

The Parsee: Liberating an Unreached People by Prayer and Fasting

There are some 3.5 million Parsees in the world with only about 30 that are born again. Also apart from the grace that God has given me, there is no other ministry reaching the Parsee people with the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

by Kaezad Dadachanjee

In February-March and July-August every year the Parsee people observe their Holy Days called, "Mukhtad." The rituals begin early morning with congregational worship of spirits of deceased relatives, and proceed through the day until sunset. Devotees bring offerings of sandal wood and incense to their fire god, along with flowers, fruits, and other gifts. There are some 3.5 million Parsees in the world, with only about 30 who are born again. Please join us in a forty day fast from February 14 through March 25, during their holy season.

Zoroaster's Birthday

March 25 the birthday of their leader, Zoroaster, Parsees worship fire as their principal god, and spirits of deceased relatives. Many consider Yeshua to be a major messiah or prophet. Their "holy" book is very similar to the Bible, which makes it attractive to them. Also, much of the Old Testament has mention of Parsee kings. This is a good incentive to offer Parsees the reading of the Bible.

Perhaps the strongest obstacle to their conversion is their sentimental attachment to their culture, and memories of joint family religious activities. Parsee converts find the Body of Messiah lacking in commu-

nity support, which has motivated many to revert to their pagan Zoroastrian ways. In this request for prayer and fasting we are including some information on the Parsees. Please join in this fast and mobilize others to pray and fast for the Parsee people.

Specific Prayer Points

Would you specifically focus on the following prayer points? We need your help. Thank you. Please pray that God would

1. *Mobilize Intercession.* Pray that God would mobilize two million intercessors worldwide with synchronized intercession for the Parsee people. Also pray that God would grant that more would Love the Parsee People and be more committed to become prayer-partners. Also pray that God would burden Evangelical leaders and media to aggressively promote this 40-Day Fast for the Parsee people, and promote awareness in the Body of Messiah. Pray that God would burden Evangelical journalists, media, internet, and advertisers to aggressively mobilize intercession and outreaches to our Parsee people, and advertise the "Love Parsee Ministries," through their publications and resources. Publish our Parsee profile in their journals, web sites, and email confer-

ences. Pray that God would burden pastors, mission leaders and youth leaders to mobilize intercession, outreach, youth outreach, and planting of congregations among our Parsee people.

2. *Parsee Awareness.* Ask God to promote an awareness in the Body of Messiah about the Parsee people. Especially pray that there would be birthed an intensity and urgency in ministry leaders about our Parsee people's need to find Yeshua, and recruit Seminary Students and Missionaries for Parsee Outreach and Planting Congregations among them. Pray that God would motivate seminaries to include Parsee studies as part of their curriculum on world religions and draw seminary students for planting congregations among our Parsee people.

3. *Laborers and Co-workers.* Pray that God would grant partners and coworkers to accompany us on the mission field, on outreach to Udwada Shrine and other Parsee Temples. Pray that God would mobilize committed intercessors to go to Parsee shrine (especially in Udwada) for prayer walks and servant-ministry to the Parsees there. Pray that God would sovereignly promote and manage the Parsee ministry outreach, meeting

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every need, detail, and arrangement, as well as defend, guide, encourage, strengthen, empower, and support every believer whom has been recruited for outreach and prayer. Pray that God would multiply this effort so that Yeshua may receive the Parsee people's worship.

4. Forbid the Powers. In prayer forbid the powers of darkness from interfering, and that love and harmony may be maintained between the organizers and between the participants. May God cause a divine order of righteousness to prevail.

5. Logistics and General Needs. Also pray that God would provide reliable and comfortable transportation for teams to minister to the Parsees. Air travel, trains and local transportation are extremely expensive and unaffordable. This hinders many native believers from participating. Please pray that the Lord would grant us air tickets and vans, as well as provide living expenses and provision for Parsee outreach teams. Pray that Christians would be encouraged and take time off from work to join our outreaches. Pray that all ministry needs may be provided. "Love Parsee" outreaches to Parsee people directly or indirectly take place in various cities of the 10/40 Window. Please pray for efficient computers, laptops, fax machines, telephone lines, internet, phones, faxes and other office equipment. Please also pray for skillful and submissive workers to help with these.

