroding are the cares and anxieties of life. Crooked are the ways of life. Often does life offer me the cup of bitterness to drink. Great is the agony with which my spirit has to wrestle. Unbreakable is the pain of the inner struggle in life that closes around me as the darkness of the night. Save me, my Lord, from its deepest gloom that falls upon me like a curtain.

Give me courage to endure, my Sustainer, what cannot be cured. Help me to fight against odds. Let me bravely bear in life the beatings and buffetings of the world. Embolden me to face and fight the prosaic hardships that life imposes upon me. Help me to brave the life's worst, that comes to me.

Let not despondency overshadow me. Let me not be a defeatist at heart. Let me not be a victim to self-distrust. Let me not lose heart about myself. Let me not underestimate myself. Let me not suffer from inferiority complex. Let me not despairingly delve deeply in the dark mysteries in which life is bounded. Let me not seek an escape from life. Let me not sink into retreat in the cloister of my inner world. Save me, my Kindly Lord, from the dangers of the morbid and musing temperament.

Zarathushtra consoles me with his soothing counsel that sorrows and sufferings, trials and tribulations are often the great disciplinarians that lead me to the springs of spiritual enlightenment. Adversity forces me to think of thee, my Heavenly Father. It brings me closer to thee. It compels me to seek comfort in thee. It works as an incentive to fathom the deep realities of life. Prosperity, on the other hand, often widens the distance between me and thee. It divides me from thee.

I will not, then, let my mind be distracted by the stress of my life. I shall be firm as a rock and nothing shall shake me. The world may not be all I should like, yet I will make the best of all that I can. I will elbow my way through life's rugged path and swim ashore the stream of life, under thy ever vigilant guidance, Ahura Mazda.



## *I will live my life with open eyes and ears, Ahura Mazda*

Primitive man came to the world he knew not why. He lived in this world he knew not why. He went from the world he knew not where. Sages and seers of all ages have addressed themselves to solve the problem of life.

Help me, thou All-knowing One, to answer the questions for myself, why have I come to this world and for what purpose? What does my life mean and what is its mission? What purpose does my existence in this vast world serve? What is my beginning and what is my end?

Life is an incessant inquiry into the why and wherefore of existence. Let me map out my life. Let me think my plan of life and let me not think only of today, but for tomorrow too. Let me not look to what is transient as permanent, what is illusive as real. Let me not, in my delusion, hang my heart upon it. Let me learn to know myself better day by day.

Let me not better the substance for shadow. Let me not, like the dog, drop the bone to grasp its shadow. Let me not delude myself. Mysteries, I know, lie around the life of man. Let me not, however, seek refuge in a visionary world to flee from the hard facts and harsh realities of life. Let me look facts resolutely in the face.

The pupil of my eye sees the world, it fails to see itself. I know that I am what I am, and not what I am reputed to be. Thou alone dost know me just as I am. Help me to unfold my latent life. Help me to realize the potencies of perfection with which Providence has endowed me. Help me to discover and show forth the good and great qualities that lie latent within me.

Let me devise ways and means of life for myself. Let me be in touch with life. Let me see and understand life, that I may do my best according to my rights to live my life wisely and nobly. Let me impose a stern training upon myself. Let me be thorough in all my doings.

Every day will I endeavor to grow mentally and spiritually, just as I grow in body. I will let nothing strangle my inner growth. Life is tranquil, when intellect and emotion are at harmony. I will labor to win such a serene state of equipoise and rest not till I am blessed with the serene enjoyment of life. I will always hunger and thirst after betterment. All throughout my life will I look beyond what I am in life and strive, under thy inspiring guidance, to be greater and nobler, Ahura Mazda.

## *Help me to make my mark in life, Ahura Mazda*

Let me take the world as it comes to me and make the most of my life, no matter in what condition of life, thou, my Creator, has called me. There are more good things of life in the world than my eyes can feast on. Life gives me more than I give to life. Let me be happy even when a tythe of the hopes and ambitions and aspirations of my life are fulfilled. Let disappointment and dejections never dog my footsteps, when everything seems to slip out from my hands. Let me not waver and vacillate. Let not my will falter. Give me a hopeful and cheerful and enthusiastic attitude towards life.

Let me not be a burden upon any one in life. Let me, by honest and hard work, make a place for myself in the world. Give me the gift, O thou Supreme Giver, of creating opportunities to progress in life and teach me how to make use of them when I have got them. Let the longing for advancement dawn within me. Let enterprise fire my mind to make the best of my life and to work for the betterment of my fellowmen.

Undaunted let me march breast forward. Let me face and fight the difficulties that come in my way. Let me be a hero in the battlefield of life and never a coward. When I am possessed by a strong urge to accomplish something great, help me to work hard and strive to satisfy my yearning.

