

I confess myself a worshipper of Mazda, a follower of Zarathushtra,
one who hates the Daevas and obeys the laws of Ahura;

For sacrifice, prayer, propitiation, and glorification unto [Hawan],
the holy and master of holiness....

Unto Verethraghna, made by Mazda, and unto
the crushing Ascendant;¹

Be propitiation, with sacrifice, prayer, propitiation, and glorification.

Yatha ahu vairyo: The will of the Lord is the law of holiness....

1. Sirozah 1.20.

I.

1. We sacrifice unto Verethraghna, made by Ahura.

Zarathushtra asked Ahura Mazda: 'Ahura Mazda, most beneficent
Spirit, Maker of the material world, thou Holy One!

'Who is the best-armed of the heavenly gods?'

Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is Verethraghna, made by Ahura, O Spitama
Zarathushtra!'

2. Verethraghna, made by Ahura, came to him first, running in
the shape of a strong, beautiful wind, made by Mazda; he bore
the good Glory, made by Mazda, the Glory made by Mazda, that is
both health and strength.

3. Then he, who is the strongest,² said unto him:³

'I am the strongest

in strength; I am the most victorious in victory; I am the most
glorious in glory; I am the most favouring in favour; I am the
best giver of welfare: I am the best-healing in health-giving.

2. Verethraghna.

3. Zarathushtra.

4. 'And I shall destroy the malice of all the malicious, the
malice of Daevas and men, of the 'Yatus and Pairikas, of the oppressors,
the blind, and the deaf.

5. 'For his brightness and glory, I will offer unto him a sacrifice
worth being heard; namely, unto Verethraghna, made by Ahura. We
worship Verethraghna, made by Ahura, with an offering of libations,
according to the primitive ordinances of Ahura; with the Haoma
and meat, the baresma, the wisdom of the tongue, the holy spells,
the speech, the deeds, the libations, and the rightly-spoken words.

'Yenhe hatam: All those beings of whom Ahura Mazda....

II.

6. 'We sacrifice unto Verethraghna, made by Ahura.'

Zarathushtra asked Ahura Mazda: 'Ahura Mazda, most beneficent Spirit, Maker of the material world, thou Holy One!

Who is the best-armed of the heavenly gods?'

Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is Verethraghna, made by Ahura, O Spitama Zarathushtra!'

7. Verethraghna, made by Ahura, came to him the second time, running in the shape of a beautiful bull, with yellow ears and golden horns; upon whose horns floated the well-shapen Strength, and Victory, beautiful of form, made by Ahura: thus did he come, bearing the good Glory, made by Mazda, the Glory made by Mazda, that is both health and strength.

Then he, who is the strongest, said unto him: 'I am the strongest in strength....,4

'And I shall destroy the malice of all malicious....5

For his brightness and glory, I will offer unto him a sacrifice worth being heard....6

4. As above, § 3.

5. As above, § 4.

6. As above, § 5.

III.

8. We sacrifice unto Verethraghna, made by Ahura.

Zarathushtra asked Ahura Mazda: 'Ahura Mazda, most beneficent Spirit, Maker of the material world, thou Holy One!

'Who is the best-armed of the heavenly gods?'

Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is Verethraghna, made by Ahura, O Spitama Zarathushtra!'

9. Verethraghna, made by Ahura, came to him the third time, running in the shape of a white, beautiful horse, with yellow ears and a golden caparison; upon whose forehead floated the well-shapen Strength, and Victory, beautiful of form, made by Ahura: thus did he come, bearing the good Glory, made by Mazda, that is both health and strength.

Then he, who is the strongest, said unto him: 'I am the strongest in strength....

'And I shall destroy the malice of all malicious....'

For his brightness and glory, I will offer unto him a sacrifice

worth being heard....

IV.

10. We sacrifice unto Verethraghna, made by Ahura.

Zarathushtra asked Ahura Mazda: 'Ahura Mazda, most beneficent Spirit, Maker of the material world, 'Who is the best-armed of the heavenly gods?'

Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is Verethraghna, made by Ahura, O Spitama Zarathushtra!'

11. Verethraghna, made by Ahura, came to him the fourth time, running in the shape of a burden-bearing⁷ camel, sharp-toothed,⁸ swift,⁹ stamping forwards, long-haired, and living in the abodes of men;¹⁰

12. Who of all males in rut shows greatest strength and greatest fire, when he goes to his females. Of all females those are best kept whom a burden-bearing camel keeps, who has thick forelegs and large humps,,¹¹ quick-eyed, long-headed, bright, tall, and strong;

13. Whose piercing look goes afar,¹² even in the dark of the night; who throws white foam along his mouth; well-kneed, well-footed, standing with the countenance of an all-powerful master:

Thus did Verethraghna come, bearing the good Glory made by Mazda, the Glory made by Mazda....

7. Doubtful (vadharôish).

8. Doubtful (dadãsôish).

9. ? Urvatô; cf. § 19.

10. Tame, domesticated.

11. ? Smarshnô.

12. ? Haitahê.

V.

14. We sacrifice unto Verethraghna, made by Ahura.

Zarathushtra asked Ahura Mazda: 'Ahura Mazda, most beneficent Spirit, Maker of the material world, thou Holy One!

'Who is the best-armed of the heavenly gods?'

Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is

Verethraghna, made by Ahura, O Spitama Zarathushtra!

15. 'Verethraghna, made by Ahura, came to him the fifth time, running in the shape of a boar, opposing the foes, a sharp-toothed he-boar, a sharp-jawed boar, that kills at one stroke, pursuing, wrathful, with a dripping face,¹³ strong, and swift to run, and rushing all around.¹⁴

Thus did Verethraghna come, bearing the good Glory made by Mazda, the Glory made by Mazda.

13. Cf. Yt10.70.

14. Or better, rushing before. Cf. Yt10.127.

VI.

16. We sacrifice unto Verethraghna, made by Ahura.

Zarathushtra asked Ahura Mazda: 'Ahura Mazda, most beneficent Spirit, Maker of the material world, thou Holy One!

'Who is the best-armed of the heavenly gods?'

Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is Verethraghna, made by Ahura, O Spitama Zarathushtra!'

17. Verethraghna, made by Ahura, came to him the sixth time, running in the shape of a beautiful youth of fifteen, shining, clear-eyed, thin-heeled.

Thus did Verethraghna come, bearing the good Glory made by Mazda, the Glory made by Mazda....

VII.

18. We sacrifice unto Verethraghna, made by Ahura.

Zarathushtra asked Ahura Mazda: 'Ahura Mazda, most beneficent Spirit, Maker of the material world, thou Holy One!

'Who is the best-armed of the heavenly gods?'

Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is Verethraghna, made by Ahura, O Spitama Zarathushtra!'

19. Verethraghna, made by Ahura, came to him the seventh time, running in the shape of a raven that ...¹⁵ below and ...¹⁵ above, and that is the swiftest of all birds, the lightest of the flying creatures.

20. He alone of living things, — he or none, — overtakes the flight of an arrow, however well it has been shot. He flies up joyfully

at the first break of dawn, wishing the night to be no more, wishing the dawn, that has not yet come, to come.¹⁶

21. He grazes the hidden ways¹⁷
of the mountains, he grazes the
tops of the mountains, he grazes the depths of the vales, he grazes
the summits¹⁸ of the trees, listening to the voices of the birds.

Thus did Verethraghna come, bearing the good Glory made by Mazda,¹⁹
the Glory made by Mazda.

15. ? Urvatô, pishatô.

16. The raven was sacred to Appollo. The priests of the sun in Persia
are said to have been named ravens (Porphyry). Cf. Georgica I, 45.

17. Reading vîgâtavô.

18. Doubtful.

19. The royal Glory (khwarrah, Av. khwarenah) is described flying in the
shape of a raven, Yt19.35.

VIII.

22. We sacrifice unto Verethraghna, made by Ahura.

Zarathushtra asked Ahura Mazda: 'Ahura Mazda, most beneficent
Spirit, Maker of the material world. thou Holy One!

