

# “MOVING WITH THE TIMES”

By NOSHIR H. DADRAWALA

“If we do not ADAPT ourselves to the TIMES and unite together to bring about certain much needed REFORMS which are long overdue we shall be DESTROYED” says a prominent Parsi solicitor and ex-Trustee of the Bombay Parsee Punchayet,

“We have to face MODERNITY OR PERISH ..... even the sudreh may have to be REVISED so that our children will find it easier to have and wear them ..... We will have to CHANGE, MODERNIZE and SHORTEN our prayers and rituals” notes an American Parsi Mobed.

“Times have changed and we Parsees must move with the TIMES” says yet another Parsee businessman, who has one of his daughters married to a non-Parsee.

To these misguided gentlemen and a few others of their rank, religion and its associated timetested customs have become merely a matter of convenience. Those traditions and customs, based on SPIRITUAL TRUTHS, which are difficult for them to observe due to their gross involvement in materialism, must be reformed or better still done away with. The word of God stands secondary to their personal comforts, needs, whims and fancies.

So what if the scriptures say “seek ye first the kingdom of God” TODAY TIMES HAVE CHANGED and one must seek the “kingdom of self gratification” prior to anything else in this world.

So what if the “Dinkard” prohibits “Juddin-Marriages”, now times have changed and it is high time some American Mobeds or Parsee solicitors re-wrote the “Vendidad” and the “Yasna” on Modern lines.

So what if the “Vendidad” forbids cremation or burial of dead bodies, if a wealthy, vociferous minority requires a crematorium, why should the Parsees refrain from constructing one

next to the present Towers of Silence, after all TIMES have changed and what “Ahura-Mazda” commanded the Parsees to do nine thousand years ago, does not necessarily hold good today. Never mind if the elements are polluted or defiled, TIME will take care of them!

“O tempora .....!”

Of the several reforms required by the vociferous minority, the one regarding “Juddin-Marriages” tops the list. “It is a burning problem” they lament, “times have changed and the youngsters just do not listen to us. Poor things, it is not really their fault, after all love is blind, and lovers cannot see the FOLLIES they themselves commit.”

Now let us faithfully attempt to analyse why “Juddin-Marriages” have been looked down upon by the Parsees, from the scriptural point of view:

In the second book of the Pahlavi Dinkard there runs a passage which states in no uncertain terms that “Just as the offspring born of a fleet Arab 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 a horse and an ass as 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”.

The Dinkard further states, “In ACCORDANCE WITH WHAT WISDOM WE HAVE RECEIVED FROM THE CREATOR, WE GIVE BIRTH ONLY TO CHILDREN FIT FOR RECEIVING SPIRITUAL REWARDS, AND FOR THIS REASON ALONE, WE ARE THE PRESERVERS OF SEED, AND KEEP THE PROCREATIVE POWER IN THE NATURALLY SOUND CONDITION, AND CON-

TINUE THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES PURE AND KEEP OUR THOUGHTS SUPREMELY GREAT.”

The Dinkard book VI then goes on to say “You must know that one who is of Mazdayacnian religion is said to be of the Mazdayacnian religion ..... by virtue of one’s continuing the thought of the Mazdayacnian 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 Mazdayacnian RELIGION ON ACCOUNT OF HIS LEADING HIMSELF BY THE ORIGINAL CONNECTED THOUGHTS OF THE RELIGION**”.

— And now a word about the “Dinkard” itself, lest some cynical Parsee question its scriptural authority.

The Dinkard according to scholars of Zoroastrianism, is the most authoritative and detailed summary of the **ORIGINAL TWENTY-ONE “NASKS” (VOLUMES)** brought by Prophet Zarathushtra himself. It is believed that the compiler of the “DINKARD” had Nineteen of the twenty-one “Nasks” at his disposal, since he manages to describe nineteen of them in detail. Also the compilers account of the “Naska” is considered **VERY TRUST-WORTHY** since his summary of the “Vendidad”, which is the only “Nask” we have in its entirety, is very precise.

From the above, one can see that the Dinkard is a very Authoritative summary of the **ORIGINAL TWENTY ONE NASKS OF ZARATHUSHTRA** and hence whatever has been written in it in disfavour of genetic mixup, is the very **WORD OF AHURA MAZDA**, conveyed through his blessed Prophet, “Asho-Zarathushtra”.

Indeed, it is a shame that a handful of Parsees, steeped in spiritual ignorance have begun to defy the very wisdom of God in the light of Modern materialism and **CHANGING TIMES**.