I will assimilate Zarathushtra's teachings into my conduct. I will rouse myself early from sleep and wake at dawn. Man has the divinity within him and he can elevate himself to the highest height of moral greatness, says my beloved prophet. Strenuously will I strive to aspire towards the ideal and to approach it as nearly as possible. With all resolve of my mind and all the zeal of my heart, will I compass land and sea to achieve my object, as did my worthy forefathers of long ago. Agile of mind and fleet of feet, whether I go barefoot or shed, will I scale the heights until my life's task is done.

Life is full of worth and beauty, says the prophet of Ahura Mazda. I will ever be all life, alert and active. I will ever do with all my will and all my might whatever good my hands find to do. I will work while there is yet day, for the night of my life may overtake me at any moment all unaware. All the days of my life, will I be strenuously doing something for the betterment of the world, as is the will of the Lord. Faithfully will I do my life's duty this side of the grave, that it may not be said after me that my life has been lived in vain.

## *Let me be thy herald to the poor, Ahura Mazda*

We live in the midst of the anomalies of life, with riotous riches on the one hand and grinding poverty on the other. The noblest persons that have walked this earth have given their food to the hungry and the starving and have themselves gone without it. Pious souls vowed to live in willful poverty. Poverty is adorned when greatness is born from it.

My heart beats warm for the poor. I will impose privation upon myself to save something for the poor and the needy. What little I can give to the poor, I will give with the grace that would make my gift rich in humility and love. Never will I put indignities upon the poor.

Let my heart ever go out to the poor. Let me have a ready disposition to help them. Let me ever be ready to help those that are in need of my help. Let me feel for the poor. Let my thoughts be devoted to their welfare. Let my generosity to the poor know no bounds, when I happen to possess a superfluity. Let me help them in ever so small a degree. Let me think and work for the happiness of the poor, when I am in the midst of poverty myself. Let me always pity them and love them and bless them, even when I cannot help them. Let me feel the sorrows of the poor, as if they were mine and let me sympathize with them, as if their trials were my own concern.

Let me chase away poverty from my door by hard work and honest industry. Let me always eat my hard-earned bread. Let me fight my way from my poverty in life by strenuous work. Let me ever stand on my own feet to work for and win my independent means.

Wealth has wings. If I lose my wealth and am reduced to poverty after having known plenty, let me battle as best as I can with the hardships of poverty. The thought that I labor to preserve my self-independence, sweetens my toil.

The entire creation attests to thy bounty, O Bountiful Lord. Thy bounty feeds all that live. Thou dost put thy protecting hand on the heads of the poor and soothe their pangs by whispering words of kindness into their ears. Poverty with thee is happier than affluence without thee, Ahura Mazda.

## *A robust and virile race cannot be reared in the slums*

Life seldom gives as much as we want. Often it gives us less than what we deserve. To many it gives not anything at all. The poor live a life of grinding toil. By day and by night they work to keep starvation at bay. Ill-clad, ill-fed, and ill-housed, they wear out their bodies and work out their hearts. Born and bred in low estate, they grow in anguish. Poverty suppresses intelligence and paralyses worth.

Often do the rich forget that they are the trusted stewards of their riches and they have to help the poor to ameliorate their condition. When they, the epicures, feast satiety and drain the cup of pleasure, the poor, like hungry dogs that slink about the villages, stand in need of the barest necessities of life and cannot quell the hunger of the hungry. The neglected and castaways of society are crippled and they cannot walk without crutches. The sun may shine bright, fresh earth may shed odor, trees may grow luxuriant, and birds may sing merrily, but the helpless and the poor weep and moan and sigh and seek relief in crying aloud and beating their breasts. Life to them is a prolonged agony between the cradle and the grave.

Life to many is an incessant struggle against poverty. Slump throws many out of work. They borrow money at usurious rates. They fall into the depths of degrading poverty. The orphans and the waifs and strays live in squalor of slums. Born in misery, they die in misery. Weary souls seek their rest in wells and rivers.

Man may fail to care for the poor, but thou, Ahura Mazda, dost never. Thou dost ever help those that are without means of sustenance through no fault of theirs. I will help and greet such of thy poor. In greeting them, I greet thee. I serve thee best, when I serve thy poor and the down-trodden, that are forsaken of men, Ahura Mazda.

## *Let us be all the world to one another*

From the time that the journey of his life begins, man likes not to be lonely in life. Crushing is the burden of solitude. Heavy is the load of life, if all alone he has to bear it. It weighs down man's spirit. Often does the firmament overcast and the clouds gather over his head and dreary darkness falls upon him and weariness of spirit takes possession of him.

