

THE LETTER

We give below a letter addressed to M/s. Dolly P. Dastoor of Canada by Mr. F. K. Rustomfram which he has published in his booklet "Playing with Fire". Any person desiring to have this booklet, which is free of cost, may write to Mr. F. K. Rustomfram, 201, Chirag Ali Lane, Hyderabad. Please send the postage stamps for posting the booklet to you together with your request:— ED.

201, Chirag Ali Lane,
Hyderabad, India.

Dear Ms. Dolly P. Dastoor,
Zoroastrian Anjuman of Quebec,
Montreal, Canada.

I read your questionnaire in the "Jame Jamshed" of May 14, 1983, and my answer to all the five queries is an emphatic No.

In support of my stand please allow me to explain what our religion is vis-a-vis the other religions. I am a Khshnoomist, i.e. a follower of the late Ustad Saheb Behramshah Nowroji Shroff, who had the good fortune to stay in Firdaus (Paradise), a Shangri La type of a place in the Demavand Mountains, north of Teheran, for over three years and study under our holy abed sahebs who are the true custodians of our Zoroastrian Mazdayasni faith.

Every religion according to Ilm-i-Khshnoom, vibrates to a planet in our solar system. This may be an abstruse idea, but then many things in Khshnoom are such that a man cannot understand

them, much less believe in them. But this is an acquired esoteric science and once a man patiently reads it and tries to understand a little of it he is addicted to it, just the same way as our young men and women get hooked on drugs. Ilm-i-Khshnoom is a science that reveals itself by institution, then proves by practice and finally establishes by realisation the immutability of the universal natural laws. We do not accept the philological explanation of modern European and Parsi savants. We usually go in for a deeper interpretation of certain Avesta terms.

Our religion, the first to appear in this world, vibrates to Jupiter, also called Burjis (or Bhrespati) in our Khshnoomese. The word Jhirum is added to the word Burjis, making it read like Burjisi Jhirum which words we use to indicate our religion. Jhirum represents the sum total of the planetary influence on a Zoroastrian soul and its affiliated innate wisdom. In order of appearance on the time-scale (loosely called Zarvane Daregho Khwadatha, which is a self-limited time cycle of 81,000 years) the Vedic religion as also its white side offsprings like Buddhism and Jainism vibrate to Mercury. Next, Judaism vibrates to Venus, Christianity to Saturn and Islam, the last to appear, vibrates to Mars, also called Hashem in our lingo. Our present Hazara (millennium) is the Hashemi Hazara and even the Zarvane Daregho Khwadatha is also under Hashemi influence.

Now, when the prophets of the last four religions appeared in this world they

were so to say, guided by the Hakikat (reality) of our Zarthosti Mazdayasni faith. In simple language, Zarathushtra was responsible in some divine way to bring forth these great religions, even though he knew that the last religion would imperil his own in Iran — the place of its birth. In support of this statement let me tell you that an eminent Parsi Priest called Dastur Dinyar (also known as Salman-i-Fars, i.e., Solomon of Iran) was responsible in reducing to writing what the Holy Prophet Mohammed dictated to him. Thus, the revealed words of God, which the Prophet received from Allah, came to be written in the Holy Quoran.

This would lead you to the inescapable conclusion that the birth of these five great religions was the Grand Pattern of Ahura Mazda. He wanted that the sanctity of each should be preserved by the followers of the other four faiths. In pursuance of this the good Lord devised a plan to implement the Grand Pattern by giving us the sources or fountain-heads in order to nourish and promote the faiths: They are:

Fountainhead of the Planets.
of the Sky.
of Righteousness.

These were given to all the religions, but a special fountainhead of Ashoi was granted as an additional boon to Zoroastrians. Possibly there was a divine purpose for this extra favour. Ahura Mazda put an additional responsibility on the followers of Zoroaster to follow the path of Ashoi strictly so that a Zoroastrian soul will attain his personal renovation (Frashogard) as expeditiously as possible. Our final goal is Frashogard, "the one far off divine event to which the whole creation moves."

The quoted words are by Lord Tennyson—the eminent English poet.

From this short appraisal you will understand that since Ahura Mazda wanted to promulgate His divine universal natural laws and work the world to its final goal of universal Frashogard, He gave this earth five universal religions and He wanted that one should follow his parental religion and not meddle with the other religions by way of marriage, conversion or adoption or through any other means which would hinder a man's spiritual progress. No floor-crossing is allowed because when a man is born, he inherits as of right his father's religion and the tenets prescribed by his prophet.

The Jhirums are graded and ours, I am glad to state, enjoys a pre-eminent status. This is not mere religious bigotry or fanaticism or arrogance. In the natural evolution of the soul the Burjisi Jhirum signifies the highest attainment. In case of intermarriage a Parsi spouse earns a demerit and throws away a promotion that has taken him or her many births and rebirths to achieve.

