tvameva mātā ca pitā tvameva
tvameva bandhuśca sakhā tvameva,
tvameva vidyā draviṇām tvameva
tvameva sarvam mama devadeva.
The conversation reproduced below takes place between the Hastinapur king, Dhṛtarāṣṭra and his cousin Vidura. It is contained in eight chapters of the *Udyoga Parva* of the epic, the *Mahābhārata*.

A tussle is going on between the king’s sons, the *Kauravas* led by *Duryodhana*, the eldest prince and their cousins, the *Pāṇḍavas*, led by Yudhiṣṭhira for an equitable division of the kingdom. Sañjaya, the king’s confidante and charioteer, had gone to placate the *Pāṇḍava* princes. The tidings he brought gave no cheer to the blind king who wanted his son, Duryodhana to inherit the entire kingdom.

The narrator is *Ṛṣi Vaiśampāyana*, a celebrated pupil of Vyāsa. He is said to have recounted the whole of *Mahābhārata* to king Janamejaya, son of Parikṣita, grandson of Arjuna, the *Pāṇḍava* prince.
Vidura Nīti is a well-known and highly beneficial part of the Mahābhārata. In these chapters, Mahātmā Vidura has explained to the King, Dhṛtarāṣṭra several issues relating to human welfare in this and the other world. The following extract consist of eight chapters (33—40) of the Udyoga Parva of the Mahābhārata. Several Sanskrit commentaries have been published on the Vidura Nīti.

In these chapters, while advising on the duties of a king, that is Rāja Dharma, several other issues have been discussed in eye-catching detail. Some of these are: Polity, interaction, treatment of others, truthful behaviour, Dharma, means to achieve happiness and eschew actions that lead to suffering, discrimination between undesirable and desirable qualities, importance of renunciation, different facets of justice, Truth, human welfare, forgiveness, non-violence, attributes of a friend, and consequences of ingratitude. The author has lucidly delineated the duties of a king while stressing upon the virtue of giving up greed.

Vidura Nīti will benefit the illiterate as well the learned, the adults, the aged and the young, the women, the rulers and the subjects, the rich and the poor, the teacher as well as the student, those busy in serving others, and those desirous of living a clean and happy life.

The Ślokas have been translated in simple language. We hope that Indians of whatever class or region they might belong to benefit from this book.

Śrāvana Krṣṇa 8, 
Vikrama Saṁvat 2011
Gorakhpur

Hanumanprasad Poddar
# CONTENTS

**Chapter-I**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Śloka No.</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1—6</td>
<td>Vidura admitted to the King’s presence .......... 17-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>Vidura inquires a worried Dhṛtarāṣṭra the reason for his being summoned .......... 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9—12</td>
<td>Dhṛtarāṣṭra explains his worry and requests a solution ............................................. 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13—19</td>
<td>Vidura describes the situations which keep a man awake. He taunts the king for the injustice done to Yudhishthira .......... 19—21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20—34</td>
<td>The attributes of a Paṇḍita ......................... 21—24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35—44</td>
<td>How to identify an idiot? ............................... 24-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Who is a Paṇḍita? ......................................... 25-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Condemnation of a person who does not share his wealth with other members of the family ....................................................... 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>A wrong deed is visited upon the doer alone .................................................................... 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48-49</td>
<td>The importance of intellect. How to wisely use one’s intelligence? ............................ 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Lack of wise policies can destroy a king .......... 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Situations where a person must share his thoughts etc. with others .............................. 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>In praise of truth ................................................. 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53—56</td>
<td>In praise of forgiveness. ................................ 27-28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>In praise of Dharma &amp; Knowledge etc. .......... 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>When are the kings and the Brahmins losers? ................................................................. 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>In praise of persons who are polite in speech ................................................................. 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloka No.</td>
<td>Topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Persons who follow others blindly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>Know your limits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>When is Gṛhastha or a Saṁnyāsī looked down upon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>The two persons who deserve a place in paradise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>When is well-earned wealth misused?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>Who deserve to be punished with death by drowning?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>The two types of person who attain paradise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67-68</td>
<td>The three means to attain success. Three types of human beings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td>Persons who do not deserve to be rich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>The three evils which destroy a human being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>The three gates to hell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>The three sources of happiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>The types of persons who deserve to be protected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>The four types of persons who ought to be kept at a distance by the king</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>The four types of dependents who deserve a shelter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-77</td>
<td>The four situations which yield result quickly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>The four deeds which make a person fearless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>The five entities who deserve to be worshipped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>The five acts which bring glory to man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>The five types of person’s who depend upon a king</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Śloka No.</td>
<td>Topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>Failure of even one of the five senses can harm a person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-85</td>
<td>Six Undesirable qualities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86-87</td>
<td>Virtues which must not be given up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88</td>
<td>Desirability of overcoming 6 bad habits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89-90</td>
<td>The six types of persons who depend on others to make a living</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91</td>
<td>Lack of care can destroy farm, cattle etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92-93</td>
<td>Six types of persons ignored by the other six</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94</td>
<td>Six sources of happiness on this earth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95</td>
<td>The six types of persons who are always unhappy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96-97</td>
<td>Seven bad habits, a king must give up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98-100</td>
<td>8 indicators of the decline of a person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101-103</td>
<td>8 sources of happiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104</td>
<td>8 virtues which elevate a person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105</td>
<td>Know your body which is endowed with many entrances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106-107</td>
<td>10 types of person ignorant of Dharma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108-110</td>
<td>Advice tendered by Prahlāda to his son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111-115</td>
<td>Qualities of a warrior, a wise king and a noble person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116-119</td>
<td>Qualities of a person who can impress his public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120-123</td>
<td>Who is superior among the learned?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>124-126</td>
<td>Qualities of a man who shines like the sun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>127-128</td>
<td>Vidura Councils Dhṛtarāṣṭra to handover half of the kingdom to the Pāṇḍava Brothers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloka No.</td>
<td>Topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–3</td>
<td>A worried Dhṛtarāṣṭra seeks counsel for his welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4–5</td>
<td>Vidura promises to tender honest advice only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6–7</td>
<td>Do not follow the path of untruth even if that leads to success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8–9</td>
<td>Keep in mind the purpose and result to be achieved in any activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10–11</td>
<td>An unthinking king loses his kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12–13</td>
<td>Wealth is destroyed by unfair treatment of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Advice regarding digestible foods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15–16</td>
<td>The time to pluck a ripe fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17–18</td>
<td>Painless collection of taxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19–20</td>
<td>Do not take a step forward without weighing its consequences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21–22</td>
<td>When do the subjects approve of a king?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23–26</td>
<td>How should a king look after his subject?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27–28</td>
<td>Injustice destroys a Kingdom. Practice of Dharma brings prosperity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Damages caused by a lack of Dharma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30–31</td>
<td>Justification for the destruction of an enemy for self-preservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32–33</td>
<td>Garner your wisdom from various sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34–37</td>
<td>Don’t underestimate the strength of a superior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38–40</td>
<td>Several types of protectors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41–43</td>
<td>Good conduct is superior to lineage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44–46</td>
<td>In praise of the truthful</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter-3

1 Dhṛtarāṣṭra wants Vidura to tell him more about righteous Conduct ........................................... 60
2-3 Vidura advises the king to treat others kindly ...................................................................... 60
4 Virtuous conduct in this world ensures passage to the Swargaloka ......................................... 60
5—38 The story of Keśinī and of meditation by Prahlāda in the dispute between his son Virocana and the Brahmin, Sudhanvā ................................................................. 60—67
39 Vidura advises the King not to resort to falsehood for the sake of land .................................. 68
40-41 The importance of intelligent conduct in achieving success .............................................. 68
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sloka No.</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>42–45</td>
<td>Even the knowledge of Vedas cannot protect a deceitful person</td>
<td>68-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46–48</td>
<td>Certain evil deeds are as pernicious as the killing of a Brahmin</td>
<td>69-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49–50</td>
<td>8 situations in which a human being can be tested. 8 destructive habits</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51–52</td>
<td>8 virtues that help in the creation of wealth, add to longevity etc.</td>
<td>70-71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53–55</td>
<td>The importance of a king’s noble conduct</td>
<td>71-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56–57</td>
<td>8 paths to righteous conduct</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>The importance of Dharma and the truth</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59–65</td>
<td>The 10 pathways to heaven</td>
<td>72–74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66–68</td>
<td>The importance of wisdom and discretion</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69–71</td>
<td>Wealth acquired through foul means does not overcome short-comings</td>
<td>74-75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72–74</td>
<td>Desirable qualities in a king who wants rule for a long time. 3 types of persons who benefit the most from the earth</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>Identification of good and of evil deeds</td>
<td>75-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76–77</td>
<td>Advice to the king to treat his nephews like a father</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chapter-4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sloka No.</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1–3</td>
<td>Dialogue between Dattātreya and the Devatās</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dattātreya advises patience and the pursuit of truth</td>
<td>77-78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5–8</td>
<td>The importance of the spoken word</td>
<td>78-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9–11</td>
<td>The rewards of forbearance</td>
<td>79-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12–15</td>
<td>The importance of the spoken word</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How to identify different types of persons?

Dhṛtarāṣṭra wants to know from Vidura the qualities of human beings born to noble families.

The downfall of noble families.

The importance of noble conduct.

The person who are unsuitable to be in a Court or belong to the king's family.

How to receive a guest?

Attributes of a good friend.

The disadvantages of a person who is unstable is conduct and thought.

The unstable temperament of an evil person.

Be Indifferent to happiness or sorrow.

Lust destroys wisdom.

A disturbed Dhṛtarāṣṭra looks for peace.

Vidura advises the king how to be at peace?

Person who are inimical can never be happy.

Damage done by internal differences.

The downfall of those who harass Brahmins and women.

Unity is strength.

Do not harm the Brahmins, the cows, the children or the women.

The conquest of anger.

Vidura advises Dhṛtarāṣṭra to amicably settle the dispute between his sons and the Pāṇḍavas.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sloka No.</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1—6</td>
<td>Who are chosen for hell by the messengers of Yamarāja?</td>
<td>94-95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>Is the policy of retribution desirable?</td>
<td>95-96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9—11</td>
<td>Why can’t a human being live to a 100 years?</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-13</td>
<td>Evil deeds akin to the killing of brahmins</td>
<td>96-97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14—16</td>
<td>The qualities of a person who deserves to go to heaven. Who is a true friend of king?</td>
<td>97-98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-18</td>
<td>The virtues of renunciations</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19—21</td>
<td>Gambling, the root cause of all evil</td>
<td>98-99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-23</td>
<td>How does a king retain the trust of his subordinates?</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24—27</td>
<td>The importance of competent subordinates</td>
<td>99-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28-29</td>
<td>Be alert while choosing an activity</td>
<td>100-101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Do not lend to such people</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-32</td>
<td>8 Virtues which enhance the human excellence</td>
<td>101-102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33-34</td>
<td>The utility of a bath and of a frugal meal</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-36</td>
<td>Persons who should be kept at an arms-length: no shelter; no request for help</td>
<td>102-103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>6 types of person who must not be catered to or pampered</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38-39</td>
<td>The time to move into the Vānaprastha Āśrama</td>
<td>103-104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-41</td>
<td>The secret of all achievement</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42—46</td>
<td>The undesirable consequences of the war with the Pāṇḍavas</td>
<td>104-105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloka No.</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47—50</td>
<td>Dharma cannot be divorced from Artha, abstain from sin by intellect. An evil person notices only the undesirable habits of others</td>
<td>105-106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Who deserved the kingdom?</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52—55</td>
<td>5 strong points of a human being</td>
<td>106-107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-57</td>
<td>Never earn the enmity of a stronger person. The learned never trust such a person</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58-59</td>
<td>The importance of wisdom</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60—62</td>
<td>Your relatives can be like fire hidden in wood</td>
<td>107-108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63-64</td>
<td>Vidura says that the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas must live in harmony</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chapter-6**

1. Suitable welcome to respectable elders a must .................................................. 109
2-3. The welcome rituals of a guest ................................................................. 109
4-5. Categories of person who though not deserving a welcome, must be treated well as guests .................................................. 109-110
6-7. Attributes of a Saṁnyāsī and of a Vānaprastha ........................................ 110-111
8-9. Do not earn the enmity of a wise person. Do not repose blind faith in anyone | 111
12—14. Choice of a person for safe upkeep ...................................................... 112
15—21. Qualities of a king who lasts long. Even a minister need not be privy to the king .... 112-113
22—24. Evil deeds lead to undesirable consequences ........................................ 113-114
25—26. The qualities of a successful ruler ...................................................... 114
27 A king must not be greedy .............................. 115
28-29 A subdued enemy must be put to death............. 115
30–33 Control of anger and giving up unnecessary disputes is beneficial........ 115-116
34-35 Dependence upon an unwise person can be dangerous ............................................. 116
36-37 The winning qualities of a king ..................... 116
38-39 7 secrets of addition to wealth ........................ 117
40-41 Never harm an innocent person ....................... 117
42-43 A kingdom must not fall into the hands of a women, a gambler or a child ............. 117-118
44-45 Who is a wise person?................................. 118
46-47 Viduraís advice: handing over kingdom to Duryodhana would be ruinous for the empire .......................... 118

Chapter-7

1 Dhṛtarāṣṭra believes that human beings are subject to fate ................................. 119
2–4 Viduraís advice: “take care of which way the wind blows”. How to endear yourself to others? ........................................... 119-120
5 The possibility of the death of a hundred princess just to please Duryodhana ................ 120
6-7 Beware of such success as could lead to failure ...................................................... 120
8-9 Do not befriend the rich who lack virtue. Dhṛtarāṣṭra expresses his inability to give up siding with Duryodhana ............... 120-121
10–13 The qualities of a humble person. It is undesirable to deal with evil persons .......... 121
14—16 Do not be friendly with a man who is evil .......................................................... 121-122
17–32 Vidura advises the king to protect his kinsmen and be fair and just to the Pāṇḍavas ................................................ 122—125
33–35 Qualities of person who stay praise-worthy for a long time ........................................ 125
36–38 6 habits which ought to be given up .......... 125-126
39–41 Importance of knowledge and the desirability of looking after the elders ............. 126
42-43 How is lineage judged?......................... 126-127
Protection of one’s near and dear ones ...... 127-128
48–50 The desirability of giving up friendship of a foolish person........................................ 128
51–56 It is not desirable to either deny the pleasures of senses or to give them unbridled freedom........................................ 128-129
57–59 The importance of forgiveness.
Importance of sustained effort.................. 129-130
60–64 How to deal with a cunning person in order to protect wealth? ......................... 130-131
65–68 Consequences of certain actions .......... 131-132
69–71 Different class of people have different strength ............................................................ 132
72–76 Persons who can be trusted and those who cannot be. Importance of paying respect to the teachers ...................... 132-133
77–81 Signs of Old-age in different groups of person ................................................................. 133-134
82–85 Vidura’s advice to the king to treat his sons and nephews on an equal footing ...... 134-135

Chapter-8

1–3 How to acquire happiness and fame in a short duration.................................................. 136
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sloka No.</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>An attitude of negativity is like courting death</td>
<td>136-137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>7 shortcomings of a student.</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7—11</td>
<td>Sources of dissatisfaction. Essentials of a good household</td>
<td>137-138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-13</td>
<td>Never give up the righteous conduct</td>
<td>138-139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14—18</td>
<td>The Inevitability of death. Hence the desirability of accumulating good deeds</td>
<td>139-140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19—22</td>
<td>Wipe out ignorance with knowledge</td>
<td>140-141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23—25</td>
<td>The virtues of detachment</td>
<td>141-142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26—28</td>
<td>The path to Swargaloka for the Kṣatriyas, the Vaiśyas and the Śūdras</td>
<td>142-143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29—32</td>
<td>Vidura advises Dhṛtarāṣṭra to be fair and just to Yudhiṣṭhira. However, the king although in agreement with him, decline his advice</td>
<td>143-144</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER ONE

Continuing the narrative, Vaiśampāyana said, “As Sañjaya departed, the wise king, Dhṛtarāṣṭra motioned to his doorman to come closer and said, ‘I desire to see Vidura. Please send for him post haste.’” (1)

The messenger sent by Dhṛtarāṣṭra called on Vidura and said, “Wise master, Maharaj Dhṛtarāṣṭra has requested a meeting with you.” (2)

Obeying the summons, Vidura travelled to the king’s palace and asked the doorman to inform the king of his arrival. (3)

The doorman approached the king and said, “Maharaj! As desired by you, Vidura has arrived. He requests an audience. What are orders for me, Should I send him in?” (4)
Dhṛtarāṣṭra replied, “Please lead the wise and far-sighted Vidura into the palace. There is no hindrance ever in meeting him.”

