

Weekly Zoroastrian Scripture Extract # 298: The First Ever Documented Roll Call by Eight Mobeds performing Yasna Ceremony in Olden Times - Visperad - Kardaas 3

Hello all FEZANA friends:

In [our last WZSE #297](#), we covered Uziran Geh Verse describing eight Mobeds required to perform the Yasna ceremony in olden times.

In one of our important liturgy, **Visperad** (Avesta: **vispa ratavo – all Lords/Chiefs – all seasons**), in its Kardaas (Chapter) 3, **an actual first ever documented Roll Call** is being taken between the Zaoatar, officiating Mobed, and his seven assisting Mobeds which we presented from Uziran Geh in our last [weekly WZSE #297](#).

Kangaji Explanation for these Eight Mobeds:

Referring to the Uziran Geh, Verse 5 presented in our last weekly WZSE #297, [Kangaji in his Khordeh Avesta](#) gives the following explanation:

In the above paragraph, various classes of Herbad, the practicing priests, are remembered with due respect. Moreover, from these names, we (come to know) what function each type of Mobed performs:

Zaota,	i.e. zoti or the performer of principal ceremony;
Haavanaan,	i.e. the Mobed who strains the Haoma and performs the ceremony;
Aatarvakhsha,	i.e. Aatarvakhshi, whose function is to keep the fire burning;
Frabaretar,	i.e. the Mobed who brings to the Zaoatar all the implements and other things (articles) required for the ceremonies;
Aabereta,	(= aap + beretar), a Mobed in holy orders, who provides for the sacred water used in religious ceremonies and for and for giving Nahaans (purificatory baths);
Aasnataar,	i.e. the Mobed in holy orders who gives Nahaans, as well as, cleaning and purifying the utensils used for ceremonial purposes;
Raathwishkara,	i.e. a Mobed who performs all the accessory services, such as adjusting the ceremonial utensils and putting them in proper order;
Sraoshaavareza,	i.e. a Mobed in whose presence a sinner confesses his misdeeds and makes amends for them, and the officer who keeps good discipline for the Yasna ceremony.

Visperad Kardaas 3:

Late Well-known Avesta/Pahlavi Scholar, Dasturji Hormazdyar Dastur Kaioji Mirza, gave a

very good Introduction in the book: *Yazishne Baa Nirang*, with prayers in Avesta script, printed in 1957 AD. In this Introduction, Dasturji gives some more details about these 8 Mobeds used to perform Yasna Ceremony in Olden Times. ([I have attached this Introduction to this WZSE, together with its Front Page and Title.](#))

Please note that currently we only have two Mobeds, a Zaotar and a Raathwi, performing Yasna, Visperad, Vendidad, Nirangdin ceremonies and where required, Raathwi performs all the rituals/prayers originally performed by these 6 other Mobeds in Olden Times.

In the Visperad prayer, in its Kardaas (Chapter) 3, a “Roll Call” is taken between Zaotar and Raathwi. Zaotar calls out the names of each of the seven Mobeds mentioned above followed by the word “Aastaaya” meaning “is he present?” as in: “Haavanaanem Aastaaya” meaning “Is Haavanaan present?” to which Raathwi standing at the designated place in Yazashneh Gaah ([please see the attached schematic](#)) and replies: “Azem Visaai” meaning “Yes I am here.”