Who is the
best-armed of the heavenly gods?'

Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is Verethraghna, made by Ahura, O Spitama
Zarathushtra!'

23. Verethraghna, made by Ahura, came to him the eighth time,
running in the shape of a wild, beautiful ram, with horns bent
round.²⁰

Thus did Verethraghna come, bearing the good Glory made by Mazda,²¹
the Glory made by Mazda....

20. Doubtful.

21. While Ardashir, the founder of the Sasanian dynasty, was flying
from Ardavan, a beautiful wild ram ran after him and overtook him,
and Ardavan understood from this that the kingly Glory had left
him and had passed over to his rival (Shah Nameh, Ardashir;
Karnamag-i Ardashir 3.11-15,
tr. Noeldeke, p. 45.)

IX.

24. We sacrifice unto Verethraghna, made by Ahura.

Zarathushtra asked Ahura Mazda: 'Ahura Mazda, most beneficent Spirit, Maker of the material world, thou Holy One!

'Who is the best-armed of the heavenly gods?'

Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is Verethraghna, made by Ahura, O Spitama Zarathushtra!'

25. Verethraghna, made by Ahura, came to him the ninth time, running in the shape of a beautiful, fighting buck, with sharp horns.

Thus did Verethraghna come, bearing the good Glory made by Mazda, the Glory made by Mazda....

X.

26. We sacrifice unto Verethraghna, made by Ahura.

Zarathushtra asked Ahura Mazda: 'Ahura Mazda, most beneficent Spirit, Maker of the material world, thou Holy One!

'Who is the best-armed of the heavenly gods?'

Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is Verethraghna, made by Ahura, O Spitama Zarathushtra!'

27. Verethraghna, made by Ahura, came to him the tenth time, running in the shape of a man, bright and beautiful, made by Mazda: he held a sword with a golden blade, inlaid with all sorts of ornaments.

Thus did Verethraghna come, bearing the good Glory made by Mazda, the Glory made by Mazda.

XI.

28. We sacrifice unto Verethraghna, made by Ahura, who makes virility, who makes death, who makes resurrection, who possesses peace, who has a free way.

Unto him did the holy Zarathushtra offer up a sacrifice, [asking] for victorious thinking, victorious speaking, victorious doing, victorious addressing, and victorious answering.

29. Verethraghna, made by Ahura, gave him the fountains of manliness,²² the strength of the arms, the health of the whole body, the sturdiness of the whole body, and the eye-sight of the Kara fish,²³ that lives beneath the waters and can measure²⁴ a rippling of the water, not thicker than a hair, in the Rangha whose ends lie afar, whose depth is a thousand times the height of a man.²⁵

For his brightness and glory, I will offer unto him a sacrifice worth being heard....

22. Erezi, Pahl. gond (Old Zand-Pahlavi Dictionary, p. 11).

23. See Vd. 19.22.

24. Possibly, perceive.

25. Cf. Yt. 16.7 and Bundashishn 18.6: 'those fish ... know the scratch of a needle's point (or better hole) by which the water shall increase, or by which it is diminished' (tr. West).

XII.

30. We sacrifice unto Verethraghna, made by Ahura, who makes virility, who makes death, who makes resurrection, who possesses peace, who has a free way.

Unto him did the holy Zarathushtra offer up a sacrifice, [asking] for victorious thinking, victorious speaking, victorious doing, victorious addressing, and victorious answering.

31. Verethraghna, made by Ahura, gave him the fountains of manliness, the strength of the arms, the health of the whole body, the sturdiness of the whole body, and the eye-sight of the male horse, that, in the dark of the night, in its first half²⁶ and through the rain, can perceive a horse's hair lying on the ground and knows whether it is from the head or from the tail.

For his brightness and glory, I will offer unto him a sacrifice worth being heard....

26. Cf. Yt. 15.10, and Bundahishn 19.32: 'Regarding the Arab horse, they say that if, in a dark night, a single hair occurs on the ground, he sees it' (tr. West).

