



# Himalayan Academy Publications

Presents

## *Weaver's Wisdom*

**Ancient Precepts for a Perfect Life**



### **Ancient Precepts for a Perfect Life**

The wise old weaver takes us on a great journey, giving us a loom on which to weave our life to our heart's content. He begins with the greatest God, ends with the lowest of men and covers everything in between. Quite an achievement, I would say, for a mere 1,080 verses inscribed on palm leaves 2,200 years ago for us to live up to today

# Section I

## Prologue

### *Introduction*

Here now are the pungent opening verses, filled with foundational knowledge for the beginning novice and the advanced pandit. God supreme is explained in no uncertain terms, beginning with the primordial AUM, the Primal Sound of the universe, the A of many alphabets. Nothing would exist without the constant resonant resounding AUM, the Soundless Sound, the impulse of creation, ever emanating from the Cosmic Dance of God Siva, the source of all three worlds. Throughout the first ten kural, one is encouraged to worship, to worship, to worship and thus soften negative karmas. Speaking of the Holy Feet, the weaver tells us of the ancient tradition so imbedded in Indian culture that even today touching the feet of a holy icon, a swami, sadhu, elder and one's mother and father is a gesture of deepest respect.

It is in these first four chapters that the weaver creates the warp, the strong, taut strands that stretch from one end of the loom to the other--as in the Vedas the priests' mantras are described as the warp connecting this world with the heavenly Sivaloka--each strand's color indicating a pattern of excellence yet to come. This first section of Weaver's Wisdom tells us of the importance of God Siva's Holy Feet, of rain, of renunciates and of virtuous living, called dharma. Here and in many chapters to come, reincarnation, punarjanma, is set forth in a most pragmatic way. In the tenth kural, the weaver tells of the boundless ocean of births that can be crossed only when one has become bound to Siva's Feet.

In chapter two, the author shows that in his day man was a vital, responsible part of ecology, inseparably entangled within it. This reverence for the environment forms another group of threads in the warp of our weaver's pattern yet to be unfolded. The Abrahamic religions, upon which historically most scientists based their postulations, brought to mankind the attitude that man is not a part of ecology, but set apart from it, created to control and selfishly exploit it. This perspective has led to mountainous problems: pollution, waste and deforestation, extermination of whole species, drought and much, much more. The weaver speaks eloquently of rain in chapter two. And in verses throughout the book he says that good behavior of the people brings rain, hence wealth, and adharmic, or unvirtuous, behavior brings drought, hence poverty, leading to famine. A point is made that should rain fail, the worship within the temples and home shrines of God and the Gods would cease, and the joyous festivals, which during that time were many, would be held no more.

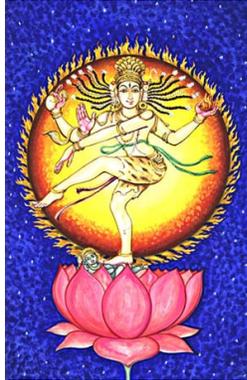
Chapter three creates another warp on the weaver's loom--the taut threads of the renunciate and ascetic--for in his day it was the sadhus, swamis and rishis who guided community leaders and individual seekers on the right path, and

kept the monarch on the side of dharma, divine law and order. In verse 21 the weaver tells how the Vedas exalt the greatness of virtuous renunciates, and in verse 29 he explains that pious men who have compassion for all life are looked up to and respected as the priestly ones.

Chapter four, "Asserting Virtue's Power," defines the fourth set of strands in the pale-colored, many-threaded warp on the weaver's word loom. This completes the four-part set of lengthwise strands and forms the base of the cloth: the white threads of Sivaness; the translucent blues of rain, or akasha; the saffron-yellow threads of sacrifice and renunciation; and the violet rays of virtue. These are the four kinds of grace we must have in life: God, rain, holy ones and virtue.

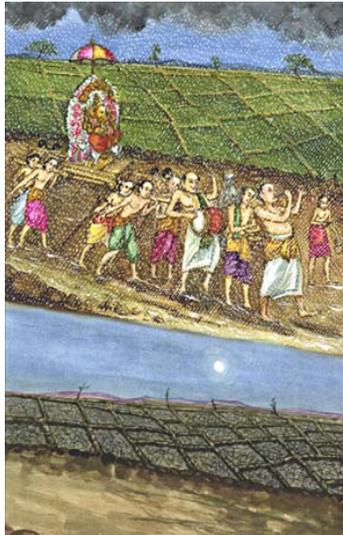
Chapter five begins the threads that crisscross the warp to form the weft. These are the rich-colored threads of virtue and wealth that the weaver uses to create the tapestry of life.

# 1. Praising God



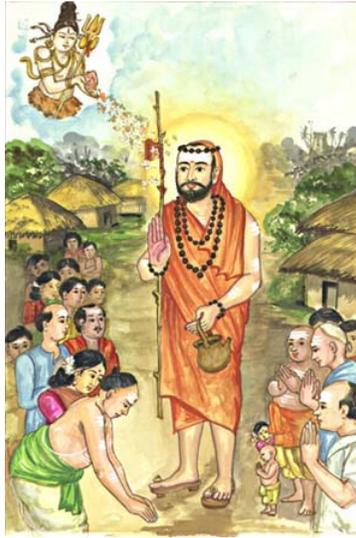
1. 'A' is the first and source of all the letters. Even so is God Primordial the first and source of all the world.
2. What has learning profited a man, if it has not led him to worship the Good Feet of Him who is pure knowledge itself?.
3. The Supreme dwells within the lotus of the heart. Those who reach His Splendid Feet dwell enduringly within unearthy realms.
4. Draw near the Feet of Him who is free of desire and aversion, and live forever free of suffering.
5. Good and bad, delusion's dual deeds, do not cling to those who delight in praising the Immutable, Worshipful One.
6. A long and joyous life rewards those who remain firmly on the faultless path of Him who controls the five senses.
7. They alone dispel the mind's distress who take refuge at the Feet of the Incomparable One.
8. They alone can cross life's other oceans who take refuge at the Feet of the Gracious One, Himself an Ocean of Virtue.
9. The head which cannot bow before the Feet of the Possessor of eight infinite powers is like the senses lacking the power to perceive.
10. The boundless ocean of births can be crossed, indeed, but not without intimate union with Infinity's Holy Feet.

## 2. Importance of Rain



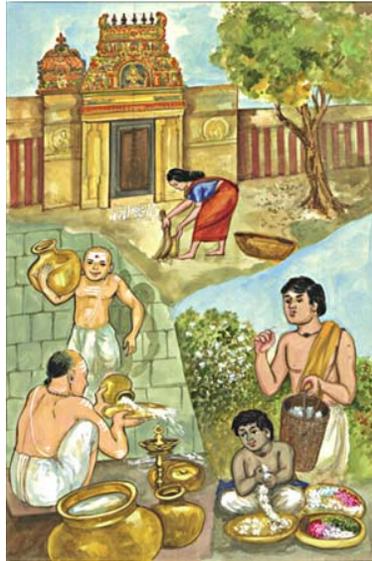
11. It is the unfailing fall of rain that sustains the world.  
Therefore, look upon rain as the nectar of life.
12. Rain produces man's wholesome food;  
and rain itself forms part of his food besides.
13. Though oceanic waters surround it, the world will be deluged  
by hunger's hardships if the billowing clouds betray us.
14. When clouds withhold their watery wealth,  
farmers cease to ply their ploughs.
15. It is rain that ruins, and it is rain again  
that raises up those it has ruined.
16. Unless raindrops fall from the sky,  
not a blade of green grass will rise from the earth.
17. The very nature of oceans, though vast, would diminish  
if clouds ceased to take up water and replenish rain's gifts.
18. Should the heavens dry up, worship here of the heavenly ones  
in festivals and daily rites would wither.
19. Unless the heavens grant their gifts, neither the giver's generosity  
nor the ascetic's detachment will grace this wide world.
20. No life on Earth can exist without water,  
and water's ceaseless flow cannot exist without rain.

