

Weekly Zoroastrian Scripture Extract # 125 – Navsari Atash Behram Padshah Saheb 250 Years Anniversary and Atash Behram Bui Ceremony

Hello all Tele Class friends:

Today, Friday October 2nd, by Fasli calendar, it is the festival of Meherangaan, Meher Maah and Meher Roj! It was a very big festival celebrated with lots of pomp during Sassanian times. We wish all our Fasli Humdins in particular and all Zoroastrian Humdins in general a very Happy and joyous Meherangaan Mubarak!

October 2nd is also Gandhi Jayanti Holiday, Mahatma Gandhiji's Birthday and we want to remember him for all he did for India!!

Tomorrow, on Saturday, October 3rd, by Shehenshahi calendar, it will be Ardibehesht Maah and Sarosh Roj, which will be a very historical day for the Parsis/Iranis: it will be 250th Anniversary of Navsari Atash Behram Padshah Saheb 250th Anniversary!!

A very big celebration is planned and the Atash Behram building has been upgraded and adorned with beautiful lights as seen in the attached photo (sent to me by my family member on WhatsApp)! What a beautiful way to adorn one of the most wonderful Atash Behram building! We pray that this Atash Behram celebrates 500th Anniversary also!! We wish all our Zoroastrian Humdins in general and Navsari Humdins in particular a very Happy Sal Mubarak for their Atash Behram Padshah Saheb Saal Gareh! I am sure it will be celebrated with pomp and dignity!

This is also the anniversary of the Wadiaji Atash Behram in Dhobi Talao, Surat Shehenshahi Atash Behram, Sethna and Kapawalla Agiaries in Tardeo.

In honor of the anniversaries of these three Atash Behrams, we will cover briefly the Bui ceremony performed in Shehenshahi Atash Behrams (little different in Udvada Iranshah Atash Behram) by a Boiwalla Mobed Saheb.

When you visit these and other Atash Behrams during a Bui ceremony, it would be uplifting to observe the ceremony performed by a Yozdaathregar Mobed Saheb and we hope that this brief explanation of this ceremony helps you to understand what the Mobed Saheb is doing during the Bui ceremony.

In honor of the Navsari Atash Behram Saal Gareh, we will follow the explanation given by the eminent scholar Dr. Ervad J. J. Modi in his Zoroastrian reference book on Ceremonies: *The Religious Ceremonies and Customs of the Parsees*, which has been formatted by my very good friend Joseph Peterson in an eBook

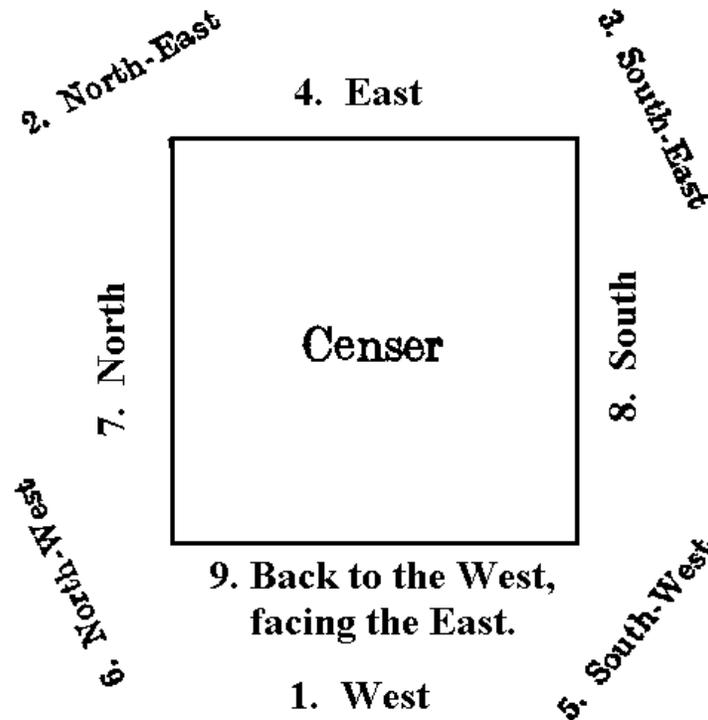
and is available in his wonderful website at: <http://www.avesta.org/ritual/rcc.htm>

