Vidura Nīti

(Mahābhārata-Udyogaparva)

tvameva mātā ca pitā tvameva
tvameva bandhuśca sakhā tvameva,
tvameva vidyā draviṇām tvameva
tvameva sarvāṁ mama devadeva.
Price: ₹20

(Twenty Rupees only)
The conversation reproduced below takes place between the Hastinapur king, Dhrtarashtra and his cousin Vidura. It is contained in eight chapters of the *Udyoga Parva* of the epic, the *Mahabharata*.

A tussle is going on between the king’s sons, the Kauravas led by Duryodhana, the eldest prince and their cousins, the Pandavas, led by Yudhisthira for an equitable division of the kingdom. Sañjaya, the king’s confidante and charioteer, had gone to placate the PANDAVA 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 *Rishi* Vaisampayana, a celebrated pupil of Vyasa. He is said to have recounted the whole of *Mahabharata* to king Janamejaya, son of Pariksha, grandson of Arjuna, the PANDAVA prince.
Submission
[From 1st Edition in Hindi]

Vidura Niti 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 consists of eight chapters (33—40) of the Udyoga Parva of the Mahābhārata. Several Sanskrit commentaries have been published on the Vidura Niti.

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 Niti 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 Kṛṣṇa 8,
Vikrama Saṃvat 2011
Gorakhpur

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

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

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?”
Dhṛtarāṣṭra replied, “Please lead the wise and far-sighted Vidura into the palace. There is no hindrance ever in meeting him.” (5)

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.” (6)

Vidura entered the King’s chambers with hands folded and addressed the worried sovereign thus: (7)

“As summoned by you, I have arrived, O wise King. I await your command.” (8)

Dhṛtarāṣṭra replied, “Vidura, Sañjaya was here a short time ago. He left after censoring me. Tomorrow, he will
Chapter 1

report to the Court the response from the prince, Ajātaśatru Yudhiṣṭhira.

(9)

तस्याद्य कुरुवीरस्य न विज्ञातं चक्रो मया।
तत्मेव दहति गात्राणि तदकार्षितां द्रुषारम्भम्। 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)

जाग्रतो दह्यामानस्य श्रेयो यद्नुपश्यसिः।
तदू बूहि त्वं हि नस्तात धर्मार्थकृष्णलो हसि॥ 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)

यत: प्राप्तः सन्नज्ञय: पाण्डवेभ्यो
न मे यथाविन्यासः प्रश्नानि:।
सवैन्द्रियाण्यप्रकृतिं गतानि
किं वक्ष्यतीत्येव मेघ प्रचिन्ता॥ १२॥

“I have been at unease since Sañjaya 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)

विदुर उवाच

अभियुक्तं बलवता दुर्बलं हीनसाधनम्।
हृत्यं कामिनं चोरमाविश्वासस्ति प्रजागराः॥ 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.

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.”

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.

“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.

“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.
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?

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.

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

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.

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

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.

“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.

“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.

“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.

“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 *Paññita* 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. (29)

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. (30)

He alone deserves to be called a *Paññita* 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. (31)

*A Paññita* is aware of the reality of life. He is dexterous in all activity. He can unravel any knot among human beings. (32)

“We know him as a *Paññita* who is fluent in speech, whose choice of words is unique, who argues well, and is intellectually brilliant. A *Paññita* can elucidate the essence of a literary work with felicity. (33)


“He alone is entitled to be called a *Pāṇḍita* whose learning is guided by intellect and whose intellect is moulded by his education. He never transgresses the limits of decency.

(34)

अश्रुतश्च समुन्नद्वो दरिद्रश्च महामनाः।
अर्थार्थाभावणां प्रेमस्मृतं इत्युच्यते बुधः॥ ३५॥

“The *Pāṇḍitas* 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.

(35)

स्वमर्थं यः परित्यज्य परार्थमनुतिष्ठति।
मिथ्या चरति मित्रार्थं यशं मूढः स उच्यते॥ ३६॥

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

(36)

अकामान् कामयति यः कामयानां परित्यजेत्।
बलवन्तं च यो दृष्टि तमाहुर्मृदङ्गेतस्मृ॥ ३७॥

“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.

(37)

अमित्रं कुरूते मित्रं मित्रं दृष्टि हिनस्तिः च।
कर्मं चाराभते दुष्टं तमाहुर्मृदङ्गेतस्मृ॥ ३८॥

“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.