### 3. Greatness of Renunciates



21. The Scriptures exalt above every other good the greatness of virtuous renunciates.
22. Attempting to speak of the renunciate's magnitude is like numbering all the human multitudes who have ever died.
23. Behold those who have weighed the dual nature of things and followed the renunciate's way. Their greatness illumines the world.
24. He whose firm will, wisdom's goading hook, controls his five senses is a seed that will flourish in the fields of Heaven.
25. Such is the power of those who subdue the five senses, that even Indra, sovereign of spacious Heaven's celestials, suffered their curse.
26. The magnificent ones are they who can dispatch the most difficult tasks; the insignificant ones are they who cannot.
27. Touch, taste, sight, smell and hearing are the senses he who controls these five magically controls the world.
28. Their own secret sayings reveal to the world the greatness of men whose words prove prophetic.
29. It is impossible to endure, even for a second, the wrath of those who have scaled and stand upon the mountain called virtue.
30. Pious men are called the priestly ones, for they are clothed in robes of compassion for all life.

## 4. Asserting Virtue's Power



31. Virtue yields Heaven's honor and Earth's wealth.  
What is there then that is more fruitful for a man?
32. There is nothing more rewarding than virtue,  
nor anything more ruinous than its neglect.
33. Be unremitting in the doing of good deeds;  
do them with all your might and by every possible means.
34. Keep the mind free of impurity. That alone is  
the practice of virtue. All else is nothing but empty display.
35. Virtue is living in such a way that one does not fall  
into these four: envy, anger, greed and unsavory speech.
36. Don't tell yourself you'll be wise enough to practice virtue tomorrow.  
Do it now, for it will be your deathless companion when you die.
37. It is utterly superfluous to inquire about virtue's benefits, so  
evident in the difference between the palanquin's rider and bearer.
38. Not allowing a day to pass without doing some good  
is a boulder that will block your passage on the path to rebirth.
39. Only virtuous deeds abound in true joy.  
All other deeds are empty and devoid of distinction.
40. Virtue is merely that which should be done in life,  
and vice is merely that which should be avoided.

## Section II

# The Way of the Householder

### *Introduction*

In India in the days before the Christian era, there were no pagans. In the days before the Islamic era, there were no infidels. In the days before contemporary science, religion was respected, the air was not polluted, nor was the water; the lands flourished, and family life was strong. Extended families worked together, obedient to the laws of the land, to the religion that guided them through life; and to their parents, grandparents and great grandparents homage was given. "Those who bear children of blameless character will be untouched by evil for seven births," the weaver declares, alluding to reincarnation and encouraging prayer before conception to reach up to the upper worlds rather than down to the nether worlds to embody a soul. In Indian cultures dedicated to ahimsa, corporal punishment in homes and schools was not as much in vogue as nowadays, and in the purest of traditional ashrams it was totally unacceptable as a systematic method of education.

Home life was strong. Parents loved their children and spoke with them of God, Gods, gurus and of the laws governing family life that this section of our weaver's weft explains. It is here that praise is given for well-behaved youth who make parents ponder, "By what great austerities did we merit such a child?" The weaver puts great stress on hospitality, explaining that the whole purpose of maintaining a home and earning wealth is to provide hospitality to guests. Speaking words of praise with a cheerful smile, gratitude, giving help in the hour of need, possessing self-control, virtuous conduct and gracious hospitality--all this was the way of the day.

He offers a new look at wealth, observing that if one is profoundly impoverished yet remains just, the world will not regard him as poor. A good lesson for us in today's world. In the chapter on self-control he alludes to the Brahmaloaka, or highest heaven, explaining that self-control will place one among the Gods. Then he refers to the Narakaloka, or lowest Hell, by saying the lack of self-control leads to deepest darkness.

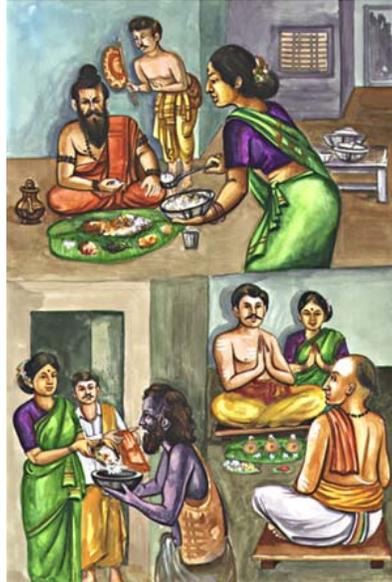
The weaver says, "Morality is the birthright of high families, while immoral conduct's legacy is lowly birth," inferring that what was done in a past life determines the joys or pains in the next, and what is done in this life will affect the one to follow. Adultery was a "no no" then as it is today: "Hatred, sin, fear and disgrace--these four never forsake the man who commits adultery." This wisdom seems to be drowned in the free-flowing freedom of

expressive life that today floods the world, but now we may turn to Weaver's Wisdom, pulled from the deep past and dressed in American English and modern Tamil to persist into the future of futures.

He explains what great goodness the Goddess of Wealth, Lakshmi, will do when envious, inharmonious conditions arise in the family, saying "Fortune's Goddess, intolerant of those who cannot tolerate other's success, introduces them to her sister, Misfortune, and goes away." On and on, leaving no stone unturned, the weaver explains that we have the duty to form and maintain a society of excellence, and gives us the tools to do so. Any nation or community can benefit from this wisdom, now released into the world language of today.

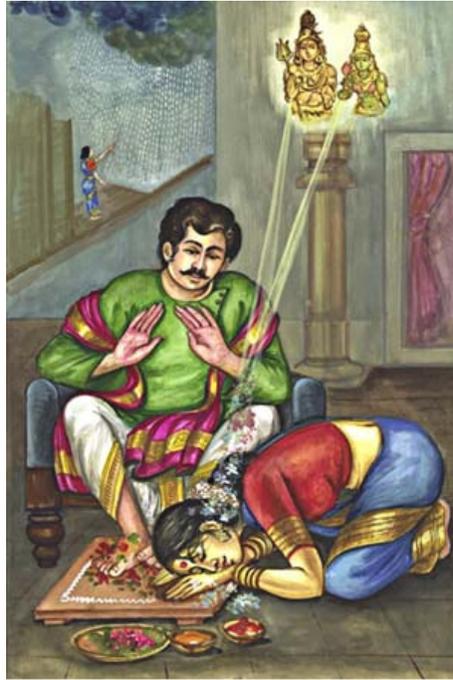
We have been careful to maintain the weaver's gender distinctions within each verse, as well as the literal meaning of his words. Some might seem surprisingly blunt now and even "sexist," but this was the way of the day then, when men were Gods and women were Goddesses, when gracious ladies were found at home and not raised as men, when men were understanding, kindly, patient and forbearing. We hope those days will be rekindled, and the warmth of the home and the family within it, the true stability of a nation, will return and human communities will enter a bold new beginning.

