

Chinvat, The Bridge of Discerning.

The idea of a bridge described in the Gathas as *cinvatō pārātu-* also appears in later Zoroastrian texts ~ Avestan, Pahlavi/Pazand, and Persian. In the Gathas the word *cinvatō* is descriptive. In later texts, it became a fixed name (YAv. *cinvat.pārātu-*).¹ The Gathas imply, and the later texts specifically state, that this 'bridge' is something the soul arrives at after death.

The notion of a bridge (after death) may have been an old Indo-European idea, pre-dating Zarathushtra. Moulton 1912 says (citing references)

"There was in Northern mythology a bridge, guarded by a maiden, which led to the home of the dead." (p. 165).

But he notes that there, "the test of the bridge is not ethical..." (pp. 165 - 166). And Darmesteter notes that the idea of a bridge after death is found in other mythologies as well.²

Both Zoroastrian and non-Zoroastrian scholars assert that (in Zoroastrian theology), at this bridge the soul is judged. If it has been 'good', it goes to heaven. If it has been 'bad' it goes to hell. But (with respect), this opinion is not supported ~ neither by the evidence of the Gathas (or other Avestan texts), nor by common sense and the reality of our lives.

In our reality, at the end of a lifetime, each person is still a mix of 'good' and 'bad'. And we have already discussed in other chapters, the injustice of punishing in 'hell' someone who has done some good, and rewarding in 'heaven' persons who have done some 'bad'.

But even more important (from the point of view of ascertaining Zarathushtra's thought), this interpretation is not supported by the evidence of the Gatha verses in which the bridge is mentioned (the micro context). And it is alien to the macro context of Zarathushtra's thought, and also to later Avestan texts.³ Let us first consider the macro context of Zarathushtra's thought in the Gathas.

The macro context.

The foregoing opinion that after death a soul is judged and then rewarded in 'heaven' or punished in 'hell' is contrary to Zarathushtra's idea that the good and bad 'rewards' for our good and bad choices, are states of being that we become ~ not places of delight (heaven) and torture (hell) to which we go.⁴

It is also contrary to Zarathushtra's idea that through our experiences (earned and unearned), and mutual loving help, everyone ~ eventually and *inevitably* ~ will evolve from a state of being that is a mix of 'good' and 'bad' to one that no longer has any evil within it ~ *because* of our freedom to choose.⁵

And it is inconsistent with Zarathushtra's rejection of the deities of his culture who were a mix of 'good' and 'bad', kind and cruel, supportive and vengeful, etc., and his perception of the nature of the Divine, as One who is wholly good, Wisdom personified, one who has acquired Lordship (rule) over the qualities that make a being divine ~ the true, good order of existence and its component qualities ~ an order of existence which includes being loving, caring, compassionate, just (as in 'fair'),⁶ ~ none of which qualities are consistent with torturing a fallible human being as punishment for behaving in a fallible way.

So let us see if we can figure out what Zarathushtra has in mind when he speaks of *cinvatō pārātu-*.

Forgive me for using such general (and subjective!) words as 'good' and 'bad'. Throughout the Gathas, Zarathushtra details the qualities that in his thought are:

'good' ~ truth, honesty, reason, doing what is right, being loving, generous, protecting, supporting, having friendship, compassion, etc.,⁷ and

'bad' ~ falsehood, lies, deceit, wrongdoing, greed, cruelty, rage, predatory violence, harming, injuring, tyranny, bondage, etc.⁸

But I cannot add so many qualifying words each time I want to express his ideas of 'good' and 'bad'. So I ask that you keep in mind his understanding of 'good' and 'bad' when I use these words.

Returning to the bridge, in many ancient cultures (unlike today), the names given to people or places often were descriptive ~ having meanings that were understood in the everyday language of that culture. We have only to look at the Old Persian names of people in Achaemenian times in Insler's essay in *Part One: Love of Truth In Ancient Iran*, to see abundant evidence of this fact. And of course, Zarathushtra named the Divine, 'Wisdom (*mazdā*) ~ which expresses his understanding of the nature of the Divine.⁹ Therefore it would be reasonable to conclude that in *cinvatō pārātu* he selected a descriptive term, the meaning of which expresses his ideas about an after-death event.

So let us first look at the meanings of these two words.

pārātu-. There seems to be little disagreement that the stem *pārātu*- means 'bridge'. Skjaervo 2006 translates the word 'ford, passage' and thinks that it derives from the stem *par*- one meaning of which is 'to cross'. A 'bridge' is a 'crossing'. So there is no material disagreement here.

cinvatō-. In English, a present participle is a word ending in *-ing*, like *dancing*, *singing*, etc. And all the linguists in our group take *cinvatō* to be gen. sg. ('of ___') of the stem *cinvant*- a present participle. But linguists do not agree about whether *cinvatō* derives from *ci* 'decide, discern', or from *caē* which variously has been translated as 'to pick, sort out, keep accounts', (most of which may be flavors of related meanings). For example:

Skjaervo 2006 thinks *cinvant*- derives from *caē*- "to pick, sort out, make accounts".

Insler 1975 comments that he follows Bartholomae 1904 in taking the stem to be *cinvant*- present participle of *ci* 'decide, discern' (p. 271). (Parenthetically, 'decide' and 'discern' are used here in roughly the same sense ~ *discern* means to ascertain the truth of something, and *decide* means to come to a conclusion about the truth of something). Insler 1975 translates *cinvatō pārātu* as 'Bridge of the Judge'.

Taraporewala 1951 also translates *cinvatō pārātu*- as 'Bridge of the Judge'. He also thinks that the stem is the present participle of *ci*-, *kī* (Skt. *ci*-), but thinks *ci*- means 'to sort out, to separate', and concludes that the word indicates a sorting out of the righteous and the unrighteous after death. He cites Vedic parallels where the Dasa are separated from the Arya. (p. 607).

Humbach 1991 translates *cinvatō pārātu*- as the "account-keeper's bridge", without explanation.

Humbach/Faiss (2010) translate *cinvatō pārātu*- as the "accountant's bridge" without comment.

Bartholomae, and Moulton 1912, each translate the term as "Bridge of the Separator".