Man is ever in search of some one who sustains him in his direst straits. He finds courage and comfort in living together with his kith and kin. When they live in unison, they become stronger and better able to go through rough times. Light becomes the burden and easy the yoke of life. Then does life take a brilliant colour. Many together find safety to sail the sea of life in one and the same boat.

Teach us all to bear with one another and live in concord. Teach us to exercise forbearance and forgiveness towards one another. Let us share with our neighbors their joys and sorrows. Let us not be wholly filled with self-love. Let us learn to love one another. Let us all learn to live in brotherly love.

Let us not covet our neighbor's good. Let us aim at their hearts and win them by our goodwill for them. Let us not seek success in the failure of others. Let us comfort and console the sorrowing and suffering with the kiss of human kindness. Let our hearts go out to others in their misfortunes.

Let us realize that we are all interdependent. Let us behave with one another in mutual trust and in common brotherhood. Trust begets trust. Let us all so to live as our lives are for thy children, who are our brethren. Guide us to serve our brethren and love our brethren for thou, Ahura Mazda, art in them all.

## *Let us be the harbingers of good will to all*

Let not my faith in human nature be ever shaken, even when man falters and fails. My faith in human nature strengthens my faith in thee. I see thy image, Creator of mine, in myself, but so is it in my neighbor, also. Thou art enthroned in every human heart. Let us then, meet one another with goodwill and with the mutual belief that we greet thee in all whom we approach and meet.

Selfishness, jealousy and mutual distrust hinder our unity. Help us to tear down the barriers that divide men from men, races from races and nations from nations. Let us bear one another's burdens. All men and all women are drops of water drawn from the one and the same sea of life. Let us strengthen the bond of unity between people and people. Let us love all, as we love ourselves.

All mankind is made of one blood. All are of one human family, united by the indissoluble bond of common humanity. Every man and every woman is brother and sister to every other man and every other woman, brothers and sisters all in the one human family. When hearts are united with hearts and souls are united with souls, whole mankind will be one heart and one soul in thee, the Father of all. Teach us, O Thou loved by all, to love all mankind as thou dost love all thy children. Let us live unto thee and let us live for thee and let us live for all thine.

Let everyone's heart go out to the heart of everyone else. Let everyone give himself to everyone else. Let the ideal of cooperative life grow day by day. Let it not stop at community and nation. Help it, Ahura Mazda, to grow to the supreme ideal of one common humanity, one universal Brotherhood.

## *Let not power be the ruling passion of the nations*

Frail is human nature. Greed, jealousy and envy have all throughout the periods of history kept the nations fighting one another. The strong exploits the weak. Wealth is the winning post towards which all run a frenzied race. Power is rated higher than piety everywhere. The fire of racialism and nationalism is fanned and kept burning all around. Periodic wars on ever-growing gigantic scale work havoc and fill the world with destruction, desolation and death. As a nation we do despicable deeds of cruelty in the time of war, which we would shudder to think of as individuals in times of peace. Modern warfare shakes the earth with terror that neither tongue nor pen can tell.

Let not the relations between nations be based on force. We cannot force the hearts of our neighbors by power, but we can win them by love. Let those that are the rulers of the destinies of the masses seek to found the basis of their power in the affections of their peoples and share their cares and anxieties and sorrows. Let them be all mercy and tenderness to the distressed and disheartened. Let them lighten the load of poverty that oppresses the poor and the destitute.

Let us not strive to win our bread and pile up fortunes for ourselves in a way that what is our gain becomes the loss of our neighbors. Let us not fly at one another's throats and fight like dogs quarrelling over a bone. Let us not callously break the laws of equity.

Let us not be sulky, when we lose our game. Let us not be jealous of the happiness that our neighbors enjoy and which we are not blessed with. Let us large-heartedly endure the success of others, where we fail. Let not our thoughts be wholly for ourselves. Let us think of others too. Let us do anything and everything that may help all mankind.

The holy prophets of the world have with clarion voice, preached that: "Happiness is his, who makes others happy."

Thou, the Creator, hast not left thy children fatherless. Thou dost guard and protect all, as the shepherd tends his flock. Let us die to ourselves, that we may live for others. Let us be well-wishers of human kind, regardless of their caste or colour or creed. Let not the salvation of our own selves be a fetish with us. Let us work for the uplift and saving of others. Let all men be brothers and all women be sisters. With all our will and all our might, let us serve all members of the one great human family. Help us, Ahura Mazda, so to live our lives that thy heavenly peace may descend upon earth.

## *Let me run to the relief of those sinking in the mire of misfortune*

When trouble seizes man and he is filled with dismay, his mind sinks in sorrow and heart bends with grief. When he smarts under poignant sorrow, he dives deep in gloom. Melancholy preys on his health. The sorrows under which he groans and the misfortunes he suffers, dig hollow in his countenance. Adversity ploughs his face with furrows, bends his back and dims the luster of his eyes. Worry makes him old before his time. He seems to grow a year older every day. Misfortune withers to an early grave.

