

Rohinton Rivetna
Opening Remarks
SSZ 2007, Sunday November 18, 2007

A Living Religion Needs Scholarship for Sustenance

In the past 50 years or so, within our community, scholarship in matters of religion, appears to have declined.

Luminaries such as *Sir Jivanji Modi* (whom we heard about yesterday, from his grandson Jamshed Modi), *Dhabar, K. R. Cama, Mobed Karkhanawalla, Erach Taraporewalla*, have long departed.

Among the few of our present-day learned scholar dasturs are *Dasturji Firoze Kotval* and *Dasturji Jamasp Asa*. Both are getting on in years, and their shoes will be hard to fill.

Our tradition of learned, scholar Dasturs appears to be lost.

We must revive the tradition of religious scholarship within our community, for both *behdins* and *athornans*.

However, the community (the practioners) does not seem to appreciate the value of scholarship.

“It goes over my head” is the common refrain, and they show no interest.

We must make community a priority in your lives.

Today, with your presence, you are accomplishing two things:

- You are learning something and enriching yourselves; and, more importantly.
- Your presence gives support to the scholars. Your feedback is invaluable, so that their future research may be directed in a constructive manner for the benefit of both the academicians as well as the community.

So, Thank You for taking the time from your busy lives, to come today. We hope that it will be of mutual benefit.