With respect, all these translations are interpretive. They take *cinvatō* to be a *person* (one who judges, keeps accounts, or separates), resulting in their interpretations, *Bridge of the Judge*; or *accountant's bridge*, or *Bridge of the Separator* ~ reflecting a mind-set in which an individual is judged by 'God' (or some 3d party) after death, before being rewarded or punished. But in the

Gatha verses in which *cīnvatō pārātu-* appears, there is no Judge or end of life judgment. Those who contend that a Judge rendering an end of life (or end of times) judgment is part of the Gathas, or later Avestan thought, need to cite chapter and verse. This they have not done. To the best of my recollection, an end of life (or end of times) judgment by any 3d party is absent from Avestan thought.

Returning to *cīnvatō*, if we stay true to its linguistics we see that the gen. *cīnvatō* is not a person, but the function ~ 'of discerning', (or the different related flavors of meaning: 'of sorting', or 'of separating') that occurs after death. ~ a translation that (1) fits the micro context of all Gatha verses in which the term appears, (2) fits the macro context of Zarathushtra's thought, and (3) is consistent with other Avestan texts.

Am I just nit-picking? Well, no, as you will see. I will give you my conclusions, and the evidence on which they are based, so that you can decide for yourself. In so doing, you will need to remove the spectacles of other religious paradigms with which our minds have been conditioned, and look at the evidence of the Gathas with fresh eyes.

I think Bartholomae's understanding of the meaning of *cīnvatō* is the best fit in the context of each Gatha verse in which this term *cīnvatō pārātu-* appears. And following Bartholomae's *linguistics* (as distinguished from his *interpretation*) I translate *cīnvatō pārātu-* as the *bridge of discerning*.

Naturally we wonder: What is discerned or decided after a soul dies? By whom? For what purpose? And is this a literal bridge?

Well, a (non-material) soul would not need a material, physical 'bridge' to make a crossing of any kind. So the 'bridge' has to be a figure of speech, a metaphor. For what?

Well, based on Zarathushtra's framework of thought as a whole, I think the 'bridge' is a metaphor for transition from an existence that is bound by mortality, to one that is no longer mortal (*amərətāt-* non-deathness) ~ a transition that can be effected only at the end of the soul perfecting process ~ when the soul is no longer a mix of 'good' and 'bad' qualities and preferences.

In Zarathushtra's thought, mortal existence is the matrix for the soul perfecting process.¹⁰ Once the soul has attained completeness (*haurvatāt-*) ~ the wholly good, true (correct, right) order of existence (*aša- vahišta-*) ~ its comprehension (a state of enlightenment), its beneficial embodiment (or personification), its good rule (the attainment of 'lordship' over the attributes that make a being divine),¹¹ the perfecting process is complete; so the need for mortal existence no longer exists, and the soul can make the transition to a non-mortal state being (cross the bridge).

Therefore the activity or function at the bridge is one of discerning whether the soul has become perfected. If it is still a mix of 'good' and 'bad', it cannot make the transition. It has to continue with the perfecting process in mortal existence.

Are these conclusions supported by the micro context of each Gatha verse in which the term *cīnvatō pārātu-* appears? They are.

The micro context.

The term *cīnvatō pārātu-* appears in 3 Gatha verses. We will look at each one in the Insler 1975 translation, so that you can feel confident that I am not molding the evidence to suit my conclusions

(although I respectfully do not agree with his translation of *cinvatō pārātu-* as "Bridge of the Judge", and have a few other minor differences as well). Here is the first of these 3 verses.

"Wise Lord, whoever ~ be it man or woman ~ would grant to me those things which Thou dost know to be the best [*vahišta-* 'most good'] for existence, namely, the truth [*aša-*] for the truth and the rule [*x šaθra-*] of good thinking [*vohu- manah-*] (with that person) as well as those whom I shall accompany in the glory of your kind [*x šmāvatqm*] ~ with all these I shall cross over the Bridge of the Judge [*cinvatō pārātūm* 'bridge of discerning']." Y46.10, Insler 1975.

You may notice, here Zarathushtra does not mention what happens to a particular soul after death. Instead he describes in general terms what enables the transition (crossing the metaphoric bridge). He also does not mention what is on the other side of this transition ~ after the 'crossing' has been made, because it is not necessary to do so (as the following discussion reveals).

So what (in this verse) enables a person ~ "man or woman" ~ to cross the bridge (make the transition)? It is the quality of the person's being ~ "truth [*aša-*] for the truth" (the true, wholly good order of existence for its own sake), and the "rule of good thinking" ~ none of which could exist without the beneficial thoughts, words and actions that personify truth and its enlightened rule (*spānta- ārmaiti-*, although not specifically mentioned here). These are qualities of the Divine (amesha spenta). So I think what is discerned after a given lifetime, is whether we have attained completely these divine qualities for ourselves, and have given them to others (represented here by Zarathushtra).¹² If we have done so, we are able to make the transition (cross the bridge) to an existence no longer bound by mortality (*amərətāt-* non-deathness ~ also a quality of the Divine), because a perfected being no longer needs mortal existence (the matrix for the perfecting process).

This conclusion is corroborated by the fact that in this verse, Zarathushtra describes these qualities as "...those things which Thou dost know to be the best [*vahišta-* 'most-good'] for existence...". In the Gathas, he uses *vahišta-* 'most good' almost as a word of art ~ for the Divine, for Its qualities (amesha spenta), for Its teaching, Its path (which is the teaching, the path of the qualities that make a being divine, amesha spenta), and for the reward for taking that path ~ paradise ~ a state of being that is the attainment of the qualities of the divine (amesha spenta).¹³

This conclusion is also corroborated by the fact that in this verse, Zarathushtra speaks of the crossing being made " ... in the glory of your kind [*x šmāvatqm*] ...". In the Gathas (and later texts) light, glory, are metaphors for truth (the true order of existence) which comprises all the other qualities of the Divine (amesha spenta). And Zarathushtra describes this glory as *x šmāvatqm* which Insler and others have translated as "... of your kind ...". The word *x šmāvatqm* is gen. pl. of the stem *x šmāvant-* which literally means "possessing you(ness)".¹⁴ Thus literally '... in the glory of possessing You(ness) [gen. pl.]...' Y46.10. Why the plural? Well, I think he uses the pl. with double entendre. It refers to the qualities (pl.) that comprise the nature of the Divine (amesha spenta). And it refers to the plurality of spiritually perfected beings which comprise a union of being that is Divine,¹⁵ and therefore no longer bound by fragmented mortality. A lovely multi-dimensional verse.

Applying the above, a moment's reflection makes it clear that the quality of a perfected soul who is able to make the transition to a non-mortal existence, is the same on both sides of the 'bridge', because only a perfected soul can cross over, which is why it is not necessary to mention what is on the other side of the 'bridge'.