Note by SPD: Complete Pav Mahel Kriyaas (Ceremonies) are explained in Gujarati books by Ervad Noshervan Unwala for the Udvada Sanjana Mobeds, by Ervad Hormuzd Pavri for the Navsari Bhagaria Mobeds, and by Mobed Meherwanji Behran Kamdin Dasturnaa for the Kadmi Mobed Sahebs. I have attached a photo file with the front pages of all these three very valuable books.

“A priest who has performed the Khub ceremony, performs the Kusti-padyab at the commencement of each new Gah, and then recites his Farziyat, *i.e.*, the necessary prayers ..... He then goes into the sacred chamber, puts on white gloves, places some frankincense over the Sacred Fire, and then the Mâchi ..... in the case of the Atash Bahram, the fire must be fed with a Mâchi of sandalwood. In this case, six pieces of sandalwood are placed on the Sacred Fire. The Atash Bahram is spoken of as Atash Bahram Padshah, *i.e.*, the king. Being the highest Grade of Sacred Fire, it is compared [233] to a king. So the sandalwood, with which the Sacred Fire is fed, is placed on it in the form of a Machi or throne. The six pieces are arranged on the fire in pairs of two pieces, placed one over the other .....

“He then washes with pure water the stone-slab on which the censer of the [235] Sacred Fire stands. This ceremony of washing the pedestal or the stone-slab (*Khân*) on which the Sacred Fire stands, is alluded to in the 9th chapter of the Yasna. The priest then places on the fire a little sandalwood and frankincense three times, speaking the words Humata, Hukhta, Hvarshta, *i.e.*, good thoughts, good words, and good deeds. Then he goes round the censer with a metallic ladle in his hand, and, standing in eight different positions (*viz.*, the four sides and the four corners), and then going back to his original position on the west of the censer and facing the east, recites, in these nine positions, different words of a short formula of prayer. This ceremonial of going round the censer is spoken of as '*chak farvun*,' *i.e.*, going round the circle (Pers. *chak*, *i.e.*, "one side of four; an eighth part of a thing").”

“The following chart points out the different positions in which the Mobed Saheb stands whilst reciting the various parts of the prayer-formula. The numbers point out the consecutive order in which he stands at the different positions before the censer on the altar:”



So we are presenting in this WZSE, “the different words of the text, recited by the Mobed Saheb standing in the four sides and four corners before the censer, the references to the Avesta text for the words, and their meanings”:

## Words Recited by the Mobed Saheb in 9 Positions during the “Chuk Farvaanu” Ceremony:

(Please hear [the attached .mp3 file](#) for its recitation)

Position 1 West: Aat-thwaa Aathro gaarayemi. (“The first two words from Vohu Khshathra Gatha Ha, Yasna 51.9”)

Position 2: North-East: Vangehush Managho zaothraabyo yazamaide. (“from Yasna 68.3”)

Position 3: South-East: Aat-thwaa Aathro gaarayemi.

Position 4: East: Vangehush Ukhdahe zaothraabyo yazamaide. (“from Yasna 68.3”)

Position 5: South-West: Aat-thwaa Aathro gaarayemi.

Position 6: North-West: Vangehush Shyaothnahe zaothraabyo yazamaide.  
("from Yasna 68.3")

Position 7: North: Sukaai Managha. ("from Yasna 68.4")

Position 8: South: Sukaai Vachanagha. ("from Yasna 68.4")

Position 9: Back to West facing East: Sukaai Shyaothna. ("from Yasna 68.4")

## Words Recited by the Mobed Saheb in 9 Positions during the "Chuk Farvaanu" Ceremony – Translation:

Position 1 West: I praise Thee, O God, through thy fire.

Position 2: North-East: We praise through the offerings of good thoughts.

Position 3: South-East: I praise Thee, O God, through thy fire.