XIII.

32. We sacrifice unto Verethraghna, made by Ahura, who makes virility, who makes death, who makes resurrection, who possesses peace, who has a free way.

Unto him did the holy Zarathushtra sacrifice, [asking] for victorious thinking, victorious speaking, victorious doing, victorious addressing, and victorious answering.

33. Verethraghna, made by Ahura, gave him the fountains of virility, the strength of the arms, the health of the whole body, the sturdiness of the whole body, and the eye-sight of the vulture with a golden collar,²⁷ that, from as far as nine districts, can perceive a piece of flesh not thicker than the fist, giving just as much light as a needle gives, as the point of a needle gives.²⁸

For his brightness and glory, I will offer unto him a sacrifice worth being heard....

27. Possibly the Gypaetus, the vulture;

28. 'Even from his highest flight, he (the vulture) sees when flesh the size of a fist is on the ground' (Bund. 19.31; tr. West). Cf. Horapollo.

XIV.

34. We sacrifice unto Verethraghna, made by Ahura.

Zarathushtra asked Ahura Mazda: 'Ahura Mazda, most beneficent Spirit, Maker of the material world, thou Holy One!

'If I have a curse thrown upon me, a spell told upon me by the many men who hate me, what is the remedy for it?'

35. Ahura Mazda answered: 'Take thou a feather of that bird with ...²⁹ feathers, the Varenjana, O Spitama Zarathushtra! With that feather thou shalt rub thy own body,³⁰ with that feather thou shalt curse back thy enemies.

36. 'If a man holds a bone of that strong bird, or a feather of that strong bird, no one can smite or turn to flight that fortunate man. The feather of that bird of birds brings him help; it brings unto him the homage of men, it maintains in him his glory.

37. 'Then the sovereign, the lord of countries, will no longer kill his³⁰ hundreds, though he is a killer of men; the³¹ will not kill at one stroke; he alone smites and goes forwards.

38. 'All tremble before him who holds the feather, they tremble therefore before me; all my enemies tremble before me and fear my strength and victorious force and the fierceness established in my body.

39. 'He³² carries the chariot of the lords; he carries the chariots of the lordly ones, the chariots of the sovereigns. He carried the chariot of Kavi Usa;³³ upon his wings runs the male horse,³⁴ runs the burden-bearing camel, runs the water of the river.

40. 'Him rode the gallant Thraetaona, who smote Azhi Dahaka, the three-mouthed, the three-headed, the six-eyed, who had a thousand senses; that most powerful, fiendish Druj, that demon, baleful to the world, the strongest Druj that Angra Mainyu created against the material world, to destroy the world of the good principle.³⁵

'For his brightness and glory, I will offer unto him a sacrifice worth being heard....

29. Pesho-parena. The Varenjana is the same bird as the Varaghna, the raven.

30. The feather of the Varenjana plays here the same part as the Simurgh's feather in the <>Shah Nameh. When Rudabah's flank was opened to bring forth Rustam, her wound was healed by rubbing it with a Simurgh's feather; Rustam, wounded to death by Isfendyar, was cured in the same manner.

31. Of him who holds that feather.

32. ? Vaêsaêpa.

33. That bird.

34. Kai Kaus; when he tried to ascend to heaven on a throne carried by eagles (Journal Asiatique, 1881, I, 513).

35. A metaphor to express the swiftness of the wind, of the camel, and of the rivers.

Cf. Yt. 5.34.

XV.

41. 'We sacrifice to Verethraghna, made by Ahura.

'Verethraghna confounds the glory of this house with its wealth in cattle. He is like that great bird, the Saena;³⁶ he is like the big clouds, full of water, that beat the mountains.

'For his brightness and glory, I will offer unto him a sacrifice worth being heard....

36. The Simurgh; see above, note 30.

XVI.

42. 'We sacrifice to Verethraghna, made by Ahura.'

Zarathushtra asked Ahura Mazda: 'Ahura Mazda, most beneficent Spirit, Maker of the material world thou Holy One!