## 5. Family Life



41. He alone may be called a householder who supports students, elders and renunciates pursuing well their good paths.
42. The virtuous householder supports the needs of renunciates, ancestors and the poor.
43. The foremost duty of family life is to serve duly these five: God, guests, kindred, ancestors and oneself.
44. The posterity of householders who gather wealth without misdeeds and share meals without miserliness will never perish.
45. When family life possesses love and virtue, it has found both its essence and fruition.
46. If a man masters the duties of married life, what further merits could monk hood offer him?
47. Among those who strive for liberation, the foremost are they who live the blessed state of family life as it should be lived.
48. The householder dedicated to duty and to aiding ascetics on their path of penance endures more than they do.
49. Domestic life is rightly called virtue. The monastic path, rightly lived beyond blame, is likewise good.
50. He who rightly pursues the householder's life here on Earth will be rightfully placed among the Gods there in Heaven.

## 6. The Good Wife



51. She is the helpful wife who possesses the fullness of domestic virtues and spends within her husband's means.
52. Family life, however full, remains empty if the wife lacks the lofty culture of the home.
53. What does a man lack if his wife is worthy?  
And what does he possess if she is lacking worth?
54. What is more majestic than a woman who preserves the prodigious strength of chastity?
55. Even the rains will fall at her command who upon rising worships not God, but her husband.
56. A married woman is one who vigilantly guards herself, cares for her husband and protects their unblemished reputation.
57. Why do guardians protect women by confinement when her own resolute chastity is a woman's best protection?
58. A woman deeply devoted to the man who wed her will be worthy of great rewards in the world where Gods delight.
59. Unless the wife pursues praise worthy purity, the husband cannot stride? prance before critics like a proud lion.
60. It is said a worthy wife is the blessing of a home, and good children are its precious ornaments.

## 7. The Blessing of Children



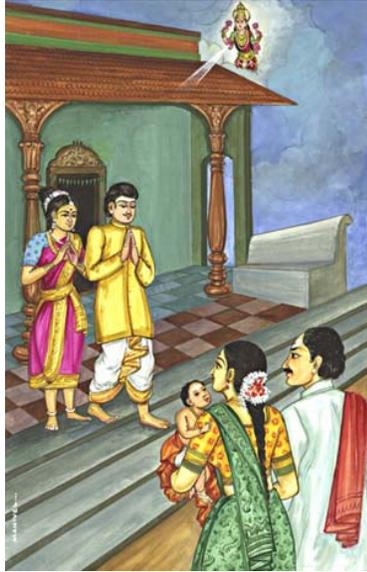
61. Of all blessings we know of none greater than the begetting of children endowed with intelligence.
62. Those who bear children of blameless character will be untouched by evil for seven births.
63. It is said that children are a man's real wealth, and that this wealth is determined by his deeds.
64. Far sweeter than divine nectar is simple boiled rice stirred by the small hands of one's own child.
65. The touched by one's children is a delight to the body, and listening to them chatter is a joy to the ear.
66. "Sweet are the sounds of the flute and the lute," say those who have not heard the prattle of their own children.
67. A father benefits his son best by preparing him to sit at the forefront of learned councils.
68. What pleasure it is to human beings everywhere when their children possess knowledge surpassing their own!
69. When a mother hears her son heralded as a good and learned man, her joy exceeds that of his joyous birth.
70. The son's duty to his father is to make the world ask, "By what great austerities did he merit such a son?"

## 8. Possessing Children



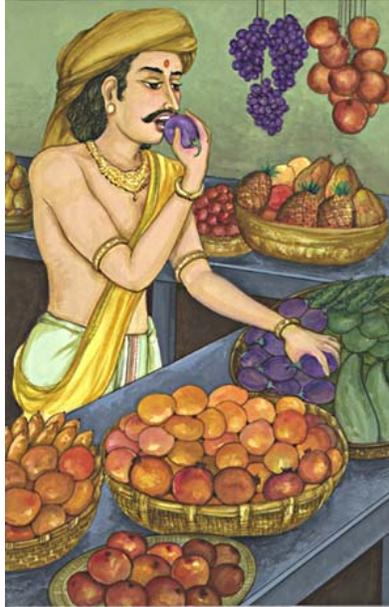
71. Can any lock keep love confined within,  
when the loving heart's tiny tears escape and confess it?
72. The unloving belong only to themselves,  
but the loving belong to others to their very bones.
73. They say it is to know union with love  
that the soul takes union with the body.
74. Love makes one affectionate toward all,  
and affection affords the priceless treasure of friendship.
75. They say love's greatness is this: it yields to good families  
worldly happiness here and heavenly bliss hereafter.
76. The uninformed say love abides with virtuous souls,  
unaware that love is also friend to those immersed in vice.
77. As the blazing sun dries up a boneless worm,  
so does virtue scorch a loveless being.
78. Life without love in the heart  
is like a sapless tree in a barren desert.
79. What good is a body perfect in outer ways,  
if inwardly it is impaired by lack of love?
80. With love enshrined in the heart, one truly lives.  
Without it, the body is but bones encased in skin.

## 9. Hospitality



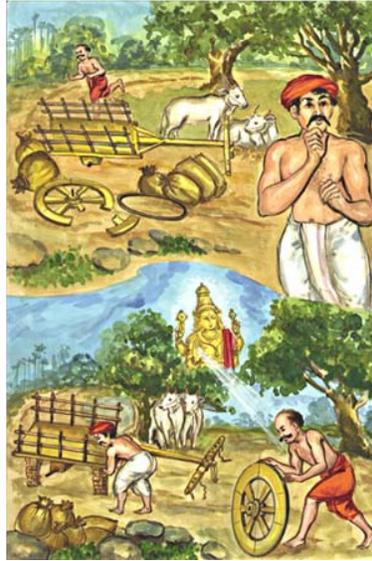
81. The whole purpose of earning wealth and maintaining a home is to provide hospitality to guests.
82. When a guest is in the home, it is improper to hoard one's meal, even if it happens to be the nectar of immortality.
83. If a man cares daily for those who come to him, his life will never suffer the grievous ruin of poverty.
84. Wealth's Goddess dwells in the hospitable home of those who host guests with a smiling face.
85. If a man eats only after attending to guest's needs, what further sowing will his fertile fields require?
86. The host who, caring for guests, watches hopefully for more, will himself be a welcomed guest of those whose home is Heaven.
87. Charity's merit cannot be measured by gifts given. It is measured by measuring the receiver's merits.
88. Those who never sacrifice to care for guests will later lament: We hoarded wealth, estranged ourselves, now none will care for us.
89. The poverty of poverties is having plenty yet shunning guests. Such senselessness is only found in senseless fools.
90. The delicate anicham flower withers when merely smelled, but an unwelcome look is enough to wither a guest's heart.

## 10. Speaking Pleasant Words



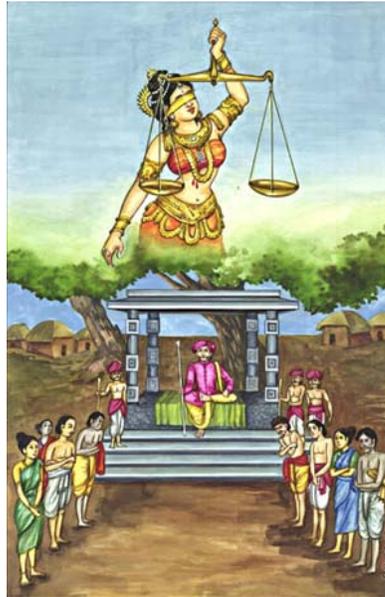
91. Pleasant words, full of tenderness and devoid of deceit, fall from the lips of virtuous men.
92. Better than a gift given with a joyous heart are sweet words spoken with a cheerful smile.
93. A kindly countenance and sweet words spoken from the heart are virtue's way.
94. Poverty-provoking sorrow will not pursue those who speak joy-producing words to all they meet.
95. Humility and pleasant words are the jewels that adorn a man; there are none other.
96. If a man seeks good works while speaking sweet words, his virtues will wax and his vices will wane.
97. Words yield spiritual rewards and moral excellence when they do not wander far from usefulness and agreeableness.
98. Sweet speech that is a stranger to pettiness imparts pleasure not only in this life, but in the next.
99. Why would anyone speak cruel words, having observed the happiness that kind words confer?
- 100.** Utter harsh words when sweet ones would serve is like eating unripe fruits when ripe ones are at hand.