Sorrow is lessened, when it is shared by others. Suffering is sweetened, when others weep with the sufferer.

Deeply does my heart ache for the sufferings of my neighbors. Let me gently and soothingly enter into the sorrows and griefs of others. I will not be callous to the misery that surrounds me. I will not veil from my eyes the sight of the sufferings of others. I will look into them with the feeling heart and strive and struggle to soften them. I will share them. Sympathizing with the sorrow of others and bearing of their griefs dull the edge of my sorrow.

When adversity confronts me, I will face it and fight it and conquer it. I will not indulge in melancholy forebodings. I will maintain equanimity in the midst of my misfortune. As the violent tempests and gales agitate but the surface of the sea and reach not the depth, so when I find myself in the midst of sorrow and suffering, will I try to maintain unperturbed calm in the depth of my heart.

Joy is vociferous; sorrow is silent. I will hide my sorrow deep in my heart. I will bury my misery in my soul. I will try not to give way to despair and dive deep in the abyss of despondency.

Yet weak and frail is man. When a great weight is on my spirits, when my heart is sore distressed, when sorrows and sufferings surge around me and I see no way out from my gloom and I have no strength to endure, I will wail and weep under my breath to thee, my Comforter. Thou, I know, art at hand to soothe my sorrow. Thou dost dwell in my heart. Thither will I betake myself and unburden my breast to thee. Deliver me from my distress. Help me to retrieve my position, when misfortune befalls me. Let bright, happy days dawn on me again, Ahura Mazda.



## *Let me sacrifice myself at the altar of service*

Man comes not to the world just for his own good, but for the good of all mankind. He has to work unswervingly for the amelioration of the many ills which afflict all living beings. The ideal of life for man is to forget himself in his service to his fellowmen. He has to serve for the sake of service, without craving for any reward and without repining when he receives no return. He has to deny himself even more willingly to bear the burdens of others. Every one has to pledge his life to all, for the good of one is the good of all.

Let my thoughts be for others. Let my whole mind and whole heart go into my work for the good of others. Let me find pleasure in pleasing others. Let me care for others more than for myself. Let me not be indifferent to the welfare of others. Let me deny myself something, that I can give it to the needy and the neglected. Let me never descend from self-denial to self-indulgence. Let me die to myself, that I may live for others.

Zarathushtra, my beloved prophet, says that happiness comes to that man who makes others happy. Faithfully will I strive to live up to that ideal. I will find my pleasure in pleasing others. I will find my happiness in making others happy. I will spend my all and I will spend myself that others may be happy. I will make others happy, before happiness comes to me. I will rejoice in the happiness of my neighbors. I will deny myself that others around me may be happy.

There is joy to receive what life gives us. But greater indeed is the joy to give from what life gives us. I will not always look to reward for what I do. Let it not be said of me that I do nothing for nothing. Let me do something for nothing. I will serve for the love of service.

I pray for help, Ahura Mazda, that I may be better equipped to serve both thee and thy children. Fill my heart with compassion and tenderness for the weak and the weary. Give me soft and sympathetic heart that feels and grieves for the sorrowing and suffering. My life is not my own. Thou hast given it to me that I may live it for others. Give me health and give me vigor, that all the better I may offer my body and my mind and my spirit in serving thee and thine. I will serve my fellow human beings for thee and in thee with all my will and all my strength for all the days of my life, Ahura Mazda.

## *I will elevate the spirit over the flesh, Ahura Mazda*

Human being, the blend of flesh and spirit, the climax of creation, is thy greatest wonder upon earth, Ahura Mazda. The glutton feasts his body, when he starves his soul. Wasted is his life, when he eats and drinks and plays and sleeps and indulges in pleasures that but fade. Great is the danger of dissipation that he sees not.

Mankind will require ages before it can attain the highest ideal of life that the religions of the world put before it. Life loses its significance and becomes meaningless if in the end its destination is dust. Short is man's life. The days slip into months and months into years. Life lasts but a moment and man should make the best use of the moment.

When man feasts and makes merry with the gaiety of spirit, the surfeit of food and pleasures palls upon his senses. He dissipates his energy and allows it to run to waste. A great gulf yawns under his feet and engulfs him into an impenetrable abyss. Alas and alas for his folly.

Life is not all rooted in the flesh. It is not just flesh. Life is spirit. Life's supreme satisfaction lies in the life of the spirit and not of the flesh. When life is not anchored in spiritual values, when it has no accumulated spiritual riches, it is poor in spite of its hoarded wealth or garnered knowledge.

