

**Steps to  
Prophet Zoroaster**

**WITH  
A BOOK OF DAILY ZOROASTRIAN PRAYERS**

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*A Step to the Prophet*

# STEPS TO PROPHET ZOROASTER

WITH

## A BOOK OF DAILY ZOROASTRIAN PRAYERS

BY

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[WITH ILLUSTRATIONS]



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“The question of religion, bound up as it is with the Whence and the Whither, the Alpha and the Omega of life, stirs the deepest depths of human nature; it is the factor in education beside which the teacher of languages, mathematics and science sinks into insignificance.”

—C. H. P. MAYO,

in “*The Nineteenth Century and After.*”

“If we could lead the pupils aright in attractive ways and carry religion into the very heart of Parsee family life, then only could we remove scepticism, and creating a high moral purpose make a marked improvement in the character and welfare of the rising generation.”

—“*Parsee Educational Service.*”

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**The G.O.M. of India**  
in his Academic robes as Doctor of Laws

TO

DADABHAI NAOROJI ESQUIRE, LL.D.

A GREAT PARSEE,

A SINCERE FOLLOWER OF THE PROPHET

AND

THE GRAND OLD MAN OF INDIA

WHOSE LIFE OF ACTIVE SERVICE TO HIS MOTHER-COUNTRY

IS A FITTING MODEL

TO THE RISING PARSEE GENERATION.

## Foreword



THERE is no denying the fact that religion, "the Alpha and the Omega of life," is the brightest and most necessary light needed in all our affairs and that food for the Soul must be properly supplied with worldly education. Religion is really a most powerful factor in the education of young people, and our significant contact with western thoughts and civilisation has also taught us to rely upon our past folklore and traditions and our old sublime Faith. In order to keep pace with the material growth in the world, our reverence for God must be abiding and our faith in the Spiritual Leader unflinching. This is especially so in the students' world.

I have keenly felt for a long time the need of a handy book on the Zoroastrian religion in simple English, together with a book of daily prayers in the original Avesta with commentary for the use of young boys and girls studying in higher institutions. With this object in view I had published in 1912 a "Zoroastrian Daily Prayer Book," and the present volume is written on similar lines.

Time has made the Parsees forget altogether the old languages of their scriptures, while utilitarians deride the critical study of the dead Avestan and Pahlavi methods of expression. But we need not therefore lose also their inner spirit and fragrance. An attempt has been made in this book to translate some of the most striking features of the Zend-Avesta and to put them in an attractive form for all who desire to peep into the glorious past. This is, I believe, a step towards the Right Path, a step towards our revered Prophet Zoroaster and towards all that has been connected with Him.



Ten small books on different subjects are put together in this volume. In the first book the reader is initiated into the Zend-Avesta, and the essential features of Zoroastrianism are clearly shewn. The second is a prayer book for the use of Parsee students, in the form of songs in Avestá, Pázend, Fárssi and English to be repeated daily before other lessons begin, in order that they may carry a good thought every morning to their class rooms. For holy days a longer common prayer has been given after the thirty daily songs. The Avestan treasure has been preserved in these selections; and at the same time, in order to convey the sense in current language, they have been translated into simple English as far as practicable. The original characters, which are unfortunately unknown to our people to-day, have been transliterated into English characters, just like the Gujaráti characters of our prayer book written in that language. No changes have been made in the original text, and references to the larger Avesta have been given at the end. Sometimes a verb in the first person singular has been changed into the first person plural, so as to recommend joint prayers if desirable. It should, however, be borne in mind that it is not my intention that these songs should supersede the prayers of the Khordeh Avesta; for, in the third book fuller notes have been given on the regular Parsee daily and divisional prayers, and ceremonials have not been disregarded. In the fourth, a short sketch of the religious career of the Prophet has been given and His personality depicted in order to place before the reader's eyes His great ideal. Outlines of sermons on Zoroastrian subjects have been put in the fifth part to give the student an opportunity to work them up in essay form. They form, however, some important principles and points to remember and a few historical facts which every Parsee ought to know. In the sixth book the reader is introduced to literature in general and to old Persian poetry in particular. Poetry always attracts the youthful mind, and the student will find in this chapter some wholesome religious food in antique verse. The

seventh book traverses a wider field, viz., science taken in the broadest sense possible, and an endeavour has been made herein to show that there are ideas in the time-honoured Parsee customs which resemble those of the present day. Educationists now insist that a course in Moral Education should form part of the school programme. The old method of giving religious and moral instruction in stereotyped essays and old-fashioned sermons to be crammed should be done away with, and religion and morality should both be brought home to the pupils in their every-day life. Stories of any type are interesting and morals can be more easily taught through these than through bare quotations and extracts from moral treatises. A selection of a few such tales has been made in the eighth part. The ninth is a book of great thoughts from and about the Zend-Avesta. To enhance the student's devotion the daily reading of one quotation is recommended. The tenth book is a very feeble attempt at a versified lecture on Zoroastrianism, in the absence of any such literature.

Thus it will be seen that the whole volume is meant to serve the double purpose of educating the rising generation in this important subject, and of supplying a great variety of allied matters for general reading in English. This book is not intended to be used only in Parsee high schools but also to serve as a useful manual for home-training.

I have not ventured herein to claim any originality, or to impose upon the reader any dogma or patent theories. My chief object, as a teacher of Avesta, has been to present in a suitable manner the kernel of the Parsee scriptures. No pains have been spared to make the book attractive, useful and acceptable to young Parsee students and other seekers after religious lore. The indulgence of the reader is craved towards any errors in it.

A few illustrations bearing on Zoroastrian aspects have been put in here and there. I am grateful to Mr. M. S. Dhotr , who kindly prepared the drawings for some of the blocks.

I am indebted to all the scholars named in the book itself and my thanks are especially due to Professor L. H. Mills for the quotations from his "Hymns of Zoroaster," published by Messrs. K. & J. Cooper.

In conclusion, it is my earnest prayer that many readers of these pages may be stimulated to the effort of studying for themselves at least a part of the original Avesta.

M. P.

POONA :

Jamshedi Nacroz, 1285 A. Y.

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