

Weekly Zoroastrian Scripture Extract # 211 – Vada Dasturji Khurshed Appointed on National Minorities Commission - Dasturji Dhalla - Homage Unto Ahura Mazda - Part 1(a) Prayer #24 - Thy Fire

Hello all Tele Class friends:

Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor Appointed as Parsi Member of National Commission for Minorities

The Indian National Minorities Commission has appointed Udvada Iranshah Atash Behram's Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor as the new Parsi Member to represent the Zoroastrian Community in India.

This is quite a great news for all our Humdins! And we wish Dastoorji the best of luck in his new appointment.

This is a very important position to represent our community and we are sure that Dastoorji will do a great job representing all of us.

Dasturji Dhalla's excellent answer to the question: Why I should pray in Avesta/Pazand language I do not understand?

Many of you have asked me: Why I should pray in Avesta/Pazand language I do not understand? Such questions have been asked all the times by our well-meaning Humdins. In the past, some attempts were made by writing Gujarati Monajats which we used to sing every day in our beloved Cama Institute.

But the best answer to this question was given by none other than one of our greatest Avesta/Pahlavi Scholar and prolific writer, Shams-UI-Ulama Dr. Dasturji Maneckji Dhalla, Vada Dastur of Karachi. One of his very wonderful books is: ***Saga of a Soul -- An Autobiography***, which was written by him in Gujarati and was translated later on in English and is available at:

<http://www.avesta.org/dhalla/saga.htm>

which I highly recommend to all of you to read. It gives details of his life in a very lucid and detailed manner.

In its **[Chapter LXI : MY FAITH IN DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS](#)** (please see the attached file and please read it), he gives a detailed background about attempts by our scholars to compose and sing prayers in Gujarati with accompaniment of a Harmonium; however, the orthodox Parsis really criticized these efforts and eventually it died down. His dear wife always kept after him to write a book of Zoroastrian prayers in English and finally after 45 years from the time he wanted to write such a book, he wrote the book of Daily Zoroastrian Prayers in English: *Homage Unto Ahura Mazda*, which is available at: <http://www.zarathushtra.com/z/article/dhalla/> and it is a wonderful book of daily Zoroastrian Prayers in English which our youths would really like it. Those who participated in our 17 Tele

Classes will remember that at the end of each Tele Class, we always had a cyber Hum Bandagi with an English Zoroastrian Prayer from Dasturji Dhalla's above book. To all parents and guardians: please look up this book and make sure the young ones also look it over. It would be great if all of us have a family prayer from this book each day. So today, we will present one of these prayers from this book and hope you enjoy it: Why I should Pray in Avesta - Dasturji Dhalla's excellent alternative - Homage Unto Ahura Mazda!

An extract from: Homage Unto Ahura Mazda - Part I(a) Prayer #24

<http://www.zarathushtra.com/z/article/dhalla/index.htm>.

[\(listen to audio recording\)](#)

May thy Fire burn forever in my house, Ahura Mazda

Fire in its various manifestations, whether as the fire of the hearth on earth, or the fiery substance in the bowels of the earth, or as the genial glow of the sun in the azure vault of heaven, or the silvery sheen of the crescent moon in the sky, or the flickering brilliancy of the stars in the firmament, or in the form of the life-giving energy distributed in the entire creation, is emblematic of thee, Ahura Mazda.

The fire-temple is the symbol in stone of the Mazdayasnian religion and the Athravan, the fire priest, feeds the consecrated fire with fresh fuel at every watch of the day and night. I shall raise an altar unto thy divine fire burning in my heart and make it sanctuary. My own Athravan will I be and I tend the holy fire within, O thou, the supremest Athravan.

When the fire of the hearth in my house calls me to rise on the third part of the night, and exhorts me to cleanse my body and bring fuel to the fire that it may burn bright, dutifully will I do it and more I will do. With the purity of my mind and the cleanliness of my heart, will I burn incense of the good thoughts of Vohu Manah and the righteousness of Asha, with the full-hearted devotion of Armaiti, on the sacred fire flickering on the altar of my heart and kindle it into a blazing flame. May my soul rise upward unto thee, Ahura Mazda, as the flame on the altar leaps heavenward.

Thy face is hid from my sight. But thou hast said to Zarathushtra that whosoever, with pious intent, sees thy light, can see thee. I shall then keep the portals of my inner temple ajar that thou mayest step in when thou dost think me worthy of the vision of the radiance and glory of thy face. As fire consumes incense, devotion melts my heart in my adoration for thee and I am buoyed up by the hope that through thy fire and in thy fire will I see thee, with the eyes of faith, Ahura Mazda.

SPD Comments

1. Prayers in this Dasturji Dhalla's book cover all types of subjects of our daily life. It is a great compendium of short daily Zoroastrian prayers in English.

2. It removes the usual complain that I do not understand what I am praying.

3. Dasturji says in the attached background chapter of his Autobiography:

“On receiving and utilizing these, many coreligionists wrote to me stating that, despite all their honest efforts, when they had simply failed to have any desire to pray in Avesta, which they could not understand, they had turned in despair to Christian prayers. But now that they had found Zoroastrian prayers in a comprehensible language they had started using them every day.”

What a wonderful tribute to Dasturji’s book.

4. As I mentioned in my previous WZSE, our prayers are a private communication between us and Dadar Ahura Mazda! They can be a simple Yatha and Ashem, they can be a Kusti prayer, they can be our Daily Farajyaat, they can be singing Gathas, they can be our thoughts in our language and words, etc..

Dasturji Dhalla’s book is one more beautiful aid to all who wants to pray in English.

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!

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

(Aafrin Pegaamber Zartosht, from [Ervad Kangaji Gujarati Khordeh Avesta Baa Maaeni](#) – Page 424, adapted Aafrinaamahi - we wish instead of Aafrinaami – I wish, in the original)

Love and Tandoorasti, Soli