Help me, my lord, to perfect my moral and spiritual nature by means of strict discipline of the sensual appetites. When I am aimlessly drifting from good age-old moorings, lead me to a safe anchorage in the world of spirit. Help me to bridle and subdue the lusts of the flesh. Let me not do what ill befits me.

I will not make my mind spiritually sterile. I will not make my heart spiritually destitute. I will not let my life be spiritual bareness. I will think and think deeply about the life of the spirit. Even in the midst of the clatter and clamor of this materialistic age, I will strive to live by spiritual values. I will remember that life of continence is better than life of self-indulgence. I will trust and follow my higher nature. I will live the life of flesh well, that I may live of spirit better. With a pure mind and a clean heart, I will live a saintly and godly life. I will live an ideal life that will not be self-centered, but God-centered, Ahura Mazda.

## *Let me hunger and thirst for goodness, Ahura Mazda*

Let me, all along my life, see with my eyes what is good. Let me hear with my ears what is good. Let me love with my heart what is good. Let me do with my spirit what is good. Let me work and further all that is good. Let me never be ungrateful. Let me repay my neighbor's goodness with greater goodness.

Let not evil thoughts and vulgar feelings and mean inclinations that mar goodness, lodge in my heart. Let me forget the wrong anyone has done to me. Let me brood not envy against him. Let emulation swallow up envy. Ere I valiantly wrestle and fight evil without, let me fight it and drive it out from within my heart and foster goodness instead.

Man has an inborn capacity to grow in goodness. The creator has given him power to bend nature to his will. So has he endowed him with strength to subdue and conquer evil.

Angra Mainyu, the father of evil, lies ambushed to fall upon me, to force me to leave the path of goodness. I will stand not for surrender and defeat, but for struggle and fight and win my victory over him. I will meet the enemy of my goodness with steadfast face and fight him down with all my might.

Greatness of man fades to a shadow. Goodness never dies. When the mortal body lies cold in death, as if it had never been alive, goodness lives with man till his life upon earth ends and survives his bodily death. When the spirit hovers between life and death, the heavenly hosts, drawn by the goodness of his life, come flying to welcome him to the abode of the good.

As the shepherd leads his flock to pasture, thou Ahura Mazda, dost guide me on the field of my life where goodness grows. I will plant the seeds of goodness in the depth of furrows that I will dig in the soil of my heart, that the tree of my life may blossom into fragrant flowers of goodness.

## *Let us valiantly fight and vanquish evil*

Evil stalks the world and human life is an incessant war against evil to the death. Betide what may, men and women have to fight unflinchingly their battles against evil and to bury the evil that crawls upon the ground.

Angra Mainyu, the Evil Spirit, has vowed vengeance upon mankind. His eyes dart hatred. He lies in ambush for his victims. He dogs their steps. Powerful is the enemy and hard is the battle ahead.

Zarathushtra, the prophet of Ahura Mazda, unfurled his banner of righteousness and sounded his trumpet call. Soldiers are we all in his army that is marching against the forces of evil.

We will put on the armor of virtue and with the mace of truth in our hands, will fight the foe upon the battleground within our hearts and without. We will fight with the vigor of the body and firmness of the mind and the strength of the soul.

Every generation of men and women, in the seven zones of the earth, are moving onward despite setbacks and winning victory after victory. Let us fight the battles against falsehood and vice and wickedness in our days and day by day cover more and more ground from the archenemy. Let our children do so in their days. Let mankind never rest until Angra Mainyu and his evil brood of unrighteousness are vanquished.

King Tehmurasp, at the gray dawn of history, says tradition, rode Angra Mainyu for his steed with valor. The father of Evil and his legions fled in terror before Zarathushtra. Our fathers of old valiantly fought the foe. So shall we. Long is the war, but we will not lose heart and with dogged persistence and tenacity strenuously fight evil wherever we meet it and in whatever form we confront it, we will do battle to it. We will rest not till we put him to route, Ahura Mazda.

## *I will not let the evil spirit have dominion over me*

Angra Mainyu has sown thistles and thorns in the field of life. Many a flower has a canker-worm at its heart. Let me weed them out. Every sweet has bitter gall mixed with it. All creation groans under heavy ills. Man stands surrounded by temptations. Vice and wickedness press hard all around.

Let me not be enmeshed in the widely woven net of evil that the Enemy of mankind has flung far and wide. Let not the veil of vice encircle my eyes and ears, that seeing, they may see not and hearing, they may hear not. Let me not deceive my own self. Let me not be a slave to my petty self. Let not my mind be bent on evil. Let no guile ever lurk in my eyes. Let not my lips utter falsehood. Let not my heart beat to wickedness.