This exposition deals with the planetary influences on the five great religions of the world.

Now I come to the ethnic aspect. You must have heard above the science of Eugenics — by which compatible parents are selected for good breeding. Watch the face of a 100% Parsi child whose Navjote has just been performed. There is a certain radiance on it. This is the evidence of the aura of the Burjisi Jhirum. Similarly, watch the face of a Parsi couple after marriage. You will find that there is a radiance evident on the faces, provided that

the parents of both the boy and the girl are Parsis. At the initiation ceremony of Navar a child performs an Yazishne. This is like being born a new into the religion. This again is expressed on the face of the child. This is because the original seed is a Zarthosti seed. There is nothing hybrid in it.

Have you heard of the lines quoted in reference to a great Achaemenian king who declares in one of the rock inscriptions that he is a

Parsi, Parsiha Puthra,
Arya, Arya Chithra

(of Parsi parentage, or a noble Aryan seed).

Do you know that one of the reasons of the fall of the Sasanian Empire was the marriage of the King, Khusro Parvez. (590-628 A.D.) to a Roman Princess? His son tried to usurp the Iranian throne and in the process eliminated his own father.

We lost our motherland Iran in 651 A.D., we lost most of our scriptures in the fire at Persepolis started by the barbarian Alexander (330 B.C.), we lost our culture, our life style our language and our script. but there is one thing we never lost, — that is, our abiding faith in the good religion. Why? because in the last thirteen centuries we preserved the good seed more or less intact. Not only that, we enhanced it by not allowing any alien blood to flow in our veins. We did not do so out of racial arrogance stating that our race was pure. We did it out of our unflinching faith in Asha and in our firm conviction that racial purity would lead to the preservation of the Atash that burns not only in our Atash Behrams and Agiaries, but which also, in a

manner of speaking, burns in our hearts and minds. (Atheraescha mananpgascha).

The principle of heredity is stressed in our Pazand writings. You may have come across words like Tokhmukh Pasbani, Gohar Durestater, Chiguni Avazitar and Mithro Awar, all meaning preservation of the seed. This aspect must not be lost sight of.

The following two quotations from the Paharvi treatise, 'the Dinkard', will underscore the importance of the need to preserve the parental seed :

"You must know that one who is of Mazdayasnian seed religion is said to be of the Mazdayasnian religion by virtue of one continuing the thought of the Mazdayasnian religion. This means that just as every species is known by its name on account of the seed within it, in the same way a religious person is said to belong to the Mazdayasnian religion on account of his leading himself by the original connected thought of the religion." — BOOK VI.

"Just as the off-spring born of a fleet horse and a country mare are neither fleet-runners like the Arab horse nor long-standing like the country one, so is the mule born by the meeting of the horse and an ass an unworthy creature and does not resemble either of the two and in this way the seed is cut off and the generation does not proceed further; for this reason a good deal of benefit accrues from the preservation of the seed essential." — BOOK VI.

In his volume on the Yashts, Prof. Darmesteter says in a footnote to the Farvardin Yasht :

"Zaratust went near into Hvov (Hvogvi, his wife) three times and each time the seed went to the ground; the angel Neryosang received the brilliance and strength of the seed, delivered it with care to the angel Anahid and in time will blend it with a mother. (Bundahishn XXXI, 8). A maid Ereadat-fedhri, bathing in Lake Kasava, will conceive by that seed and bring forth the Saviour Soshyant; his two forerunners, Ukhshyatereta (Hoshidar Bami) and Ukhshyat-nemah (Hoshidar Mah) will be born in the same way of Srutat-fedhri and Vanghu-fedhri."

Have you paused to think why the name of Spitman has been linked with Zarathushtra's? Spitman was the ninth lineal ancestor of our Prophet. This is to emphasise the fact that for eight generations the Prophet's forebears preserved the chastity of the Mazdayasni seed and added to it the already huge store of ancestral righteousness.

At the time of the wedding ceremony, when both the boy and the girl are Parsis, the Ashirwad prayers contain such words as "ham dadastani" (we are of the same faith) and awardad-i-din-i-Mazdayasni (according to the tenets of the Mazdayasni religion). This makes the contract inviolate in the eyes of the Lord. All the other contracts are not valid as, according to our religion the noumena of "Khetwodatha" cannot take place. This word occurs in our prayers "Jas me avanghe Mazda, Mazdayasno ahmi." It means that when an integrated soul enters our dakhyu regions it is split up into male and female counter parts. They trail down to earth, get born and ultimately get married, as per the laws of kesas (retributory compensation). At death they cross the bridge of requiter (chinvat) and ultimately become one integrated whole.

Now we come to the fire energies working within and around the human body. When a Parsi boy marries a non-Parsi girl he is apt to reduce in potency the fire energies of Atash-i-Mino Karko and Atash-i-Vohu Frayan. Atash-i-Mino Karko is the fire energy that guides our evanescent world. Atash-i-Vohu Frayan is the energy that works on a higher plane in our body. When a child is born to such a union it will have his fire energies impaired.