Position 4: East: We praise through the offerings of good words.

Position 5: South-West: I praise Thee, O God, through thy fire.

Position 6: North-West: We praise through the offerings of good actions.

Position 7: North: For the enlightenment of our thoughts.

Position 8: South: For the enlightenment of our words.

Position 9: Back to West facing East: For the enlightenment of our deeds.

(Translation from J.J. Modi's *Religious Ceremonies and Customs of the Parsees* (Bombay, 1922) converted in ebook format by Joseph Peterson at: <http://www.avesta.org/ritual/rcc3.htm> from the book pages 234 - 239)  
(Please see the attached JPEG photo file for the book cover)

Dr. Ervad J. J. Modi further states:

“The meaning of the above formula on the whole is as follows:— "O God! We praise Thee, through Thy fire. We praise Thee, by the offerings of good thoughts. We praise Thee through Thy fire. We praise Thee by the

offerings of good words. We praise Thee through Thy fire. We praise Thee by the offerings of good deeds. (We do all this) for the enlightenment of our thoughts, for the enlightenment of our words, and for the enlightenment of our deeds." That is to say, the worshipper standing before the sacred fire, taking it as the symbol of God's refulgence and purity, and placing over the fire sandalwood and frankincense as visible offerings, offers the real, though invisible offerings of good thoughts, good words, and good deeds, and thereby hopes and prays for the further enlightenment of his thoughts, words, and deeds."

“Having recited the above short but pithy formula of prayer the priest places again over the fire a little sandalwood and frankincense, and then recites, as said above, the Atash Niyayesh several times, according to the Gah or period of the day. While reciting the first Niyayesh for the first time, the priest goes on placing bits of sandalwood and frankincense (*aêsma bûi*) at the intervals of a few words. “

### ***“The ringing of the bell.***

During the recital of the first Niyayesh, and during the recital of the first Pazand portion of it, whilst uttering the words "dushmata," "duzhukhta," "duzvarshta," *i.e.*, evil thoughts, evil words, and evil deeds, he rings a bell thrice; some ring the bell thrice, whilst uttering each word, *i.e.*, in all give nine strokes of the bell. This is, as it were, to emphasize that portion of the prayer, wherein the worshipper expresses a desire to shun bad thoughts, bad words, and bad deeds. At the end of the first recital of the principal portion of the Atash Niyayesh, the priest draws by means of two ladles two circles in the ash in the censer at its ridge, and at the similar end of the second recital [239] he obliterates the circles again. While reciting the Niyayesh during the first and the fifth Gah or period of the day (the Hawan and the Ushahin), the priest stands on the West of the censer with his face towards the East, and during the other periods vice versa. “

After this, the Mobed Saheb recites Doaa Naam Setaayashne.

Finally, he stands in the outside Pavi and recites Doaa Tandoorasti for the Bui sponsoring family.

## **SPD Comments**

This then is a short description of the Bui Ceremony as explained by Dr. J. J. Modi. Once again I want to thank Joseph Peterson to place this whole book in an eBook format on his website.

I strongly urge all Humdins to attend an Atash Behram Bui Ceremony and observe all the above actions of the Mobed Saheb.

May the Flame of Fellowship, Love, Charity and Respect for all burn ever eternal in our hearts so we can do HIS work with humility, diligence and eternal enthusiasm!

