

## RULES OF DAILY PRAYERS. WHAT TO PRAY AND HOW?

Take a bath immediately before praying. Cover your head while praying. Kushti is the prelude. Often there is a chasm between ideals and practice; the ideal line is required to be shortened at times. There are therefore ideally compulsory prayers and practically compulsory prayers.

During the day time i.e. in Havan, Rapithvan and Ujiran Gahs, the ideal compulsory prayers are Sarosh Baj, Gah, all the five Niyash's viz. Khorshed, Maher, Mahbokhtar, Ava and Atash; Doa Nam Setayashne; three Yashta's viz. Ahuramazda, Ardibeheshta, and Sarosh Yashta Hadokht; Doa Nam Setayashne (again), "Char dishaa no Namaskar", 101 Names of Dadar Ahuramazda.

If this ideal line is not practicable, you can omit the three Yashta's. If that also is not practicable, recite only two Niyash's - Khorshed and Maher - after Sarosh Baj and Gah; and end at Doa Nam Setayashne and 101 Names. But this is the Minimum. No further shortening is permissible.

A word about "**Vispa Humata**". This is to be recited immediately after Meher Niyash in Gah Havan, and "biji Havan" (i.e. from Ahura mazda Roj in Ava month to Ardibeheshta Roj of the coming Fravardin month). Vispa Humata is not to be chanted in Rapithvan and Ujiran Gah's.

Ideally, any Yashta other than the above three (viz. Ahuramazda, Ardibehesht and Sarosh Hadokht) should be recited after all the five Niyash's and those three Yashtas. However, as a matter of compromise, you can recite any Yashta after the five Niyash's or even after Khorshed Meher.

A word about Doa Nam Setayashne. This is to be prayed after you finish your set of Niyash's, and before beginning your Yashta's. After finishing your set of Yashta's, Doa Nam Setayashne is to be repeated.

Khorshed, Maher and Ava Niyash's cannot be recited in Aivisruthrem and Ushahin Gah's; but Mahbokhtar and Atash Niyash's can be prayed in any of the 5 Gahs.

In Agiari or Atash Baheram, whatever Niyash's - Khorshed, Maher, Mahbokhtar and Avan, you desire to recite, please do it outside the Atash Padshah's inner room. In the inner room pray only Atash Niyash. You can pray any Yashta (except Khorshed, Meher and Avan Yashta) in the inner room facing the Padshah Saheb.

**The ideal night-time Prayers are:** in Aivisruthrem: Kushti, Sarosh Baj, Gah, Sarosh Yashta Vadi, Atash Niyash and Mahbokhtar Niyash; and Doa Nam Setayashne at the end. As a poor compromise you can omit one or both the Niyash's. But Sarosh Yashta Vadi is a must.

In Ushahin, same as Aivisruthrem except that instead of Sarosh Yashta Vadi, pray Hadokhta. Avoid praying between midnight and 3 a.m.

A bath is compulsory immediately before Prayers, whether at home or in a Fire-temple. If that is not possible before going to the Fire temple, an advanced and knowledgeable prescriber has suggested this: sprinkle water with your right hand fingers all over your clothes, wash your face and hands with water and do three Kushti's one after the other. Then start with Sarosh Baj and go ahead.

### **When you pray, don't utter anything except the prescribed Manthra.**

Remember, Manthra Prayer is not just a reading exercise; it is a religious exertion. It has its Rules to be carried out. They are founded on the spiritual science called "Staota Yasna". They have a rationale and a reason but they go beyond our intellectual level. The human reason itself declares the existence of ultra-reason. Modern science does not hesitate to declare that common sense is not the criterion for truth.

The Rules of Manthra Prayer do not appear to depend on its meaning. The Sarosh Yashta Vadi can be recited only in Aivisruthrem, although its translation no where indicates why it is so. In Gah prayers we find the names of Ahuramazda, Asho Zarathushtra, Yazats, Gathas, Mobeds, Ashavans. Why then this restriction? The short answer is that the Manthra are intended to have a positive vibratory effect in consonance with the actual vibrations going on in Nature at that time or moment.

Remember! where there is a will, there is a way. Exert a little with faith and devotion and Nature will help you nine-fold. Try to break the spell of your usual excuse: "I have no time". Find time and you will find that time itself will stand before you. Manthra is a living miracle. Experience it.

- Cherag

(Parsi Pukar – SEPTEMBER 1996 Vol. 2; No.3)