# 11. Gratitude



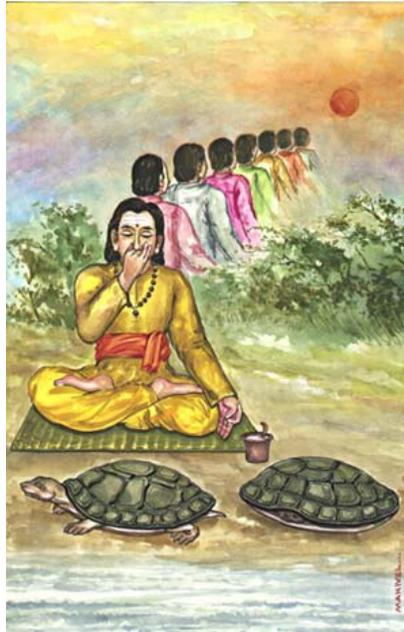
101. The bounty of Heaven and Earth are scant repayment for help rendered though no help was received.
102. A kindness done in the hour of need may itself be small, but in worth it exceeds the whole world.
103. When help is given by weighing the recipient's need and not the donor's reward, its goodness is greater than the sea.
104. While aid may outwardly seem as puny as a mustard seed, those who know will deem it as imposing as a towering palm.
105. Help rendered another cannot be measured by the extent of assistance given. Its real measure is the recipient's worthiness.
106. Never forget fellowship with pure souls, nor forsake friendship with those who aided you in adversity.
107. For seven lives in seven bodies the grateful will remember friends who relieved their anguish and affliction.
108. It is improper to ever forget a kindness, but good to forget at once an injury received.
109. The deadliest injury is effaced the moment the mind recalls a single kindness received from the injurer.
110. Having killed every kind of goodness, one may yet be saved, but there is no redemption for those who let gratitude die.

## 12. Impartiality



111. Justice may be called good when it acts impartially toward enemies, strangers and friends.
112. The wealth of those who possess justice will not perish; rather it will be their posterity's soothing security.
113. However prosperous it may seem, all wealth gained by loss of rightness must be relinquished that very day.
114. In their offspring one may doubtlessly discern who are the just and who are the unjust.
115. Adversity and prosperity never cease to exist. The adornment of great men's minds is to remain unswervingly just under both.
116. When his heart forsakes fairness and his deeds turn depraved, a man realizes deep within himself, "I am ruined."
117. Though a man is profoundly impoverished, if he remains just, the world will not regard him as poor.
118. To incline to neither side, like a balance scale's level beam, and thus weigh impartially is the wise one's ornament.
119. Speech uttered without bias is integrity, if no unspoken bias lurks in the heart.
120. Those businessmen will prosper whose business protects as their own the interests of others.

## 13. Possession of Self-Control



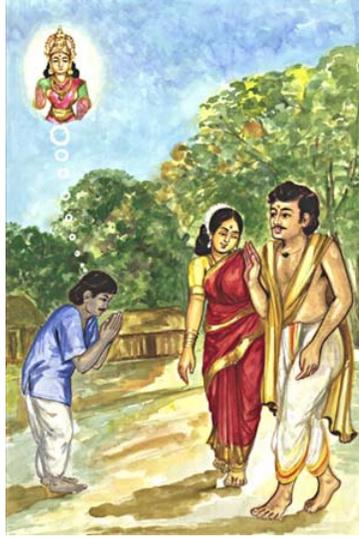
121. Self-control will place one among the Gods, while lack of it will lead to deepest darkness.
122. Guard your self-control as a precious treasure, for there is no greater wealth in life than this.
123. Comprehending and acquiring self-control confers upon one the esteem of wise men.
124. More imposing than a mountain is the greatness of a man who, steadfast in domestic life, has mastered self-control.
125. Humility is a precious quality in all people, but it has a rare richness in the rich.
126. Like a tortoise withdrawing five limbs into its shell, those who restrain the five senses in one life, will find safe shelter for seven.
127. Whatever you may fail to guard, guard well your tongue, for flawed speech unfailingly invokes anguish and affliction.
128. The goodness of all one's virtues can be lost by speaking even a single word of injury.
129. The wound caused by fire heals in its time; the burn inflicted by an inflamed tongue never heals.
130. Virtue will wait in the streets to meet a man possessed of learning and self-disciplined, his anger subdued.

## 14. Possession of Virtuous Conduct



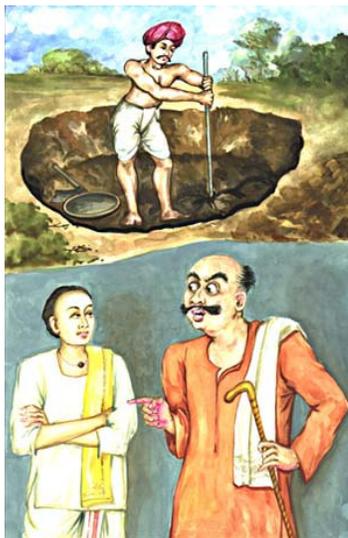
131. Virtuous conduct leads a man to eminent greatness.  
Therefore, it should be guarded as more precious than life itself.
132. In your striving, be mindful to preserve good conduct.  
In your deliberations, discover it is your staunchest ally.
133. Morality is the birthright of high families,  
while immoral conduct's legacy is lowly birth.
134. If a priest forgets the Vedas, he can relearn them.  
But if he falls from virtue, his high birth is forever lost.
135. Prosperity is not for the envious,  
nor is greatness for men of impure conduct.
136. The firm-minded never slacken in upholding virtuous conduct,  
for they know the miseries brought on by such neglect.
137. By honest conduct one achieves honorable eminence,  
while corrupt conduct brings one nothing but blame.
138. Good conduct is the seed in virtue's field;  
wicked conduct's harvest is never-ending sorrow.
139. Men who conduct themselves virtuously  
are incapable of voicing harmful words, even forgetfully.
140. Those who cannot live in harmony with the world,  
though they have learned many things, are still ignorant.

## 15. Not Coveting Another's Wife



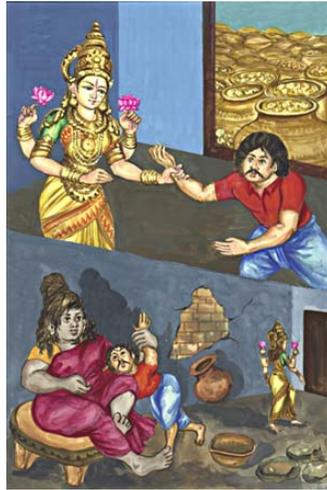
141. Those who know virtue's laws and marital rights never indulge in the folly of desiring another man's wife.
142. Among those who stand outside virtue, there is no greater fool than he who stands with a lustful heart outside another's gate.
143. No different from the dead are those who wickedly desire the wife of a friend.
144. Though a man's measure be mountainous, what good is it if, without the minutest concern, he takes another's wife?
145. A man who seduces another man's wife, knowing she is easy, suffers a shame that neither dies nor diminishes.
146. Hatred, sin, fear and disgrace these four never forsake the man who commits adultery.
147. He is decreed a worthy householder who holds no desire for the womanliness of another's wife.
148. The chivalry that does not look upon another's wife is not mere virtue it is saintly conduct.
- 149.** In a world encircled by the awe some sea, to whom do good things belong? To men never impassioned to caress a married woman.
150. Though a man deserts virtue and indulges in vice, he keeps some decency by not wanting another's wife's womanliness.