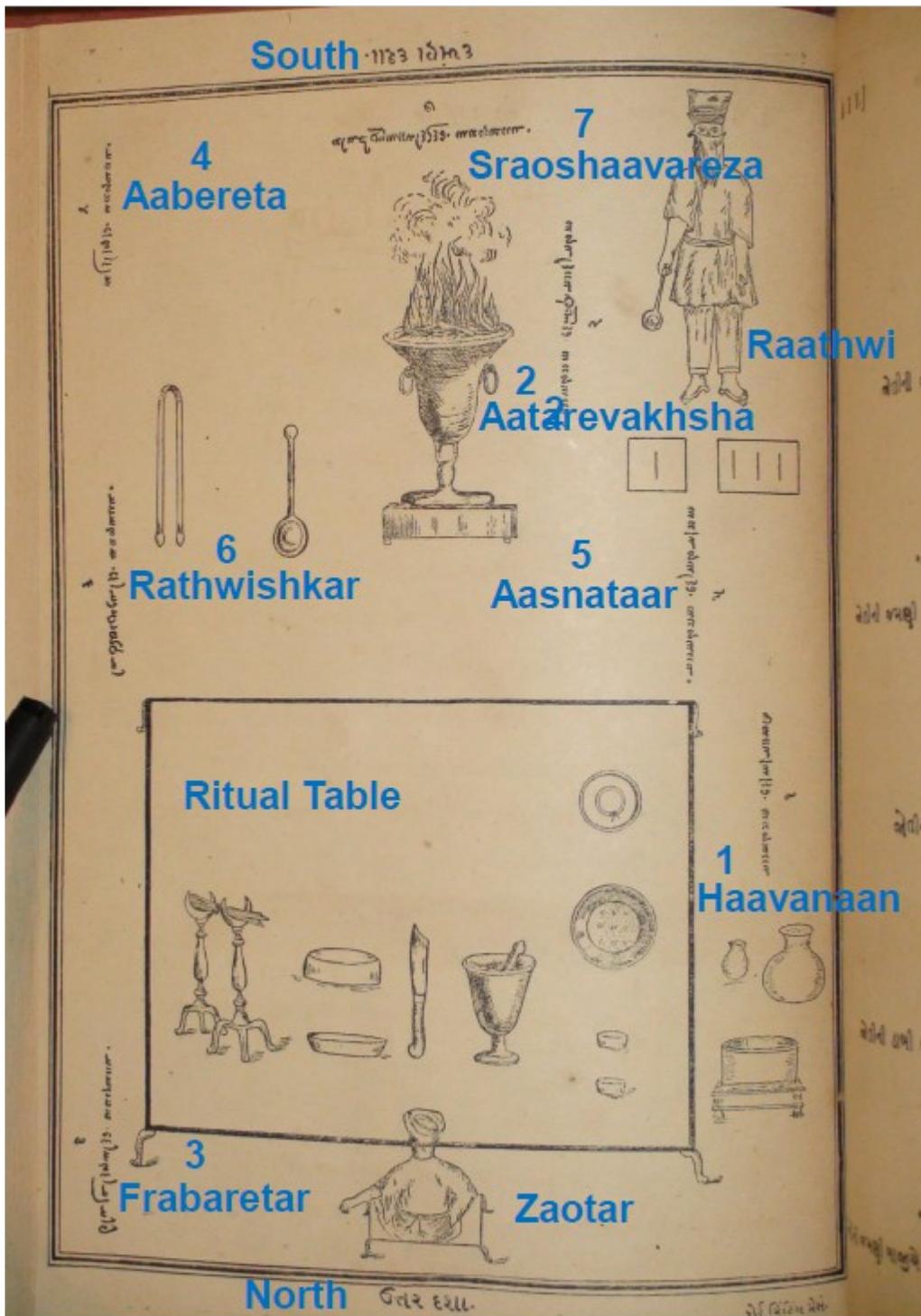
The same Roll Call is repeated for the rest of the Mobeds mentioned above. Please see the schematic of the whole Yazashneh Gaah with the positions of the Raathwi answering this Roll Call.

With this background, let us present this first ever documented Roll Call from Visperad Kardaas 3:

The First Ever Documented Roll Call by Eight Mobeds performing Yasna Ceremony in Olden Times – Visperad – Kardaas 3

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

[\(Please see the schematic below for the various positions of Raathwi\):](#)



(1) (Zaotar asks) **Haavanaanem Aastaaya?**

(2) (Raathwi standing on the Right Side of Zaotar, near Ritual Table, replies) **Azem Visaai.**

(3) (Zaotar asks) **Aatarevakhshem Aastaaya?**

(4) (Raathwi standing on the Right Side of Zaotar near the Aatash Gaah, replies) **Azem**

Visaai.

(5) (Zaotar asks) **Frabarehtaarem Aastaaya?**

(6) (Raathwi standing on the Left Side near Zaotar, replies) **Azem Visaai.**

(7) (Zaotar asks) **Aaberetem Aastaaya?**

(8) (Raathwi standing on the Left Side of Zaotar near the Aatash Gaah, replies) **Azem Visaai.**

(9) (Zaotar asks) **Aasnataarem Aastaaya?**

(10) (Raathwi standing on the Right Side between Ritual Table and Aatash Gaah, replies) **Azem Visaai.**

(11) (Zaotar asks) **Rathwiskarem Aastaaya?**

(12) (Raathwi standing on the Left Side between Ritual Table and Aatash Gaah, replies) **Azem Visaai.**

(13, 14) (Zaotar asks) **Sraoshaavarezem Aastaaya, Daahisitem arshwachastemem?** (meaning from Kangaji Avesta/English Dictionary: Wisest and most veracious in speech – **Sraoshaavareza**)

(15) (Raathwi facing Zaotar in front of Aatash Gaah, replies) **Azem Visaai.**

SPD Comments

Visperad Ceremony:

1. The Visperad is divided into 23 Kardaas (chapters). It is never recited alone but is always recited with the Yasna. In fact, the celebration of the Visperad is the celebration of the Yasna with the additional recital of the 23 chapters of the Visperad.
2. It is worth noting that Visperad is incorporated in the ritual of Vendidaad, and so whenever the Vendidaad is recited, the Visperad too is recited along with it.
3. The Visperad is an important scripture as well as higher liturgical ritual, but it is not used daily like the Yazashne and Vendidaad, but recited only at specific occasions as follows:
 - a) On the fourth day of the Naavar ceremony, (**please see the photo below**)
 - b) On the 6 Gaahambaars of the year,
 - c) Whenever the Vendidaad is performed, and
 - d) On the last day of the 'Geti kharid' ceremony.
4. During the special periods of 6 Gaahambaars (season festivals), the Visperad is specially recited, called **Gaahambaar ni Visperad**, i.e. the Visperad of the Gaahambaar. The furtherance, progress, development and improvement of everything in the world depend upon time, upon the due succession of seasons at their proper

times. Nature holds forth, before men, the Gaahambaars or the seasons as the best ideal for all work to be done at the proper time.

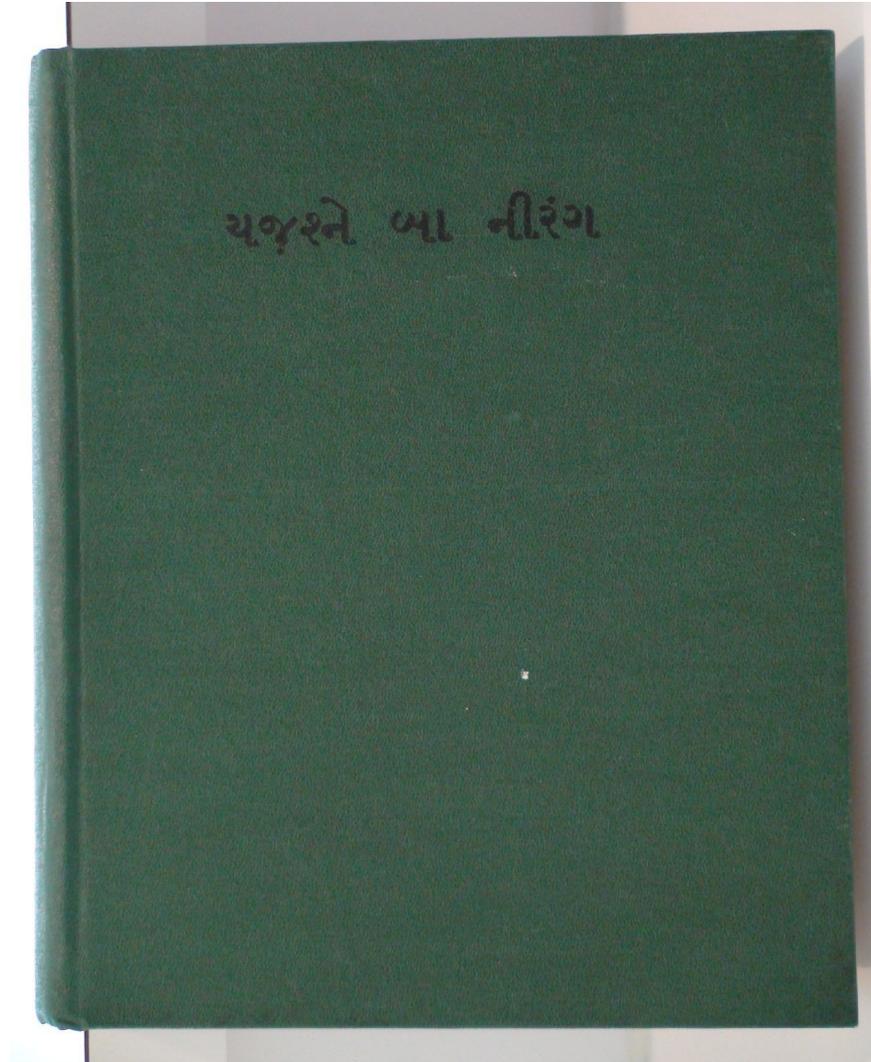
5. The Gaahambaars then are specially considered to be the proper times for the celebration of the Visperad ceremony.

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!

In HIS service 24/7!

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

Love and Tandoorasti, Soli



YAZISHNE BA NIRANG

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તથા

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A Navar Initiate performing Visperad with an experienced Mobed and a Rāthwi.