

Weekly Zoroastrian Scripture Extract # 331: Guide me to be free from bigotry, Ahura Mazda – Dasturji Dhalla – Homage Unto Ahura Mazda – Part III(b) – Prayer 21

Hello all Tele Class friends:

Dasturji Dhalla, in his famous book: *Homage Unto Ahura Mazda* discusses the importance of freeing himself (and so all of us) from bigotry. In these days of rancor, acrimony, malice and vindictiveness, it will be appropriate to quote Dasturji Dhalla's one of the prayers from his wonderful book: ***Homage unto Ahura Mazda*** about **"Guide me to be free from bigotry, Ahura Mazda"**!

Let me take this opportunity to repeat a previous WZSE introduction of Dasturji Dhalla – **Homage Unto Ahura Mazda**. Hope you do not mind hearing his wonderful explanation about why he wrote this book – **Homage unto Ahura Mazda!**

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-Ul-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 Teachers, 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 and at the beginning of each Religion Class.

So today, we will present one of these prayers on “**Guide me to be free from bigotry, Ahura Mazda**” from this book and hope you enjoy it:

Guide me to be free from bigotry, Ahura Mazda – Dasturji Dhalla – *Homage Unto Ahura Mazda* – Part III(b) – Prayer 21

Dasturji Dhalla grew up as a very orthodox Zarathushtri. During his stay in NY and USA for his Ph. D. studies, he experienced the free US society and came in contact with many people with varied backgrounds. During this period, he started to open his mind and slowly drifted to become an enlightened person with lofty ideals. On his return to Karachi, he was appointed the Vada (Chief) Dastur of Karachi and Sindh province. Many of our NA friends from Karachi speak very highly of him and he used to teach religious classes to them. He was invited to give lectures to many groups. During his first visit to Mumbai for a lecture series, orthodox Parsis threw rotten eggs on the stage and gave a very hard time to him for his enlightened thoughts on religion.

In one of his prayers in his above book, he talks about “**Guide me to be free from bigotry, Ahura Mazda**”. This is a wonderful short prayer on bigotry by Dasturji. He reaches out to Ahura Mazda to free him from all types of bigotry and let him be open minded to hear and understand all who have opinions on subjects different from his own.

So today, we present this prayer by Dasturji on bigotry:

Guide me to be free from bigotry, Ahura Mazda – Dasturji Dhalla – *Homage Unto Ahura Mazda* – Part III(b) – Prayer 21:

[\(Please hear the attached .mp3 file for its recitation\)](#)

Let me have the will to believe and let me tolerate others' right to believe what they believe. Let me have sympathy with the beliefs of others and let me be charitable to them. Let me not scoff at what others hold holy. Let me not trifle with their feelings.

Let me patiently hear the arguments of the opposite side. Let me even go beyond my own point of view. Let me put myself in the place of him, with whose views I do not agree. Let me weigh his arguments. Let me understand his case. Let me find

the truth and help my opponent to find his truth. It is the truth that matters. If I find the truth, let me not endeavor to force my truth upon others. Let me patiently and persuasively try to explain and convince him. Let time be the judge, when the right shall shine out as right and wrong shall come out as wrong.

Let it be an instinct with me to think and to reason before I act. Let me thoroughly incline my ears and listen to the words of wisdom from whatever source they come. Let me not like the cynic doubt everything and believe nothing. Let me always look to the bright and best side of things. Let me be free from the prejudice of caste, colour and creed. Let my sympathy extend to all mankind and embrace all.

Let me pierce the fog that may fill my mind. Let me not forget the debt I owe to the past. Yet let me discern the signs of the age I live in. Let me be in harmony with it. Let me remember that the world is surging with new life. Let not the unthinking and blind traditionalism retard and arrest my progress. Let me remember that socio-religious customs, outward forms of religion, formalism make not for godliness. When oppressive becomes the conflict between reason and faith, let me broad-mindedly see my way clear to accomplish what I seek. Guide me to be catholic (wide-ranging, all-embracing) in spirit, Ahura Mazda.

(Dasturji Dr. Dhalla – *Homage Unto Ahura Mazda* Part III(b) Prayer 21:

<http://www.zarathushtra.com/z/article/dhalla/ch3b/iiib21.htm>)

SPD Comments

1. **Question: What is the connection between a mind and a parachute?**

Answer: Both do not work unless they are open!

Dasturji in the above wonderful prayer emphasizes the need to open our minds while working with others who have different views on matters than we do.

2. 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.
3. It removes the usual complain that I do not understand what I am praying.
4. 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.

5. As I mentioned in my previous WZSEs, 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.. And praying to Dadar Ahura Mazda with Faith is the best way to live our lives through good and bad times.

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!

In HIS service 24/7!

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

Love and Tandoorasti, Soli