## 16. Possession of Forbearance



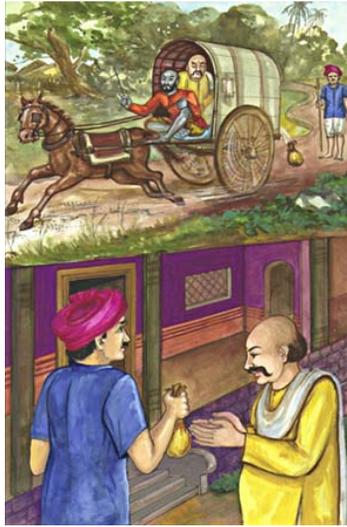
151. Just as the Earth bears those who dig into her,  
it is best to bear with those who despise us.
152. It is always good to endure injuries done to you,  
but to forget them is even better.
153. It is impoverished poverty to be inhospitable to guests.  
It is stalwart strength to be patient with fools.
154. Desiring that greatness should never cease,  
let one's conduct foster forbearance.
155. Worthless are those who injure others vengefully,  
while those who stoically endure are like stored gold.
156. The joy of the vengeful lasts only for a day,  
but the glory of the forbearing lasts until the end of time.
157. Though unjustly aggrieved, it is best to suffer the suffering  
and refrain from unrighteous retaliation.
158. Let a man conquer by forbearance  
those who in their arrogance have wronged him.
159. Those who patiently endure rude remarks  
possess the rare purity of an ascetic.
160. Great are those who suffer fasting's hardships; yet they  
are surpassed by those who suffer hard words.

## 17. Avoidance of Envy



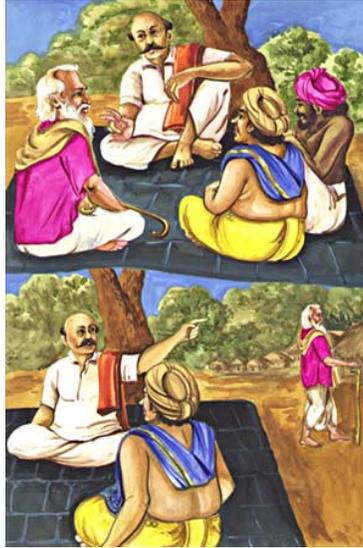
161. The unenvious heart is to be valued  
no less than virtuous conduct itself.
162. Among the many precious things a man may acquire,  
none surpasses a nature free from envy toward all.
163. They say he who is jealous instead of joyous of another's  
wealth  
clearly desires no wealth or virtue of his own.
164. Envy will never cause one to commit wrongful deeds  
who rightly fathoms the disgrace that follows.
165. A man's own envy is foe enough to forge his ruin,  
even if he has no other enemies.
166. Whoever begrudges another's bounty will watch  
his naked and starving kindred die in poverty.
167. Goddess Fortune, intolerant of those who cannot tolerate  
other's  
success, introduces them to her sister, Misfortune, and goes away.
168. The wicked one called Envy consumes this world's wealth,  
then consigns sinners to those worlds of hellish fire.
169. It is worth pondering why good men may be poor  
while the envious in heart can prosper.
170. There are no envious men who have risen to prosperity.  
There are no men free from envy who have fallen from it.

## 18. Avoidance of Covetousness



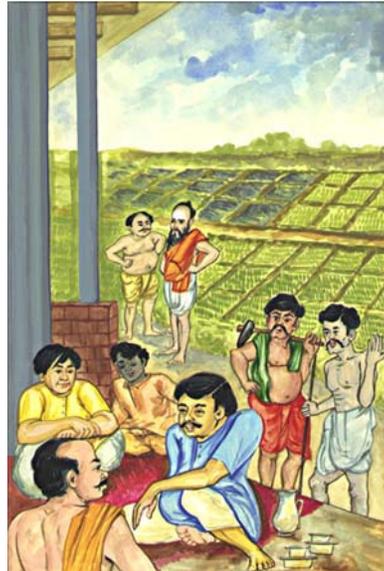
171. In the very attempt to wrongly gain another's wealth, a man forfeits his family's future and his own faultlessness.
172. Those who deem injustice shameful never commit guilt-yielding deeds driven by money-yielding desires.
173. Those who seek immortal bliss will not succumb to immoral deeds that follow desire for fleeting delights.
174. With senses conquered and sight unclouded by depravity, one will not wish for other's wealth, even in destitution.
175. What avails a man's subtle and comprehensive learning, if, crazed by covetousness, he treats others insensibly?
176. Desiring grace and doing his duty, a man who desires wealth but acquires it wrongly is destroyed nevertheless.
177. Do not seek the fortune that greed gathers, for its fruit is bitter on the day of enjoyment.
178. To protect one's own prosperity from decline one must not crave the property held by others.
179. Just as wise men know the goodness of non coveting, so Fortune Herself knows their goodness and draws near.
180. There is a thoughtless desire for other's things that is destructive. There is a mindful pride that, in refusing to covet, is triumphant.

## 19. Avoidance of Backbiting



181. Silent about virtue and swift to act wrongly,  
one who does not slander others may still be called good.
182. More vile than violating virtue and committing crime  
is slandering a man, then smiling to his face.
183. Virtue declares that dying, not living, will bring  
better rewards to deceiving backbiters.
184. Though you speak unkind words to a man's face,  
do not talk behind his back heedless of consequent harm.
185. Though his every word is full of kindly virtue,  
a man's mean backbiting will betray an empty heart.
186. If a man spreads tales of other's faults,  
his own worst faults will be exposed and spread.
187. Not knowing the companionable art of cheerful conversation,  
men estrange even friends by divisive discourse.
188. If men are disposed to spread the faults of friends,  
what deadly harm might they do to strangers?
189. Only because she weighs duty well does Earth bear the weight  
of those who wait for a man's departure to defame him.
190. If men perceived their own faults as they do the faults of others,  
could misfortune ever come to them?

## 20. Avoidance of Pointless Speech



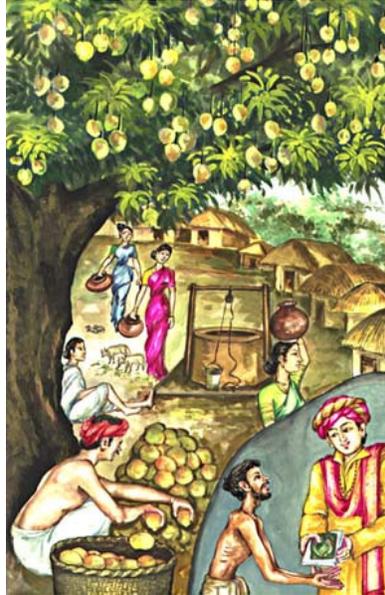
191. Everyone is disgusted by a man who offends one and all with meaningless chatter.
192. Uttering useless words to crowds is worse than committing unkind nesses toward companions.
193. A long and pointless discourse itself declares to all the speaker's lack of worth.
194. Worthless words are doubly unprofitable: the listener's enjoyment is lost, and the speaker's own virtues vanish.
195. Prestige and popularity flee the best of men the moment they speak inane and useless words.
196. Do not call him a man who enjoys displaying his own empty words. Rather, call him the chaff of men.
197. Let the wise, if they deem it necessary, speak even unpleasant words, but it is good if they always refrain from pointless speech.
198. Even in search of extraordinary gains, the wise will never speak trivial or un gainful words.
199. The wise, faultless and free from ignorance, never utter pointless words, even forgetfully.
200. In your speaking, say only that which is purposeful. Never utter words that lack purpose.