The doorman approached Vidura and asked him to proceed to the private chambers of the sagacious king. He told the visitor how the king had observed that there was never any hindrance for him to meet Vidura.

Vidura entered the King’s chambers with hands folded and addressed the worried sovereign thus:

“As summoned by you, I have arrived, O wise King. I await your command.”

Dhṛtarāṣṭra replied, “Vidura, Sañjaya was here a short time ago. He left after censoring me. Tomorrow, he will
report to the Court the response from the prince, Ajātaśatru Yudhiṣṭhira.

(9)


tasyādya kuṭumbarasya n vinijāatāt vaco maya.
tam he dhārti gatrami tadakārṣitā prajāgarman. || १० ||

“Today, I could not comprehend what the Kuruvīra Yudhiṣṭhira has conveyed. This inability [to know his intentions] has made me restless. I can hardly sleep.” (10)


ejagratō dhaṁmaṇasya śreyo yuddhupāyasya.
tadd dṛṣṭi tvam hi nastatā datarṣthakūḍalā hamsa. || ११ ||

“Brother, please be frank and speak what works, in your wise opinion, to my welfare who is unable to sleep and is restless with apprehensions. Among us, you alone are learned in the understanding of Dharma and Artha.” (11)


yat: prapt: saṁjñay: pāṇḍavēbhya

n me yathāvartanaś: prajānat. ||
svarṇīrājanupākrttāni gataṁ

kim vṛṣṭītyēv mṛdaya prajñan. || १२ ||

“I have been at unease since Saṅjaya returned after meeting the Pāṇḍavas. I feel distraught in my mind and body. I am apprehensive of what he might convey tomorrow in the Court.” (12)


vidur uvac

abhyutkante balaṁtan durbalāṁ hiṁśāśaṇam.
hūtasvāṁ kāmyām chaśramāvaṃśānti prajāgarā: || १३ ||

After careful consideration, Vidura responded: “Rājan! They alone stay sleepless who antagonize a mightier person, or the weak, helpless and destitute who have lost whatever little they had. The lechers as well as the thieves too stay awake at night.” (13)
Narendra! I hope that you are not afflicted with any of the aforementioned serious maladies. I trust that you are not impatiently coveting wealth that belongs to others. (14)

Dhṛtarāṣṭra replied, “I desire to hear your righteous words and your sound and beneficial advice. In our royal family, you alone are respected even by the learned.” (15)

Vidura continued: “The king, Yudhiṣṭhira possesses all the attributes to be a king of the universe. He always respected your wishes. You, however, exiled him. (16)

“You are a pious person, conscious of your duty. However, being blind [to his qualities], you did not recognize his merit. You turned hostile and declined to hand over a part of the kingdom to him. (17)

“Yudhiṣṭhira respects you as an elder, a superior. In temperament, besides being chivalrous, he is gentle, kind, righteous and truthful. On account of this he has suffered one misfortune after another in silence. (18)
“You have entrusted the kingdom to incompetent persons like Duryodhana, Śakuni, Karṇa and Duḥśāsana. How then, do you expect to enhance your glory as a ruler?” (19)

“He alone is entitled to be named a Paṇḍita who knows his worth, is industrious, has the capacity to suffer and who does not deviate from his duty under any circumstances. (20)

“A Paṇḍita always acts admirably and shuns evil activity. He believes in God and worships with devotion. (21)

“A Paṇḍita is not diverted from the path of his duty, his Dharma, by the emotions of anger, joy, pride, shame, obstinacy and a false sense of superiority. (22)

“We call him a Paṇḍita whose activities are not known to others when that is considered or advised but only when that succeeds.” (23)

“A Paṇḍita’s actions are not interrupted by summer or winter, by heat or cold, neither by fear of consequences...
nor by lust. He is not swayed from his path either by riches or poverty.

(24)

“He alone is entitled to be called a _Paṇḍita_ whose worldly wisdom partakes of the twin qualities of _Dharma_ and _Artha_, and one who forsaking the path of sensual indulgence takes the road of living like an upright human being.

(25)

“The learned men, deep in their wisdom, know their limitations. They aspire to achieve what is possible within their power and work for the same. For them no effort, however small, is below their dignity.

(26)

“The foremost attribute of a _Paṇḍita_ is that he listens attentively, grasps the essence of a subject in no time, and acts firmly in his discretion and not out of emotion. He never utters an irrelevant word or tender an opinion about others unless so requested.

(27)

“The wise do not aspire for the unattainable. They do not grieve for what is lost. Misfortune does not rattle them.
We call him a *Pañḍita* who makes up his mind before taking up a project. Thereafter, he works relentlessly, and does not stop mid-way. All through this he exercises total control over his mind.

(O descendent of Bharata! The learned occupy themselves with the most desirable of objectives. They act in pursuit of progress and enrichment [of others]. They do not find a fault with those engaged in good deeds.)

He alone deserves to be called a *Pañḍita* who does not feel over-elated when praised. Condemnation does not depress him. His mind is like a large whirlpool in the Ganges, always ebullient.

*A Pañḍita* is aware of the reality of life. He is dexterous in all activity. He can unravel any knot among human beings.

“We know him as a *Pañḍita* who is fluent in speech, whose choice of words is unique, who argues well, and is intellectually brilliant. A *Pañḍita* can elucidate the essence of a literary work with felicity.
“He alone is entitled to be called a *Paṇḍita* whose learning is guided by intellect and whose intellect is moulded by his education. He never transgresses the limits of decency.”

“*The Paṇḍitas* call a man a fool who although illiterate thinks too much of himself and who though a pauper dreams rich. Such a fool desires to grow rich without effort.”

“This fool deserts his duty and looks after the interest of others. His conduct towards his friends is deceitful.”

“He is called an idiot who befriends undesirable persons and who shuns those whose company he ought to seek. For no rhyme or reason he courts enmity of the powerful.”

“Unjustifiably, he makes enemies of friends while trying to befriend his enemies. He harms his friends for no reason. He is such a fool that he invariably sets out on the wrong path.”

“O descendent of Bharata! He is stupid who unnecessarily expands the scope of his activity, who doubts everyone’s intentions and who delays what can be completed in a short while.”
He is deficient in intellect who does not perform *Śrāddha* for his ancestors and who does not worship the *Devatās*. He is unable to make sincere friends. (40)

“He enters a house or Court uninvited and speaks much when not even asked to do so. Such a lowly fool trusts the most untrustworthy persons. (41)

“He is truly an idiot who while being himself at fault, accuses others of being so. He flies into unnecessary rage although he can do nothing about the situation. (42)

“He is called a dunce who without understanding his limitations, without putting any effort, violating the principles of *Dharma* and *Artha*, desires to possess the unattainable. (43)

“He who tenders advice to the undeserving, who worship the non-existent or *Śūnya*, the one who seeks favours with a miser, is the foolish one. (44)
“We call him a _Pāṇḍita_ who does not take airs even after achieving wealth, prosperity, status and education.”

(45)

एकः सम्पन्नमध्यांति वस्ते वासुक्षव श्रेष्ठनम्।
वोसंविभव्य भृत्येभ्यः को नृसंसतलस्ततः॥ ४६॥

“Who can be crueler than the one who enjoys a sumptuous meal and puts on fancy clothes without sharing the same with those who deserve his care and who depend on him?”

(46)

एकः पापानि कुरुते फलं भुइँके महाजनः।
भोजारो विप्रमुच्छते कर्ता दोषेण लिप्यते॥ ४७॥

“One person earns riches by committing evil deeds. Several others enjoy them. While the latter do not face any consequences, the former pays for his misdeeds.”

(47)

एकं हन्यान वा हन्यादिषुमृत्को धनुषमता।
बुद्धिर्बुद्धिमतोत्सृष्ट हन्याद् राष्ट्रं सराजकम्॥ ४८॥

“A warrior’s arrow might or might not kill anyone. However, a wise man’s counsel may destroy a king as well the whole kingdom.”

(48)

एक्या हेतु विनिशिचत्य षोश्चतुर्भिर्विश्वेः कुरु।
पञ्च जित्या विदित्या षटू सप्त हिल्या सुखी भव॥ ४९॥

“Be happy by doing thus—decide between the two (duty and other) with the help of one (intellect); subjugate the three (friend, foe and neutral) with the help of four (_Sāma, Dāma, Daṇḍa_ and _Bhedā_) win over five (sense organs); know the six virtues of a king (_Sandhi, Vigraha, Yāna, Āsana, Dvaidhībhāva_ and _Samāśrayarūpa_) and give up seven faults (womanising, grambling, hunting, taking liquor, using foul language, inflicting cruel punishment and earning wealth through unfair means).”

(49)
“Poison kills the one who is administered the same. A weapon kills the one who is attacked with it. However, a violation of policy and statesmanship destroys the king as well as his subjects.

“Do not partake a feast all by yourself. Do not take decisions unilaterally. Do not walk alone on a solitary path. Do not keep awake when others are asleep in a large group.

“Rājan! There is no alternative to a boat when crossing the sea. Likewise, truth alone is the stairways to heaven. However, you have failed to appreciate this reality.

“The persons of a forgiving nature have only one shortcoming and no other. It is a pity that a person of forgiving temperament is considered to be a weakling.

“A forgiving temperament is not a sign of weakness. Forgiveness is a sign of strength. It is a virtue of the weak and an ornament of the strong.
“In this world, forgiveness can conquer everyone. It is a charm. Every obstacle can be overcome with patience and forbearance. No evil person can harm the one who carries peace as his weapon. (55)

“A conflagration dies on its own when there is no dry grass to burn. A person lacking in the virtue of forgiveness makes himself and other associated persons equally guilty. (56)

“Dharma alone is the highest virtue. Forgiveness alone is the panacea for peace. Learning is the most satisfying attainment. *Ahimsā* is the greatest source of happiness. (57)

“Serpents swallow the creatures like frogs hiding in their burrows. Likewise, this earth eats up the kings who do not take on an enemy or the Brahmins who do not travel away from their homes (in search of knowledge or spreading their acquired knowledge). (58)

“A person who is always polite and who does not honour and befriend evil persons, deserves special consideration in this world. (59)
“Women who fall for another’s man and men who [without applying their mind to a person’s virtues] respect him only because some others hold him in high regard, show a lack of judgment and discretion. (60)

“A destitute who craves for rich possessions and a weakling who gets angry for no reason, both are like sharp thorns that can pierce a body and make it lose vitality. (61)

“A Gṛḥastha who shuns his duties and never gets going and a Saṃnyāsī busy without business, neither of them deserve respect and recognition due to wrong attitude. (62)

“Rājan! The person who though powerful is forgiving and the one who is benevolent although himself not a man of means, ascend to heaven. (63)

“The wealth earned through fair means can be mishandled in two ways: give it to the undeserving and deny the deserving. (64)

“The affluent who do not give charity and the poor who cannot patiently bear their circumstances, deserve to be drowned in water with a heavy stone tied to their neck. (65)
who lives according to the yogic tenets and a warrior who lays down his life on the battlefield, both ascend to the heavens beyond. (66)

“O mighty king, the most superior among the progeny of Bharata, the learned know that to achieve success one can adopt means that can be sublime, mediocre or low. (67)

“Likewise, the human beings too can be subdivided into three categories: The most capable, the mediocre and the good for nothing. They ought to be assigned duties according to their capabilities. (68)

“Rājan! The wife, the son and the servant are not owners of wealth. Even their earnings belong to the person whom they serve. (69)

“However, depriving another of his wealth, sleeping with another’s woman and deserting a close friend surely lead to destruction of the guilty. (70)

“Give up lust, anger and greed. These three evils destroy the soul and are a gateway to hell. (71)
“O Bhārata! To beget a son, to be granted a boon and the conquest of another country taken together are as good as getting rid of an enemy. (72)

“You must not let down three types of supplicants even in danger, be it a devotee, or a servant or the one who says that he belongs to you alone, if they seek your protection. (73)

“A powerful king must eschew confidential consultation with four types of persons: Dimwits; those who procrastinate; others who act in haste (unthinking) and sycophants. The learned should identify such persons. (74)

“Respected brother! You are wealthy. You are living the life of a Gṛhaṭha. Four types of persons ought always to live in your household: your elders; someone from an esteemed family but fallen on evil days; a friend in penury and a childless sister. [A Gṛhaṭha ought to give shelter to such persons.] (75)
“Maharaj! At Indra’s instance, Bṛhaspati advised him about the four virtues that yield instantaneous results. These are as follows—

1. The determination of the Devatās, 2. the influence of the wise, 3. the humility of the learned, 4. the destruction of the sinners.

“Four activities dispel fear. However, if not executed properly, the same generate fear. These are—1. Offering oblations to fire in full faith, 2. Observing silence as an act of faith, 3. Studious effort at self-education and 4. Performing Yajña with full ritual.

“O Bharata!re! A man must diligently serve the following five pre-eminent entities: 1. The mother, 2. The father, 3. Agni, 4. The Soul and 5. The Guru.

“A person who worships the Devatās, the ancestors, other human beings, the Samnyāsīs and the guests surely gets name and fame.

“Rājan! The following five will ever pursue you wherever you go: the friends; the enemies; the indifferent lot [or
those who take a middle path]; those who seek protection
and the ones who offer the same. \(81\)

"Out of our five senses of perception, even if one goes
astray, our discretion flows out like water out of a leaking
pot. \(82\)

"A man who aspires to wealth or craves to rise high
must give up the following six undesirable traits—
1. Excessive sleep, 2. Lassitude, 3. Fear, 4. Anger,
5. Laziness and 6. Procrastination. \(83\)

"Shun the following six persons as a sailor avoids a
boat with a hole: a Guru who is unable to communicate; a
Hotrī who cannot recite the Mantras; a king unable to protect
his subjects; a woman who talks bitter; a cowherd who
does not want to step out of his habitation to graze his flock
and a barber who desires to live in a forest. \(84-85\)

"A man should never eschew the following six virtues:
Truth, charity, promptness, freedom from malice and
spitefulness; forgiveness and forbearance. \(86\)
In this world the following six happenings are a source of joy: Steady income, sound health, a loving and soft-spoken wife; an obedient son and knowledge that can help in earning wealth. (87)

One who has conquered his senses and who has controlled the following six weaknesses of the mind—lust, anger, greed, attachment, arrogance and jealousy does not involve in sin. Obviously, he is unaffected by the damage caused by them. (88)

Different people earn their livelihood from different sources. They can be categorized in the following six ways only while a seventh one is unknown. A thief steals from a careless person. A Vaidya is dependent for his living on the sick. Women of loose character earn their living from lusting visitors. A Purohita depends on Yajamānas. A king lives on the income from litigants. An educated person survives on the ignorance of others. (89-90)

The following six are decimated if not steadily looked after: Cows, services, agriculture, women, education and an association with the lowly. (91)
Certain time-servers ignore their benefactors once their purpose has been served. A pupil, once his education is over, is indifferent to his teacher. Married sons overlook the happiness of their parents. A man turns his head away from a mistress once his lust has been satisfied. Helpers are ignored once a job has been accomplished. After crossing the ferocious currents of a river, the traveller gives up the boat. An ailing person once cured has no use for his doctor.

“Rajan! There are six situations in which one is happy—

On the contrary, the following are always unhappy: A jealous person, a hateful person, one who is never contented, an angry person; a person who always suspects others and a person ever dependent on others.
O Bhärata! Look for these eight happenings which indicate that people are happy. The same are in themselves a source of joy in this world—1. Social gatherings and

(101—103)


(104)

“The wise man who knows about this abode of the soul, that is, the human body with nine doors, three pillars and five witnesses (sense organs), is truly learned.” (105)

O Dhṛtarāṣṭra! The ten types of men who do not know anything about Dharma are: An intoxicated man; a careless person; an insane person; a person who is fatigued; an angry man; a hungry person; a man in haste; greedy; frightened and lecherous. A learned man should not befriend such persons.