'Where is it that we must invoke the name of Verethraghna, made by Ahura? Where is it that we must praise him? That we must humbly praise him?'

43. Ahura Mazda answered: 'When armies meet together in full array, O Spitama Zarathushtra! (asking) which of the two is the party that conquers and is not crushed, that smites and is not smitten;

44. 'Do thou throw³⁷ four feathers³⁸ in the way. Whichever of the two will first worship the well-shapen Strength, and Verethraghna, beautiful of form. made by Mazda, on his side will victory stand.

45. 'I will bless Strength and Victory, the two keepers, the two good keepers, the two maintainers; the two who ...,³⁹ the two who ...³⁹ the two who ...³⁹;

the two who forgive, the two who strike off,
the two who forget.⁴⁰

46. 'O Zarathushtra! let not that spell be shown to any one, except
by the father to his son, or by the brother to his brother from
the same womb, or by the Athravan to his pupil.⁴¹

These are words

that are awful and powerful, awful and assembly-ruling, awful
and victorious, awful and healing: these are words that save the
head that was lost and chant away the uplifted weapon.'

37. Doubtful.

38. Or an arrow feathered with four Varenjana's feathers.

39. Â-dhwaozhen, vî-dhwaozen, fra-dhwaozen.

40. Âmarezen, cf. Pers. âmarzidan; vîmarezen, cf. Yt. 1.2;
fra marezen, cf. Pers. farmush.

41. Cf. Yt. 4.10.

XVII.

47. We sacrifice to Verethraghna, made by Ahura: who goes along
the armies arrayed, and goes here and there asking, along with
Mithra and Rashnu:

'Who is it who lies unto Mithra? Who is it who
thrusts [his oath] against Rashnu?⁴²

To whom shall I, in my might, impart illness and death?'⁴³

48.⁴⁴ Ahura Mazda said: 'If men sacrifice unto
Verethraghna, made by Ahura, if the due sacrifice
and prayer is offered unto him

just as it ought to be performed in the perfection of holiness,
never will a hostile horde enter the Aryan countries, nor any
plague, nor leprosy, nor venomous plants, nor the chariot of a
foe, nor the uplifted spear of a foe.

49.⁴⁵ Zarathushtra asked: 'What is then, O Ahura Mazda! the sacrifice
and invocation in honour of Verethraghna, made by Ahura, as it
ought to be performed in the perfection of holiness?'

50. Ahura Mazda answered: 'Let the Aryan nations bring libations
unto him; let the Aryan nations tie bundles of baresma for him;
let the Aryan nations cook for him a head of cattle, either white,
or black, or of any other colour, but all of one and the same
colour.

51. 'Let not a murderer take of those offerings, nor a whore,
nor a, who does not sing the Gathas, who spreads death in
the world and withstands the law of Mazda, the law of Zarathushtra.

52. 'If a murderer take of those offerings, or a whore, or a, who does not sing the Gathas, then Verethraghna, made by Ahura, takes back his healing virtues.

53. 'Plagues will ever pour upon the Aryan nations; hostile hordes will ever fall upon the Aryan nations; the Aryans will be smitten by their fifties and their hundreds, by their hundreds and their thousands, by their thousands and their tens of thousands, by their tens of thousands and their myriads of myriads.'

54. There Verethraghna, made by Ahura, proclaimed thus: 'The Soul of the Bull,⁴⁶ the wise creature, does not receive from man due sacrifice and prayer; for now the Daevas and the worshippers of the Daevas make blood flow and spill it like water;

55. 'For now the Vyambura⁴⁷ Daevas and the worshippers of the Daevas bring to the fire the plant that is called Haperesi, the wood that is called Nemetka;⁴⁸

56. '(Therefore) when the Vyambura Daevas and the worshippers of the Daevas bow their backs, bend their waists, and arrange all their limbs,⁴⁹ they think they will smite and smite not, they think they will kill and kill not; and then the (?Vyambura) Daevas and the worshippers of the Daevas have their minds confounded and their eyes made giddy.'⁵⁰

For his brightness and glory, I will offer unto him a sacrifice worth being heard....