(38)

संसारयति कृत्यानि सर्वंत्र विचिन्तित्सः।
चिरं करोति क्षिप्रार्थं स मूढो भरतर्भ॥ ३९॥

“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.

(39)
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 *Pandita* who does not take airs even after achieving wealth, prosperity, status and education. (45)

> एकः सम्पन्नस्यन्ति वस्ते वासश्र शोभनम्।
> योजसंविभज्य भूत्येभ्यः को नृषंसतस्ततः॥ 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 कुरुः फलं भुइःके महाजनः।
> भोज्यारो विप्रमुच्यन्ते 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 हन्यादेशुर्मुको धनुमात।
> बुद्धिरुद्धिमतोत्सृष्टा 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)

> एकया द्वे विनिशिचत्य श्रीशचतुर्भिरवशे कुरू।
> पञ्च जित्वा विदित्वा षट्स सप्त हित्वा 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 (*Śama, Dāma, Daṇḍa* and *Bheda*) 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, gamblign, 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)

अतृप्त पतितो बल्न: स्वयमेवोपपायम्यति।
अक्षमावान् परं दोषेऽरत्मानं चैव योजयेतु॥ ५६॥

“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)

एको धर्म: परं श्रेयः कृष्णेकाशान्तिरूतमा।
विद्याका परमा तृ पिरहिंसेका सुखावहा॥ ५७॥

“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)

(57)

हृदिमाृ ग्रस्ते भूमि: सर्वं विलश्यानविव।
राजानं वाविरोध्वरं ब्रह्माणं चाप्रवासिनम्॥ ५८॥

“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)

द्वे कर्मणि नरः कुर्वनस्मिल्लोके विरोचते।
अबुवन् परुषं किंचिदस्तोजनचंस्वद्वथा॥ ५९॥

“A person who is always polite and who does not honour and befriend evil persons, deserves special consideration in this world.

(59)

हृदिमाृ पुरुषव्यायं परप्रत्यकारिणौ।
स्त्रियः कामिकामिन्यो लोकः पूजितपूजकः॥ ६०॥
“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 Gṛhaṣṭha who shuns his duties and never gets going and a Saṁnyāsī 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.

“A Samnyāsī 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)
वरप्रदानं राज्यं च पुत्रजम्म च भारत।
शत्रुरोचं मोक्षं कृष्णात् त्रीणि चैकं च तत्समम्।॥ ७२ ॥

“O Bharata! 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)

भक्तं च भज्ञानं च तवास्मीति च वादिनम्।
त्रीनेतां सघं प्राप्तानु विषमेधः न संत्यजेतू।॥ ७३ ॥

“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)

चत्वारि राज्यं तु महाबलेन
वन्यान्याहुः पण्डितस्तानि विद्यात्।
अत्यप्रजः सह मन्नं न कुर्या–
न दीर्घसूत्रे रभसैश्रवारणोश्च॥ ७४ ॥

“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)

चत्वारि ते तात गृहे वसतु
श्रीयाबिभुजुष्टस्य पूर्णस्य गृहस्थधर्मे।
बृद्धो ज्ञातिरवसनः कुलीनः
सखा दरिद्रो भगिनी चानपत्या॥ ७५ ॥

“Respected brother! You are wealthy. You are living the life of a Gṛhastha. 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 Gṛhastha ought to give shelter to such persons.]” (75)

चत्वार्यांह महाराज साधस्लानि बृहस्पति।
पृच्छते त्रिद्वेश्वाय तानीमानि निबोध मे॥ ७६ ॥
“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 Bharataśreṣṭha! 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 Samnyāsis and the guests surely gets name and fame.
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—

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.

A king must give up the following undesirable habits: Womanizing, gambling, indulgence in liquor, use of harsh words, awarding highly stringent punishment and misuse of treasury. These shortcomings destroy even a mighty king. (96-97)

A man on a destructive path exhibits the following eight tendencies: He is jealous of the Brahmins; he courts their enmity; he usurps their wealth and desires to kill them. He relishes condemning the Brahmins and cannot stand their praise. He does not invite them to the Yajñas and finds fault if they ask for any gifts or charity. A wise man ought to give up these evil habits because these would never do any good to him. (98—100)

“O Bhārata! 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
interaction of friends, 2. Increase in wealth, 3. Affection between sons and fathers, 4. Fondness of the couples for sex, 5. Use of appropriate, pleasant and timely words in conversation, 6. Rise in status amongst equals, 7. Acquisition of desired goals and social approval and 8. Appreciation in confratigations. (101—103)


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 Dhrṣṭarāṣṭra! 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)

Thus, in the Mahābhārata Udyogaparvā-Prājāgaraparvāṇi, the dialogue between Vidura and Dhṛtarāṣṭra, end of the thirty-three chapter entitled “Vidura-Nīti”
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.  