Much as the **TIMES** may have changed, the laws governing the science of genetics, certainly have remained unchanged for the past thousands of years and **HENCE THAT WHICH WAS CONSIDERED DEPLORABLE DURING THE TIMES OF ZARATHUSHTRA, STILL REMAINS DEPLORABLE TODAY**.

As Abraham Lincoln said “The problem is **NOT A QUESTION OF GOD FITTING INTO OUR PLANS, BECAUSE THE VERY REASON OF OUR EXISTANCE IS TO ACCOMMODATE OURSELVES TO HIS PLANS**”. Indeed, what a contract these wonderful words of wisdom are to those fired away recklessly by a few American Mobeds and a vociferous minority in India, desiring to accommodate **GOD and his DIVINE ORDER** into Mundane Plans.

The **PARSEE MARRIAGES AND DIVORCE ACT** also confirms (according to Section 2(6) that :—

- a) **BOTH** the Parties to the marriage should be **PARSEE ZOROASTRIANS**.
- b) They should undergo the **ZOROASTRIAN ASHEERWAD CEREMONIES**.
- c) Which should be performed by **TWO PARSEE PRIESTS**.

It is to be emphasised at this stage that the Zoroastrian religion does not recognise the system of **CIVIL MARRIAGES** at all. The Registrar certainly provides the ill-informed couples a **LEGAL LICENCE/CONTRACT TO COHABIT** according to Mundane Laws, but from the spiritual and religious point of view such marriages are totally invalid, illegal and to say the least **A FARCE**.

According to the Zoroastrian religion, Marriage is a “**TARIKAT**” — a spiritual discipline, over and above the pleasures of sex and begetting children. It is a sacrament; a step towards the upliftment of the two souls united in holy

matrimony, according to the rites and customs of the Zoroastrian religion.

Also, Juddin Marriages are a threat to the very existence of the community. Those ignorant Parsees who talk recklessly about **REGENERATING** the Parsi Stock (as if the Parsees are a breed of cattle and sheep) with the mixture of **ALIEN BLOOD**, fail to realize that in the true sense such alliances only lead to spiritual **DEGENERATION**.

Nelson was not far from truth when he said, "The history of Rome and Greece and other decayed nations shows that once a **PARTICULAR STOCK BEARING EXCEPTIONAL QUALITIES ARE LOST, THEY ARE LOST FOREVER**. Even Friedrich Nietzsche has been on record to state that "The only nobility is that of birth and Blood ... intellect alone does not ennoble; on the contrary, something is always needed to **ENNOBLE INTELLECT** — What then is needed? — **BLOOD**."

If Nelson and Nietzsche may seem foreigners to cynical Parsee, here's what the great Indian patriot Pandit Madan Mohan Malavia had to say in appreciation of the conservative Parsees. "I honour your community for its desire to keep up its **PURITY OF BLOOD AND ITS TENACIOUS STRENGTH AND CHARACTER**, which have enabled it to live and flourish so long **WITH DISTINCTION**."

It is very necessary for a Parsee to marry within the fold (as per the mandate of the holy scriptures), however at this juncture it is essential to point out that "Cousin-Marriages" should be avoided as far as possible. Hereditary diseases such as diabetes, asthma, etc., are usually found at a very high level amongst Parsees who marry their very first or second cousins. Indeed it is necessary that young Parsee Men and Women should seek **NEW BLOOD**, But there seems to be no necessity for them to marry outside the community in order to regenerate themselves **PHYSICALLY**; since by doing so they are only **DEGENERATING THEMSELVES ON THE SPIRITUAL** (and to a certain extent

physical) **LEVEL**, as explained in the "DINKARD".

**AVOIDING "COUSIN MARRIAGES" WILL REGENERATE THE PARSEE COMMUNITY PHYSICALLY AND SIMULTANEOUSLY AVOIDING "JUDDIN-MARRIAGES" WILL REGENERATE THE COMMUNITY SPIRITUALLY.**

History confirms that "Juddin-Marriages" have proven to be disastrous for the Parsee community in ancient Iran. The children born of racially mixed parentage (both amongst the commons as well as the royalty) have been **GREATLY INSTRUMENTAL** in bringing about the downfall of the once mighty Achemenian and Sassanian empires. Unfortunately, history seems to be **REPEATING** itself once again today, for the Parsees here in India. Indeed if we do not mend our ways, we shall be lost as an **OUTSTANDING ETHNIC COMMUNITY** in the next few generations, and **NOT TIME BUT THE PARSEES THEMSELVES WILL BE BLAMED FOR IT.**

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