The foregoing conclusions are also corroborated in some YAv. passages. For example:

The conclusion that the transition (crossing the bridge) is to an existence no longer bound by mortality is corroborated in the YAv. **Yy19.10** (which is the earliest (surviving) commentary on the Ahuna Vairya), although this section does not specifically mention the bridge. The Ahuna Vairya tells us to choose an existence that accords with truth [*ašātcēt hacā*].¹⁶ And the author of its YAv. commentary has the Lord Wisdom (purportedly) speaking about the Ahuna Vairya as follows,

"... this utterance is a thing of such a nature, that if all the corporeal and living world should learn it, and learning should hold fast by it, they would be redeemed from their mortality!" **Yy19.10**, Mills translation.¹⁷

You may notice, in **Yy19.10** it is not just learning (or even reciting) the Ahuna Vairya, that redeems us from our mortality. It is also holding fast by its teachings ~ making them a part of our being, attaining an existence in accord with truth.

The conclusion that the quality of being ~ the wholly good, true order of existence ~ is the same on both sides of the bridge is corroborated by § 6 of this same YAv. Yasna (**Yy19.6**), and also by **Yy71.16**. in each of which the author has the Lord, Wisdom, (purportedly) speaking.

Yy71.16: 'As you wish (to be) here, O truthful one [*ašāum*] (so) you shall be ~ (your) truthful [*ašava*] soul to reach the bridge of discerning (and) go over; truthful [*ašava*] you shall go (being) of the most-good existence [*vahištahe aṅhəuš gen. sg.*]; you shall sing the Ushtavaiti Gatha ...'. my translation. Avestan words are from Geldner.¹⁸

The YAv. words *ašāum* and *ašava* are declensions of *ašavan-* 'truthful' (the adj. of *aša-* 'truth'). As in our Gatha verse (Y46.10) here too the 'most good existence' (*vahišta- ahu-*) is equated with being truthful (*ašavan-*). And here too, it is being truthful, being of the most good existence, that enables the transition (crossing the bridge) ~ showing that the state of being on both sides of the bridge, is the true, wholly good order of existence (which enables the soul to 'cross over').

In **Yy19.6** the author again has the Lord Wisdom (purportedly) speaking.

Yy19.6: '... I will convey his soul across the bridge indeed, to the most good existence [*vahištəm ahūm*] ~ I who (am) the Lord Wisdom ~ all the way up to the most good existence [*ā. vahištāt. aṅhaōt.*], all the way up to the most good true order of existence [*ā. vahištāt. ašāt.*] all the way up to the most good lights [*ā. vahištaēibyō. raocābyō.*].' my translation; Avestan words are from Geldner 1P p. 75.

Like our Gatha verse (Y46.10), this YAv. passage (**Yy19.6**) also equates 3 things ~ the most good existence (*vahišta- ahu-*), the most good true order of existence (*aša- vahišta-*), and the most good lights (*vahišta- raocah-*) ~ all of which are just different terms for Zarathushtra's paradise ~ a state of being, not a place. And once again, 'light' here ('glory' in Y46.10) is the material metaphor for the true order of existence (*aša-*).

Our Gatha verse (Y46.10) does not mention the Lord Wisdom, whereas in the foregoing YAv. passage **Yy19.6** it is the Lord Wisdom who brings the soul across the bridge. But He is not described as a Judge ~ condemning the 'bad' and rewarding the 'good'. In this passage (**Yy19.6**) He (the Divine) brings the soul over the bridge because of the (divine) quality of the person's being, (and also because during his lifetime, the person has recited the Ahuna Vairya).¹⁹ But we need to read this section together with the section from this same Yasna (**Yy19.10** quoted above) in which

it is not just reciting, but also holding fast by the Ahuna Vairya ~ making its teachings a part of our lives ~ that redeems us from mortality.

The Gathas, the Ahuna Vairya (Yatha Ahu Vairyo), the Asha Vahishta (Ashem Vohu) are guides, to show us how to live our lives (wisdom acquired by the ear). The way we live our lives is a living worship (what I call the 'giving' prayers),²⁰ that enables spiritual growth in Zarathushtra's thought, and results in a perfected existence (described in Yy19.6 and Yy71.16 above).

Let us now look at the 2d Gatha verse in which *cinvatō pārətu* is mentioned.

"During their regimes, the Karpans [a 'bad' type of priest] and the Kavis [princes] yoked (us) with evil actions in order to destroy the world [*ahūm* 'existence'] and mankind. But their own soul [*urvā*] and their own conception [*daēnā*- 'envisionment'] did vex [*x raodaŋ*] them when they reached the Bridge of the Judge [*cinvatō pārətuš* bridge of discernment], (there) to become guests [*astayō*] in the House of Deceit forever [*yavōi vīspāi* 'for all of a life time']." Y46.11, Insler 1975. The words *yavōi vīspāi* which Insler and others have translated here as "forever", he translates in other verses as for the duration of a lifetime (or 'all' of a lifetime), and others have translated these words as for a long duration.²¹

And Insler1975 comments that in Gatha Avestan, *urvan-* is used in the sense of both 'soul' and 'self', a usage that is parallel to Vedic *ātmán*.²²

Clearly in this verse, the priests and princes (who have died and reached the 'bridge') are still a mix of good and bad ~ with the 'bad' greatly predominating. So what happens to them? Well, that is a bit difficult to say precisely, because (in addition to the tangled Avestan syntax), *x raodaŋ* has not yet been decoded with any degree of certainty ~ generating such translations as:

Insler 1975 "did vex";

Humbach 1991 "will recoil";

Humbach/Faiss 2010 "will make them shudder/tremble";

Taraporewala (1951) "shall-chide" (agreeing with Andreas);

Bartholomae; and Moulton 1912 "shall torment".

In later Pahlavi/Pazand texts, a deceased person's evil thoughts words and actions (personified as a vile hag) abuses his soul when it reaches the 'bridge' ~ which is not an exact fit with this Gatha verse (Y46.11) either.

But regardless of translation differences (and the interpretations of later texts), it is safe to say that in this Gatha verse Y46.11, when (after death) these priests and princes reach the 'bridge of discernment', they are not happy with their own state of being ~ their own souls/selves, their own envisionment.