42. Against truth.

43. Cf. Yt. 10.108 seq.

44. § 48; cf. Yt. 8.56.

45. §§ 49-53 = Yt. 8.57-61.

46. Goshorun or Drvaspa; see Yt. 9. The destruction of any living being is an injury to Drvaspa.

47. ? Vyāmbura.

48. The Haperesi and the Nemetka are probably some species of green wood; it is forbidden to put green wood in the fire as it kills it, and injures the Genius of Water at the same time.

49. In order to strike.

50. The general meaning of the last four clauses is that the impious are defeated.

XVIII.

57. We sacrifice to Verethraghna, made by Ahura.

I offer up Haoma, who saves one's head;⁵¹
I offer up the victorious Haoma; I offer him up, the good
protector; I offer up Haoma, who is a protector to my
body, as a man who shall drink of him shall
win and prevail⁵² over his enemies in battle;

58. That I may smite this army, that I may smite down this army,
that I may cut in pieces this army that is coming behind me.

For his brightness and glory, I will offer unto him a sacrifice
worth being heard....

51. ? Sâiri-baoghem; cf. § 46.

52. Nivazaiti; literally, swallow (? frôt ôbun burtan, Vd. 5.8
[26]).

XIX.

59. We sacrifice to Verethraghna, made by Ahura.

The prince and his son and his sons who are chiefs of myriads⁵³
offer him up a bright ...⁵⁴ [saying]: 'He is strong, and Victorious
is his name; he is victorious, and Strong is his name;'

60. That I may be as constantly victorious as any one of all the
Aryans;⁵⁵ that I may smite this army, that I may smite down this
army, that I may cut in pieces this army that is coming behind
me.

For his brightness and glory, I will offer unto him a sacrifice
worth being heard....

53. Cf. Yt. 5.85.

54. ? Asânem sighûirê.

55. Cf. Yt. 5.69.

XX.

61. We sacrifice to Verethraghna, made by Ahura.

Yatha ahu vairyo: The will of the Lord is the law of holiness....

In the ox is our strength, in the ox is our need;⁵⁶
in the ox is
our speech, in the ox is our victory; in the ox is our food, in
the ox is our clothing; in the ox is tillage, that makes food
grow for us.

For his brightness and glory, I will offer unto him a sacrifice
worth being heard....

56. From Y. 10.20 (62), where, instead of the words, 'in the ox
is our strength (amem), in the ox is our need,' the text has, 'in the

ox is his need, in the ox is our need,' meaning, 'when we give him his need (water and grass), he gives us our need (milk and calves),' (Pahl. tr.).

XXI.

62. We sacrifice to Verethraghna, made by Ahura;

Who breaks the columns asunder, who cuts the columns to pieces, who wounds the columns, who makes the columns shake; who comes and breaks the columns asunder, who comes and cuts the columns to pieces, who comes and wounds the columns, who comes and makes the columns shake, both of Daevas and men, of the Yatus and Pairikas, of the oppressors, the blind, and the deaf.

For his brightness and glory, I will offer unto him a sacrifice worth being heard....

XXII.

63. We sacrifice to Verethraghna, made by Ahura.

When Verethraghna, made by Ahura, binds the hands, confounds the eye-sight, takes the hearing from the ears of the Mithradrujes⁵⁷ marching in columns, allied by cities, they can no longer move their feet, they can no longer-withstand.

For his brightness and glory I will offer unto him a sacrifice worth being heard....

64. Yatha ahu vairyo: The will of the Lord is the law of holiness....

I bless the sacrifice and prayer, and the strength and vigour of Verethraghna, made by Mazda; and of the crushing Ascendant.

Ashem Vohu: Holiness is the best of all good....

[Give] unto that man⁵⁸ brightness and glory, give him the bright, all-happy, blissful abode of the holy Ones.

57. See p. 120, note 2.

58. Who shall offer a sacrifice to Verethraghna.

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