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

“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, Yudhiṣṭhira? Please tell me the truth.  

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.
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.

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.

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

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.

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

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.
"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. (23)

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. (24)

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.’] (25)

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. (26)

Like the winds scattering the clouds hither and thither, an unjust king destroys with his misdeeds even an inherited kingdom. (27)
“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)

“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. (45)

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. (46)

“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. (47)

“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. (48)

“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. (49)
“The paupers always relish their meal because being hungry they enjoy whatever is available. This sort of pleasure is not available to the rich.

“Rājān! 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.

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

“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.

“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.

“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.
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 Laks̄mī always at his beck and call. (58)

Råjan! 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.

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.

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

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.

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

Råjan! As two large fish trapped in a net with tiny holes, 

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holes, working together tear the net apart, lust and anger do away with the sense of discrimination. (66)

“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)

“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)

“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)

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

“An evil 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. (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. (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. (75)

“Rājan, it is quite a job to control one’s utterances.
However, even the meaningful, literary and learned language cannot be overused. (76)

अभ्यावहति कल्याणं विविधं वाक् सुभाषिता।
सैव दुर्भाषिता राजननर्थ्योपपदवते॥ ७७ ॥

“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. (77)

रोहते सायकैविंद्रु वनं परशुना हतम्।
वाचा दुरुक्तं बीभतं न संरोहति वाक्ष्यतम्॥ ७८ ॥

“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. (78)

कर्णिनालीकनाराचार्चन्िहर्वति शरीरः।
वाक्ष्यात्मस्तु न निन्तुं शक्यो हदिशयो हि स:॥ ७९ ॥

“The arrows named Karṇi, Nālīka and Nārāca 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. (79)

वाक्सायका वदनानिष्पतति
येराहत: शोचति राज्यहानि।
परस्य नामर्मसु ते पतति
तानू पणिद्तो नावसृजेतु परेभ्य:॥ ८० ॥

“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. (80)

यस्मै देवाः प्रवच्छन्ति पुरुषाय पराभवः।
बुद्धिं तत्वापकर्षितं सोवाचारीनां पश्यति॥ ८१ ॥

“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. (81)
“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

धृतराष्ट्र उवाच

बूढ़ि भूयो महाबुद्धि धर्मार्थसहितं वचः।
श्रृणवतो नासिं मे तृतिविचित्रानीह भाषसे॥ १ ॥

धृतराष्ट्र 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

सर्वतीर्थेऽषु वा स्नानं सर्वभूतेषु चार्जवम्।
उभे ल्येते समे स्थातामार्ज्ञं 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)

आर्जवं प्रतिपद्यस्व पुज्रेषु सत्तं विभो।
इह कौति परं प्रायं प्रेत्य स्वर्गमवाप्यसि॥ ३ ॥

“Hence, 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 कौतिर्मणुप्यस्य पुष्प्य लोके प्रगीयते।
तावत् स पुरुषंव्यायं 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)

अन्नायुदाहर्वतीमित्वां पुरातनम्।
विरोचनस्य संवादं केशिन्यथे सुधन्वना॥ 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 Daiya 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.

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 Kūśa mat or a mat woven with reeds would suffice.” (15)

Sudhanvā responded, “A father and son can share a seat. So can two Brahmins, 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 उवाच
आवां कुत्र गमिष्यावः प्राणयोर्विंपणो कृते।
न तु देवेष्वहं स्थाता न मनुष्येषु कर्षिचित्॥ २०॥

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

सुधान्वोवाच
पितरं ते गमिष्यावः प्राणयोर्विंपणो कृते।
पुत्रस्यापि स हेतोहि प्रहादो नानूतं 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 उवाच
एवं कृतपणो कृबो तत्राभिभज्जतुस्तदा।
विरोचनसुधान्वानो प्रहादो यत्र तिष्ठति॥ २२॥

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

प्रहाद उवाच
इमों तौ सम्प्रदृश्येते याभ्यां न चरितं सह।
आशीविषाविव कुब्ध्रावेकमार्गाविहागतो॥ 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 के सहैवं चरिषयो न पुरा चरिस्यं सह।
विरोचनेतदर्प्प्चार्मि किं ते संध्यं सुधान्वना॥ २४॥
Addressing Virocana, the king said, “Have you made friends with Sudhanvā? How is it that you are together? It has never been so before.”  (24)