I think this is a story teller's way of conveying the idea of the soul's unhappiness with the evil within itself (an exercise in self judgment),²³ which makes the soul unable to make the transition from mortal existence to a state of being not bound by mortality. The evil within these priests and princes requires that they remain as "guests" ~ indicating a temporary sojourn (that is attached)²⁴ to a wrongheaded state of being, to the house of untruth/falsehood/deceit, *drūjō dāmānāi* (in the Gathas 'house' is used as a metaphor for a state of being that 'houses' various qualities).²⁵ The idea of a temporary sojourn is consistent with Zarathushtra's idea that each person will eventually evolve to spiritual completeness ~ an evolution that occurs through many experiences over a long,

long period of time (many lifetimes),²⁶ in mortal existence ~ the matrix for this perfecting process. Whether these multiple lifetimes occur back here on earth, or in some other mortal reality, or both, Zarathushtra does not say, and I do not know.²⁷

Here is the 3d verse (Y51.13) in which *cinvatō pārātu-* appears. It shows even more clearly the reason why a soul cannot cross over. In the immediately preceding verses 10 and 12, Zarathushtra speaks of maleficent, cruel actions, and then he says in verse 13,

"By reason of this, the conception [*daēnā-*] of the deceitful person misses the true (conception) of the honest man. His soul shall vex [*x raodaŋ*] him at the Bridge of the Judge [*cinvatō pārātā*] the 'bridge of discerning' surely, in that he has disappeared from the path of truth [*aša-*] by reason of his own actions and (the words) of his tongue." Y51.13, Insler 1975.

Here too, we have the same translation difficulty with *x raodaŋ* as in Y46.11. But despite that difficulty, we can agree about one thing. After death a person who has been 'bad' is unhappy with the quality of his being. His soul *discerns* that (during his lifetime) he "has disappeared from the path of truth" (and is therefore unable to cross over to an existence that is no longer bound by mortality).

These ideas are echoed in another Gathas verse which does not specifically mention the bridge. It says,

'When mortals [*mašyāñhō*] learn these principles which Wisdom has given [*dadāŋ*] ~ a way of good access and one with no access; as well as long destruction for (all that is)²⁸ deceitful [*drəgvō.dābyō* pl.], but salvation for (all that is)²⁹ truthful [*ašavabyō* pl.], then each one shall exist with these (principles). Wish it so.' Y30.11, my translation. The Insler 1975 translation is footnoted for comparative purposes.³⁰

Some things in this verse (Y30.11) corroborate ideas in the 3d 'chinvat' verse (Y51.13 above).

Zarathushtra's choice of *mortals* (in Y30.11) reflects the state of being on this side of the 'bridge' ~ one that has not (yet) made the transition to a non-mortal existence (across the 'bridge').

In Y30.11, Wisdom's "principles" are of course the path of truth and its reward,³¹ which is 'a way of easy access' (one that enables crossing the 'bridge' to a non-mortal state of being).

In the 3d chinvat verse Y51.13 (above) the soul has ignored this path ("...he has disappeared from the path of truth [*aša-*] by reason of his own actions and (the words) of his tongue." Y51.13, Insler 1975), which in Y30.11 Zarathushtra implies is the way of 'no access' ~ a soul who is untruthful cannot access a non-mortal existence (he cannot 'cross the bridge').

In Y30.11, Zarathushtra speaks of 'long destruction for (all that is) untruthful' and 'salvation for (all that is) truthful'. And what is Zarathushtra's notion of *salvation*? It is truth, its comprehension, its embodiment, its rule, its complete attainment, ~ a state of being that no longer is bound by mortality (the matrix for the perfecting process) and is able to 'cross the bridge'.³²

Returning to the 3 Gatha verses that mention that mention *cinvatō pārātu-* the bridge of discerning, we can extract some undisputed facts from all 3 of these Gatha verses.

1. All 3 verses imply that we come to this 'bridge' after the end of a (material) lifetime.
2. None of these verses states that any 3d person (or 'God') judges the soul at the bridge. Zarathushtra is mentioned in Y46.10, but not as a judge. And in the two verses (Y46.11, Y51.13)

which refer to persons who have done evil during their lifetimes, Zarathushtra is not mentioned as being present. Nor is any other 3d party (or 'God') mentioned as being present in any capacity in any of these 3 verses ~ not even as one doing the discerning or deciding. It is the (deceased) person himself ~ its soul/self, its envisionment (*daēnā*-) personified in its thoughts, words and actions, that discerns what it is, and is upset, unhappy, because it sees, it **discerns** the evil in its own state of being which prevents it from 'crossing the bridge'. The absence of a 3d party 'judge' or decision-maker makes it clear that the process is simply something that automatically and inevitably happens. A perfected being (after its last material lifetime) makes the transition (crosses over). An unperfected being has to continue with the perfecting process in mortal existence, (it has **"no access"** to a non-mortal existence at that time as Y30.11 implies). But, consistent with Zarathushtra's thought (in which spiritual evolution requires understanding), I think it is the wisdom (the divine within) each soul that enables it to evaluate itself, **discern** the quality of its being (with 'right judgment' *rashn*), and feel sorrow at its evil qualities.³³

3. In none of these Gatha verses is there any mention of the soul being sent to a *place* of reward ('heaven') or a *place* of punishment ('hell') after it crosses the bridge. Even the verse (Y46.11), which mentions the temporary destination of a soul that has evil within it, does not say that it has become a **"guest"** in the 'house of punishment' or in the 'house of torment'. It says that the soul who cannot cross the 'bridge' becomes a **"guest"** for a long time in the **'house of untruth' *drūjō dāmāna***- which in the Gathas is the 'hell' a state of being that 'houses' 'bad' qualities ~ an ignorant, deceived, wrong-headed state of being ~ which exists only in mortal existence.³⁴

It is significant (is it not?) that no (surviving) Younger Avestan text mentions or describes the soul of a deceased person being confronted by a Judge who renders judgment upon it.³⁵ In the face of this total lack of evidence, is it reasonable to read into Gatha verses, a Judge and such a (flawed, unjust, cruel) judgment on a fallible, imperfect being, as punishing it in a hell of torments?

The Pazand *Mainyo i khard*, says (in the form of a story) that 'rashn' judges a soul after death. 'Rashn' means 'right judgment' ~ in the sense of a quality of mental activity (just as one might say *he has good judgment*), which is not really different from correctly **discerning, deciding**. If you look at the context of the *Mainyo i khard* story (which has been detailed in another chapter),³⁶ it is clear (to me at least) that rashn there is an allegory, as are all the other qualities (vices and virtues also referred to there) which retard or help the soul to make the transition (cross the bridge) in that Pazand story. So in that story, the quality of the soul is discerned in a true, right, correct way ~ with right judgment. It is significant that even in this late Pazand text, there is no mention of 'God' judging the soul of the deceased.