A Parsi girl marrying outside the fold suffers more in the matter of fire energies. A child born to this union will have none of the sustaining properties of these two fire Shaktis as the male seed is the dominant one.

You must have heard of the controversial Navjotes performed in Bansda, Gujarat State, in 1942. Some of our Priests, styling themselves as reformists, performed the Navjote of 77 persons, young and old, whose fathers were Parsis and mothers non-Parsis. How many of these follow our religion at present, I ask? The Navjote was performed to assuage the guilt of Parsi fathers who lived a life of promiscuity. The converted Parsis of Bansda today are begging at the gateposts of Agiaries and Atash Behrams on festival days after putting on a worn-out Parsi cap.

If a proper register for Navjotes and weddings is kept by the Panchayat Authorities, keeping a record of boys and girls both of whose parents are Parsis, then it would be easy to find out as to who was surreptitiously taken in the fold or what unions are to be acknowledged for the purposes of entry into a place of fire worship, Dokhmanashini and the last rites as also for help from religious and charitable institutions earmarked for Parsis.

Similarly, if there is an Athornan High Council, having the backing of all our Dastcoors and Panthakis, it would be possible to take disciplinary action against erring priests who perform an irregular Navjote or an irregular wedding. In case the offending Priests are reluctant to mend their ways, their names could be struck off the register.

Now let us examine the figures relating to juddin marriages. Though nothing officially is available I am forced to rely on figures mentioned in magazine articles.

In the decade 1950 to 1959, six Parsi boys and 79 Parsi girls married outside the community.

In the next decade, 1960 to 1969, 168 Parsi boys and 211 Parsi girls married outside the community.

By relating these two sets of figures it could be estimated that in the decade 1970 to 1979 over 1300 boys and girls could have married outside the community. Projecting the figures to a foreseeable future it may be assumed that the total may reach a dangerous level. One would shudder to think of the future of the community as an ethnic entity. With what face and in what numbers would we welcome the advent of Shah Behram Varzavand, the saviour who is supposed to come after the turn of the century? By that time Parsis may be considered an endangered species, endangered by their own hands and of their own volition.

We represent a fragmented people following a fragmented religion. Lets preserve what we have got. Lets not decide religious questions on the basis of a free vote.

The eight Atash Behrams of India are today guiding us and protecting us. Let us

heed the holy fire and do nothing that would lessen the radiance of the immortal flame.

Young Parsis, leaving the shores of India today (a sort of a 20th Century Diaspora) and settling abroad in cushy jobs, think that they can do anything once they are away in foreign lands. This should not be the case. The collective Parsi posture is essentially orthodox. The vocal reformists of today are the conservatives of tomorrow. We will not support the 'avant garde', may they be priests or the laity, if they transgress the Mazdayasni Law. Let them pause and think. Distance does not give them a licence to ignore the basic tenets of our religion and to manipulate the faith in any manner they like. Religion is grounded in time honoured traditions. In our case the traditions are 9500 years old. Let us not make religion a matter of expediency.

Even when we left the shores of our beloved Iran and found a happy and hospitable sanctuary in the western shores of India we were in constant touch with the leading Dastcoors of Iran on religious interpretation of problems facing us here. That is how the Revayets came to be written. In the Fifteenth, Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries young Parsi lads walked to Iran from Gujarat and brought back answers to religious questions. Not only that we followed these answers as closely as possible. Why can't the priests in North America and elsewhere follow their superiors in India?

Much is being made of the so called free choice given to us by Zoroaster. Kindly read Yasna Ha 30, stanzas 2 to 6, again and you will find that the option is restricted between the good and the evil and there is no doubt which one the prophet expects you to choose. Let me quote Rev. L. H. Mills (Sacred Books of the East series,

Vol xxxi, Part iii; "He who was the evil of them both chose the evil, but the more bounteous spirit choose divine Righteousness." This is not a blanket choice given to Parsis in India and elsewhere to do anything they please or say anything they please. The choice is obvious and it does not take any time to come to the right decision. People who seek shelter under the freedom-of-choice clause are apt to misuse the freedom and plead this clause to justify their misdeeds.

A letter written by the Right Reverends of our faith in the U. S. A. and Canada and published by the "Jame Jamshed" recently has been brought to my notice. The signatories say that if their actions are criticised by a Parsi he will have

to go without their presence at the religious ceremonies. So the critic will not receive the benefit of prayers from these priests. I would gladly meet my maker without the benefit of obsequial prayers from such persons. Holding the laity or for that matter the Athornans to ransom is contrary to our religious and secular precepts. I respectfully ask my co-religionists to desist from such a course of action.

Let the Manis and Mazduks of North America retrace their steps before it is too late.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely,
F. K. R.

5th July, 1983.