(106-107)
It is ancient lore. “Listen carefully what the *Asura* king Prahlāda accompanied with Sudhanvā advised his son during a discourse.

“A king who eschews lust, gives up anger, distributes wealth to the deserving, who is learned in scriptures, is knowledgeable, and performs his duty expeditiously, sets an example for others to emulate.

“Riches flow into the coffers of a king who instils faith in his subjects, the one who awards punishment only to those whose guilt has been established, who is aware of the limits of the maximum and the minimum sentence, and the one who understands when to pardon and when not.

“It is a courageous and resolute ruler who does not insult the weak, who treats even an enemy carefully but intelligently, who avoids a conflict with the powerful, and who fights chivalrously when the occasion so arises.”
He is a pre-eminent, shrewd and noble soul who does not succumb even when faced with a misfortune, systematically, carefully and promptly he makes an effort to overcome the adversity. He suffers in silence but defeats his enemies in the long run. (112)

A person is always happy if he avoids unnecessary travel, companionship of men of easy virtue, if he does not covet another man’s wife, shuns the evils of falsehood, arrogance, and hypocrisy, does not steal, back-bite or consume liquor. (113)

A person possessed of the following attributes earns approbation amongst all—1. He does not initiate an effort in Dharma, Artha or Kāma in anger or in haste, 2. If asked, he utters only the truth, 3. He does not pick up a quarrel.
even on behalf of a friend, 4. He does not flare up nor
does he give up his discretion when not accorded due
respect, 5. He never finds faults with others, 6. He is kind
to others, 7. In a moment of weakness he does not stand
security for another; and 8. He is not boastful nor intolerant.

(114-115)

“A person who does not try to look formidable all the
time, who does not all along brag to others about his
chivalry and mite, one who even though highly upset and
angry, does not utter unpleasant words, endears himself
to everyone. (116)

“The noble [the Ārya] consider a person of good
conduct to be superior if he does not fan the extinguished
embers of enmity, does neither act arrogant nor mean,
and does not act foul and behave undesirably under the
pretext that he is in grave danger. (117)

“Amongst persons of noble conduct he is considered
superior to others who is not all the time celebrating his
good fortune, who does not rejoice over the others'
misfortune, and who never feels sorry over what he has given away in charity. (118)

“A person who makes an effort to learn about the habits, social conduct and Dharma of his countrymen, soon learns to distinguish between the desirable and the undesirable. Such a person, wherever he goes, is able to establish his hold over the masses. (119)

“That wise man alone is superior to others who gives up arrogance, attachment, evil deeds, envy, treachery, back-biting, enmity with the other social groups and contentious arguments with the persons who have lost their mind or with persons of evil intent. (120)

“The Devatās pray for the prosperity of the person who gives charity, performs Havana, worships gods, performs auspicious deeds, repents for his mistakes or omissions, and daily attends to the most desirable activities. (121)
“A learned man’s conduct is praiseworthy if he marries, makes friends, interacts socially and engages in conversation among equals. He shuns those who are not worthy of his association. He always behaves respectfully in the presence of the persons who are superior to him in learning and virtue. (122)

“A thinking person automatically gets rid of miseries who partakes of whatever is left after distributing the food among his dependents, who works more and sleeps less, and who gives away a part of his wealth to the needy who is not even his friend. (123)

“Such a person is unharmed and his goals are never destroyed who keeps to himself, and acts on his own volition and in his own interest; others never know even if he acts against their wishes. (124)

“One ought to be ever ready to be at peace and conciliatory with others. One should be truthful, gentle and...
respectful towards others. Let one’s thoughts be pure. A person with these attributes shines like a glistening, highly valuable gem from a reputed mine among his class. (125)

“He is considered superior to others who is coy and does not show off. He radiates like the Sun because of his limitless brilliance, purity of heart and a composed mind. (126)

“Ambikānandana! All the five sons of the accursed king Pāṇḍava who were born in the forest, are brave like five Indras. You brought them up when young. You arranged for their education. They have always been obedient to you. (127)

“Brother! Give them their just share of the kingdom. You too would live happy along with your sons. Narendra, in case you act on this suggestion, neither the Devatās nor the humans would have a cause to criticize you. (128)”

Thus, in the Mahābhārata Udyogaparvāṇi-Prajāgaraparvāṇi, the dialogue between Vidura and Dhṛtarāṣṭra, end of the thirty-three chapter entitled “Vidura-Nīti”
CHAPTER TWO

धृतराष्ट्र उवच

जाग्रतो दश्मानस्य यत् कार्यमनुपशयसि।
तदृ बृहि त्वं हि नस्तात धर्मार्थः कुशलो हसिः॥ १॥

Responding to Vidura’s advice, Dhṛtarāṣṭra said, “My worries keep me awake. Please advise how I should proceed next. You alone among us are dexterous in the knowledge of Dharma and Artha.

(1)

लं मा यथावदृ विदुर प्रशाधि
प्रजापूर्वं सर्वमजातश्चः।
यन्मनसे पश्चादीनसत्तव
श्रेयस्करं बृहि तदृ वै कुरुणाम्॥ २॥

“Generous Vidura! Let me know your honest views after careful consideration. What would be the most suitable way out for Yudhishṭhira as well as the Kauravas?

(2)

पापशंकी पपमेवानुपशुन्
पृष्ठामि त्वं व्याकुलनात्मनाम्।
कवे तन्मेव बृहि सर्व यथाव
मनोहितं सर्वमजातश्चः॥ ३॥

“O wise man! I always fear the worst. All around, I see nothing but the signs of doom. With a disturbed mind, I ask you, ‘What are the demands of Ajātaśatru, Yudhishṭhira? Please tell me the truth.

(3)

विदुर उवच

शुभं वा यदि वा पापं दैवं वा यदि वा प्रियम्।
अपृष्टस्य सदृ बृहयद्यस्य नेत्रेषोत्पराभवम्॥ ४॥

Vidura replied, “As a matter of principle, an advice of a well-wisher must ever be honest even if it hurts and even if it is unasked for.

(4)
“Please listen to me carefully. I speak the truth which also caters to your well-being. Further, I speak for the benefit of all the Kauravas.

“O Bhārata! One should not indulge in deceitful acts in order to succeed in vicious designs.

“Likewise, it is not wise to be disheartened if you do not succeed even after putting in a careful and honest effort.

“One must be clear about one’s objective before initiating an activity. Think deep before taking a step forward. One must not hurry thoughtlessly.

“A thoughtful person must think of the purpose, the consequences of an activity and the accruing benefit, if any, before taking up a project or not.

“A king ought to understand the reality of the situation in his kingdom, progress or lack thereof under his rule. He must know the limits to which he can stretch his treasury. He should be aware of the measure of punishment that can be inflicted on the guilty. Otherwise, his rule will be unstable.
A man who is aware of the aforesaid limitations and is occupied with the pursuit of knowing *Dharma* and *Artha*, rules a stable kingdom. (11)

Having attained a kingdom, the king must not become overconfident and treat others unfairly. Arrogance and an unbending temperament destroy wealth as old age shatters good looks. (12)

A greedy fish swallows the steel bait covered with tempting victuals. It does not for a moment think of the consequences. (13)

Anyone who desires to make a headway ought to adopt means that will ensure his success. A man should eat what is edible, what can be digested and what will nourish his body. (14)

Anyone who plucks an unripe fruit does not enjoy its taste. Simultaneously, however, he destroys the seed as well. (15)

He who waits for the fruit to ripen prior to plucking it, enjoys its juice. With the seed, he grows more of the same fruit. (16)
“Like the black bee which sucks the sap of a flower while protecting it, a king gathers taxes painlessly from his subjects. (17)

A gardener plucks flowers but does not pull out the roots of the plant. Similarly, a king gathers taxes in order to provide protection to the public. He does not uproot them like the person making charcoal out of it. (18)

Carefully consider an action to its end. Will it be beneficial or harmful? A decision to perform a task should be based on such considerations. (19)

Certain unnecessary and uncommon tasks are never accomplished. These are not worth even a try. Human effort is wasted in trying to perform such tasks. (20)

A king who cannot be generous when pleased and who cannot be tough even when angry, is as much unwanted by the public as an impotent man by a woman. (21)

A wise man does not delay performing a task where with little effort a significant result can be achieved. He does not brook any hurdle in such activity. (22)
A king who looks kindly at his subjects, looks at them with such concentration as if he would drink them through his eyes into his heart, is loved by his Prajā even if he is not very voluble.

“A king should not be easily accessible. He ought to be like a flower-laden tree which does not bear fruits. He should be like a fruit-laden tree which is not easy to climb. Even though weak, he must exude confidence and strength. Such a king cannot be uprooted.

“A king makes his subjects happy if he serves them attentively, wholeheartedly, addresses them courteously and works for their welfare. [Literally, ‘serves his subjects with his eyes, mind, words and deeds.’]

“A king must not strike terror in the heart of his subjects just as a hunter frightens a deer. Such a ruler even though he has conquered the world, is soon deserted by his public.

“Like the winds scattering the clouds hither and thither, an unjust king destroys with his misdeeds even an inherited kingdom.
“If a king follows the righteous norms traditionally well-established by the wise, his empire prospers, the earth under his control produces more, and his wealth multiplies. With this happening, his glory and prestige scale new heights. (28)

“When a king deserting the path of Dharma, takes to the path of Adharma, his empire shrinks like a sheet of leather placed on fire. (29)

“Save the effort that is needed to destroy another kingdom and utilize that energy for the uplift of your kingdom. (30)

“Establish a kingdom in Dharma and protect it accordingly. A kingdom righteously attained does not slip out of a king’s hands nor does a king let it go. (31)

“Like extracting gold out of rocks, one must learn something of substance even from a child who babbles, and an insane who talks aimlessly. (32)

“Like a ascetic who depends on small gleanings of grain even from a rock, a man of substance gathers knowledge from all sources such as thoughtful sayings,
intellectual writings as well as from watching and emulating the good deeds of others. (33)

“Its sense of smell leads a cow. A Brahmin follows the Vedic percepts. A king keeps an eye on his kingdom through his secret agents. The ordinary folk use their eyes to perceive. (34)

“A Rajan! A cow which does not easily yield her milk, suffers discomfort. The one that allows itself to be milked easily is not maltreated. (35)

“A malleable piece of metal does not require a furnace. A bent wooden stick needs no further effort to bend it. (36)

“All these illustrations indicate that the wise bow in the presence of the mighty. Giving in to a stronger person is like bowing before Indra. (37)

“The clouds protect the animals. The ministers assist a king. The husbands look after their wives. The Brahmins derive support from the Vedas. (38)

“The truth protects Dharma while concentration and...
application preserves learning. Constant care protects a person’s charm and noble conduct protects a family. (39)

“Correct weight and measurement and care protect the grain. The horses need to exercise all the time. The cows need constant care. Dirty clothes offer protection to women by hiding their charms. (40)

“In my view, birth in a noble family is no armour for a characterless man. A man though born low is superior if he is of a sound moral character. (41)

“A man suffers from an incurable malady if he is envious of others’ wealth, beauty, valour, social status, happiness, good fortune, and prestige. (42)

“One should be afraid of undertaking an undesirable task, one should be afraid of delay in what is to be accomplished and leakage of secrets yet to be achieved. One should not imbibe intoxicating liquor. (43)

“For an arrogant person boasting of his education, wealth and his family standing, can be poisonous. [It can result in an unseemly behaviour and undesirable consequences.] However, for the noble, these attributes are a source of strength [to do good.] (44)
"Even a villain takes airs and considers himself a virtuous person in case he is approached by a noble person with a request."

“The saintly persons provide moral support to the intellectuals as well as to other persons of a saintly disposition. Even the wicked are helped by the saints. However, the reverse never happens.

“A well dressed person wins over others in an assembly. Anyone possessing a cow can successfully cater to sweet buds. If you possess a carriage, you can comfortably travel long distances. Likewise, a man of noble character easily wins over others.

“Character is the bed-rock of a human being. If it is destroyed, his life, wealth and his relatives are of no advantage to him.

“O superior among the Bharatas! The arrogant wealthy take more of meat in their meals while the middle class is happy with milk and milk products. The poor, however, use more of oil than other ingredients while cooking food."
“The paupers always relish their meal because being hungry they enjoy whatever is available. This sort of pleasure is not available to the rich. (50)

“The rich in this world cannot even digest a proper meal [because the tension in their life upsets their digestion.] A poor man can digest even wood pieces. (51)

“A lowly person is worried about unemployment. A middle-class man fears death. The highest fear dishonour more than any other thing. (52)

“While liquor certainly intoxicates and is therefore undesirable, the desire to live a luxurious life intoxicates all the more. It is so frightening because a person enamoured of an indulgent life does not return to his senses before his downfall. (53)

“The world suffers from uncontrolled senses and resultant desires. This results in unbridled indulgence. Everyone suffers thus like the stars diminished in the presence of the Sun. (54)

“The sufferings of a person who is overwhelmed by the five senses of touch, smell, sight, taste and sound, senses which lead the human beings astray, multiply like the waxing moon. (55)
A king who, without first conquering his five senses and the mind, asks his ministers to comply with his orders, or who, without subordinating his advisers, wants to conquer his enemies, is soon deserted by his public. (56)

A king who takes them on as his enemies and conquers his five senses and the wandering mind, surely succeeds in being victorious over his ministers as well as his enemies. (57)

A sober king who has conquered his senses and his wayward mind, who awards punishment to the guilty and undertakes a task only after weighing the pros and cons, has Lakṣmī always at his beck and call. (58)

Rājan! The human body is like a chariot of which the soul is the charioteer. The sensory perceptions are the horses geared to pull this chariot. An ever-alert man who has reigned them, who is dexterous, clever and in control of himself, travels on this chariot of life in joy and peace. (59)

The senses when not reined are powerful enough to destroy a man just as untamed and uncontrollable horses throw off the foolish charioteer. (60)
An ignorant man, unable to control his senses, takes the real for the unreal and accepts the apparent for what might be worthless. Such a man [having lost his sense of discrimination] rejoices even when he is in fact deep in sorrow. (61)

Ignoring Dharma and Artha, such a person becomes a slave to his senses. Soon he gets deprived of his prosperity, his woman, his wealth, and even his life. (62)

He may be wealthy but if he has not overpowered his senses, his wealth gets destroyed because of his lack of control over senses. (63)

Controlling your mind, the five senses as well as your sense of discrimination, try to look within yourself in order to realize your soul. Your soul is your friend as well as your enemy. (64)

Realization of your soul [of yourself] makes the soul your true friend. It is your well-wisher as well as your enemy. (65)

Råjan! As two large fish trapped in a net with tiny
holes, working together tear the net apart, lust and anger do away with the sense of discrimination. (66)

समवेश्येह धर्मार्थोऽसम्भारान् योजधिगच्छति।
स वै सम्भृतसम्भारः सततं सुखमेध्यते॥ ६७॥

“He who keeping in mind the dictates of Dharma and Artha in this world, organizes the means of achieving his ends, forever stays happy and prosperous with their help.(67)

यः पंचाभ्यतन्त्वान् शत्रूनिर्विजितं मनोमयान्।
जिगीण्वति रिपूनयान् रिपोडभिधवन्ति तम॥ ६८॥

“Anyone who without having conquered his five senses which are basically his weaknesses and therefore inimical to his well-being, tries to conquer his enemies, is defeated. [The unvanquished five senses are enemies within, hidden and dangerous.] (68)

दृष्टानं हि महात्मानो बध्यमाना: स्वकर्मधि:।
इन्द्रियाणामनीशत्वाद् राजानो राज्यविध्यमेयः॥ ६९॥

“In case the five senses are not subjugated, even the great saints become subject to the consequences of their deeds. In a similar situation, the kings stay mired in meaningless lives of luxury to the detriment of their kingdom. (69)

असंत्यागात् पापकृतमपापां--
स्तुत्यो दण्डः सृष्टते मिश्रभावात्।
शुष्केऽणाः दहते मिश्रभावात्
तस्मात् पापे: सह सन्धि न कुर्यात्॥ ७०॥

“Even an innocent man suffers the consequences of his association with the guilty. It is like water-soaked sticks catching fire easily when tied with a dry pack. Hence, avoid an evil person under all circumstances. (70)

निजानुस्त्यतत: शत्रून् पंच पंचप्रयोजनान्।
यो मोहान निगृहाति तमापदु: ग्रस्ते चरम॥ ७१॥

“Anyone who unwisely and because of foolish
attachment, is unable to control the inimical horses of the five sensory pleasures going astray, meets with an undesirable fate.