Virocana replied—“Father, Sudhanvā 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)

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

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

Prahalāda 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. (33)

“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.” (34)

Addressing his son, Prahalāda said, “Sudhanvā’s father, Angirā is superior to me. Sudhanvā is superior to you and so is his mother to your mother. You have, therefore, lost your bet today. (35)

Addressing Sudhanvā, Prahalāda said, “If you please, I would like to have Virocana returned by you.” (36)

Sudhanvā replied—“Prahalāda! 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 Kumārī Keśini’s presence. (37-38)
Vidura continued thus—“Rajendra! 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)
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.

The following eight attributes enhance a man’s glory:

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.

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.
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 Paṇḍita 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 *Tapasvī* when he has attained higher knowledge and wisdom. (69)

\[
\text{धनेनाधर्मङ्क्षेन} \quad \text{याच्छोदरमयधीयते।}
\]
\[
\text{असंबृतं} \quad \text{तद्} \quad \text{भविति} \quad \text{ततोण्यदवदीयते॥} ॥ ७० ॥
\]

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

\[
\text{गुरुरात्मवतं} \quad \text{शास्ता} \quad \text{शास्ता} \quad \text{राजा} \quad \text{दुरात्मनाम्।}
\]
\[
\text{अथ} \quad \text{प्रच्छन्नपापानं} \quad \text{शास्ता} \quad \text{वैवस्वतो} \quad \text{यम:॥७१॥}
\]

“*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 Sūrya takes their control. (71)

\[
\text{ऋषीणां} \quad \text{च} \quad \text{नदीनां} \quad \text{च} \quad \text{कुलानां} \quad \text{च} \quad \text{महात्मनाम्।}
\]
\[
\text{प्रभवो} \quad \text{नाधिगत्ववः} \quad \text{स्त्रीणां} \quad \text{दुरश्चरितस्य} \quad \text{च॥} ॥ ७२ ॥
\]

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

\[
\text{द्विजातिपूजाभिरतो} \quad \text{दाता} \quad \text{झातिपु} \quad \text{चार्जवी।}
\]
\[
\text{क्षत्रियः} \quad \text{शीलभाग्} \quad \text{राजशिरचरं} \quad \text{पालयते} \quad \text{महीम्॥} ॥ ७३ ॥
\]

“Rājan! 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)

\[
\text{सुस्वर्णपूष्पां} \quad \text{पृथिवीं} \quad \text{चिन्नवति} \quad \text{पुरुषस्यायः।}
\]
\[
\text{शूरश्च} \quad \text{कृतविद्यश्च} \quad \text{वश्च} \quad \text{जानाति} \quad \text{सेवितमु॥} ॥ ७४ ॥
\]

“The brave, the learned and those who know how to serve others, garner wealth from the earth. (74)

\[
\text{बुद्धिश्रेष्ठानि} \quad \text{कर्माणि} \quad \text{बाहुमध्यानि} \quad \text{भारत।}
\]
\[
\text{तानि} \quad \text{जद्वाजधन्यानि} \quad \text{भार्म्मस्यवराणि} \quad \text{च॥} ॥ ७५ ॥
\]
“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)

दुर्योधनेऽवध शकुनी मूढे दु:शासने तथा।
कर्णे चेष्वयमाधाय कथं त्वं भूतितिमिच्छसि॥ ७६ ॥

“Rājan! How do you expect to prosper by handing over administration to Duryodhana, Śakuni, the idiot Duḥśāsana and Karṇa?

(76)

सर्वगुणेऽरुपेतास्तु पाण्डवा भरतस्वभ।
पितृवर्तस्त त्वारिज वर्तने तेषु वर्तस्व पुज्वत॥ ७७ ॥

“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-Prajāgaraparvāṇi, the dialogue between Vidura and Dhṛtarāṣṭra, ends of the thirty-five chapter entitled “Vidura-Niti”
CHAPTER FOUR

विदुर उवाच

अत्रैवोदाहरन्तीममितिहासं पुरातनम्।
आत्रेयस्य च संवादं साध्यानां चैति न: श्रुतम्॥ १॥

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

(1)

“In ancient times, the wise Maharṣi Dattātreya, a man of firm determination, was wandering as a royal swan [Paramahaṁsa]. 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 Haṁsa 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 Puṇya [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)

“...”