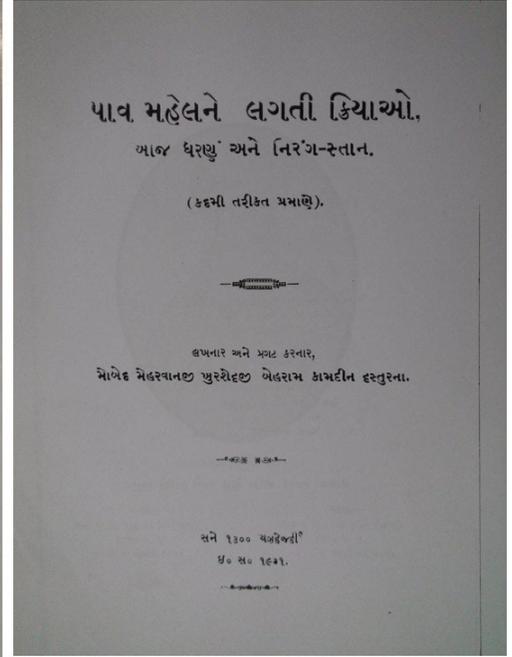
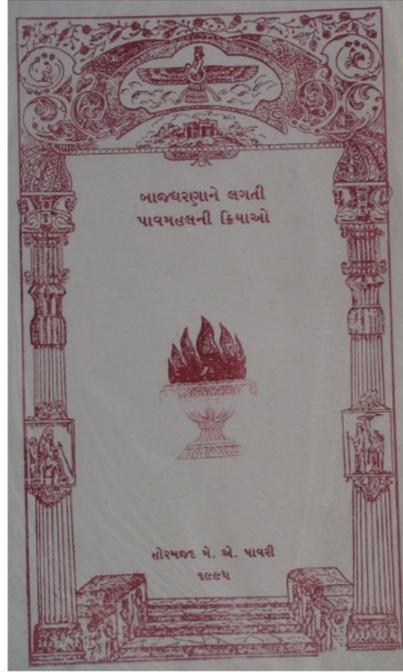
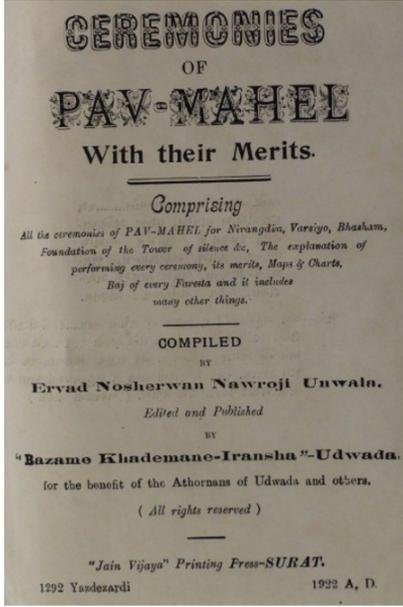
Atha Jamyat, Yatha Aafrinaamahi! (May it be so as we wish!)

Love and Tandoorasti, Soli

Navsari Atash Behram 250th Anniversary.jpg



Pav Mahel Books.jpg



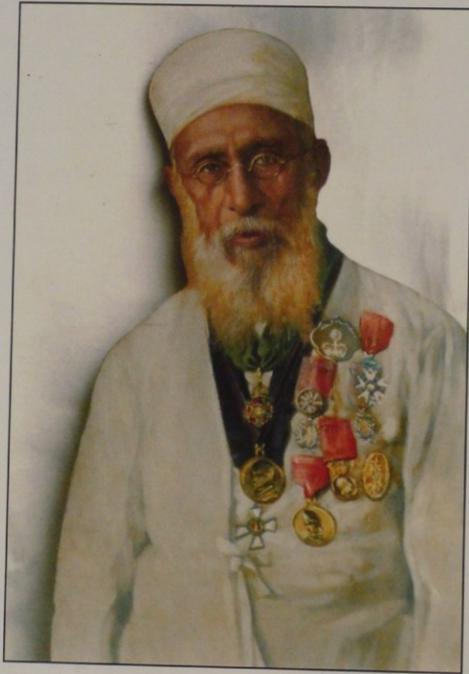
Unwala – Pav Mahel  
(Gujarati) Ceremonies  
(for Udwada Mobeds)

Pavri – Pav Mahel  
(Gujarati)  
Ceremonies (for  
Navsari Mobeds)

Behram Kamdin – Pav  
Mahel (Gujarati)  
Ceremonies (for  
Kadmi Mobeds)

JJ Modi book.jpg

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*by*  
Marzban J. Giara

**THE RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES  
AND  
CUSTOMS OF THE PARSEES**

**J. J. MODI**