(A attachment, is unable to control the inimical horses of the five sensory pleasures going astray, meets with an undesirable fate. (71)

“A villainous person is a stranger to the following virtues: Not finding faults with virtuous attributes [in others]; simplicity; purity; contentment; polite conversation; control of the five senses; truth and an absence of a fickle temperament.

B villainous person is a stranger to the following virtues: Not finding faults with virtuous attributes [in others]; simplicity; purity; contentment; polite conversation; control of the five senses; truth and an absence of a fickle temperament. (72)

“Bharata, the vile, the mean and the lowly persons do not have the following qualities: Knowledge of the self; an absence of anger; forbearance; truthful conduct; keeping one’s word and charity.

Bharata, the vile, the mean and the lowly persons do not have the following qualities: Knowledge of the self; an absence of anger; forbearance; truthful conduct; keeping one’s word and charity. (73)

“An uncaring fool causes anguish to the learned by calling them names and demeaning them. The abusive person commits a sin. On the contrary, the person offended gets rid of a sin by forgiving the guilty.

An uncaring fool causes anguish to the learned by calling them names and demeaning them. The abusive person commits a sin. On the contrary, the person offended gets rid of a sin by forgiving the guilty. (74)

“Violence is the strength of the wicked. The king is powerful because he can punish the guilty. A woman’s strength is her ability to care. Forgiveness is the weapon of the virtuous.

Violence is the strength of the wicked. The king is powerful because he can punish the guilty. A woman’s strength is her ability to care. Forgiveness is the weapon of the virtuous. (75)

“Rājan, it is quite a job to control one’s utterances.
However, even the meaningful, literary and learned language cannot be overused.

(Abhayadhiti katyaan vibhivaka sauvabhushita.)

Saeve durbhushita rajanarthayopapadyate II 77 II

“A well-spoken word can be a source of immense joy and well-being. The same intent if conveyed in bitter words can cause a lot of damage.

Rohate saayakervindh vaan pasuuna hatam.
Vaacha duruska bihathum na sargohiti vaakshamata II 78 II

“A forest damaged by the hunters’ arrows and sliced by axes will revive in time. However, a wound caused by bitter taunts does not heal.

Karishnaliikanaarachannihantita sharirat.
Vakaasalyata t na nihirtu shakyo haidishayo hi sa II 79 II

“The arrows named Karni, Nalika and Naraca can be plucked out of the body. However, the thorn of a bitter spite cannot be pulled out because it pierces deep into the heart.

Vakshayaka vadanaanishyantita
Yerahaat shochita rajyahanit.
Parshy namrshsu te patantit
Tanu panduto navamshjeetu parabhya II 80 II

“Unpleasant words coming out of a mouth like arrows hurt the core of the listener. The aggrieved person suffers day and night. Hence the learned should avoid using any bitter and foul language.

Yam deeva prajatantar pushtaay paraabhav.
Budhiksh tatyapakshantito sauvachriinani parshyit II 81 II

“When the gods desire to vanquish a person, they deprive him of his wisdom. The latter then, in sheer perversity, confines himself to undesirable deeds alone.
“When the times are bad, discretion gets buried under the dirt of ignorance and malicious thinking. Under such circumstances even unfair and unjust means, deeply ingrained in the psyche, appear to be just and justified.(82)

“O mighty Bharata! Your sons have lost all sense of discretion on account of their enmity against the Pāṇḍavas. You are obviously unable to appreciate the situation. (83)

“Maharaja! Your obedient nephew Yudhiṣṭhira alone is fit to be the king. He has all the attributes of a capable king, even of the universe. (84)

“He is superior to all your sons. He is well versed in the concepts of Dharma and Artha. He is glorious. He is extremely wise and is a favourite of fortune. (85)

“Rājendra, among the followers of Dharma, Yudhiṣṭhira is supreme. He is kind, merciful, and pleasant of temperament. He holds you in great respect. That is why he is tolerating indescribable suffering. (86)

Thus, in the Mahābhārata Udyogaparvāṇi-Prajāgaraparvāṇi, the dialogue between Vidura and Dhṛtarāṣṭra, end of the thirty-fourth chapter entitled “Vidura-Niti”
CHAPTER THREE

Dhṛtarāṣṭra Uvac

बृहि भूयो महाबुद्धे धर्मार्थसहितं वचः।
श्रुण्वतो नासित मे तृतीयचित्राणीह भाषसे॥ १॥

Dhṛtarāṣṭra said, “My wise brother, tell me more about Dharma and Artha. My curiosity is insatiable. The more you speak, the more I want to listen. Your point of view on the subject is unique.” (1)

विदुर उवाच

सर्वतीर्थेषु वा स्नानं सर्वभूतेषु चार्जवम्।
उभे त्वेते समे स्यातामार्जेन वा विशिष्यते॥ २॥

Vidura replied, “Taking a bath in the holy places and cordial behaviour towards others are equally virtuous. Hence polite behaviour matters more than anything else. (2)

आर्जेवं प्रतिपद्धस्व पुत्रेशु सतं विभो।
इह कौतिः परं प्रायः प्रेत्य स्वर्गमवाभ्यसि॥ ३॥

“Above, O brother, treat your sons and the Pāṇḍava princes on an equal footing. [Both are your children.] Treat them kindly. Thereby, you will gain name and fame in this world and on your death ascend to heavens. (3)

यावत् कौतिर्मन्यद्राय पुण्या लोके प्रगीयते।
तावत् स पुरुषव्याय स्वर्गलोके महीयते॥ ४॥

“O Lion among men! Long as the virtuous and glorious deeds of a person are remembered and recited in this world, he stays in the Swargaloka. (4)

अत्रायुदाहरतीममितिहासं पुरातनम्।
विरोचनस्य संवादं केशिनयथें सुध्वन्ना॥ ५॥
To illustrate this, since ancient times, the conversation between Sudhanvā and Virocana with reference to Keśini is narrated.

“The story relates to Keśini’s Swaymvara. She was an unusually charming woman. She appeared in a Swaymvara gathering in order to choose the best of a groom among several gathered to win her hand.

Virocana, son of a Daitya king was present there to win over her hand. Addressing him Keśini said,

Virocana replied, “Keśini, we are the descendants of Prajāpati. We are superior to others. The entire world belongs to us. Neither the Devatās nor the Brahmins compare with us.”
Keśini said, “Virocana, let us stay put and wait till tomorrow when Sudhanvā arrives. I shall thereafter come face to face with the two of you at the same time.” (10)

Virocana responded and said, “I shall do as you please, O shy woman. Tomorrow morning you will face me and Sudhanvā at the same time.” (11)

Vidura continued: “O mighty king, next morning at sunrise Sudhanvā arrived at the scene where Virocana waited with Keśini. (12)

“O mighty Bharata, Sudhanvā approached Keśini and Virocana, son of Prahalāda. The woman stood up to honour the Brahmin and offered him a seat, water to wash his feet and Arghya.” (13s)

Addressing the two of them, Sudhanvā said, “Prahlādanandana, I can merely touch your pretty, golden throne but I cannot sit upon it. That would make us equal.” (14)
Virocana replied, “Sudhanvā, you are not entitled to sit next to me on my throne. For you a stool, a Kuśa mat or a mat woven with reeds would suffice.” (15)

Sudhanvā responded, “A father and son can share a seat. So can two Brahmans, two Kṣatriyas, two Vaiśyas, two Śūdras or two aged persons. However, others cannot share a common seat. (16)

“Your father, Prahalāda looks after me sitting in front at a lower level. You are a mere child brought up in the luxury of a palace. You are not yet aware of such niceties.” (17)

Virocana replied, “Sudhanvā, I put on stake all the gold, cows, horses and the wealth at the command of the Asuras. Let us go to a learned person and ask him which one of us is the superior of the two.” (18)

Sudhanvā responded: “Virocana, you keep your gold,
cows, horses and wealth to yourself. We wager our lives and put this question to a knowledgeable person.” (91)

विरोचन उचाच

आवां कुत्र गमिष्याव: प्राणयोर्विघपो कुते।
न तु देवेभं स्थाता न मनुष्येशु कर्मिचित् ॥ २० ॥

Virocana said, “Betting upon our lives, where shall we go? I cannot approach the Devatās nor the human beings for a decision.” (21)

सुधनवोवाच

पितरं ते गमिष्याव: प्राणयोर्विघपो कुते।
पुत्रस्यापि स हेतोर्हि प्रहादो नानूतें वदेत् ॥ २१ ॥

Sudhanvā said—“Now that both of us have put our lives on stake, we shall go to your father for a decision. I am sure that Prahalāda would not speak untruth even for the sake of his son.” (22)

विदुर उचाच

एवं कुतपणौ कुडा तत्राभिजगमतुस्तदा।
विरोचनसुधनवानौ प्रहादो यत्र तिष्ठति ॥ २२ ॥

Continuing, Vidura said, “Having set up a wager in anger, both Sudhanvā and Virocana approached Prahalāda.” (22)

प्रहाद उचाच

इमो तौ समप्रदृश्येते याभ्यां न चरिं त सह।
आशीविषाविव कुडावेकमार्गार्विहागतौ ॥ २३ ॥

Looking at them, Prahalāda thought to himself, “These two have never even walked together. However, today Sudhanvā and Virocana, walking like two angry serpents have walked the same path to approach me. How come?” (23)

किं वै सहैवं चरस्यो न पुरा चरस्य: सह।
विरोचनेतत् पृच्छामि किं ते सन्धयं सुधनवना ॥ २४ ॥
Addressing Virocana, the king said, “Have you made friends with Sudhanvâ? How is it that you are together? It has never been so before.” (24)

Virocana replied—“Father, Sudhanvâ has not tied a bond of friendship with me. We have bet upon our lives to settle an issue. Hence we are here and you are the judge. Please tell me the truth. Do not prevaricate.” (25)

Prahalâda asked his attendants—Fetch water and Madhuparka to welcome Sudhanvâ. Later addressing the guest, he said, “Brahmin, you are my honoured guest. I have a white, well-tended cow to present you with.” (26)

Sudhanvâ replied—“Madhuparka and water have already been offered to me en-route. Prahalâda, kindly answer me in truth whether this Brahmin is superior to Virocana or not?” (27)

Prahalâda replied—“Brahmin, I have only one son. You stand as his adversary. [It is a difficult situation.] How can I decide the issue between the two of you?” (28)
Sudhanvå replied—“O wise man! You hand over all your wealth including the cows to Virocana, your legitimate son. However, settle our dispute truthfully.” (29)

Prahalåda replied—“Sudhanvå! Tell me the fate of an evil person who tells a lie and gives a false decision.” (30)

Sudhanvå said, “A judge who gives a perverse decision meets the fate of a woman whose husband visits another woman at night, of a gambler who at the end of a day has lost the bet or of a person who is compelled to carry a weight even though he is tired having worked throughout the day. (31)

“A king who gives an unjust and false decision is confined to his city or is thrown out to starve and face his enemies. (32)

“Our lies lead us to hell: five generations suffer for a lie told to retain animals. Ten generations suffer if the lie relates to a cow. For lies relating to horses, a hundred generations
suffer in hell. The punishment for a lie relating to humans is for one thousand generations to rot in hell.

“The preceding as well as the succeeding generations suffer in hell for a lie told for the sake of gold. A person who indulges in lies for the sake of a woman or for land, destroys himself. Kindly avoid doing so.”

Addressing his son, Prahalåda said, “Sudhanvå’s father, Angirå is superior to me. Sudhanvå is superior to you and so is his mother to your mother. You have, therefore, lost your bet today.

Addressing Sudhanvå, Prahalåda said, “If you please, I would like to have Virocana returned by you.”

Sudhanvå replied—“Prahalåda! You have followed the path of Dharma. You have not spoken an untruth out of attachment and self-interest. Hence I return your precious son to you. “Please ask Virocana to accompany me and wash my feet in Kumåri Kešini’s presence.”
Vidura continued thus—“Rājendra! Therefore, do not resort to falsehood for the sake of land. By abstaining from truth in the interest of your son, do not lead yourself, your sons and your ministers to perdition.” (39)

“The Devatās do not stand guard with sticks like the cowherds. They bless the man they want to take care of with wisdom.” (40)

“There is no doubt about it that as a man involves himself in virtuous deeds and works for the welfare of others, he succeeds in whatever he aims for.” (41)

“Even the scriptures do not absolve a crook who cheats others. Like the young birds flying out of the coop as soon as they grow feathers, the Vedas too desert the wicked when he nears his end.” (42)

“The Vedas prescribe that one must eschew the
following: Liquor; strife and violence; enmity of a group; marital discord; inciting conflict between members of a family; mutiny against a king; arguments between a man and woman and evil deeds. (43)

“The following seven must never be called as witnesses: A palmist; a trader in stolen goods; a gambler; a physician; an enemy; a friend and a dancer. (44)

“The following four actions if performed with dignity and in faith, make a person fearless: Agnihotra [offering oblations to fire]; observing silence; self-education and performing Yajña. In case these tasks are not undertaken correctly and in true spirit, they generate a fear [of an impending calamity] (45)

“The following can be classified as guilty like the one who has killed a Brahmin: A person who sets a house on fire; a person who poisons another; a paramour who depends on the earnings of a bastard; a person who earns
a living selling liquor; a person who makes arms; a person who backbites; the one who stabs a friend in the back; a womanizer; a person who aborts; one who sleeps with the teacher’s wife; a Brahmin who indulges in liquor; a sharp-tempered person; one who blurts like a crow; an atheist; one who denounces the Vedas; one who poses as a priest just because he carries a ladle; an outcaste; a cruel person and the one who though powerful harms another person even though asked for protection. (46–48)

“Gold is tested in fire. Nobility is judged by behaviour. A Sādhu is recognized by his conduct. The bravery of a person is revealed only when he confronts danger. Financial distress brings out the best in a composed person. A friend or a foe is judged when a person faces a grave misfortune or danger. (49)

“Old age takes a toll on beauty. Forbearance is run out by hope. Death brings an end to life. A person who is ever finding fault with others cannot act righteously. Anger destroys riches. Being servile to the wicked destroys character. A man loses all sense of shame when swayed by lust, and arrogance destroys everything. (50)

“Good fortune brings wealth. It is multiplied by boldness.
It takes root in wisdom. Thereafter the riches are preserved by care and control. (51)


Respected brother! However, there is one virtue which overrides all the above noted ones. When a person is honoured by the king this one virtue surpasses all others. (53)

Rājan! On this earth, eight virtues make you feel as if you are in Swargaloka. Four of these are associated with the saints and are ingrained in them. The other four are aspired for by noble persons. (54)
The saints practice self-control or the control of the five senses, truth, simplicity and politeness. The noble persons perform *Yajña*, give charity, acquire education and perform austerities. (55)

The following have been described as the eight parts to *Dharma*: 1. *Yajña*, 2. Learning, 3. Charity, 4. Penance, 5. Truthfulness, 6. Forgiveness, 7. Kindness and 8. Absence of greed. (56)

The first four of the above might even make the practitioner arrogant. However, the last four are virtues not to be found among those who are not *Mahātmās* [realized souls]. (57)

An assembly lacks substance in the absence of the elders. He is not fit to be called an elder who does not stand by *Dharma*. Without truth there is no *Dharma* and where there is guile, there is no truth. (58)

“Truth, elegance, ability to patiently hear the other
person, learning, noble birth, high character, valour, wealth, and ability to talk well are the route to Heaven. (59)

“A notorious person indulging in evil deeds begets nothing but sin. On the contrary, a noble person performing virtuous tasks is blessed with a deserving reward. (60)

“Hence a person known and praised for his good deeds must never commit a sin. Sinful deeds repeatedly indulged in, destroy one’s discretion and wisdom. (61)

“His wisdom destroyed, a person repeatedly commits sin. Likewise, a virtuous deed performed again and again, makes a person wiser. (62)

“Growing wiser, a man always performs virtuous deeds. Such a person transcends to Heaven. That is why a man ought always to wholeheartedly perform good deeds. (63)

“A person who is always finding faults with others, who is cruel, who rubs salt into others’ wounds, who always acts inimical, and who is wicked, soon suffers grievously because he is indulging in sinful deeds. (64)
On the contrary, a person with a positive attitude and who is not seeking to find fault with others, is always occupied with noble deeds. He attains happiness and is respected all around. (65)

“He alone is entitled to be called a Pañḍita or a wise man who approaches the learned for wisdom. It is only the latter who having attained Dharma and Artha, are able to progress steadily. (66)

“He who works hard during the day, sleeps at peace at night. Similarly a man ought to work hard for the eight months of the dry season so that he can take it easy during the four months of the rainy season. (67)

One must work hard when young so as to live his old age in happy contentment. Likewise, one must lead one’s life in such an orderly fashion that he can be happy even in afterlife. (68)

“It is a matter of grace to approve of food that is easily digested, appreciate a blameless wife’s looks even when she is past her prime, say bravo to a warrior after his...
victory and recognize the achievement of a Tapasvi when he has attained higher knowledge and wisdom. (69)

“An effort made to hide deficiencies with the help of wealth earned by foul means, does not succeed. Rather, this highlights more shortcomings. (70)

"Guru guides the pupils who exercise control over their mind and senses. The king disciplines the wicked. Those who indulge in sin under various guises Yama, son of Surya takes their control. (71)

“It is difficult to go to the bottom of a Rishi, a river, the family of a Mahatma, and misdeeds of a fallen woman. (72)

“Rajan! A king rules for long if he worships the Brahmins, if he is charitable, if he is kind to his kin and if he is of a noble character. (73)

“The brave, the learned and those who know how to serve others, garner wealth from the earth. (74)
“Bhārata! Well-thought out actions are preferable. Next are the deeds done with the use of force. Jobs done where the thighs and legs are involved are placed in the next category. Carrying dead weight is the worst of a job.