“It is said that silence is better than speech. However, the second virtue of speech is telling the truth, the first being silence. Use of pleasant words is the third desirable attribute of speech. Fourthly, speaking according to Dharma makes even pleasant words sound better. (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.” (21)

At this stage, Dhṛtarāṣṭra intervened and said: “Vidura! 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?” (22)

Vidura replied: “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. (23)
“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 [a round mass or ball of food] and [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)

“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. (40)

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

“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. (42)

“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)

“Distress, grief, pessimism or worry destroy beauty, valour, and knowledge. Rather, a person affected by these negative attitudes, soon becomes sick. (44)
“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 Yudhishṭhira 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)

“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)

“Dhrtāraśṭra! 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)

“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)

अन्योन्यसमुपप्तम्भादन्योन्यापापश्रयेण  
ज्ञातयः सम्प्रवर्धने सरसीवोत्यलान्युत।। 65।।

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

(65)

अवध्या ब्राह्मणा गावो ज्ञातयं शिशवं स्त्रियः।।
येषां चानानि भुज्जीति येच स्युः शरणागताः।। 66।।

“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)

(66)

न मनुष्ये गुणः कशिचदू राजन् सदनन्तामृते।।
अनातुत्तवाद भद्रं ते मृतकल्या हि रोगिणः।। 67।।

“Rājan! God bless you! For human beings there is nothing better than wealth and good health. A sick person is like a corpse. (67)

(67)

अव्याधिजं कटुकं शीर्षरोगि  
पापानुबन्धं परुषं तीक्ष्णमुखाम्।।
सतां पेयं यन्न पिबन्त्यसनो  
मन्यं महाराज पिब प्रशाप्य।। 68।।

“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)

(68)
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 Udyogaparvani-Prajāgaraparvani, the dialogue between Vidura and Dhṛtarāṣṭra, end of the thirty-sixth chapter entitled “Vidura-Nīti”
CHAPTER FIVE

Vidura uvach

सप्तदशेमान् राजेन्द्र मनुः स्वायम्भूजब्रवीत्।
वैचिन्त्रवीर्य पुरुषानाकाशं मुष्टिभिर्मर्त: ॥ १ ॥
दानवेदनस्य च धनुरावन्यं नयनोजब्रवीत्।
अथो मरीचिनः पादानग्राह्यान् गृहस्तस्तथा ॥ २ ॥
यश्चालिष्यं शास्ति सि यश्च तुधियत्
यश्चालिष्येत्यं भजते द्विष्णुम्।
स्त्रियशच यो राश्ति भद्रमश्चुते
यश्चायाच्यं याचते कथते च ॥ ३ ॥
यश्चालिष्याचार: प्रकरोधकारी
यश्चालिष्येत बलिना नित्यवरी।
अश्ब्रह्मानाय च यो ब्रवीति
यश्चालिष्यायं कामयते नरेन्द्र ॥ ४ ॥
वध्वावहासं श्रवशुरो मन्यते यो
वध्वा वसन्नभयो मानकाम:।
परश्वेते निर्वर्ति स्ववीज्ञं
स्त्रियं च यः परिवदतेतिवेलम्। ॥ ५ ॥
यश्चापि लब्धा न स्परामीति बादी
दत्वा च यः कथति याच्यमान:।
यश्चास्ततः सत्त्वमुपानयीत
एतानु नयनं निःयं पाश्चस्त:। ॥ 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)

“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 Śrutis 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)

“He alone is of genuine assistance to the ruler who without worrying whether his advice would please the king...
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)

“Rajan! When the game of dice was about to begin, I had warned against its propriety. O Pratipananda! 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.

“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.

“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.

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

“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)

“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)

“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)
“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 Yudhiṣṭhira can destroy the universe. (43)

न व पुज्यात पृथिवी संगरामराम्।
पाण्ड्वां पंच च च च।

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

धार्षराष्ट्र व राजन् वायाणा। पाण्डुसुता मता।
यायाम सब्बायणू यायाणू नीन्दन वनात॥ ४५॥

“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)

न राज्यान्तूते वायाणां वायाणं न स्युर्खते वनाम्।
वानं हि रक्षयते वायाणे वायाणं रक्षति कान्नम्॥ ४६॥

“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)

न तथेच्छन्ति कल्याणां परेषां वेदितु हुणान।
यथेषां ज्ञातुमिच्छन्ति नेगुणं पापचेतस॥ ४७॥

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

अर्थिनिश धर्ममिच्छन् धर्मे स्वर्गलोकादिवामृतम॥ ४८॥

“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*. (48)

“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.