Angra Mainyu is busy buying souls in the bazar. Woe unto me, if I am out to sell my soul to him. Let him not master me. Let me not belie my origin by going over to him and embracing him and becoming an ally of the forces of evil. Passionately goaded by the love for light, the moth wheels round the flame and flies into it. The lure of flame spells its doom. Let me not blindly fall in the fire of vicious self-indulgence and burn myself.

Human nature is not intrinsically evil. The creator has planted the seed of goodness in man. He is good by nature. It is futile to load Angra Mainyu with man's sins and saddle him with his misdoings. Providence has endowed man with Freedom of Will. It is for him to choose whether he will live his life in the world of goodness or in that of wickedness.

The strength of my righteousness is known when I combat wickedness. Zarathushtra's clarion call rouses me to exert myself to fight valiantly evil within my inner world and in the outer world. Guide me out of evil and strengthen me with thy might in my goodness, my Gracious God.

I will hush the beguiling voice of the Evil Spirit. I will silence the storm of passions. I will smother vicious thoughts. I will sweep the ground of my heart of all impurities, that, then, in the clean and calm and pure atmosphere I can meet thee and greet thee and hear thee speak to me, Ahura Mazda.

*Orthodoxy courts pureities of dogmatic theology,  
casuistry and irrational formalism*

All communities are hydra-headed. They have their orthodox and their reformers, fanatics and sober-minded persons, visionaries and men of commonsense, mystics and rationalists, hypocrites and sincere persons.

The orthodox see not the absurdity of remaining in bondage to the customs of the infant humanity, when it was in swaddling clothes. They are wedded to the beliefs and practices, good and bad, that have come down to them through a long past and whose origin lies buried on obscurity. Blindly do they believe on the dogmas of the bygone days of their primitive ancestors. Stubbornly do they refuse to deliver themselves from the yoke of bigotry fostered by priestcraft.

The mere mention of reform acts upon them like a red rag on a bull. They are daggers drawn over the controversy with the reformers. They indulge in hair-splitting pureities. Charlatanism thrives on credulity and superstition.

Save me, my Savior, from bigoted narrowness and sectarian exclusiveness. Let me not take the form for the substance. Let me not live according to the letter of religion, but according to its spirits. Let me see that it is wrong to assert fanatically that whatever is, is right. Let me wisely see that there is much that is wrong and it has to be righted. Let me always unswervingly aim at accuracy and truth in my research work.

Let me always strive to be just to those with whom I differ. Let me put myself in the place of those who differ from me and know and understand their views that I may be tolerant and forgiving in my dealings with them. Above all, let me always remember that abuse is neither argument nor logic.

Zarathushtra, the wisest priest of my religion, does not forcibly exact implicit, mechanical obedience from me to his teachings. He does not impose his prophetic yoke on my thought, but leaves me freedom of thought to exercise my will freely.

May the breath of Vohu Manah, Good Mind, blow the mists of superstition and credulity that generate orthodoxy, from my mind and illumine it with the gleams of the sunshine of needful reform. May he, the premier archangel of Ahura Mazda, so guide me that I may not be impervious to the light of the new age. May he prevent me from blindly holding to the old order of the dead past. May he inspire me to move with the times.

## *Guide me to be free from bigotry, Ahura Mazda*

Let me have the will to believe and let me tolerate others' right to believe what they believe. Let me have sympathy with the beliefs of others and let me be charitable to them. Let me not scoff at what others hold holy. Let me not trifle with their feelings.

Let me patiently hear the arguments of the opposite side. Let me even go beyond my own point of view. Let me put myself in the place of him, with whose views I do not agree. Let me weigh his arguments. Let me understand his case. Let me find the truth and help my opponent to find his truth. It is the truth that matters. If I find the truth, let me not endeavor to force my truth upon others. Let me patiently and persuasively try to explain and convince him. Let time be the judge, when the right shall shine out as right and wrong shall come out as wrong.

Let it be an instinct with me to think and to reason before I act. Let me thoroughly incline my ears and listen to the words of wisdom from whatever source they come. Let me not like the cynic doubt everything and believe nothing. Let me always look to the bright and best side of things. Let me be free from the prejudice of caste, colour and creed. Let my sympathy extend to all mankind and embrace all.

Let me pierce the fog that may fill my mind. Let me not forget the debt I owe to the past. Yet let me discern the signs of the age I live in. Let me be in harmony with it. Let me remember that the world is surging with new life. Let not the unthinking and blind traditionalism retard and arrest my progress. Let me remember that socio-religious customs, outward forms of religion, formalism make not for godliness. When oppressive becomes the conflict between reason and faith, let me broad-mindedly see my way clear to accomplish what I seek. Guide me to be catholic in spirit, Ahura Mazda.

## *Let enthusiasm be the driving power of youth*

Youth is exuberant in cheerful energy and over-plus energy. Let me work in my youthful years with physical and mental exuberance. Let the cup of my vitality brim over all along my youth.