## 21. Dread of Sinful Deeds



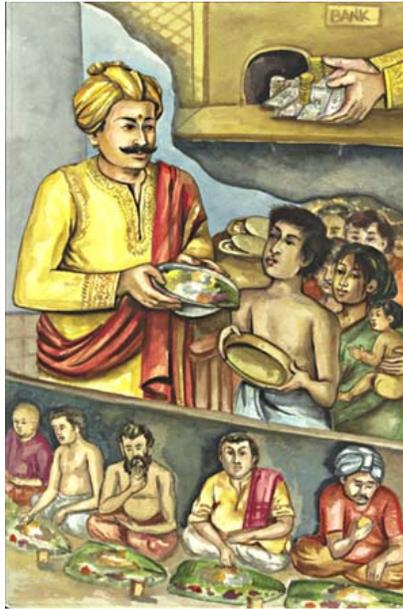
201. Wicked men do not fear, but worthy men dread,  
the arrogance of sinful deeds.
202. From evil springs forth more evil.  
Hence evil is to be feared even more than fire.
203. To commit no wrong, even against one's enemies,  
is said to be supreme wisdom.
204. Only the forgetful plot another's ruin; others remember  
that virtue itself devises every plotter's downfall.
205. Do not commit wrongful deeds, claiming to be poor.  
Such deeds only cause one to be poorer still
206. Let one who hopes for freedom from affliction's pain  
avoid inflicting harm on others.
207. One can escape from hate-filled enemies,  
but his own hateful acts will pursue and destroy him.
208. As a man's shadow follows his footsteps wherever he goes,  
even so will destruction pursue those who commit sinful deeds.
209. If a man feels any fond affection for himself,  
let him not indulge in immoral deeds, however trifling.
210. If men neither deviate from right nor act wrongly,  
they will be defended against destruction.

## 22. Understanding One's Duty of Give



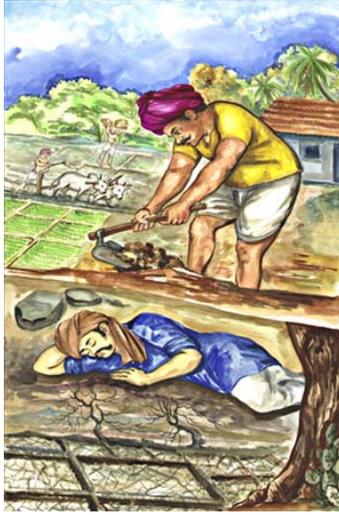
211. The benevolent expect no return for their dutiful giving.  
How can the world ever repay the rain cloud?
212. It is to meet the needs of the deserving  
that the worthy work so hard to acquire wealth.
213. Of all duties, none is better than benevolence,  
whether in this world or that of the Gods.
214. He who understands the duty of giving truly lives.  
all others shall be counted among the dead.
215. The wealth of a community-loving wise man  
may be likened to a well-filled village water tank.
216. Riches retained by the big-hearted resemble fruits  
ripening on a tree in the heart of a village.
217. In the hands of a generous man,  
wealth is like a medicinal tree whose healing gifts help all.
218. Those who know duty deeply never neglect giving,  
even in their own unprosperous season.
219. The benevolent man considers himself poor only  
when he is unable to render his accustomed duty to humanity.
220. Were it said that loss of wealth is the price of generosity,  
such loss would be worth selling one's self to acquire.

## 23. Charity



221. Giving to the poor is true charity.  
All other giving expects some return.
222. Though some may declare it a good path, garnering gifts is bad.  
Even if they say it denies one Heaven, giving gifts is good.
223. Men of good birth graciously give,  
never uttering the wretched excuse, I have nothing.
224. How unpleasant a beggar's pleading can become,  
until one sees his face so sweetly pleased.
225. Great, indeed, is the power to endure hunger.  
Greater still is the power to relieve other's hunger.
226. Relieving the ravaging hunger of the poor  
is a right use for wealth men have obtained.
227. The fiery scourge called hunger never touches  
the man who shares his daily meal with others.
228. Is it because they are unaware of the joys of giving  
that hard-hearted men waste their wealth by hoarding it?
229. More bitter than even a beggar's bread is the meal  
of the miser who hoards wealth and eats alone.
230. There is nothing more bitter than death;  
yet even death seems sweet when giving is impossible.

## 24. Illustriousness



231. Give to the poor and become praiseworthy.  
Life offers no greater reward than this.
232. Those who expound will always praise  
people who bestow alms on the imploring poor.
233. Nothing on Earth is imperishable,  
except exalted glory, which endures forever.
234. So great is glory gained by men in this world,  
that celestials cease praising ascended sages.
235. Loss that is gain and death that is life of  
immortal glory are attained only by the wise.
236. If you must be born, be born for glory.  
Those born without it would be better off without birth.
237. Why do those whose life is devoid of renown blame enemies  
who hate them, when they have themselves to blame?
238. Barren are they and deemed a disgrace by all men on Earth  
who fail to beget the offspring called fame.
239. Even flawlessly fruitful lands will lessen their yields  
when forced to support the body of one who lacks illustriousness.
240. Those who live without reproach truly live.  
Those who live without renown don't live at all.

## Section III

# The Way of the Renunciate

### *Introduction*

The ideal followed by the renunciate is elucidated in this section of Weaver's Wisdom. In the weaver's day, long ago, as it is today, the two paths--that of the family and that of the renunciate--were and are the core of society. In India today, millions pilgrimage to the great festivals called kumbhamela, where the two paths meet for a few months every three years.

Thousands of renunciates teach and preach in tents to millions of seekers. In the nine chapters here are found the essential teachings to be passed on by the ministers of the religion to their followers, especially by example, for it is the renunciates who can live these truths most fully and constantly. Householders can only try.

There is one hope in every devout Hindu's heart: that each elderly father, having raised his family well, will retire in his later years and join the band of renunciates, to perform penance and make ready for yet another life, when he may take up the highest path, that of the renunciate, which Valluvar calls by the sweet Tamil name, thuravi.

The eminent Swami Vivekananda defined this path so eloquently in his never-to-be-forgotten poem, "Song of the Sannyasin." When I was a young man, this poem moved me, brought before my vision the Great Path of the Hindu monk and world-renouncer, led me at an early age to give up the world and seek God, just as many in the weaver's time were so inspired. Fifty years earlier, my spiritual preceptor, Satguru Yogaswami of Jaffna, Sri Lanka, stood in a festive crowd as Swami Vivekananda was paraded through Jaffna on his return to India from America.

The young Tamil man, later to become the greatest sage of the 20th century, was also moved by Swami Vivekananda's living example to choose the path of the renunciate. I commend Vivekananda's poem to all who wish to know the spirit of the path that leads to liberation from rebirth, the path known and valued in Valluvar's day as one-half of dharma's fulfillment.