Praying for the Parsees

Pray for the Parsees: Pray that God would turn the confidence and allegiances of all Parsees (especially the leaders, professionals, and trustees) away from all false gods, and turn them only towards Messiah

Yeshua, with godly repentance, water baptism, and true discipleship. Pray for the recruitment of loving believers tailor-made for individual Parsees, to minister to the Parsees' needs in gentle and practical ways. Pray that the Parsees may be delivered from the grip of the Deceiver, from familiar spirits, and the Anti-Messiah spirit. Pray that the healing power of Yeshua might be demonstrated towards sick Parsees, especially to those not open to the Gospel, to attest to the Deity of Yeshua.

Pray that Parsee children might be drawn to Yeshua, revealing the simplicity of the Gospel. Pray that the

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Parsees might be delivered from intellectualism that would keep them from accepting the simplicity of the Gospel. Also pray that converted Parsees would fund and support "Love Parsee Ministries," and use Parsee resources to fund outreaches to the Parsee people. Pray that Parsees would turn away from their own "holy book", and develop a desire in them for the Bible..

Planting Indigenous Parsee Churches

Pray that indigenous Parsee congregations would be planted in every Parsee locality, especially in Iran; Afghanistan; Udwada, Bombay, Pune, and Gujrat (India); Karachi (Pakistan); the United Kingdom; North America; Germany, and Australia. Pray for pro-

tection of unsaved Parsees: Bind death and affliction from taking any Parsee person before he /she is saved. Pray for protection for those who minister to, including their families, who minister to the Parsee people.

Pray for the "Jesus Video" Outreach: Pray that every Parsee may possess a "Jesus Video," and a good study Bible in his spoken language. Pray that every Parsee might be drawn to God's Word.

Barukh Ha Shem. Pray that the Name of Yeshua would be proclaimed over the Parsee people, at the Parsee pagan temples, and at their localities. Yeshua is the Name above every Name. Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Yeshua Adonai (Yeshua is Lord).

History of the Parsee People

God's faithfulness to a thousand generations is revealed. "He has remembered His covenant forever, The word which He commanded to a thousand generations" (Ps. 105:8). The God of Israel has been true to His covenant with Abraham and his descendants. All of Israel's enemies from Bible times have perished, but Israel remains and is prosperous.

Another people from Bible times has endured the test of time and geography. These are the prosperous Parsee people. In the Old Testament, Parsee kings are prominent for their benevolence to Israel. In the book of Daniel, the Parsee kings Cyrus and Darius promote Daniel to the highest position in the land. In the book of Esther, Parsee king Xerxes (Ahasuerus) overrules Haman's plans, favoring Esther and Mordecai, and saves the Jewish nation from annihilation. In 2 Chronicles 36, Parsee king Cyrus liberates the Jewish people and

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sends them to rebuild the temple of our God. In Ezra and Nehemiah, Parsee kings Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes not only send the Jewish people to rebuild our Lord's temple, but also give money. Additionally, they provide Ezra, Nehemiah and the other Jews resources—building material, authority, safe passage and soldiers to ensure it.

The Parsee kings also instructed authorities over the region to give the Jews whatever they wanted for the ceremonies of worship of our God, and exempted them from taxation. The only gentile in the Old Testament that the Lord ever called His anointed was a Parsee. In Isaiah 44:28, and Isa 45:1, The Lord calls Parsee king Cyrus His shepherd and anointed.

In India and Pakistan, the Parsee people have excelled in every area of life. In politics, Dadabhoy Navroji was the right-hand man of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, founders of modern India. The late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was the son of a Parsee, Feroze Gandhi. Soli Sohrabji, a Parsee, is India's attorney general. In the military, the only field marshal that India has had was a Parsee, Field Marshal Maneckshaw.

In science, the country's nuclear technology work was founded and pioneered by Bhabha, a Parsee. In sports and the arts, Farokh Engineer was a world-class cricketer, and Zubin Mehta is a renowned music conductor. Freddie Mercury of the rock band Queen was a Parsee as well. It was the Parsee family Wadia that brought India its first ships, and the Parsee family Tata, its first airlines. The Tata family were also pioneers in automobiles, watches, steel and iron, fields where they still lead. The Godrej family is well known for manufacturing household items and health care

products. Parsee lawyers are among the best and most influential. Parsee doctors give quality health care and rarely charge the poor. Parsee schools offer superior education at low cost to people of all backgrounds without distinction. Numerous charities in India are funded and operated by Parsees. These support the poor among the Parsees as well as the non-Parsees.