Let me not fritter away my youthful years. Let me not indulge myself in indolence. Let me not oversleep my youth. Let me not be found sleeping at the cockcrow. Let me be up and doing at the first streak of dawn. Let me begin my daily work before the break of day. Let me be at my desk in the small hours of the morning.

Let me enure myself to fatigues and hardships in youth. Let me cheerfully endure cold and heat which the inclemency of the seasons bring. Let me not take my meal, till I have sweated for it. Let me have steadfast perseverance never to relent and never to relax in the task I undertake to perform. Strenuous work adds zest to the pursuit of life. Let me draw added zest from necessary rest and recreation. Nothing good and noble can be had in the world without honest labor and hard work and youth is the proper time for strenuous activity. Let me retain the vivacity of my youth as long as I can.

Youth is the period of florescence and fruition, budding and blossoming. The tender leaves of life sprout in spring. The fragile flower blooms but to fade. Slowly does the spring wear into summer and summer into autumn.

When old age replaces youth, let my mind work with its youthful vigor, even when my body begins to suffer from the weakness of the flesh. Let my heart retain its warmth of youth. Let me have the earnestness that my youth possessed. Youth had expectation in store before it. Age has experience in stock. Let me make the best use of my hoarded possession. I wish that I may be young again to live my youth once more.

Help me, Ahura Mazda, to carry my seventy years as though they were but fifty. Grant that I may witness a hundred winters that I may work with the soundness and durability of my body and agility of my mind.



## *Let me not while away my time, Ahura Mazda*

The caterpillar preys at the heart of the rose and eats the leaves. Time devours everything. It wrecks all. The horizon alludes man's pursuit and recedes before him. Mirages mock his eyes. Ever-fleeting and ever-flying is time. Time is all-conquering. The proud is laid low in dust by him. The tyrant Zohak, before whom the heavens did quake, fell on his face in the dust at the bidding of time.

Let time never lag with me. Let me ever be busy with some useful work. Let me not waste my time. Let me not dream away my days. Let not vacillation and instability hinder my onward march.

Let not my present be darkened by the clouds of the past, which the horizon is now clearing. Let me not ponder over vanished dreams of the past. Let not the spell of the past be thick upon me. The past is past. Futile it is to make it the present. My yesterday is the thing of the past. I have to turn backwards to look at it, when forward is my move. The past is dead. The present and future have I to create anew. They only matter to me.

If life is to be hard upon me, let it be in my youthful past. Let the future bring to me the happiest time of my life. Spare me the agony to live on the memory of happiness that I had in my youthful life of prosperity, now lost, leaving me in the midst of hardship and adversity.

Man knows not when he sleeps, whether he would wake up alive. Slowly does life begin to ebb away from him. The soul drops its vesture of flesh.

Let me not fall into dotage. Let me strive and let me hope and let me work all my waking hours and all the days of my life and let me grow, until deathless time makes me sleep the sleep, of death.

Unbegotten thyself, thou art the begetter of all. Unmoved thyself, thou art source of all movement. Thou dost see everything in the whole universe at one and the same moment. Thou dost ordain when every drop of rain shall fall. Thou alone shalt endure through all time. Time touches thee not.

Help me to make the best use of my time, as good and great ones of all times have done, O thou Sovereign of earth and heaven!

## *Help me to conquer sin, Ahura Mazda*

I have sinned unwillingly. I have not sinned on purpose, O thou great Forgiver. I have sinned through human frailty. Through want of firmness, I faltered and fell. Look, my Lord, with pity and forgiveness on my soul. Angra Mainyu, the Evil Spirit, cast deafness upon my mind and blindness upon my heart and I heard thee not and saw thee not and sinned.

Sin, I will remember, is the transgression of thy will. I will not now do violence to thy will. I will conform to thy will.

Strengthen me to loosen the bonds of sin that bind me. I will cleanse my heart from vicious passions. I will wash my soul clean from all sin with the penitent tears of my heart. I will purify my mind from the stain of sin.

I will purge my mind of evil thoughts and my heart, of evil passions. I will not minister to vicious thoughts and sensual passions. I will not let them tarnish and darken my soul. I resolve that I will not fail to keep my undertaking not to fall back into sin for which I am now penitent. Thou hast created me fully equipped and armed against temptation to sin. With undaunted courage will I fight the will to sin and conquer sin with thy help, Ahura Mazda.

## *I will die unto sin, Ahura Mazda*

I have sinned against thee, Ahura Mazda, in thought and word and deed. I have denied thee. Intolerant is the burden of my misdoings. I have been tempted to sin and inequities. I confess my sins to thee, I acknowledge my sins. I humble myself before thee. Kneeling at thy feet, I repent. I prostrate myself before thee to do due penance for my sins. I am fallen. Thou alone can raise me and take me by the hand.