(75)

राजन! How do you expect to prosper by handing over administration to Duryodhana, Śakuni, the idiot Duḥśāsana and Karna?

(76)

“Bharataśreṣṭha! The Pāṇḍavas are endowed with all the superior attributes. They treat you like a father. You too should accord them a fair treatment as if they are your sons.

(77)

Thus, in the Mahābhārata Udyogaparva-Prajāgaraparvanī, the dialogue between Vidura and Dhṛtarāṣṭra, ends of the thirty-five chapter entitled “Vidura-Niti”
CHAPTER FOUR

विदुर उवाच

अत्रेोदाहरतीममितिहासं पुरातनम्।
आत्रेयस्य च संवादं साध्यानां चेति न: श्रुतम्॥ १॥

Vidura continued and said, “In this context I have heard of a conversation between Dattātreyā and the gods he was worshipping.

(1)

“In ancient times, the wise Maharṣi Dattātreyā, a man of firm determination, was wandering as a royal swan [Paramahamsa]. The gods asked him:

(2)

“Though we are the gods to be placated, we are unable to gauge your reality just by looking at you. We believe that you are learned in scriptures, wise and a composed person. Kindly say a few learned words to us.”

(3)

The Hamsa replied: “Devatās! I have learnt that a person’s duty lies in being composed, in control of the
senses and the mind and in following the Truth and the 
Dharma. Shedding all prejudices, he should treat everyone 
equally whether he likes him or not. (4)

“He should not retort to foul words with expletives. 
Controlling his anger, the person who forgives the guilty, 
reduces him to nothingness. To him is transferred any 
merit that might be due to the guilty. (5)

“He must not insult another nor abuse him. He must 
not betray a friend nor serve another who is mean and 
vicious. He should not be arrogant nor of a loose moral 
character. He must avoid use of angry, harsh and unkind 
words in addressing another. (6)

“Harsh and unkind words hurt the listener in the core 
of his heart, mind and even bones. Such words make the 
life of the addressee miserable as if sinned. Therefore, a 
righteous person should give up the use of harsh words 
forever. (7)
“A person who uses harsh and unbecoming words, who is hot tempered, who hurts others in their weak moments, and who pierces others with poisonous barbs, is like a pauper, or like the dregs in a rubbish heap. [In the form of foul and harsh language] he carries penury and death in his mouth. (8)

“If a righteous person is injured by another with penetrating arrows of taunts that burn like fire or the rays of the Sun, the learned should take it as if his suffering is adding to his stock of Puñya [merit.]. (9)

“Like cloth taking on the colour of a dye in which it is soaked, a noble person is adversely affected if he renders service to or keeps the company of an evil person, a fraudulent Tapasvī or a thief. His coming under their sway affects his character (10)

“Even the gods await the arrival of a person who does not speak ill of others or who does not compel others to back-bite. Such a person unless provoked, does not attack others nor does he provoke others to hurt anyone.
He is so noble that even if hurt by someone, he forgives the guilty. (11)

“Anonymous: Profane speech, ye shun. 
Silent speech is better than speech. (12)

A human being takes on the colour of the company he keeps or of those he serves. He can mould himself according to his will as well. (13)

“A man is freed from the desires he wants to eschew or take his mind off from. Once completely detached, he is unaffected by any sorrow. (14)

“He moves beyond happiness and sorrow who is neither vanquished nor has a desire to overcome another, who is not inimical to anyone, who does not like to hurt the others, and who looks at infamy and aplomb with equanimity. (15)
“He is a superior being who wishes everyone well, who never nurses an ill-will for anyone else, who is truthful and soft-spoken and who has conquered his senses. (16)

“That person is slightly lower who does not make a false promise, who delivers what he has promised, and who is aware of others’ shortcomings. (17)

“The following are the vilest of persons: An unjust and cruel king; a person full of several shortcomings; a tainted person; someone who out of anger denounces everyone else; an ungrateful person; a person not friendly with anyone else and one who is evil at heart. (18)

“He is mean who out of self-doubt does not believe in doing well to others. He keeps a distance even from his friends. (19)

“For your uplift serve or seek help from the most superior persons. If unavoidable, go to persons at the next level. However, under no circumstances, cringe in front of the vilest to ask for a gain. (20)
Even if a man gets enriched with help from undesirable persons, or by putting in tireless effort, because of his wisdom or by sheer hard work, he cannot hope to attain the respect, character and dignity of the persons of reputed families.”

Even the Devatās, knowledgeable in Dharma and Artha, desire to be friends with the persons from families of status. Please tell me which these superior families are?”

Those families are superior to others, the members of which have the following attributes: Meditation or penance; subjugation of senses; a study of the Vedas; performance of Yajña; holy matrimonial alliances; distribution of grains in charity all the time and noble conduct.
The families of repute are never lax in their moral attitudes. Their young members do not cause pain to their parents with their shortcomings. Such families willingly follow the path of *Dharma*. By rejecting the path of falsehood, these families enhance their prestige. (24)

“The families decline if they do not perform *Yajña*, if they marry in tainted families, if they give up reading the scriptures or if they violate the tenets of *Dharma*. (25)

“Destroying the wealth of the *Devatās*, usurping a Brahmin’s assets and overstepping the limit of decorum and decency in dealing with the Brahmins, even the highly regarded families come to naught. (26)

“Bharata, humiliating the Brahmins or usurping the pledged wealth bring disrepute even to families of status. (27)

“The families which, even though endowed with the wealth of cows, human beings or riches, do not maintain a high moral character, cannot be counted among the nobility. (28)

“The families of high moral conduct even though poor, can be counted among the superiors. Their prestige is enhanced by their conduct. (29)
Take care that you do not deviate from the path of the righteous conduct. Wealth is transitory. It comes and goes. A virtuous man, even though reduced to penury, is not considered a pauper. However, the one who has strayed from the path of virtue, is diminished for good. (30)

Families devoid of virtue cannot prosper even if they are rich in milch cattle, horses, other animals and fields rich in harvest. (31)

In our families, may there be none who is inimical to others! May there be no king or minister who usurps the wealth belonging to others! May none be a traitor, a cheat, or the one indulging in falsehood! May there be none who takes a meal before offering it to the ancestors, the parents and the guests. (32)

He shall not enter our assembly who kills a Brahmin, who is jealous of a Brahmin, and who does not offer 

Pīṇḍa [a round mass or ball of food] and 

Tarpaṇa [presenting libations of water] to the ancestors. (33)

In our families, may there be none who is inimical to others! May there be no king or minister who usurps the wealth belonging to others! May none be a traitor, a cheat, or the one indulging in falsehood! May there be none who takes a meal before offering it to the ancestors, the parents and the guests. (32)

He shall not enter our assembly who kills a Brahmin, who is jealous of a Brahmin, and who does not offer 

Pīṇḍa [a round mass or ball of food] and 

Tarpaṇa [presenting libations of water] to the ancestors. (33)
“A virtuous person is never in short supply of a mat of grass, earth to sit upon, water and sweet words. (34)

“My wise King! These four items are faithfully and devotedly offered to welcome the guests in the homes of the virtuous who are otherwise busy in holy pursuits. (35)

“Even a small carriage can carry a heavy load while a large piece of wood cannot. Likewise, only the courageous persons of high descent can carry heavy responsibility and not others. (36)

“He is not a friend who always inspires fear with his angry behaviour or who has been placated for fear of harm. He alone is a true friend who can be trusted like a father. Others are at best companions. (37)

“Even a hitherto stranger, if he behaves like a friend, becomes a relation, a friend, support and shelter. (38)

“A fickle person, or one who does not look after the
elderly, or one whose thinking is never stable, can never make permanent friends. (39)

“Ancient and one whose thinking is never stable, can never make permanent friends. (40)

An ignorant man, a man who changes his mind all the time, or a man who is ensnared by his lustful senses, cannot attain Artha [objective, desire, riches]. He is like a Haṁsa which hovers around a lake that has dried but never steps into it.

An evil man’s temperament is fickle like that of a cloud. He gets angry for no reason and is pleased without justification. (41)

“An evil man’s temperament is fickle like that of a cloud. He gets angry for no reason and is pleased without justification. (42)

Even carnivores do not feed upon the flesh of ungrateful men who betray their friends who have helped them and who have treated them with kindness.

Honour a friend whether he is rich or a pauper. Making no demand on friends, one ought not to look forward to material benefits from them. (43)

“Honour a friend whether he is rich or a pauper. Making no demand on friends, one ought not to look forward to material benefits from them. (44)

Distress, grief, pessimism or worry destroy beauty, valour, and knowledge. Rather, a person affected by these negative attitudes, soon becomes sick. (45)
“Do not grieve because it does not beget what you aspire to. Grief merely brings bodily suffering and pleases your enemies. (45)

“A human being dies repeatedly and is reborn. He suffers losses and recoups them. He asks others for favours while at another time others approach him for their benefit. Similarly, in life he grieves for others while at another time they grieve for him. (46)

“Joy and sorrow, creation and destruction, profit or loss, birth or death, are a part of every life cycle. Hence a composed person should neither rejoice in nor moan their occurrence. (47)

“Our six senses are quite fickle. When these perceptions [recklessly] indulge in a certain deed, discretion is correspondingly extinguished. It is like water leaking out of a pot with a hole.” (48)
Dhṛtarāṣṭra interrupted: “I have treated Yudhiṣṭhira deviously. He is bound by the essence of Dharma like fire hidden in a piece of wood. The Pāṇḍavas will now wage a war and destroy my foolish progeny. (49)

“O wise brother! This fear agitates my mind. Everything around me too is upset by the thought of an impending catastrophe. Therefore, guide me to the path of peace. Advise me how to quench my apprehension.” (50)

Vidura replied: “My faultless king! I do not see any other means of pacifying your apprehensions except erudition, Tapasyā, abjuration of greed and command of the five senses. (51)

“A man wards off fear with intelligence. He attains to a higher level with the help of Tapasyā. Service of the Guru brings him knowledge. Yoga leads to the peace of mind.” (52)

“The persons looking forward to salvation do not depend on charity. They do not even depend upon the virtue gained by reading the Vedas. They lead their life in this world giving up attachment, lust, jealousy and greed.” (53)
“One’s store of happiness is augmented at the conclusion of a balanced education, a justified war, virtuous deeds and intense meditation. (54)

“Rājan! Those who sow seeds of disunity do not get a sound sleep even lying on well-made beds. They do not enjoy the company of women nor the eulogies sung by the court singers. (55)

Those who are inimical to each other, never act according to Dharma. They can never be happy. They are unable to garner a good name. They are not interested in being at peace with others. (56)

Such persons do not appreciate even what is said for their well-being. They are unable to take care of their possessions or of their welfare. Such divisive persons are ultimately destroyed. Their situation is hopeless. (57)

“It is normal for a cow to give milk. So too, it is probable
for a Brahmin to be a Tapasvī and for a woman to be playful. Likewise, to fear one’s kith and kin is quite natural. (58)

Likewise, to fear one’s kith and kin is quite natural. (58)

“Slim creepers, daily nourished with water, withstand strong gusts of wind for years, for they are many and together. The same is true of noble and truthful persons. Individually weak, they are formidable when united. (59)

“Slim creepers, daily nourished with water, withstand strong gusts of wind for years, for they are many and together. The same is true of noble and truthful persons. Individually weak, they are formidable when united. (59)

“O Bharataśreṣṭha! Burning logs of wood emit smoke when kept separate. When these are brought together, a conflagration occurs. Members of a clan suffer when disunited and prosper when united. (60)

“O Bharataśreṣṭha! Burning logs of wood emit smoke when kept separate. When these are brought together, a conflagration occurs. Members of a clan suffer when disunited and prosper when united. (60)

“Dhṛtarāṣṭra! Those who try to exhibit their strength over the cows, the Brahmins, the women and members of their clan, fall to the ground like ripe fruit cracked at the stem. (61)

“Dhṛtarāṣṭra! Those who try to exhibit their strength over the cows, the Brahmins, the women and members of their clan, fall to the ground like ripe fruit cracked at the stem. (61)

“A tree standing alone, though strong, widespread and with deep roots, can be uprooted with all its branches by a powerful windstorm in no time. (62)

“A tree standing alone, though strong, widespread and with deep roots, can be uprooted with all its branches by a powerful windstorm in no time. (62)

“However, when a number of trees stand together as a group in a grove, they can withstand the fiercest of gales. (63)

“However, when a number of trees stand together as a group in a grove, they can withstand the fiercest of gales. (63)
“Like the wind overcoming the strength of a solitary tree, a man endowed with all the qualities, if alone, is considered an easy prey by his enemies.

(64)

अन्योन्यसमपुष्टस्माधान्योन्यापाश्रयेण च।
ज्ञातयः समप्रवर्धन्ते सरसीवोत्त्वलान्युत। ॥ ६५ ॥

“However, when united and supporting each other, members of a clan prosper like the lotus in a pond. (65)

अवध्या ब्राह्मणा गावे ज्ञातयः शिशुः स्त्रियः।
येषां चानानि भुज्जीत ये च स्यूः शरणागताः। ॥ ६६ ॥

“One must never kill a Brahmin, a cow, a member of the family, a child, a woman, the one who provides for food in charity and the one who seeks protection. (66)

न मनुष्ये गुणः कशिचदृ राजन् सधनतामृते।
अनातुत्वाद भद्रं ते मृतकल्य हि रोगिणः। ॥ ६७ ॥

“Rājan! God bless you! For human beings there is nothing better than wealth and good health. A sick person is like a corpse.