### Song of the Sannyasin

Wake up the note! the song that had its birth  
Far off, where worldly taint could never reach,  
In mountain caves and glades of forest deep,  
Whose calm no sigh for lust or wealth or fame  
Could ever dare to break; where rolled the stream  
Of knowledge, truth, and bliss that follows both.  
Sing high that note, sannyasin bold! Say,  
"Om Tat Sat, Om!"

Strike off thy fetters! bonds that bind thee down,  
Of shining gold, or darker, baser ore--  
Love, hate; good, bad; and all the dual throng.  
Know slave is slave, caressed or whipped, not free;  
For fetters, though of gold, are not less strong to bind.  
Then off with them, sannyasin bold! Say,  
"Om Tat Sat, Om!"

Let darkness go; the will-o'-the-wisp that leads  
With blinking light to pile more gloom on gloom.  
This thirst for life forever quench; it drags  
From birth to death, and death to birth, the soul.  
He conquers all who conquers self.  
Know this and never yield, sannyasin bold! Say,  
"Om Tat Sat, Om!"

"Who sows must reap," they say, "and cause must bring  
The sure effect: good, good; bad, bad; and none  
Escapes the law. But whoso wears a form  
Must wear the chain." Too true; but far beyond  
Both name and form is atman, ever free.  
Know thou art That, sannyasin bold! Say,  
"Om Tat Sat, Om!"

They know not truth who dream such vacant dreams  
As father, mother, children, wife and friend.  
The sexless Self--whose father He? whose child?  
Whose friend, whose foe, is He who is but One?  
The Self is all in all--none else exists;  
And thou art That, sannyasin bold! Say,  
"Om Tat Sat, Om!"

There is but One: the Free, the Knower, Self,  
Without a name, without a form or stain.  
In Him is maya, dreaming all this dream.  
The Witness, He appears as nature, soul.  
Know thou art That, sannyasin bold! Say,  
"Om Tat Sat, Om!"

Where seekest thou? That freedom, friend, this world

Nor that can give. In books and temples, vain  
Thy search. Thine only is the hand that holds  
The rope that drags thee on. Then cease lament.  
Let go thy hold, sannyasin bold! Say,  
"Om Tat Sat, Om!"

Say, "Peace to all. From me no danger be  
To aught that lives. In those that dwell on high,  
In those that lowly creep--I am the Self in all!  
All life, both here and there, do I renounce,  
All heavens and earths and hells, all hopes and fears."  
Thus cut thy bonds, sannyasin bold! Say,  
"Om Tat Sat, Om!"

Heed then no more how body lives or goes.  
Its task is done: let karma float it down.  
Let one put garlands on, another kick  
This frame: say naught. No praise or blame can be  
Where praiser, praised, and blamer, blamed, are one.  
Thus be thou calm, sannyasin bold! Say,  
"Om Tat Sat, Om!"

Truth never comes where lust and fame and greed  
Of gain reside. No man who thinks of woman  
As his wife can ever perfect be;

Nor he who owns the least of things, nor he  
Whom anger Chains, can ever pass through maya's gates.  
So, give these up, sannyasin bold! Say,  
"Om Tat Sat, Om!"

Have thou no home. What home can hold thee, friend?  
The sky thy roof, the grass thy bed, and food  
What chance may bring--well cooked or ill, judge not.  
No food or drink can taint that noble Self  
Which knows Itself. Like rolling river free  
Thou ever be, sannyasin bold! Say,  
"Om Tat Sat, Om!"

Few only know the truth. The rest will hate  
And laugh at thee, great one; but pay no heed.  
Go thou, the free, from place to place, and help  
Them out of darkness, maya's veil. Without  
The fear of pain or search for pleasure, go  
Beyond them both, sannyasin bold! Say,  
"Om Tat Sat, Om!"

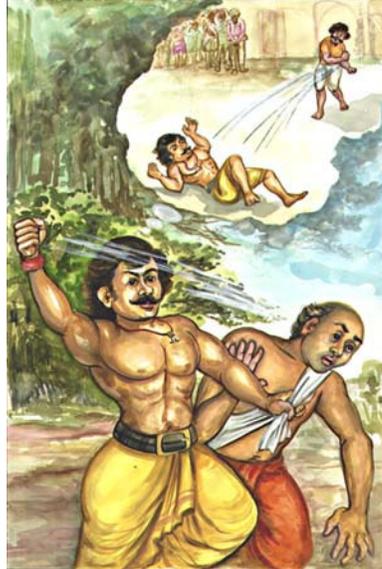
Thus day by day, till karma's power's spent,  
Release the soul forever. No more is birth,  
Nor I, nor thou, nor God, nor man. The "I"  
Has All become, the All is "I" and Bliss.

Know thou art That, sannyasin bold! Say,

"Om Tat Sat, Om!"

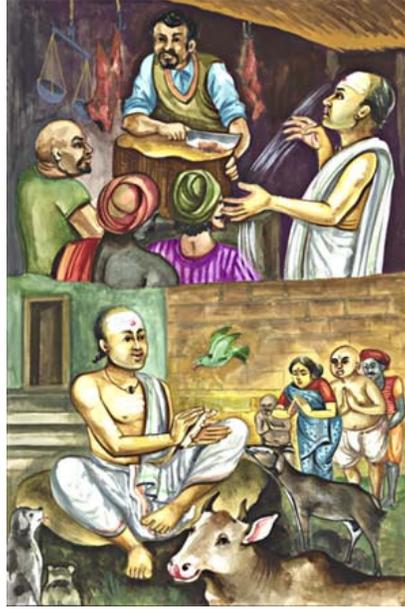
"Song of the Sannyasin" by Swami Vivekananda is quoted, with written permission, from *Inspired Talks, My Master and Other Writings*; copyright 1958 by Swami Nikhilananda, trustee of the estate of Swami Vivekananda; published by the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center of New York. Remarkably, the handwritten original was discovered (long after his passing in 1902) hidden in a wall during the 1943 restoration of a retreat where Swamiji had spent the summer and given darshan and discourses to Western seekers.

## 25. Possession of Compassion



241. Among the wealthy, compassionate men claim the richest wealth, for material wealth is possessed even by contemptible men.
242. Find and follow the good path, ruled by compassion Of the many ways, that one leads to liberation.
243. Those whose hearts are drawn toward mercy will never be drawn into the dark and woeful world.
244. Kindly ones who lovingly protect all life need never dread hurt from the actions of their own life.
245. This wide and wind-swept fertile Earth is witness to the truth that misery is not for kind-hearted men.
246. They say those who act cruelly by forsaking kindness must have forgotten what it means to forsake virtue.
247. As this world is not for the penniless, so is that world not for the pitiless!
248. Those without wealth may one day prosper, but those without kindness are utterly and incurably poor.
249. Practicing charity without compassion is as inconceivable as realizing God without clarity of mind.
250. Before proceeding against men weaker than yourself, ponder when you stood before those more powerful.

