

2.2.2 Verses from Yasna 30

Ahura Mazda has an Adversary, here called, in v. 5, 'Dregvant', the Deceitful or Wicked One, i.e. one who upholds 'drug', the lie or falsehood, opposed to 'asha'. In v. 6 he is named the Deceiver. Wicked men also are called 'dregvant', opposed to the just, 'ashavan'. 'Worst Existence' is a term for hell, i.e. a place for retributive punishment (seemingly a new concept then in religious thought). The '(House of) Best Purpose' is a name for heaven, parallel to the traditional 'House of Song' (cf. 2.2.3.8 et pass.). 'Hardest stone', v. 5., is the substance of the sky, see 1.2.6. The Daevas, v. 6, are shown by the tradition to be Indra and other warlike divinities, cf. 2.3.1.55. Fury or Wrath, Aeshma, is a great demon; for the prophet, it is suggested, he hypostatized the battle-fury of war bands, cf. 1.2.7, 1.3.1. On the Ahuras see 1.2.3, 1.3.3. Devotion 'gave body and breath', v. 7, as guardian of earth. At the last day the world will be 'made frasha-', v. 9, i.e. transfigured, made free once more from evil, made wonderful.

(1) Truly for seekers I shall speak of those things to be pondered, even by one who already knows, with praise and worship for the Lord of Good Purpose, the excellently Wise One, and for Truth . . . (2) Hear with your ears the best things. Reflect with clear purpose, each man for himself, on the two choices for decision, being alert indeed to declare yourselves for Him before the great requital. (3) Truly there are two primal Spirits, twins renowned to be in conflict. In thought and word, in act they are two: the better and the bad. And those who act well have chosen rightly between these two, not so the evildoers. (4) And when these two Spirits first came together they created life and not-life, and how at the end Worst Existence shall be for the wicked, but (the House of) Best Purpose for the just man. (5) Of these two Spirits the Wicked One chose achieving the worst things. The Most Holy Spirit, who is clad in hardest stone, chose right, and (so do those) who shall satisfy Lord Mazda continually with rightful acts. (6) The Daevas indeed did not choose rightly between these two, for the Deceiver approached them as they conferred. Because they chose worst purpose, they then rushed to Fury, with whom they have afflicted the world and mankind. (7) With Power He came to this world, by Good Purpose and by Truth. Then enduring Devotion gave body and breath . . . (8) Then when retribution comes for these sinners, then, Mazda, Power shall be present for Thee with Good Purpose, to declare himself for those, Lord, who shall deliver the Lie into the hands of Truth. (9) And then may we be those who shall transfigure this world. O Mazda (and you other) Lords (Ahuras), be present to me with support and truth, so that thoughts may be concentrated where understanding falters. . . . (11) O men! when you learn the commands which Mazda has given, and both thriving and not-thriving, and what long torment (is) for the wicked and salvation for the just – then will it be as is wished with these things.