(67)

अव्याधिजं कटुकं शीर्षरोगि
पापानुबन्धं परूर्षं तीक्ष्णमुष्णाम्।
सतं पेयं वन पिबन्त्यसन्तो
मन्युं महाराज पिब प्रशाम्य। ॥ ६८ ॥

“Maharaj! Overcome your anger which is born without sickness, which is bitter and causes a headache. Your anger is associated with evil, is unyielding, and is penetrating and hot [like an iron bar kept in a furnace]. The noble persons gulp their anger down while the evil persons are unable to do so. [If you overcome this you will be at peace] (68)

रोगार्दिता न फलान्याधिर्यते
न वै लभन्ते विशयेशु तत्त्वम्।
The sick have no taste for delicious fruit. They derive no real joy even from indulgence in the pleasures of the senses. The sick are always suffering. They enjoy neither their riches nor any moments of happiness. (69)

Rājan! Looking at Draupadī being won over in the game of dice, I had warned you: “Kindly restrain Duryodhana engaged in betting in the Court. The learned prohibit this type of behaviour.” However, you paid no heed to my words. (70)

Whatever is opposed to a polite temperament cannot be called valour. One ought to follow Dharma in all its fine nuances. Wealth earned through harsh and villainous means is soon destroyed. On the contrary, riches accumulated through gentle and honest means last for generations. (71)

Rājan! Your progeny should protect the Pāṇḍavas while the Pāṇḍava princes safeguard your sons. The Kauravas must treat the enemy of the Pāṇḍavas as their
enemy and look at their friend as their own. They ought to share the same aims, the same joys and spend their lives in prosperity. (72)

“Maharaj! Today you are the corner-stone of the Kaurava Empire. The Kuru clan looks up to you for leadership. Brother, Kunti’s sons are young. They have suffered terribly in exile. At the moment, for the sake of your prestige, look after the interest of the Pāṇḍavas. (73)

“Narendra! Kindly arrive at a settlement with the Pāṇḍavas so that your enemies have no occasion to notice your weak points. Naradeva, the Pāṇḍava’s claim is rooted in truth. It is for you to restrain your son, Duryodhana.” (74)

Thus, in the Mahābhārata Udyogaparvāṇi-Prajāgaraparvāṇi, the dialogue between Vidura and Dhṛtarāṣṭra, end of the thirty-sixth chapter entitled “Vidura-Nīti”
CHAPTER FIVE

Vidura uvach

सप्तदशमानूः राजेन्द्र मनुः स्वायम्भुवोऽववीत्।
वैचित्रयवीर्यः पुरुषाणाकाशं मृष्टिभिर्भर्तं:। १।
दानवेन्द्रस्य च धनुर्नाम्यं नमस्तोजववीत्।
अथो मरीचिन्: पादानग्राह्यान् गृहतस्तथा। २।
यशचाष्टिः शास्ति वै यशच तुष्येद्
यशचाष्टिबलं भजते द्विषतमः।
स्त्रियशच यो रक्षसी भद्रमशुन्ते
यशचाचाच्यं याचते कथने च। ३।
यशचाबिभजः प्रकरोत्यकारिः
यशचाबलो बलिना नित्यवेरी।
अश्रुहान्याः च यो ब्रवीति
यशचाकाम्यं कामयते नरेण्द्र। ४।
वध्वावहासं श्रवश्रुरो मन्थते यो
वध्वा वसनभयो मानकामः।
परश्येन निर्विश्वमति स्वबीजः
स्त्रियं च य: परिवदत्तिबलम्। ५।
यशचापि लब्धा न स्मरामीति वादी
दत्त्वा च य: कथति याच्यमानः।
यशचासत: सत्यमुपायीत
एतनं नयति निर्यं पाशस्तः। ६।

Vidura continued: “Rājendra! Son of Vicitravīrya! Svāyambhuva Manu has written:

“The following seventeen categories of men are led to the hell by the Yamarāja messengers carrying snares:
1. Men who challenge the sky with a fist,
2. The man who wants to bend the unyielding rainbow and who wants to catch the Sunbeams,
3. The man who rules over the subjects unfit to be ruled.
4. A man who derives satisfaction crossing the limits of propriety.
5. The man who [stealthily] serves the enemy.
6. The one who defends a woman of ill repute and expects favours in return.
7. A man who asks for favours from another unworthy of granting a favour.
8. One who sings his own praise and though born high he indulges in mean acts.
9. Though weak he makes an enemy of the powerful.
10. He imparts lessons to those who have no faith.
11. He who craves for the undesirable.
12. A father-in-law who flirts with the daughter-in-law, sleeps with her and still fearlessly strives for social recognition.
13. One who cohabits with another’s wife.
14. He who condemns a woman unnecessarily.
15. He who wants to usurp goods by denying their receipt.
16. Having made a donation, he boasts of being charity-minded.
17. One who tries to prove a lie as the truth. (1–6)

यस्मिन् यथा वर्तिते यो मनुष्यः
सत्सिद्धस्तथा वर्तितव्यः स धर्मः ।
मायाचारं मायया वर्तितव्यः
साधवाचारः साधुना प्रत्युपेयः ॥ ७ ॥

“Dharma lays down that we should treat a man as he treats us. Pay a deceitful man in the same coin. Respond to a man of good conduct with dignity and honesty. (7)
Advancing years take a toll on physical appearance. Hope kills perseverance. Death extinguishes life. Jealousy and intolerance lead you astray from the path of Dharma. Lustful craving overcomes restraint. Serving the vicious and mean takes a toll on good character. Anger destroys wealth and arrogance obliterates everything.”

Dhṛtarāṣṭra intervened: “When the scriptures lay down that a man will live for a hundred years, why is he unable to meet the target?”

Vidura replied, “Rājan! May God bless you! The following sharp-edged swords cut short the life of a human being. It is these that kill, not death:

1. Extreme arrogance, 2. Limitless speech, 3. A failure to renounce, to give up, 4. Anger, 5. Exclusive concern in personal welfare, 6. Treachery to a friend.”

Vidura Niti
“O Bharat! According to the Šrūtis the following are treated as killing a Brahmin. One must atone for associating with them:

1. One who seduces a trusting woman, 2. One who seduces a teacher’s wife, 3. A Brahmin who has an affair with a Śūdra woman, 4. One who drinks heavily, 5. He who tries to order about the seniors, 6. One who destroys another’s livelihood, 7. He who orders the Brahmins on his chores, 8. One who kills another seeking protection. (12-13)

“Such learned person goes to Heaven: 1. Who obeys the elders, 2. Who follows Nīti, 3. Is charitable, 4. Who is satisfied with the remnants of the offerings of the Yajña meal, 5. The one who abjures violence, 6. The one who keeps away from destructive activities, 7. Who is grateful, and 8. Who is truthful and of mild nature. (14)

“Rājan! It is easy to find a person who is always polite and sweet. However, it is difficult to come across the one who renders good advice in harsh words and who willingly listen to such words of advice. (15)
or not, following the path of *Dharma*, speaks words, though harsh, in the interest of the, kingdom. (16)

“It is advisable to give up a friend for the sake of the family, to give up the attachment to a clan for the sake of the town, to sacrifice a town to save the country and to give up (pleasures of) this world for the well-being of the soul. (17)

“Save your wealth for help in times of distress. Use your riches to protect your woman. Wealth as well as the woman can be used as armour for self. (18)

“Gambling has always been considered as the means of driving a wedge of enmity between human beings. Hence, the wise ought not to engage in gambling even for fun. (19)

“Rājan! When the game of dice was about to begin, I had warned against its propriety. O Pratipanandana! Son of Vicitravirya! However, you did not like my advice as a sick person does not relish taking medicine and a suitable diet. (20)
“Narendra! You have all along been trying to get the Pāṇḍavas, handsome like the peacocks with multi-coloured feathers, defeated by your sons who are ugly as the crows. In due course you will repent that you, deserting the lions, had tried to save the jackals. (21)

“Brother! A master who does not get annoyed with a devoted menial who is always at his command looking after his comfort, is in turn trusted by his employees. The latter does not desert him in times of distress. (22)

“A king must not delay the payment of wages to his staff. He must not try to usurp another’s kingdom and wealth. Remember that even loyal ministers denied their wages and consequently their comforts, turn into enemies and desert the king. (23)

“The most difficult of jobs are accomplished by able assistants. However, before recruiting competent persons, the king ought to decide upon their duties, availability of funds and how these are to be spent, and the wages of the future employees. (24)
“Be kind to an employee and treat him as an equal if he understands the nuances of your thinking on various issues. Such a person attends to his duties with utmost promptness and fulfills his assignment in total. He speaks for your well-being, is loyal, well-behaved and gentle, and knows your strength and competence. (25)

“An employee who disobeys his master’s command, who declines to carry out an assignment, who overestimates his intelligence, or who contradicts his employer, ought to be dismissed at the earliest. (26)

“A man is suitable to be a messenger or an ambassador if he has the following eight attributes:

1. He is not arrogant, 2. He is not a coward, 3. He does not procrastinate, 4. He is kind-hearted, 5. He is pure at heart, 6. He is not misled by others, 7. He is healthy, 8. He can converse elegantly. (27)
“A smart person does not, in misplaced faith, untimely visit the place of an undependable man. He does not stand in hiding at crossroads at night. He never tries to win the affection of a woman in whom the king is interested.

(28)

“A smart courtier will not contradict the king in an assembly where the latter is consulting vicious advisers in a group. He must not utter the words: ‘I do not believe it.’ He ought to remove himself from such a gathering on some pretext or the other.

(29)

“A smart person avoids dealing with a king who is unusually kind and generous, with a woman of disrepute, government servants, a son, a brother, a widow with young children, soldiers or with men deprived of their rights.

(30)

“The following eight virtues add to a man’s prestige:

(31)
“Brother! There is another virtue which powerfully overrides the virtues listed above. When the king welcomes a person, this particular quality stands out. (32)

The person who takes a daily bath gets the following ten rewards:

A person who is restrained in food intake gets the following six rewards:

“Do not give shelter to the following: An idle person; a glutton; one who is inimical to everyone; a trickster; a
cruel person; a man who ignores the limitations of time and place and a person dressed unsuitably. (35)

“Even when in dire straits do not beg of help from the following: A miser; a person who uses filthy language; an idiot; a person who lives in the wild; a rogue; a mean fellow; a heartless person; an ungrateful person and a man who make an enemy of others. (36)

“One must not render service to the following undesirable and mean persons: A person whose activities harm others; a lazy person, a liar, a man fickle in loyalty, a person devoid of love, and one who over-rates his intelligence. (37)

“To earn money one has to seek help from others. The helper, in turn, makes a demand. He wants a return for his effort. Wealth as well as those who assist in garnering it, depend on each other, and stay unfulfilled without each other. (38)
“A Gṛhastha begets sons. He must keep them free of debt and make sure that they are settled in gainful employment. For his daughters he finds suitable matches and gives them away. Thereafter he can settle down to live in a forest like a Muni.

(39)

हितं यत् सर्वभूतानामात्मनाश्च सुखावहम्।
तत् कुर्यादीश्वरे हृदत्तां सर्वार्थसिद्धवे॥ ४०॥

“The secret of all success and attainments is: ‘Act in a manner conducive to the benefit of the entire mankind as well as yourself. All your activities should be in the service of God and to fulfil His design. This is the secret of all success.’

(40)

वृद्धिः प्रभावस्तेजश्च सत्त्वमुन्तानेव च।
व्यवसायश्च यथस्य स्यात् तस्यावृत्तिभयं कुतः॥ ४१॥

“A person need not fear the loss of his living if he has the following qualities: motivation and strength to move ahead, prestige, brilliance [of intellect and personality], valour, determination and capacity to put in effort.

(41)

पश्य दोषानु पाण्डवैविर्ग्रहे ततं
यत्र व्यथेयुरपि देवा: सश्रवः।
पुत्रावरं नित्यमुद्धिगङ्गवासो
यशःप्रणाशो द्विषतं च हर्षः॥ ४२॥

“Look at the damage that would be caused by fighting against the Pāṇḍavas. A war against them would cause a suffering to Indra and the other Devatās. This war would result in enmity against your sons, an unending disturbed life for you, loss of your prestige and joy to your enemies.

(42)

भीष्मस्य कोपस्य चैवेद्रकल्य
द्रोणस्य राज्यश्च युद्धिन्दिरस्य।
उत्साद्येल्लोककरमिं प्रवृत्तः
श्वेतो ग्रहित्यंगिरापतनं खे॥ ४३॥
"Maharaj, you are chivalrous like Indra. A comet making a trajectory through the sky creates a disturbance throughout the world. Consequently the peace of the universe is lost. Likewise, your boiling anger and that of Bhīṣma, Dronācārya and of the king Yudhiṣṭhīra can destroy the universe. (43)

The hundred sons of yours and Karna and the five Pāṇḍavas, can jointly rule the entire land to the ocean’s shore. (44)

Rājan! Your sons are like a forest and the Pāṇḍavas are like the lions living therein. Do not destroy the forest along with the lions. Nor you should turn those lions away. (45)

A forest cannot be protected without the lions. Similarly the lions cannot survive without the forest. While the lions safeguard the jungle, the latter provides them with safety. (46)

Those occupied with evil deeds are uninterested in knowing the virtues of others. Their interest lies in knowing others’ shortcomings only. (47)

“Anyone who desires to achieve his objective in full,
should take to the path of *Dharma*. As the *Amṛta* cannot be separated from the *Swargaloka*, *Dharma* cannot be divorced from *Artha*.

“Once a person diverts his attention from evil deeds to the path of others’ welfare, he soon realizes the distinction between what is appropriate and inappropriate in this world.

Anyone who follows the path of *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kāma* according to the requirements of time, he realizes their benefits in this world as well as in world beyond.

“Rājan! A person who can overcome the rising tide of anger or joy, and who stays calm in the face of misfortune, deserves to be a ruler.

“Rājan! May God bless you! The wise have described five useful sources of empowerment:

1. Physical strength. This is the least important,
family traits. Nobility, 5. Intelligence which includes all of the above and is, therefore, the best.  

“It is not wise to court the enmity of a person who can grossly harm you, in the belief that he not being close by, can cause no damage.

Which wise man can fully trust a woman, a king, a serpent, and lessons taught long ago, a powerful opponent, an enemy, indulgence and the hope of longevity?  

A person who has been shot with the arrow of intelligence, cannot be revived by a Vaidya, any medicine, by performing Havana, auspicious rituals, the recitation of Vedic verses nor by tried and proved herbs.  

“Bhārat! A man must not insult a serpent, the fire, a lion, and his own family members because all of these can be fiercely resistant. [They will not bear an insult or ill-treatment with impunity.]  

“Agni is fiercely lustrous and penetrating. Yet it lies hidden in wood. It does not burn the wood till someone else ignites it.
The moment a fire is ignited through friction between two pieces of wood, its flames swallow the same wood, nay the entire jungle, and any other object in its path. (61)

Similarly, born in your family and incandescent like fire, the Pandavas are lying dormant and at peace because of their forgiving nature and want of greed. They are like the fire hidden in a piece of wood. (62)

Along with your sons you are like a creeper while the Pandavas are like a giant Såla tree. A creeper cannot multiply without taking support of the Såla tree. (63)

Ambikånandana! Your sons are like a forest. Treat the Pandavas like lions living therein. Brother! Deserted by the lions, a forest is destroyed. On the other hand, the lions too are destroyed if the forest dies.” (64)

Thus, in the Mahåbhårata Udyogaparvan-Prajågaraparvan, the dialogue between Vidura and Dhåtarå¶¢ra, end of the thirty-seventh chapter entitled “Vidura-Niti”
CHAPTER SIX

विदुर उवाच

ऊर्ध्वं प्राणं हस्तक्षामन्ति यूनः स्थविर आयति।
प्रत्युत्थानाभिबादाभ्यां पुनस्तान् प्रतिपद्यते। \(1\)

Vidura continued: “When a senior approaches a young man, the latter begins to breathe heavy in anticipation. Later when he stands to welcome the guest and bows to him, he regains his breath. (1)

पीठं दत्तं साध्वेः भागताय
आनीयापः परिनिर्णिज्य पादं।
सुखं पृष्ट्वं प्रतिबेद्यातं संस्थं
ततो दद्यादनमवेश्यं धीरं। \(2\)

“A calm and composed person should at first offer a seat to a virtuous man who arrives as a guest. He should wash the guest’s feet with water and ask about his well-being. Only then he should talk about his own situation. In due course, the guest is offered a meal as required. (2)

यस्योदकं मधुपर्कं च गां च
न मन्त्रवितू प्रतिगृहाति गेहे।
लोभादृ भयाददथ कार्प्ययो वा
तस्यान्त्रं प्रजीवितमाहरायं। \(3\)

“The wise have described the life of a Gṛhaustha as in vain if a Brahmin, learned in the Vedas, out of the host’s fear or his greedy nature, or his miserly habits, does not accept the offering of water, Madhuparka, or cow. (3)

चिचकित्सकः शत्यकर्तावकर्मिणाः
स्तेनः कृतो मध्यपो भ्रूणहा च।
सेनाजीवी श्रुतिविक्रायकशः
भृशं प्रयोज्यत्थिथितिनंदकाहः। \(4\)
“The following persons do not deserve their feet to be washed. Yet, when they come as unannounced guests, they should be welcomed: A Vaidya; a surgeon; a man who has strayed from celibacy; a thief; a cruel person; a drunkard; a person who carries out an abortion; a soldier or a person who sells Vedic knowledge.