(49)

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. (50)

“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.

(51)

“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. (52—55)

“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. (56)

“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? (57)

“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. (58)

“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.] (59)

“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 Pāṇḍavas 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 Pāṇḍavas are like a giant Sāla tree. A creeper cannot multiply without taking support of the Sāla tree. (63)

Ambikānandana! Your sons are like a forest. Treat the Pāṇḍavas 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 Mahābhārata Udyogaparva-Prājāgaraparvani, the dialogue between Vidura and Dhṛtarāṣṭra, end of the thirty-seventh chapter entitled “Vidura-Niti”
CHAPTER SIX

विदुर उवाच

ऊर्ध्वं प्राणं हृदकामनं यूनः स्थविरं आयति ।
प्रत्युत्थानाभिवादाभ्यं पुनस्तान् प्रतिपद्यते ॥ १ ॥

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.

पीठं दत्तं साधवेभ्यागताय
आनीयापः परिनिर्णिज्य पादौ ।
सुखं पृष्ठं प्रतिवेद्यात्मसंस्थं
ततो दद्यादनमवेश्यं धीरः ॥ २ ॥

“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.

यस्योदकं मधुपर्कं च गां च
न मन्त्रवितू प्रतिगृहाति गेहे।
लोभाद् भयादथ कार्पण्यन्तो वा
तस्यान्तर्भ जीवितमाहुराया: ॥ ३ ॥

“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.

चिकित्सकः शत्यकर्तव्यकर्माणि
स्तेन: कूरो मद्यपो भ्रूणहा च।
सेनाजीवी श्रुतिविकायकः
भृशं प्रियोप्यतिथिनिदौकाह: ॥ ४ ॥
“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].
“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. (7)

“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. (8)

“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. (9)

“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. (10)

“Women deserve special protection. They have been called the wealth of the family [Grhalakṣmī]. 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.

“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 1/2)

गिरिपृष्ठमुपारुढ़ा प्रासादं वा रहगतः॥ १७॥
अरण्ये निश्लाके 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 1/2)

नामुहुत्तू परमं मन्त्रं भारताहिति वेदितुमु॥ १८॥
अपणिद्वतो वापि सुहुत्तू पणिद्वतो बायनात्मवान्।
नापरीक्ष्य महीपालः कुर्यात् सचिवमात्मनः॥ 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 हार्थलिप्सा च मन्त्ररक्षणमेव च।
कृतानि सर्वकार्यानि यथं पारिषदा विदु:॥ २०॥
धमें चार्थेऽ च कामे च स राजा राजस्ततमः।
गूढमन्त्रस्य 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 मोहदनुतिष्ठति।
स तेषां विपरिभ्रशादु भ्रश्यते जीवितादिपि॥ २२॥

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

कर्मोऽ तु प्रशस्तानामनुष्ठानसुखावहम्।
तेषामेवाननुष्ठानपश्चात्तापकरं मतम्॥ २३॥

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

अनधीत्य यथा वेदान विप्रः श्राद्धमहि।
एवमश्रुतशाप्तायुन्योंन मन्त्रं श्रोतुमहि॥ २४॥

"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. \(\text{(24)}\)

स्थानवृद्धिक्षयज्ञस्य पाद्गुण्यविदितात्मनः।
अनवज्ञातशीलस्य स्वाधीना पृथिवी नृप॥ २५॥

"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. \(\text{(25)}\)

अमोघक्रोधर्षस्य स्वयं कृत्यान्वैवेशिष्यः।
आत्मप्रत्यक्षोकशयस्य वमुद्वेव वसुधरः॥ २६॥

"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. \(\text{(26)}\)
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.

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.

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

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.

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

“A king who never cheats, who is smart, grateful, wise, and simple-minded, gets supporters even when his treasury is empty.
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)

“Råjan! 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)

“Bhårata! 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 Devatås. (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)

“Råjan! The subjects of a kingdom being governed by
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. Rājan, 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)

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

“So 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 Udyogaparvāṇi-Prajāgaraparvāṇi, the dialogue between Vidura and Dhṛtarāṣṭra, end of the thirty-eight chapter entitled “Vidura-Nīti”
Dhṛtarāṣṭra 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.”

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.

“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.