In Pakistan too the Parsees have taken the lead. The Cowasjees and Dinshaws were pioneers in ship building, and the Kandawallas were the leaders in the automobile industry until the government nationalized them both. Avaris and Minwallas pio-

High Court. The Eduljee Dinshaw family owned so much land that it is understood that the local government banned their acquisition of any more. Parsee land owned by the Bhandara family was the site of the official residence of the president of Pakistan. Parsee schools Bai Virbaiji and Mama are among the best in the nation. NED, long one of the best engineering colleges in south Asia, was founded and owned by Parsees until its take-over by the Pakistani government. In the USA, the UK and other western countries, Parsees occupy prominent positions in business, enterprise, technology and education.

Parsee Values and Beliefs

In the Parsee scriptures, Gathas, their Prophet Zoroaster is quoted as saying, "Reflect with a clear mind, man by man for himself," encouraging devotees to decipher what is good and bad. The foundation of the Parsee lifestyle is to show mercy and to do good to all. Parsees rarely concern themselves with such issues as "salvation" or "life after death."

The average Parsee believes in a righteousness of works. However, a Parsee's zeal for doing good is not motivated by fear of God or earning His favor. A Parsee is by nature a good person, because their religion teaches the principles of "Good thoughts, good words, and good deeds." These words can be frequently found on Parsee tee-shirts or refrigerators, but again this religious teaching rarely drives a Parsee.

Salvation in the Parsee belief system is by grace and cannot be earned. Traditionally, Parsees believed in a heaven and a hell. Parsees believe that entrance into heaven is by the mercy of the Creator God. They hope that their departed loved ones made it to heaven.

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neered the hospitality industry. Brig. J. Golwalla, Col. Lushkary, and Maj. Irani earned many military distinctions. Avari, Minwalla, Marker, Cowasjee, and Bhandara family members have all held high government positions. Some of these have been appointed honorary ambassadors by foreign nations. Jamshed Marker has been Pakistan's ambassador to both the USA and the United Nations under different governments. Parsee Byram Avari has more than once been the world's yachting champion.

Other notable Parsees were the late Jamshed Mehta, mayor of Karachi; Justice Dorab Patel, Senior Justice of the Supreme Court of Pakistan; and Justice Sidhwa of the Punjab

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Modern schools of thought among the Parsees are changing the traditional belief in heaven and hell. Many contemporary Parsee scholars teach that heaven and hell are on this earth. Many also teach against the existence of a devil. Instead they speak of "good mentality," and "evil mentality."

Concept of God and of Angels

In Exodus, YHWH declares His name as "I AM THAT I AM." In John, Yeshua calls Himself by the same name, "I AM." Hebrews says, "Messiah Yeshua the same yesterday, to day, and forever." In Revelation, Yeshua is

spoken of as the One who is, and who was, and who is to come. Thus we see that Yeshua is the Eternal One, the One who has always been. The Hebrew for "I AM" in Exodus is more like the term "to be."

The Parsees have a concept of a Creator God whom they call Ahura Mazda. Mazda means "wisdom," while Ahura means "being" or "to be;" i.e., "one who is." The name that the Parsees give to the Creator God is the same that the Bible calls Yeshua, "I AM," or "being." The Parsee people do not realize that this God whom they call by this name is actually Messiah Yeshua. They are in fact worshipping a God whom they do not know, an

"unknown god," if you will.

Parsees hold the fire in high esteem. Some perhaps even give fire as much importance as the "Creator God" himself. The Parsee places of worship have traditionally been called "fire temples." In these temples, there is a central room housing a large vessel with a lit fire, fueled by wood and fragrances. Parsees traditionally pray to this fire, often bowing low or even bowing on their faces before it. Parsee scriptures call fire the "son of god," and consider it the visible representation of the invisible god. These are the same titles that the Bible gives Yeshua of Nazareth.

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