The following items are not to be put on sale: Common salt, cooked food, curd, milk, honey, edible oil, ghee, linseeds, meat, the fruit, the roots, leafy vegetables, red cloth, perfumes and jaggery.

The following are the traits of a Saṁnyāsī:
1. He does not get angry.
2. For him a piece of stone and a nugget of gold are the same.
3. He does not grieve.
4. He is indifferent to settlements or dissensions.
5. He is devoid of censure or approval.
6. He is neither a friend nor an enemy to anyone.
7. He is indifferent [to his surroundings].

नीवारमूलङ्कुदशाक्षकृत्ति:
सुसंयतात्मागिनिकार्थियभुः चोद्यः।
वनेन वसनितिद्विध्वप्रमत्तोऽधुर्स्थः पुष्पयकृष्टेष्ठे तापसः।॥७॥
The attributes of the highest Vānaprastha are as follows:

1. He survives on brown rice, roots, vegetables and the Inguda nuts.
2. He is in control of his wandering mind.
3. He performs Agnihotra regularly.
4. Even while residing in a forest he is particular in looking after his guests.

“If you harm an intelligent person, do not believe that there would be no retribution because you are away from him. A wise man’s arms can always reach you if you harass him.

“Never trust an untrustworthy person. Do not have a blind faith even in a trustworthy person. Fear born out of blind faith can totally uproot a person.

“A man ought to protect women without fear or favour and free of jealousy. He must justly apportion his property. He should talk sweet and stay neat and clean. He must address women politely. However, a man must never be totally under the influence of women.

“Women deserve special protection. They have been called the wealth of the family [Gṛhalakṣmī]. They are auspicious and deserve to be worshipped. They are the
harbingers of good fortune. Women are sacred. They illuminate a home with their radiance.

“The duties of a household should be thus divided. A father runs the home. The mother looks after the kitchen. A householder should entrust the care of the cows to an equal. He does the farming himself.

A man’s business ought to be run by his employees. His sons look after the Brahmins. Agni was born of water. The Kṣatriyas were born of Brahmins. Iron comes out of rocks. However the radiation of each one of them although illuminating everything else, gets lost in the place of its origin.

“Gentle persons, born of a noble family, resplendent like Agni, of temperament forgiving, free of shortcomings, stay calm like the fire hidden in a piece of wood.

“The king whose counsel and decisions are unknown to the ministers of his inner cabinet as well as to the other officials, and who is aware of every happening around him, enjoys power and glory for a long time.

“The king should be a doer. He should perform according
to the dictates of *Dharma, Artha* and *Kāma*. He need not disclose his plans in advance to others.  

\(16\frac{1}{2}\)

गिरिपृष्ठमुपारुहः प्रासादं वा रहोगतः। ॥ १७॥

अरण्ये निष्ठलाके वा तत्र मन्त्रोभिधीयते।

“Secret consultations are to be held at the top of a mountain or in an upper chamber of the palace in seclusion or in a thatched, hidden cottage in a forest.  

(17\(\frac{1}{2}\))

नामुहुः परमं मन्त्रं भारताहिति वेदितुम्। ॥ १८॥

अपणिद्वतो वापि सुहुः पणिद्वतो वायनात्मवान्।

नापरीख्य महीपालः कुर्यात् सचिवमातमः। ॥ १९॥

“Bhārata! The one who is not a friend, who though a friend is not wise, or though wise, yet not in control of his thoughts and mind, is not worthy to participate in secret consultations. The king must not appoint a minister without a thorough assessment of the qualities of a person.(18-19)

अमात्ये हार्थिलप्सं च मन्त्ररक्षणमेव च।

कृतानि सर्वकार्याणि यस्य परिषदा विदुः। ॥ २०॥

धर्मं चार्यं च कामे च स राजा राजस्ततमः।

गृहमन्त्रस्य नृपतेस्तस्य सिद्धिरसंशयम्। ॥ २१॥

“Ultimately it is the responsibility of a minister to take care of the treasury and implement the decision of the kingdom. That king is the most successful among kings whose performance in *Dharma, Artha* and *Kāma*, [that is, the policies laid down by the scriptures], is discovered by his courtiers only after their implementation. A king who can keep his decisions to himself is sure to succeed.  

(20-21)

अप्रशस्तानि कार्याणि यो मोहादनुतिष्ठति।

स तेषां विपरिभ्रम्भादू भ्रंशयते जीवितातद्धिः। ॥ २२॥

“A person can even lose his life as a result of the
adverse consequences of evil deeds indulged out of lust or greed. (22)

“Performing a good deed is a source of joy. However if an intended good deed is not executed, it becomes something to repent for. (23)

“A Brahmin is ineligible to be invited to perform a Śrāddha unless he has studied the Vedas. Similarly, a person is not eligible to be taken into confidence by the king unless he has knowledge of the following six policy attributes:

1. How to forge an alliance, 2. How to wage a war, 3. How to march on an expedition to attack, 4. Where to halt or interrupt an attack and 5. How to use duplicity to gain an upper hand 6. Where to look for shelter. (24)

“Rājan! A king who is knowledgeable in the aforesaid six facets of policy, who is conscious of the present situation, who is aware of the losses or of the gains made by him, and who is admired by his public for his polite behaviour, is sure to succeed as a ruler of the earth. (25)

“This earth blesses that king with riches, who does not squander his pleasure or wrath, who personally supervises important projects, and who is fully aware of his finances. (26)
A king should be contented with his designation and appurtenances of a king such as an umbrella. He ought to pay enough as wages to his employees. He must not usurp the wealth of the kingdom to himself. (27)

“A Brahmin knows the Vedas. A man knows all about his wife. A king knows the qualities of his minister. However, a king alone knows himself [that is, his strengths and shortcomings]. (28)

An enemy once conquered must not be allowed to live. If, for want of strength, he cannot be done away with, bide with him till he can be finished. An enemy, if not eliminated, can present a danger at any time. (29)

Under all circumstances, one must restrain one’s anger over a Devatā, a Brahmin, a king, an old person, a child or a sick person. (30)

“It is the fools who rake up an argument all the time. The wise should eschew this habit. The society respects a person who shuns unnecessary argument. Such a person escapes considerable damage. (31)
A king whose pleasure is unrewarding and whose anger is futile, is as much shunned by his subjects as an impotent husband by his wife. (32)

Intelligence does not necessarily bring riches nor does stupidity reduce a person to penury. The wise alone understand the ways of this world, not others. (33)

“Bhārata! It is a fool who always dishonours learning, character, age, intelligence, wealth and the elders of the family. (34)

Misfortune soon overtakes a man of a mean character, the one who is stupid, who notices defects even in virtues, who is irreligious, is foul of tongue and loses temper at the slightest pretext. (35)

To make friends all around, one must not cheat, should be charitable, should keep his word, and always talk of the welfare of others. (36)

“A king who never cheats, who is smart, grateful, wise, and simple-minded, gets supporters even when his treasury is empty. (37)
The following seven virtues add to wealth: 1. Patience/Perseverance, 2. Control of the mind, 3. Control of the five senses, 4. Purity [in living and in thought], 5. Kindness, 6. Polite speech, 7. Being faithful to friends. (38)

“A king who does not fairly disburse wealth among his dependents, who is cruel, ungrateful and shameless, deserves to be deserted. (39)

“A man who though guilty, hurts his guiltless associates, cannot sleep well, just like a person residing in a home inhabited by a serpent. (40)

“Bhārata! Those [kindly and truthful souls] who are blameless and whose criticism interferes with the eternal happiness and the security of the property of others, should always be treated like the Devatās. (41)

“The ultimate fate of wealth and other objects is doubtful when these are handed over for upkeep to a woman, a slothful person, a lowly being, and a wicked person. (42)
a woman, a gambler, or a child, drown in a sea of sorrows like the passengers in a boat full of stones. (43)

“I consider him to be wise who undertakes only that much of a job for execution as he can conveniently handle. Råjan, taking up a burden beyond one’s capacity can lead to jealousy and friction. (44)

“He is like the living dead who is eulogized by a gambler, by hired singers, and by prostitutes. (45)

“Bhårata! Ignoring the great archers and glorious Påndavas, you have entrusted your great empire to Duryodhana. (46)

“Soon you will see the downfall of Duryodhana who is intoxicated with the immense prosperity and grandeur of the empire. It will be like fall of the King Bali who lost his dominance of the three worlds in no time [to Viṣṇu appearing as Vāmana.] (47)

Thus, in the Mahābhārata Udyogaparvaṇi-Prajāgaraparvaṇi, the dialogue between Vidura and Dhṛtarāṣṭra, end of the thirty-eight chapter entitled “Vidura-Nīti”
CHAPTER SEVEN

ध्रुतराष्ट्र उवाच

अनीश्वरोहयं पुरुषो भवाभवे
सूत्रप्रोता दारुमयिव योषा।
धात्रा नु दिष्टस्य वशे कृतोहयं
tस्माद वद लं श्रवणे धृतोहम्। १ ॥

ध्रुतराष्ट्र spoke: “Vidura! Man is shackled in attaining prosperity and its destruction. Brahmā has made him subservient to his fate as a stringed puppet. Kindly continue your discourse. I am listening patiently.”

विदुर उवाच

अप्राप्तकालं वचनं बृहस्पतिरिपि बुवन्।
लभते बुद्धवज्ञानवमानं च भारत॥ २ ॥

Vidura replied: “Bhārata! It will be an insult even to Bṛhaspati if he says something without consideration of time and place. His intelligence too will be doubted. (2)

प्रियो भवति दनेन प्रियवादैन चापरः।
मन्त्रमूलबलेनान्यो यः प्रियः प्रिय एव सः॥ ३ ॥

“In this world a person is liked because he is charitable; another because he talks politely and in sweet tones. A third one endears himself because he can prescribe a remedy or suggest a Mantra. However, he alone is genuinely beloved of all who is dear, good and kind at all times. (3)

द्वेषो न साधुरङ्गवति न मेधाविन प्रणितः।
प्रिये शुभानि कार्याणि द्वेषे पापानि चैव है॥ ४ ॥

“If you develop enmity with another, he is no longer considered to be a saint, learned or intelligent. [One is so
biased that] everything a beloved does is considered auspicious and whatever an enemy does is thought to be evil. (4)

उक्तं मया जातमात्रेपि राजन्
दुर्योधनं त्यज पुत्रं त्वमेकम्।
तस्य त्यागात् पुत्रशतस्य वृद्धि-
रस्यायात्यागत् पुत्रशतस्य नाशः॥ ५॥

“Rājan! When Duryodhana was born, I had advised you to give him up. I had told you that giving up this one would ensure the survival of the other hundred while clinging to him would destroy all others. (5)

न वृद्धिर्वह मन्तव्या या वृद्धिः क्षयमावहेत्।
क्षयोपि बहु मन्तव्यो यः क्षयो वृद्धिमावहेत्॥ ६॥

“An accretion that forebodes ill for the future should not be taken seriously. On the contrary, even a depletion is welcome if it augurs well for the future. (6)

न स क्षयो महाराज यः क्षयो वृद्धिमावहेत्।
क्षयः स त्विह मन्तव्यो यं लब्धवा बहु नाशयेत्॥ ७॥

“Maharaj! A decline which rebounds into an ascent, is not in reality a setback. However, any current advantage is not welcome if it converts into a set back and destruction later on. (7)

समुद्रं गुणत: केचिद् भवति धनतोपरे।
धनवृद्धान् गुरौहीनान् धृतराष्ट्र विवर्जय॥ ८॥

“Dhṛtarāṣṭra! Some are rich in virtues while others are wealthy. However, if a rich person lacks virtues, he ought to be shunned completely.” (8)
Dhṛtarāṣṭra interrupted and said, “The end result of whatever you say is beneficial. The wise endorse it. It is also true that Dharma alone is the victor. In spite of this, I am unable to desert my son.”

Vidura said:

अतीवगुणसम्पन्नो न जातु विनयान्वितः।
सुपूर्खममपि भूतानामुखमर्दमुपेश्यते॥ १० ॥

Vidura responded: “A deeply virtuous and humble man cannot withstand the shightest annihilation of mankind nor turn his face away.

परापवादनिरता: परदु:खोदयेषु च।
पर्यपरिवरोधे च यतने सततोत्थिता:॥ ११ ॥
सदोषं दर्शनं येषां संवाससं सुमहदु भयम्।
अर्थादाने महानं दोषं प्रदाने च महदु भयम्॥ १२ ॥

“It is inadvisable to borrow money from those who denounce others all the time, who enjoy causing pain to others, who relish destroying the unity among others, whose thinking is perverse and whose association can be highly dangerous. There is danger in lending them either.

ये वै भेदनशीलास्तु सकामा निष्प्रथा: शाठा:।
ये पापा इति विख्याता: संवासे परिगहिता:॥ १३ ॥

“Avoid the company of those who sow seeds of dissension, who are lechers, shameless, vicious and well-known rascals. Such persons are condemnable.

युक्तान्त्वायैमहादोषवेष्टे नरास्तानु विवर्जयेत्।
निवर्तमाने सौहार्दे प्रीतिनीचे प्रणश्यति॥ १४ ॥
या चैव फलनिर्वृत्ति: सौहार्दे चैव यत् सुखम्।

“Shun those as well who have other shortcomings besides the ones mentioned above. The mean persons stop being affectionate once their friendship is over. The
joys and any other advantages accruing from such friendship are also lost. (14\(\frac{1}{2}\))

“Thereafter, that mean person denounces his former friends. He tries to harm them if they are even slightly at fault. He is never at peace. (15\(\frac{1}{2}\))

Considering the damage that is likely to be caused to himself by an association with such mean, cruel, and lecherous persons, the learned man must eschew any contact with them. (16\(\frac{1}{2}\))

“A man who obliges his kith and kin, the poor, the humble and the sick, prospers in sons and animals. He enjoys immense prosperity. (17\(\frac{1}{2}\))

“Rājendra! Those who desire their own welfare, should help their near and dear ones to progress. Therefore, go ahead and add to your clan. (18\(\frac{1}{2}\))

“Rājan! The one who treats the members of his family with respect, deserves to be prosperous. (19)

“O superior among the Bhāratas! Even if the members of your family are devoid of virtue, they ought to be
protected. Naturally, your virtuous well-wishers deserve a higher consideration.  

“Rājan! You are competent to oblige the chivalrous Pāṇḍavas. Hand them over a few villages for their upkeep.  

“Nareśwara! You will earn a good name in the world if you do so. Brother! You are ageing. You ought to exercise control over your sons.  

“Bharataśreṣṭha! Please think of me as your well-wisher. I speak for your benefit. Brother, if a person desires everyone’s well-being, he must not quarrel with his relatives. Rather, he should share his happiness with them.  

“Members of a clan ought to share a meal, pleasant conversation and affection. Such is the duty of each one of them. They must avoid conflict.  

“In this world your kith and kin help you to sink or swim. The good ones among them help you to tide over the flood. The vicious push you down to drown.
“Rājendrā! Treat the Pāṇḍavas fairly. O Respectful! protected by them you will be safe from your enemies, if any.

“À deer suffers when it nears a hunter carrying poisonous arrows. If a relative suffers when in the vicinity of a rich man, it is the latter who suffers the consequences of the sin [of not helping him in time of need.]

“Naraśreṣṭha! Later on you will repent over the death of the Pāṇḍavas or of your sons. Just think over the situation. [There is still time.]

“Life is not certain. Do not commit an act if you have to repent at its consequences later on.”

“Barring Śukrācārya, there is none who has not violated ethics at one time or the other. Let bygones be bygone. It is for a wise person like you to carefully decide the future course of action.