It is true that a late YAv. Fragment mentions that a wicked person goes to an unpleasant *place* after death, but even in that Fragment, there is no mention of a Judge rendering a judgment, and in that Fragment, although a soul goes to an unpleasant *place*, there is no mention of punitive tortures. The unpleasantness consists of stink, bad food, and cold, (well ... O.K., I admit ... 'bad food' would be torture to many of us). Even in the (grammatically faulty) YAv. *Vendidad* which specializes in horrible punishments and tortures in *this* life, there is no mention of a 3d party judging the soul and sending it to a place of punitive tortures after death.³⁷

Such ideas are simply absent from Avestan thought.

Did the authors of later (Av. and Pahl.) texts believe that the 'bridge' was a real bridge? Well, based on some of the passages in which this 'bridge' is mentioned, I think that at least some of them still did understand that this is not a real (physical) bridge, but a metaphor for transition.

There are those who argue that the 'bridge' is indeed real and that the soul who is unable to cross it, falls to a place beneath which is a punitive "hell".³⁸ The persons who so argue do not explain how they reconcile their views with the fact that no Zoroastrian text (however late) contends that 'hell' is eternal. And I am not aware of any text ~ however late ~ which states that a person who is unable to cross this bridge soon after death, comes back to the bridge and is able to cross it after spending a period of time in a place of punitive torture ~ hell. With respect, this unsupported argument (or perhaps belief) is a sad reflection of the invasion of other religious beliefs into Zarathushtra's thought. It is totally inconsistent with the macro and micro framework of his teachings,³⁹ and it is not supported ~ either by reason, or the reality of our lives, or by the evidence of any (surviving) Avestan text.

Which raises the question: What happens to a soul in the hiatus ~ between the time it is unable to cross, and before it returns to a material existence to continue the perfecting process? The Gathas and other Avestan texts do not specifically answer this question (so far as I am aware). But based on Zarathushtra's framework of thought I offer the following speculations.

If mortal existence is the matrix for the perfecting process, it would be reasonable to conclude that the period after death, and before the soul re-enters another material existence, would be incidental to the perfecting process. Now in Zarathushtra's thought, reason (*x ratu-*), understanding (*cisti-*) are of foundational importance. In the very first Gatha verse, he asks Wisdom for teachings that will satisfy the reasoning part of good thinking.⁴⁰ Understanding (*cisti-*) is so important a part of his teaching (in the Gathas), that in YAv. times *cisti-* was personified (as an allegory) and celebrated in the *Din Yasht*, in which *cisti-* is described as 'most right understanding, Wisdom given, truthful'.⁴¹ And the author has Zarathushtra (purportedly) saying to *cisti-* 'understanding',

"... If thou art before me, stay for me; if thou are behind me, overtake me." *Din Yasht*, Yt. 16, § 2, Darmesteter translation.⁴²

Now we know that the ability to reason, understand, plays a significant part in the soul perfecting process in *material* existence.⁴³ So I speculate that reason, understanding would also have to play an important part in the soul perfecting process in the *non-material* interludes (after death, and before embarking on a new material existence), which may involve a period of self reflection, self evaluation, regarding the soul's past choices in thought, word and action ~ what it did well, and where it went astray ~ so that, with guidance from the divine, the soul obtains some understanding regarding past errors, and how it may do better in the next phase of its perfecting process. This is pure speculation on my part ~ but it fits the macro context of Zarathushtra's thought, and it is consistent with the 2 Gatha verses which discuss what happens when a person who has 'bad' qualities reaches the bridge after death.

In conclusion:

I think the 'bridge of discerning' *cinvatō pārātu-* is simply a metaphor which expresses the function of discerning whether the soul of a deceased person is able to make the transition from mortal existence to one that is no longer bound by mortality.

If, at the end of its last (mortal) lifetime, it has attained completely the qualities that make a being divine ~ the true, wholly good, order of existence (*aša- vahišta-*), and its component qualities ~ its comprehension, its beneficial embodiment in thought, word and action, its good rule ~ it is able to make the transition (cross the bridge Y46.10), in the **glory** of an enlightened nature ~ a nature that personifies the qualities that make a being divine (*amesha spenta*).

But when the soul/self of a deceased person **discerns** that it still is a mix of good and bad qualities, it is unhappy with the evil within itself ~ 'bad' qualities which prevent it from making the transition to a non-mortal existence ~ so that it must continue **temporarily** in mortal existence until it has evolved (through a thousand and one experiences, earned through the law of consequences, as well as unearned, and also the giving and receiving of mutual, loving help) over a long period of time, during which its destructive, harmful preferences are destroyed, and it attains a state of being that personifies the true, wholly good order of existence at which time it will be able to make the transition ~ cross the bridge ~ to a non-mortal existence.

Is that the end? It is not.

In the Gathas, Zarathushtra says something that presents an interesting puzzle. In Y50.9 he expresses the idea of a human being **ruling at will over reward**, which enables it to **be in the stride of the blessed/good giving one**. Zarathushtra says,

"... When I could **rule at will over my reward**, then I would, exercising such **power**, **be in the stride of the blessed one** [*hudānaoš* the 'good-giving one']." Y50.9. Insler 1975.

What is he saying here? What is his intent? Well, let's take a look. Let us first consider what he means by **reward**.

We know that in his thought, the good **reward** for following the path of truth, the path of the qualities that make a being divine (*amesha spenta*) is the attainment of these divine qualities completely (*haurvatāt-*), one of which is non-deathness (*amərətāt-*).⁴⁴ So the good **reward** includes 'non-deathness'.

In another verse, referring to previously mentioned harmful, destructive conduct, he says,

"Because of these things, the class of Karpans [evil priests] is disappearing, and the Kavis [princes] along with those they ensnare. They shall not be brought to those who **rule over life at will in the House of Good Thinking**." Y32.15, Insler 1975;

"This is equal to the best indeed [*vahištācīti* 'most good indeed'] ..." Y32.16, Insler 1975.