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

“Rajan! 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)

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)

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)

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:

अतीवगुणसम्यनो न जातु विनयानवित:।
सुसृष्टमयि भूतानामुपपर्मदुपेश्यते॥ १०॥

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

परापवादनिताः परदु:खोदयेषु च।
परस्परविरोधे च यतनि सततोत्थिताः॥ ११॥
सदोषं दर्शनं येषां संवासे सुमहद भयम्।
अर्थात् अनेन महानः दोषः प्रदाने च महद्व 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 निःस्तपा: शाठः।
ये पापा इति विख्याता: संवासे परिगमिता:॥ १३॥

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

युक्तांश्चान्येमहादोषेष्वेय नरस्तानू विवर्जयेत्।
निवर्तमाने सौहार्द्व प्रीतिनीचेप्रणश्यति॥ १४॥
या चेव फलनिः: सौहदे चेव यत: 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 1/2)

यत्ते चापवादाय यत्मारम्भते क्षये ॥ १५ ॥
अल्पेण्यपकृते मोहान शान्तिमधिगच्छति।

“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 1/2)

तात्तौऽः संगतं नीचेरूङ्संपर्कृतात्मभिः ॥ १६ ॥
निशाम्य निपुणं बुद्ध्या विद्वान् दूराद् विवर्जितेऽ।

“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 1/2)

यो ज्ञातिमनुग्रहति दरिद्रं दीनामातुरम् ॥ १७ ॥
स पुत्रपशुभिर्वृद्धि श्रेयश्चानन्यमश्नुते।

“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 1/2)

ज्ञातयो वर्धनीयास्तेः इच्छन्त्यात्मन: शुभम् ॥ १८ ॥
कुलवृद्धि च राजेन्द्र तस्मात् साधु समाचार।

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

श्रेयसा योक्ष्यते राजन् कुर्वाणो ज्ञातिसत्क्रियाम् ॥ १९ ॥

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

विगुणा हापि संरक्ष्या ज्ञातयो भरतर्भ।
किं पुनर्गुणावस्ते व्यतप्रसादाधिकाइक्षिणः ॥ २० ॥

“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.
Subhāto bhava Rajendro Pāṇḍavānā prati maṇḍat.

Adbhūtīyā: śāstra nāmā teśvṛtaṃ bhūvihāsit.

“Rājendra! Treat the Pāṇḍavas fairly. O Respectful! protected by them you will be safe from your enemies, if any.

Śrīmanā džaśāmāsād sē jaśātivānti.
Dikshāstān pūrā ṛgav s ānavatam vīḍati.

“A 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.]

Paścātādhipa narashreṣṭhā tāvā tapo bhūvihātī.
Tānā vā hatahā suṭāna vāpi śrutwā taddhūchintat.

“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.]

Yān khāṭvān sāmanāth: pariśālīt karmāna.
Aadāvē b n tattu kuryādāhyāvā jīvīte satī.

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

N kāṣṭhānāpahyātā pūmanāy atrā bhārγāvāt.
Sreśṣasapārtipatāsttu budhmātavē tīṣṭātī.

“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.

Duryādhane nāḥētāt pāṇāṃ tāṣṭu pūrā kṛtam.
Tvāmā tattu kūlaṃkṛtāḥ pratyāneṣyā netraśva.

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

“Naraśreṣṭha! 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:

(36-37)

“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.

राजन! एक परिवार की दृष्टि में पारंपरिक मापक निर्देश निर्देशित किए जाते हैं।

“Rajan! 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.

दुष्कृतिका तप्तका प्रतिवादो न विद्यते।
अष्ठि निर्मुक्तदेहस्य कामरक्षस्य किं पुनः।

“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?

हस्तीको का वैष्णव धार्मिक प्रयादर्शनम्।
मित्रवं सुवास्यं च सुहऽं परिपाल्येत्।

“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.

वर्षणीका कुलीनो वा मर्यादां यो न लंघनेत्।
धर्मार्पणिका मृदुप्रेमान् स कुलीनशान्ताद वरः।

“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.

यथोक्तिका उन चित्त निर्भृत्तं निर्भृत्तं वा।
समेति प्रज्ञा प्रज्ञा तयोंमें न जीर्यति।

“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].

Like avoiding a well, covered with grass and straws, a wise man must give up his association with a vicious person who is devoid of clear thinking. Such a friendship wanes in any case.

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:
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)

κρατεῖται: σαράντα σακχιμαντὸν δραμακαράνατ.
αριθμοῖς σαλ中山 τοῦ τοῦτον κρατοῦ θέλη.