“Nareśwara! If Duryodhana has earlier caused harm
to Pāṇḍavas, as the eldest in the family it is your duty to compensate them. 

"Narasreṣṭha! If you hand over the kingdom to the Pāṇḍavas, it will wipe out the blot on your name. The wise will regard you with respect.

"The man who paying attention to a wise man’s words, acts upon them, is remembered for a long time.

"The advice tendered by the learned goes waste if it does not enlighten the listener of his duty or if not acted upon.

"A learned man prospers if he does not initiate an evil task. On the contrary, the one with a perverse vision who continues following the evil course of actions undertaken earlier, is pushed into a limitless mire in the hell.

“A wise man need understand the following six leakages of confidential discussions of wealth and plug the same. This will help protect his riches:

“Rājan! The one who always keeps these leaking exits shut and is occupied in the pursuit of Dharma, Artha and Kāma, gains control of his enemies. (38)

“Even like Brhaspati, a man cannot, without the knowledge of the scriptures or without looking after his elders, understand the significance of Dharma and Artha. (39)

“An object falling into the ocean drowns and is destroyed. An advice is lost upon a person who does not pay heed. The learning of a person is lost who has no control over his senses, and Havana made in ashes is useless similarly. (40)

“Even the learned ought to be judged wisely, with discretion and by yardsticks born of experience, before making them friends. Suitable and discreet investigation need to be carried out. Others too can be consulted for advice in the matter. (41)
“Humility makes up for lack of renown, Valour defeats misfortune, Forgiveness wipes out anger, Good conduct overcomes many a shortcoming. (42)

“Rājan! A family should be judged by the following yardsticks: Availability of varied objects of luxury; the mother-side relatives the house itself; the manners of receiving the guests; quality of food served and the type of clothing used. (43)

“Even a man devoid of arrogance about his body does not spurn a justified offering, though he had never asked for it. How then can a lecher give it up? (44)

“Protect a friend who is a Vaidya, who serves the learned, who is religious, handsome, and who has several friends, and is polite of speech. (45)

“Whether born low or high, a man who does not violate the principles of Dharma, stays within the limits of morality, is mild tempered and restrained, is superior to hundreds of the high-born. (46)

“It makes for a durable friendship if two persons think alike [under different situations], share and keep secrets
and are of the same views [in matters where an application of intelligence is called for].

“A wise person must not befriend an arrogant person, a fool, an angry man, a thoughtlessly courageous or an irreligious person.

“A friend ought to have the following traits:

“A complete subordination of the senses is as difficult as an effort to avoid death. However, allowing them complete freedom can destroy even the divinity of Devatās.

“According to the wise, the following virtues add to longevity:
Chapter 7

Anyone who desires to regain the wealth unjustly destroyed, by taking recourse to unshakable wisdom, with noble intentions, acts like a brave man. (53)

A man who knows how to prevent an impending calamity, who is firmly determined to do his duty in the present, and who is aware of the unfinished tasks in the past, is never reduced to penury. (54)

A noble deed done wholeheartedly and steadily, in speech, thought and action, is fascinating and attractive. Therefore, always act for the welfare of others and perform good deeds. (55)

The following activities are beneficial: Contact with auspicious objects; control of the wayward mind; a study of the scriptures; hard work; simplicity and frequent contact with truthful and noble persons. (56)

To work consistently, without interruption, is a source of money, profit and welfare. That is why a hardworking man rises to great heights and lives happily. (57)
“Brother! For a well-endowed man, there is no other measure to bless him with more wealth and beneficial in all respects, than forgiveness at all times and place. (58)

“A powerless man has perforce to forgive others. However, the powerful ought to forgive others for the sake of Dharma. For anyone who does not distinguish between good and a wrong doing, the virtue of forgiveness is always handy and beneficial. (59)

“Indulge in a pleasure that does not make you stray from the path of Dharma and Artha, but in a reasonable measure. However, avoid the excessive indulgence and attachment to sensory pleasures. (60)

“Lakṣmī does not oblige those who are always grieving, are slothful, atheists, lazy, have succumbed to the sensory pleasures, and lack enthusiasm. (61)

“Men of perverted wisdom spurn a man who is simple and hesitant because of being such. They dishonour him to be a weakling. (62)

“Even Lakṣmī is afraid to go near a man who is by extremely superior, unusually brave, a strict follower of
rules and arrogant about his wealth of wisdom. [Moderation is the key for success.]

“Rājyalakṣmī obliges neither the highly virtuous nor those without any noble qualities whatsoever. She is not enamoured of too many fine traits nor does she have an attachment for total idiots. Like a cow under heat, the blind Lakṣmī stays at a few places only.

“A study of the Vedas leads you to perform Agnihotra. A study of the scriptures makes a person humble and of good conduct. A woman gives sexual pleasure and a son. Riches allow you to live well and be charitable.

“If with the help of ill-gotten wealth a person performs Yajña and other rituals for betterment of his after-life, he does not succeed in his effort. The tainted riches do not result in any benefit in the other world.

“A fearless man is not afraid of a dense forest, a difficult path, a terrible misfortune, of turmoil, or seeing a weapon raised to attack him.

“The following are the keys to progress: Effort; restraint;
smartness; care; perseverance; an alert memory and the quality of initiating an effort after careful consideration. (68)

तपो बलं तापसानां ब्रह्म ब्रह्मचिद्दं बलम्।
हिसा बलमसाधुनां क्षमा गुणवतं बलम्॥ ६९ ॥

“Tapasyā is the strong point of a Tapasvī. The Vedas provide the backbone of intelligence to the knowledgeable. The vicious depend on violence to advance their objectives. The virtuous depends for success on forgiveness. (69)

अष्टो तान्यब्रह्मणानि आपो मूलं फलं पयः।
हिविर्ब्रह्मणकाम्या च गुरोर्वचनमौषधम्॥ ७० ॥

The following eight do not violate a fast:

न तत् परस्य संद्धायू प्रतिकूलं यदात्मन:।
संग्रहेणौषध धर्मः स्यातू कामादन्यः प्रवर्तते॥ ७१ ॥

“Do not treat anyone in a manner that looks harmful to yourself. This is in a nutshell what Dharma is all about. If anyone desires to act otherwise, he follows the path of Adharma (Sin). (71)

अक्रोधेन जयेत् क्रोधमसाधुं साधुना जयेत्।
जयेत् कदयर् दानेन जयेत् सत्येन चानृतम्॥ ७२ ॥

“Conquer anger with calmness. Conquer a devious person by treating him well. Be charitable to a miser. Let Truth override untruth. (72)

स्त्रीधूर्तके जलसे भीरो चण्ड चुपुष्मानिनः।
चौरणे कृतलणे विश्वासो न कार्यो न च नास्तिके॥ ७३ ॥

“Do not place your trust in the following: A woman; a cheat; a lazy person; a coward; a habitually angry man; a man arrogant about his manliness; a thief; an ungrateful person and an atheist. (73)
The fame, longevity, glory and valour of a person who is ever engaged in the service of the elders and who each day greets his elders respectfully, are always on the increase. (74)

Do not covet wealth which you acquire after a lot of suffering, by violating the tenets of Dharma, or by submitting to an enemy. (75)

The following are a matter for concern:
1. An uneducated person, 2. A coitus that does not result in pregnancy, 3. A hungry population, 4. A nation without a king. (76)

The following situations resemble old age:
1. Walking long distances for a human being, 2. Non-stop and heavy rains in the hills, 3. A woman deprived of sex, 4. Taunts that disturb the mind of the listener. (77)

The following show the doer in a bad light:
with strangers, 6. A woman living away from her husband in a distant land. (78-79)

“Silver is used to add impurity to gold. Tin is used to modify silver. Tin is mixed with lead and lead is mixed with any available impurity. (80)

“One cannot overcome sleep by continuing to sleep. A woman cannot be won over by too frequent sexual indulgence. One cannot extinguish fire by adding more fuel. The evil habit of excessive drinking is not cured by taking more and more of liquor. (81)

“He succeeds in life who has won over a friend by offering him money, enemies by defeating them in battle, and women by lavishing luxuries upon them. (82)

“A person can live happily with a thousand. Another is satisfied with merely a hundred. Therefore, Maharaj Dhṛtarāṣṭra, give up greed. Survive you will. (83)

“A man stays unattached who realizes that all the grain, animals, women, and other goods available on earth are not enough to satisfy for one man alone. [A greedy man’s desires can never be satisfied.]”
“Rājan! I repeat that if you look at your sons and the Pāṇḍavas with the same affection, treat them as equal in all fairness.”

Thus, in the Mahābhārata Udyogaparvanī-Prajāgaraparvanī, the dialogue between Vidura and Dhṛtarāṣṭra, end of the thirty-nineth chapter entitled “Vidura-Nīti”
CHAPTER EIGHT

विदुर उवाच

योःध्याचित: सदिरसंज्ञामानः
करोत्यर्थः शक्तिमहापवित्ता।
क्षिप्रं यशस्तं समुपैति सन्तः-
मलं प्रसन्ना हि सुखाय सन्तः। １। ॥

Vidura continued: “A man soon gains name and fame if he, respected by other noble persons, unattached, acting within his limits, tries to attain his objective. He is always happy [and successful] who is blessed by the saints.

(1)

महान्तमण्यमुर्थमधर्म्युक्तं
यः संतज्जत्वनपापकृष्ट एव।
सुखं सुदृढ़व्यात्ममुच्य शोते
जीणां तवं सर्प इवाद्वमुच्य॥ ２॥

“He sleeps in peace, free from sorrows, who like a snake shedding its skin, gives up wealth earned by devious means.

(2)

अनृते च समुत्कर्षं राजगामि च पैशुनम्।
गुरोश्चालीकनिर्बन्धः समानि ब्रह्महत्या॥ ३॥

“The following three acts are like killing a Brahmin:

1. To progress by telling lies, 2. Backbiting against others to the king, 3. To insist upon a wrongdoing even to a Guru.

(3)

असूयैकपदं मृत्युरतिवादः श्रीयो वधः।
अशुश्रुषा त्वरा श्लाघा विद्यायः श्रावस्त्रयः॥ ४॥

“To find faults with the virtuous is like courting death. To use harsh words or to denounce them is like killing Lakṣmī. The following three habits are inimical to learning:
No desire to pay heed to the teacher or be at his service; restlessness and self-praise. (4)

“For a student the following seven are known handicaps [in the path of his success]:

“It is difficult for a person harking for pleasures to get educated. [There is much distraction.] Those seeking learning eschew pleasures. One has to choose either of the two. (6)

“There is never enough fuel for any fire. Even the mighty rivers cannot flood an ocean. Yamarāja is not satiated with any number of deaths. A lustful woman needs more and more men to satisfy her. [There is no end to greed.] (7)

“Hope kills contentment. Yamarāja takes a toll on prosperity [Even the rich die.] Anger destroys riches. A
miser does not attain name and fame. The animals die for want of care. A lone angry Brahmin can destroy a nation.

138 Vidura Niti

Try to always stock the following in a home:

Bhārata! Manu has advised that to worship the Devatās, the guests and the Brahmins, the following goods should always be available in a household: goats, bullocks, sandalwood, Viṇā, a looking glass, honey, Ghee, water, copper utensils, a conch, Śālagrāma idols and Gorocana powder.

Brother! I now advise about the most important and blissful fact of life: Never give up your Dharma because of
an insatiable desire, fear, greed, and even for the sake of your life.

"Dharma alone is eternal. Happiness and sorrow are transitory. And so are human beings, birds, and animals or whatever lives. Do not settle down for the transient in preference to the eternal. Be contented because contentment brings peace and a wealth of joy.

Think of the mighty kings who at the end of their glorious reins, leaving behind their kingdoms and the ultimate in luxury they had enjoyed, surrendered to Yamarāja. Their treasuries were full. They were powerful kings. Yet they could not escape death.

"Rājan! When a son brought up with loving care and effort dies, we take his body out of the home. We moan grievously. And, later like a log of wood we mount his body onto a pier into the flames.
"Others enjoy the wealth of the deceased. The birds pick at his bones or the fire devours it. Only the good deeds or the evil ones travel with him to the other world."

"Brother! As the birds desert a tree that does not bear fruit or flowers, a dead body is left to burn on the pyre by his sons, his kinsmen and other near and dear ones."

"The dead person who is left to burn carries nothing but his good or bad deeds to the other world. Therefore, a human being ought to gradually pile up the fruit of rightful activities."

"High above and below this and the other world is the darkness of ignorance. This envelops our senses and misleads them. Rājan! Be aware of this and let this darkness of ignorance not envelope you."
“If you understand what I say, you would earn fame and name in this world. You have then nothing to fear here or thereafter. (20)

आत्मा नदी भारत पुण्यतीर्था
सत्योदका धृतिकूला दयोर्मि:।
तस्यां स्नात: पूयते पुण्यकर्मः
पुण्यो न्यात्मा नित्यमलोभ एव॥ २१॥

“Rājan! Our soul is like a river. The virtuous conduct is like the sacred places on its banks. It originated in God who alone is the Truth. Its banks are made of contentment. A virtuous man gets purified taking a bath in its waters full of kindness. A soul that has eschewed greed always stays pure. (21)

कामक्रोधग्राहवतीं पञ्चेन्द्रियजलां नदीम्।
नावं धृतिमयी कृत्वा जन्मदुर्गाणि संतत॥ २२॥

“The river of life is teeming with the reptiles of lust and anger. The five sensory organs are like the water running in this river. Life and death constitute the difficult to cross flood of its water. Cross this river riding the boat of contentment and perseverance. (22)

प्रज्ञावृद्धं धर्मवृद्धं स्ववञ्चुः
विद्यावृद्धं वयसा चापि वृद्धम्।
कार्याकार्यं पूजयत्वा प्रसादः
यः सम्पृच्छेन स मुहृदश कदाचित॥ २३॥

“The man who pleases his elders, superior to him in intelligence, Dharma, education, and age, with his courteous behaviour, stays unattached. He questions them for the knowledge about his Dharma and Adharma. (23)

धृत्या शिश्नोदरं रक्षेत् पाणिपादं च चक्षुषा।
चक्षुः श्रोत्रे च मनसा मनो वाचं च कर्मणा॥ २४॥
“A man ought to take care of his penis and stomach with patience. [He should bear the hunger for sex and food with composure.] He should use his eyes to protect his hands and feet, his mind to look after his eyes and ears and his good deeds to oversee his mind and speech. (24)

“A Brahmin who takes care of the following, never strays from the Brahmaloka:

1. A daily bath with offering of water to gods and the evening prayers,
2. Wearing the Yajñopavīta all the time,
3. Reading books every day,
4. Not accepting food from the fallen,
5. Always speaking the truth,

“A Kṣatriya goes to heaven if he follows the following practices:

1. He reads the Vedas, 2. Sitting on the Kuśa grass around the fire, he performs different types of Yajñas, 3. He looks after his subjects, 4. He dies in battle trying to save the cows and the Brahmins. He takes arms because that is the call of his conscience. (26)
“A Vaiśya ascends to heaven if he, having read the scriptures, helps the Brahmans, the Kṣatriyas and those dependent on him, from time to time with money. He should also perform Yajñas and inhale the sacred fragrance coming out of the three sacred fires. (27)

“The Śūdra can overcome his misfortune and, remain free of sins, ascend to the Swargaloka if he renders appropriate and just service to the Brahmans, the Kṣatriyas and the Vaiśyas. (28)

“Maharaj! The reason for my elaborating upon the Dharma of the four Varṇas is that because of your attitude the Pāṇḍunandana Yudhiṣṭhira is moving away from his Kṣatriya Dharma. Therefore, you revert him to his Rāja Dharma.” (29)

Dhṛtarāṣṭra responded and said,

“Vidura! Whatever advice you render daily, is most appropriate. Saumya! I too think on the same lines. (30)
“Although I think of the welfare of the Pāṇḍavas in a similar fashion, my views change the moment I consult Duryodhana.

“None of us dare challenge Destiny. That alone is unchangeable. Human effort fails when faced with the dictates of Fate.”

Thus, in the Mahābhārata Udyogaparvāṇi-Prajāgaraparvāṇi, the dialogue between Vidura and Dhrītarāṣṭra, end of the Fourty chapter entitled “Vidura-Nīti”