In this last quotation (Y32.15 - 16), instead of ruling at will over **reward** (as in Y50.9 above), Zarathushtra speaks of ruling at will over **life in the house of good thinking** which is **equal to the most good indeed** [*vahištācīti*]. Now, the **house of good thinking**, and the **most good existence** [*vahišta- ahu-*] are also ways of describing the ultimate 'good' **reward** in the Gathas. Zarathushtra often engages in word play. And here I think 'life' (in Y32.15) is just another way (a flip-side way) of saying 'non-deathness' ~ part of the 'good' **reward** (in Y50.9). So in these two verses, the 'good' **reward** consists of a state of enlightenment, the most good existence, a state of being that is non-deathness (**life**).

Next, what does Zarathushtra mean by having the **power to rule at will** over this 'good' **reward** (Y50.9) which includes 'non-deathness' *amərətāt-*?

Well, we cannot say for sure (because he does not specifically explain this phrase). But he gives us a hint. He says that a person who **exercises the power to rule at will over reward** will be "in the stride of the blessed one [*hudānaoš* 'of the good-giving one']."Y50.9, Insler 1975.⁴⁵ The stem *hudānu-* (< *hudāh-*) which Insler 1975 translates as "blessed", is translated by other linguists as "generous" (Humbach 2010, Skjaervo 2006). The genesis of *hudānu-* is *hudāh-*, the components of which consist of the prefix *hu* 'good' and *dāh-* 'to give (etc.)'; thus *hudānu-* is 'generous' in the sense of 'good giving' (an adj.) and 'good giving one' when the adj. is used as a noun.

The quality that is a 'blessed good giving' which is *hudānu-* is giving freely without any thought of a return ~ what is given does not have to be bargained for or earned ~ there is no quid pro quo for the generosity of a 'blessed good giving'.

Now ask yourself: What/who is the ultimate good-giving-one [*hudānu-*]? It is the Divine, the One who is generous with its blessings, Wisdom personified (*mazdā-*). And what is the 'good' reward? It is the qualities of the Divine, the true order of existence -- which includes being beneficent (generous, loving),⁴⁶ which is, wisdom personified (*mazdā-*).

Following this line of reasoning, we see that in Y50.9, **exercising the power to rule at will over the reward** (of non-deathness) is equated with thinking, speaking and acting (walking the walk) in a generous, good giving way ~ 'in the stride of the blessed/good-giving-one [*hudānaoš*].'

"... When I could **rule at will over my reward**, then I would, **exercising such power**, be in the stride of the blessed one [*hudānaoš* the 'good-giving one']." Y50.9. Insler 1975.

This ties into a fundamental part of Zarathushtra's teachings ~ mutual, loving help (good giving) between the Divine and man and all the living ~ so fundamental indeed, that it was remembered across the millennia even into Pahlavi times, during which 'mutual assistance' is one of the three things mentioned in a Pahlavi text as being necessary for the perfecting of existence.⁴⁷

Following this line of reasoning, I speculate that in times of need, when mortal existence seems overwhelmed by evil and needs help, perfected souls who are part of the Divine in a state of non-mortal existence (reward) have the **power to rule over their non-deathness (reward) at will** ~ they are not bound by their non-deathness. They have the **power at will** to assume mortal existence to help us to break the stranglehold of evil.

And I speculate that such help may occur in many ways. It may occur once in a thousand or more years in ways that influence millions of people (as with the founders of many good religions), and it may also occur continuously, millions of times, in small ways that may help only a few, or even just one person who is going through a dark night of the soul and needs a hand.

The poet Francis Thompson, expressed the idea that there is a continuous traffic of 'angels' between earth and 'heaven', to help in times of need ~ their "ancient places" are not in some stratosphere isolated from the rest of existence. Their "ancient places" are right where they are needed.

"... The angels keep their ancient places ~
 Turn but a stone and start a wing!
 'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces,
 That miss the many-splendoured thing.
 But (when so sad thou canst not sadder)

Cry ~ and upon thy so sore loss
 Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's ladder
 Pitched betwixt Heaven and Charing Cross. ..." ⁴⁸

If we set aside Francis Thompson's terminology, his images capture what I am trying to express here (and what I see in the Gathas) ~ a continuous traffic of light filled being(s) who ~ **ruling at will** over non-deathness (**reward**) take on mortal form, with all its limitations, in order to continue to help those of us who are drowning in difficulties, or just need a helping hand to make it ~ whether it is nations, or communities, or a family, or one individual soul. The continuous traffic of help is there (even though we often are unaware of this 'many-splendoured thing').

If this is so, then the transition (crossing the bridge) to a state of being that is no longer bound by mortality, is not the end. Enlightened being(s) continues to be involved in the work of perfecting existence.

As I understand Zarathushtra's thought, we all ~ perfected and unperfected ~ are still part of one existence.⁴⁹ No one makes it until everyone makes it. In the Gathas, achieving completeness occurs at both an individual and a collective level.⁵⁰ So each of us ~ the unperfected and also the perfected ~ continue to give and receive mutual, loving help in 1,001 ways, large and small, until everyone makes it.

* * * * *

¹ In the Gathas, *cinvatō pərətu-* are two separate words. In the later Avestan, these 2 words became a compound term *cinvat.pərətū* and then one word ~ both of which became a fixed name. Taraporewala 1951 p. 607; Moulton 1912 p. 164). E. W. West 1871 shows the Pahlavi/Pazand word is "Chandor" in the Glossary & Index (p. 48) of his work *The Book of the Mainyo-ikhard*.

² Darmesteter states:

"This bridge is known in many mythologies; it is the Sirath bridge of the Musulmans; not long ago they sang in Yorkshire of 'the Brig o' Dread, na brader than a thread' (Thomas, Anecdotes, 89), and even nowadays the peasant in Nievre tells of a little board ~

'Pas pu longue, pas pu large
 Qu'un ch'veu de la Sainte Viarge,'

which was put by Saint Jean d'Archange between the earth and paradise ..." SBE 4 pp. 212 - 213, ft. 3.

³ Detailed in *Part Three: Heaven in Other Avestan Texts*; and *The Absence of Damnation & Hell in Other Avestan Texts*.

⁴ Detailed in *Part Two: A Question of Reward & The Path*; and *The Houses of Paradise & Hell*.

⁵ Detailed in *Part Two: Asha & The Checkmate Solution*. Indeed, an inevitable good end is so fundamental a part of Zarathushtra's thought, that it is found ~ undisputed ~ in both YAv. and Pahlavi texts, although in a few Pahlavi texts, it is arrived at through punishment, and in the *Bundahishn* through a process of purification through molten metal (discussed in *Part Three: Heaven & Hell in Pazand & Pahlavi Texts*).