As a penitent supplicant I come back to thee. Forgive me for what I have done amiss. Absolve me from my sins. I approach thee with contrite heart, for to none else can I go but thee.

Sin is the disease of the soul. Sick has been my soul, for I have sinned. Thou art the only healer. In thee is my hope. I commend myself into thy hands. I resign myself to thy mercy. Draw me nigh unto thee.

When my sins are forgiven me, I will wash and cleanse myself from sins. I will not transgress thy commands. I will not do anything that is not pleasing to thee. I will never desire what transgresses right. I will ever desire what is right. I will swerve not from the commandments. I will not set them at nought. I will forsake them not, nor forget them. Dutifully will I keep them. I will make them the supreme rule of my life. Grant, in thy mercy, remission of these my sins, Ahura Mazda.

*Death but brings me to my life's new birth  
in thy abode, Ahura Mazda*

Strong is the sense of transiency of life with which I am filled. Life seems to be suspended by a thread. My body grows old with age, but my soul knows no age and ever young will it live. Worn out and old will I die in this world to be born young and wholesome in the other.

When weakness steals upon me, my bodily strength fails and impending death lays me low on the bed of sickness, when healing remedies are of no avail, when health cannot be restored, let me not linger and suffer. When life slowly begins to ebb away from me, when the night of death comes and I stand on the threshold of the next world, let me live my last moments in the hope that with the end of my mortal life upon earth, my soul will now rest in ineffable peace.

When my mortal bonds are broken and I lay down my life, when I depart this life from my lifelong labors to rest, then at last I will be gathered to my Heavenly Father who created me. Let me never forget that my soul has proceeded from thee, my God, and has one day to return to thee. I belong to thee by birth. Let me then die as one that still belongs to thee. One day will I be where thou art and thy angels are and the righteous dead are.

It is upon everyone to work out one's own salvation or damnation. When man regulates his conduct according to the laws ordained by God, he is saved. When he obeys them not, he is lost. Man alone can make his heaven or his hell.

Thou, Ahura Mazda, hast been by my side from the day when I first saw the light. So be thou, I beseech thee, when the light ceases to shine upon me on the day I take my departure from this world. When I cross the border land of the earth and heavenly regions, let the golden gate of Garonmana open for me, Ahura Mazda.

## *Death knows no time, nor respects rank*

Thou hast built the earthly house of clay for man's soul. When at death man is taken to his rest, the body that was of earth, returns to earth and the soul soars to the heavenly heights. To immortality will he go, when he departs this life, when his robe of clay is rent in twain.

Man knows not the duration of his life. But he does know that of mortal make is he in life. The grave does ever stand yawning in front of him. Without warning does the dark hour of his death sound. Helplessly do the living look their last on the dying, the singing of the funeral dirge begins and the grave closes upon him. Ahura Mazda alone knows not death.

Ruthless and remorseless is death. Cruel death suddenly snatches away the dearest, who was the life of its doting mother, soul of her soul, the light of her eyes, whom she had rocked in arms to sleep. Her heart bleeds and breaks for it. Willingly would she have given her heart's blood and died, that her child might live. With its death, die all her joy and happiness in life. Unbearable is the emptiness caused, when her beloved child has left her, never to come back again. In spite of others around her, she feels lonely to walk the dreary path to death. She makes her heart the urn for the ashes of her beloved dead. Her only consolation is that her beloved child now lives in the beyond, leaving her behind and one day when she will herself die, she will be reunited with her dear departed one.

Death walks in darkness and carries away young and old, high and low, good and evil wayfarers that it meets on the way. When the wicked lie on their sick-beds, their sinking eyes look coming death in the face. The visions rise before them of the hideous approach of death. When death ends their lives, their souls live for three nights in the vicinity of their bodies. The grim memory of their wicked lives haunts them. The horrible fate that is impending for them frightens them. They see the gate of heaven slammed in their faces and hell opening to receive them. Many such ungodly persons live and die and the world weeps not, for they burdened the world and were as though better not born.

Freed from the frailty of flesh, the chosen of the Lord peacefully pass away to their final rest. Their bodies turn to dust. Like the eagle beating the air with wings, their souls soar the highest heights of heaven with their wings of righteousness and goodness. Vohuman, the premier Archangel, welcomes them to the abode of eternal light and weal. Their names live in this world from age to age and their pious memories stay with us.

I will live my life doing thy will. I will die my death doing my duty to thee and thine. When I am relieved of the burden of my body and lightly does my soul step out free to fly heavenward and the gates of the Tower of Silence are closed between me and my loved ones, let me be at peace with myself and with the world and with thee, Ahura Mazda.

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