“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)

yatū सुधिन सेवकमानोधि धर्मार्थार्थाः न हीयते।
कामं तदुपसेवतः न मूढ्रत्रमाचरेऽः ६०।

“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)

दुःखार्थेषु प्रमतेषु नासिकेभवलसेषु च।
न श्रीर्वस्त्रयाद्वातेषु येचोत्साहविविशिष्ठतः: ६१।

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

आर्जेद्य नरं युक्मार्जवात् सम्प्रत्रापम्।
अशां मन्यमानास्तु धर्म्यंति कुबुद्धय: ६२।

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

अत्यार्यतदातारमतिशूरमतिवर्तम्।
प्रजाभिमानिनं चैव श्रीर्ष्यानोपसर्पित। ६३।

“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.] (63)

राज्यालक्ष्मी ओबििजेई नीन्द्यत्ते निसर्गेतुच श्री।
नैचे गुरुत्वात् कामात्ते नैसर्गिकायानातुरख्यते।
उन्मत्ता गौरिवाध्या श्रीः कवच्चिदेवावतिष्ठते॥ ६४॥

“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. (64)

अगिन्होत्रफला वेदा: शीलवृत्तफलं श्रुतम्।
रतिपुत्रफला नारी दत्तभुक्तफलं धनम्॥ ६५॥

“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. (65)

अध्ययनपार्जितस्थर्यः करोत्याध्यथेहिमकम्।
न स तस्य फलं प्रेत्य भुक्तेष्यर्थस्य दुरागमात्॥ ६६॥

“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. (66)

कान्तरे वनुगंधेशु कृत्याग्निस्वाप्तसु सम्भ्रमे।
उद्धवेशु च शास्त्रेशु नास्ति सत्त्ववत्तां भयम्॥ ६७॥

“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. (67)

उत्थांथ संयो दाक्ष्यमप्रमादो धृति: स्मृति:।
समीक्ष्य च समारम्भो विद्यर्म मूलं भवस्य तु॥ ६८॥

“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)

“Tapasyāṅ is the strong point of a Tapasvi. 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)

The following eight do not violate a fast:

“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)

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

“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 Dhrtastra, 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.]” (84)
“Rājan! I repeat that if you look at your sons and the Pāṇḍavas with the same affection, treat them as equal in all fairness.” (85)

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

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

“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.

“To find faults with the virtuous is like courting death. To use harsh words or to denounce them is like killing Lakṣmi. 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.

“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.

“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.]

“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.

“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, Viñā, a looking glass, honey, Ghee, water, copper utensils, a conch, Śā lagrāma 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. (12)

“Dharmá 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. (13)

“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 Yamarája. Their treasuries were full. They were powerful kings. Yet they could not escape death. (14)

“Rájan! 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. (15)
"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. (16)

"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. (17)

"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. (18)

"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. (19)
“If you understand what I say, you would earn fame and name in this world. You have then nothing to fear here or thereafter.

आत्मा नदी भारत पुण्यतीर्था 
सत्योदका धृतिकूला दयोमिः।
तत्स्यो स्नातः पूयते पुण्यकर्मा 
पुण्यो ह्यात्मा 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.

कामक्रोधाग्रहवति पञ्चविद्याजलां नदीम्।
नावं धृतिमयी कृत्वा जन्मदुर्गर्गणि 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.

प्रज्ञावृद्धं धर्मवृद्धं स्ववन्धुं 
विद्यावृद्धं वयसा चापि वृद्धम्।
कार्यंकारः पूजयित्वा प्रसादः 
यः सम्पृच्छेन स मुहृत्तं 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.

धृत्या शिश्नोदरं स्त्रेोतं पाणिपादं च चक्षुषा।
चक्षुः श्रोत्रेः च मनसा मनो वाचचं 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, 6. Serving the Guru. (25)

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 Brahmins, 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 Brahmins, the Kṣatriyas and the Vaiśyas. (28)

“Maharaj! The reason for my elaborating upon the Dharma of the four Vānas 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)

Chapter 8
“Although I think of the welfare of the Pāṇḍavas in a similar fashion, my views change the moment I consult Duryodhana.

न दिष्टमभ्यतिक्रान्तुं शाख्यं भूतेन केनचित्।
दिष्टमेव ध्रुवं मन्ये पौरुषं तु निर्यक्षम॥ ३२ ॥

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

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

॥ विदुरनीति सम्पूर्ण इ॥

॥ Thus ends of Vidura-Nīti ॥