⁶ Detailed in *Part One: The Nature of the Divine*.

⁷ Detailed in *Part One: The Beneficial-Sacred Way of Being; Truth, Asha; Embodied Truth, Aramaiti; Good Rule, Vohu Xshathra & Power; The Nature of the Divine; Love; A Question of Salvation*; and many other chapters in *Part One*.

⁸ Detailed in *Part One: Good & Evil*.

⁹ Detailed in *Part One: The Nature of the Divine*.

¹⁰ Detailed in *Part Two: Asha & The Checkmate Solution*; and in *Part One: The Paradox of the Material & The Spiritual*.

¹¹ Discussed in *Part One: Completeness & Non-Deathness, Haurvatat, Ameretat*; and *A Question of Salvation*; and in *Part Two: A Question of Reward & The Path*.

¹² I am not 100% certain what Zarathushtra means when he says "...whoever ... would grant to me those things which Thou dost know to be the best [*vahišta-* 'most good'] for existence, namely, the truth [*aša-*] for the truth and the rule [*xšaθra-*] of good thinking [*vohu- manah-*]..."Y46.10. I surmise that this reflects the Gatha teaching that it is not enough for us to attain completeness for ourselves, we have to both give and receive it (detailed in *Part One: Completeness & Non-Deathness, Haurvatat, Ameretat*). In addition, Zarathushtra, as the teacher, gives Wisdom's word (which here is summarized as "truth for the truth and the rule of good thinking...") to others. They in turn express these teachings in their lives, and in so doing, give it back to their teacher and others. But that is just my opinion. Perhaps you have a more insightful one.

¹³ Detailed in *Part Two: The Puzzle of the Most Good, Vahishta*; and *A Question of Reward & The Path*.

¹⁴ The word *xšmā-* 'you' is a 2p pl. personal pronoun (Skjaervo 2006); and the suffix *-vant* means 'possessing'. Macdonnell in *A Vedic Grammar for Students*, § 86, p. 63, says that adjective stems formed with the suffix *man-*, *-vant* both mean *possessing*. Jackson expresses the same opinion for similar Avestan adjectives, Jackson 1892, §§ 289, 291, pp. 84 - 85; which he explores further under 'suffixes' § 857. Thus *xšmāvant-* literally means 'possessing you(ness)', which generally has been translated as 'someone like you' or 'someone of your kind', (discussed in detail in *Part Three: The Puzzle of the Sincere Ones & Others*).

¹⁵ Detailed in *Part One: Completeness & Non-Deathness, Haurvatat, Ameretat*.

¹⁶ Detailed in *Part One: The Manthra of Choices, Ahuna Vairya (Yatha Ahu Vairyo)*.

¹⁷ SBE 31, pp. 262 - 263.

¹⁸ Here is the YAv. text of this section and the one before it Yy71.15 - 16 (so you can see the context).

yeidižī zaraθuštra aēte vācō ustame urvāēse gayehe framravāi pairitē tanavō uzəm yōi ahurō mazdā urvānəm haca acištāt aṅhaoṭ avavaiṭya bəzasca fraθasca pairi.tanvya yaθa tm zā•• astica tm zā avaiti bəzō yavaiti fraθasciṭ•• Yy71.15.

yaθa vaši ašaum ida aṅhō ašava frapārayāṅhe urvānəm tarō cinvatō pəratūm vahištahe aṅhəuš ašava jasō uštavaiṭīm gāθəm srāvayō uštātātəm nimraomnō•• ... [liturgical instructions follow]. Yy71.16, Geldner 1P pp. 235 - 236;

My translation.

'For if, O Zarathushtra, you proclaim ... this Word, 'at (this) turning point of (your) life' [*urvāēse gayehe*] I Ahura Mazda, (will keep your) soul/self [*urvānəm*] away from most-bad existence [*haca acištāt aṅhaoṭ*] as far away as the thickness and width of the earth ...' Yy71.15;

'As you wish (to be) here, O truthful one [*ašaum*] (so) you shall be ~ (your) truthful [*ašava*] soul to reach the bridge of discerning (and) go over; truthful [*ašava*] you shall go (being) of the most-good existence [*vahištahe aṅhəuš*]; you shall sing the Ushtavaiti Gatha ...' Yy71.16.

The two gen. sg. words *vahištahe aṅhəuš* 'of most-good existence' require an implied verb to make the meaning work. I think the implied verb is '(being) of the most-good existence'. The verb 'to be' often is

implied in Avestan. And his [turning point of life' \[urvaēse gayehe\]](#) I think refers to his discovery of, and decision to teach, Wisdom's path of truth.

The mention of the earth's dimensions in § 15 is consistent with the idea that [most-bad existence](#) is in mortal existence. And in § 15 (which deals with the 'most-bad existence') there is no mention of going over the chinvat bridge. Going over the bridge is mentioned only in § 16 which is about the most-good existence (reflecting the 3 chinvat verses in Gatha in which there is no mention of souls that have 'bad' in them crossing the bridge ~ only of 'good' souls doing so). These facts are consistent with the conclusion that 'the bridge of discerning' is a metaphor for the function of discerning if a soul is in accord with the true (correct) order of existence (*ašavan-* in this YAv. passage), ~ an existence which is the superlative degree of intrinsic goodness (*aša- vahišta-/ahu- vahišta-*), in which event it is able to make the transition from mortal to perfected non-mortal existence (*amərətāt-*).

¹⁹ SBE 31, p. 261.

²⁰ Discussed in *Part One: Worship & Prayer*.

²¹ Discussed in detail in *Part Two: The Houses of Paradise & Hell*.

²² Insler 1975, p. 123, commenting under Y28.4.

²³ This concept of self judgment is discussed in *Part One: Buried Treasure in Ancient Stories*.

²⁴ The implied "(attached)" is required in English translation because *dəmānāi* 'to (the) house' is dat. sg.

²⁵ Detailed with evidence in *Part Two: The Houses of Paradise & Hell*.

²⁶ Zarathushtra does not specifically say either that there is, or is not, such a thing as 'reincarnation'. In *Part One: Reincarnation* I discuss the evidence which requires the conclusion that if (as he teaches) life is a progression towards perfection (the wholly good, true order of existence *aša- vahišta-*) then there would have to be other opportunities for the perfecting process to continue (whether back here on earth, or also in some other mortal reality), because no one is perfect by the time he departs this life ~ at the end of one lifetime ~ at least in our reality.

²⁷ Detailed in *Part One: The Paradox of the Material & The Spiritual*; and *Part Two: Asha & The Checkmate Solution; The Puzzle of Creation*, as well as in other chapters throughout this book.

²⁸ I have inserted the words "(all that is)" to show that *drəgvō.dəbyō* is pl. A literal (but awkward) translation would be "long destruction for deceitful-possessions [*drəgvō.dəbyō* pl.]". In other words, what is destroyed is the many kinds of deceitfulness which the soul possesses.

²⁹ I have inserted the words "(all that is)" to show that *ašavabyō* is pl. A literal (but awkward) translation would be "salvation for truthfulnesses [*ašavabyō* pl.]". In other words, what is saved is the many kinds of truthfulness which the soul possesses.

³⁰ Here is the GAv. text, and the Insler 1975 translation for comparative purposes.

hyaṭ tā urvātā sašaθā yā mazdā dadāṭ mašyāṅhō
x'tīcā ānaitī hyaṭcā darəgēm drəgvō.dəbyō rašō
savacā ašavabyō aṭ aipī tāiš aṅhaiṭ uštā• Y30.11, Geldner 1P p. 108.

Insler 1975. "(to the adherents). Men [*mašyāṅhō*], when ye learn those commandments [*urvātā*] which the Wise One has posed [*dadāṭ*], when ye learn (there is) both a way of easy access and one with no access, as well

as long destruction for the deceitful [*dragvō.dābyō*] but salvation for the truthful [*ašavabyō*], then each one (of you) shall abide by (all) these commandments." Y30.11.

My translation. 'When mortals [*mašyāñhō*] learn these principles which Wisdom has given [*dadāt*] ~ a way of good access and one of no access; as well as long destruction for (all that is) deceitful [*dragvō.dābyō* pl.], but salvation for (all that is) truthful [*ašavabyō* pl.], then each one shall exist with these (principles). Wish it so.' Y30.11.

mašyāñhō is nom. pl. of the grammatically masc. stem *mašya-* (Skjaervo 2006) which linguists generally agree means 'mortal(s)', but interpretively limit it to mortal man (generic), which in my view may not be justified (see *Part Two: A Question of Immanence*).

The words *dragvō.dābyō* and *ašavabyō* are adjectives that are here used as nouns. Insler 1975 (and other excellent translators) have opted to translated these two adjectives as nouns that are people. But that is in serious conflict with the macro context of the Gathas. Translating these two adjectives as nouns that are concepts is consistent with the macro context of Zarathushtra's thought in the Gathas (discussed in detail in *Part Three: Ashavan and Dregvant*, in which this verse Y30.11 is also discussed in a ft.).

³¹ Detailed in *Part Three: A Question of Reward & The Path*.

³² Detailed in *Part One: A Question of Salvation*.

³³ YAv. texts frequently speak of 'wisdom acquired by the ear, and the wisdom within' ~ the latter representing the divine within (discussed with references in *Part One: Meditation & Contemplation*).

³⁴ Detailed in *Part Two: The Houses of Paradise & Hell*.

³⁵ Discussed in *Part Three: The Absence of Damnation & Hell in Other Avestan Texts*.

³⁶ Detailed in *Part One: Buries Treasure in Ancient Stories*.

³⁷ Discussed in *Part Three: The Absence of Damnation & Hell in Other Avestan Texts*.

³⁸ In certain Pahlavi and Pazand texts, 'bad' souls were indeed sent to a place of torture called *dōzhakh* which has been translated as "hell" by E. W. West, and Haug (detailed in *Part Three: Heaven & Hell in Pazand & Pahlavi Texts*). But as West himself states, the Pahlavi *dōzhakh*, derives from the Avestan "*dushahu*" [*duš.ahu-*] which means 'bad existence' (E. W. West's Glossary & Index p. 63, in his 1871 book *The Book of the Mainyo-ikkhard*).

But it is interesting that even in the Pahlavi *Arda Viraf Namah*, (which specializes in describing a place of punitive tortures after death), *Arda Viraf* (the narrator of this text) says that the place below the chinvat bridge is an **earthly** desert. Specifically, he states that as part of his guided tour of what happens to 'good' and 'bad' people after death, he was taken to a place

"below the Chinvat bridge, into a desert, and was shown **hell in the earth** of the middle of that desert" which was filled with demons and demonesses (Ch. 53, §§ 2 - 5, p. 183). (He also specializes in demons and demonesses).

Most important is the fact that in this text, this bad existence [*dōzhakh*] "**in the earth** of the middle of that desert" beneath the bridge is described separately from the many chapters which enumerate various places of torture as the punishment after death for various specified sins. So here, the author of this text was describing two different strands of traditional information ~ one being that the place below the bridge was the bad existence ('hell') in an **earthly** desert; and the other being the bad existence ('hell') in a punitive place of tortures after death for 9,000 years.

³⁹ Detailed and discussed in *Part Two: A Question of Reward & the Path*, and *Asha & the Checkmate Solution*; and in many other chapters in this book.

⁴⁰ Detailed in *Part Six: Yasna 28.1*.

⁴¹ The YAv. words are as follows, Geldner 2P pp. 228.

razište cište mazdađāte aṣaoni•: 'straightest understanding, Wisdom given, truthful.' My translation.

⁴² SBE 23, p. 265.

⁴³ Discussed in *Part Two: Asha & The Checkmate Solution*.

⁴⁴ Detailed in *Part Two: A Question of Reward & The Path*; and *The Houses of Paradise & Hell*.

⁴⁵ Skjaervo 2006 shows *hudāh-* (< *dāh-* 'to give' etc.) as an adj. which he says means "who gives good gifts, generous"; and he also shows the adj. stem *hudānu-* which he says means " *generous", with *hudānaoš* as its gen. sg. form. When the context requires the conclusion that this adj. *hudānu-* is used as a noun, *hudānaoš* would mean, literally 'of (the) generous one' or 'of (the) good-giving one'.

⁴⁶ Detailed in *Part One: Truth, Asha*.

⁴⁷ Detailed (and quoted) in a ft. in *Part Two: Asha & The Checkmate Solution*.

⁴⁸ From Francis Thompson's poem, *In No Strange Land*, from *Modern American & Modern British Poetry*, (Edited by Louis Untermeyer, Harcourt Brace, 1955), p. 456.

⁴⁹ Detailed in *Part Two: The Puzzle of Creation*.

⁵⁰ Detailed in *Part One: Completeness & Non-Deathness, Haurvatat, Ameretat*.