## 26. Abstaining from Eating Meat



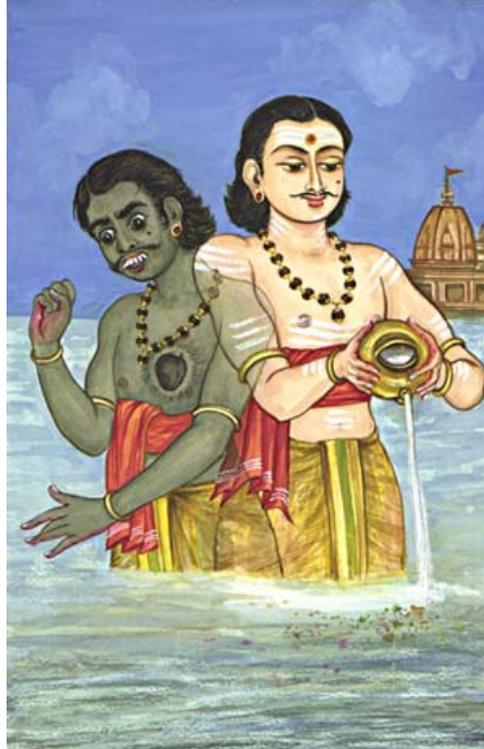
251. How can he practice true compassion who eats the flesh of an animal to fatten his own flesh?
252. Riches cannot be found in the hands of the thriftless, nor can compassion be found in the hearts of those who eat meat.
253. He who feasts on a creature's flesh is like he who wields a weapon. Goodness is never one with the minds of these two.
254. If you ask, "What is kindness and what is unkindness?" It is not-killing and killing. Thus, eating flesh is never virtuous.
255. Life is perpetuated by not eating meat. The jaws of Hell close on those who do.
256. If the world did not purchase and consume meat, no one would slaughter and offer meat for sale.
257. When a man realizes that meat is the butchered flesh of another creature, he will abstain from eating it.
258. Insightful souls who have abandoned the passion to hurt others will not feed on flesh that life has abandoned.
259. Greater than a thousand ghee offerings consumed in sacrificial fires is to not sacrifice and consume any living creature.
260. All life will press palms together in prayerful adoration of those who refuse to slaughter or savor meat.

## 27. Austerity



261. It is the nature of asceticism to patiently endure hardship and to not harm living creatures.
262. Austerity belongs to the naturally austere. Others may attempt it, but to no avail.
263. Is it because they must provide for renunciates that others forget to perform penance?
264. Should he but wish it, an ascetic's austerities will ruin his foes and reward his friends.
265. In this world men do austerities diligently, assured of acquiring desires they desire.
266. Men who follow some austerity fulfill their karma. All others, ensnared in desires, act in vain.
267. As the intense fire of the furnace refines gold to brilliance, so does the burning suffering of austerity purify the soul to resplendence.
268. One who has realized by himself his soul's Self will be worshiped by all other souls.
269. So potent is the power acquired through disciplined self-denial that those who attain it may even delay the moment of death.
270. A few people fast and abstain, while most do not. Due to this, many suffer deprivation.

## 28. Deceptive Conduct



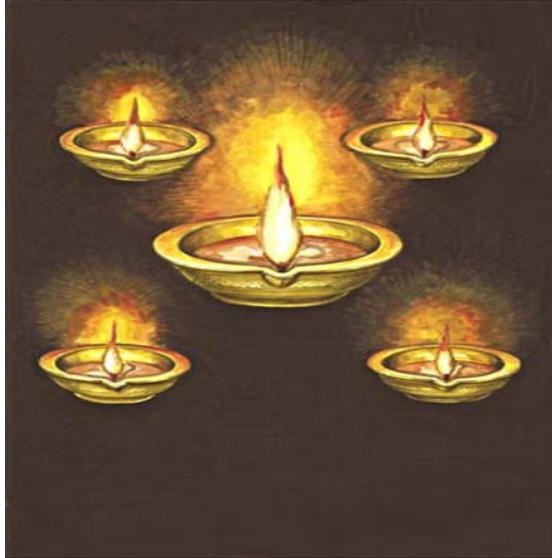
271. A deceiver's own five elements remain undeceived by his double-dealing mind and silently mock him.
272. Of what avail is an outer appearance of saintliness if the mind suffers inwardly from knowledge of its iniquity?
273. He who has not attained the power yet wears the garb of saints is like a cow that grazes about wearing a tiger's skin.
274. He who conceals himself beneath holy robes and commits sins is like a hunter hiding in the bushes to snare unwary birds.
275. The day will come when those who claim dispassion yet act deceitfully exclaim, "Alas! Alas! What have I done?"
276. None is so heartless as he who, without renunciation in his heart, poses as a renunciate and lives in pretense.
277. Like the poisonous jequirity bean, with its red and black sides, there are outwardly dazzling men whose insides are dark.
278. Many are the men who piously bathe in purifying waters, while in their black hearts impure conduct lies concealed.
279. The arrow is straight but cruel; the lute is crooked but sweet. Therefore, judge men by their acts, not their appearance.
280. Neither shaven head nor long matted locks are needed, provided one casts off conduct condemned by the world.

## 29. Avoidance of Fraud



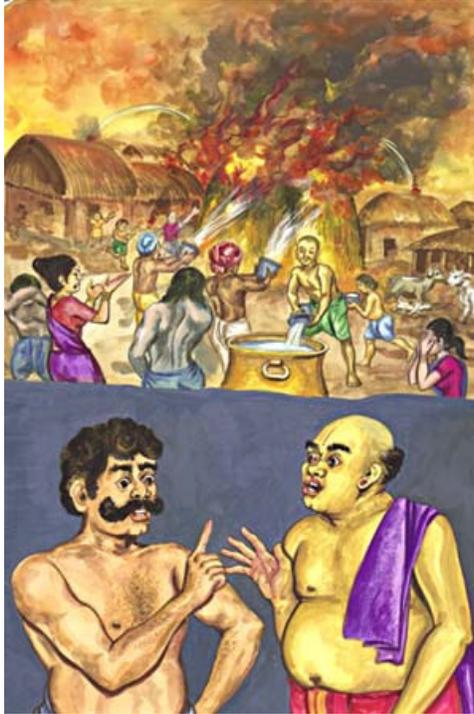
281. He who wishes not to be scorned by others guards his own mind against the slightest thought of fraud.
282. The mere thought of sin is sin. Therefore, avoid even the thought of stealing from another.
283. A fortune amassed by fraud may appear to prosper but will all too soon perish altogether.
284. Taking delight in defrauding others yields the fruit of undying suffering when those delights ripen.
285. Benevolent thoughts and kindly feelings flee from those who watch for another's unwatchfulness to swindle his property.
286. Those who walk deceit's desirous path cannot hope to work wisdom's measured way.
287. The dark deceptions of fraud cannot be found in those who desire the greatness called virtue.
288. As righteousness resides in the hearts of the virtuous, so does deceit dwell in the hearts of thieves.
289. Men who know nothing but deception die a little each time they contrive their crooked deeds.
290. Even the life in his body will abandon him who cheats others, while Heaven itself never forsakes those who are honest.

## 30. Truthfulness



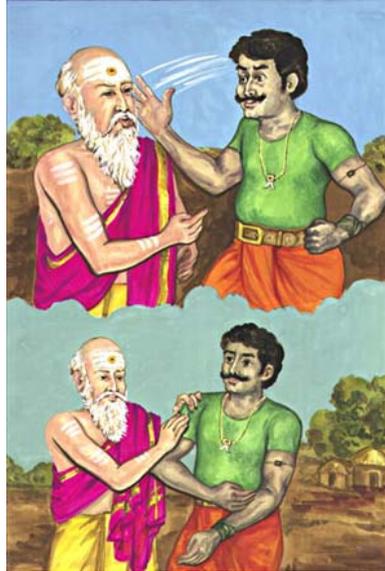
291. What is truthfulness? It is speaking words which are totally free from harmful effects.
292. Even falsehood is of the nature of truth if it renders good results, free from fault.
293. Let one not speak as true what he knows to be false, for his conscience will burn him when he has lied.
294. One who lives by truth in his own heart truly lives in the hearts of all people.
295. Those who speak only truth from the heart surpass even penitents and philanthropists.
296. No prestige surpasses the absence of falsehood; all other virtues flow from it effortlessly.
297. Not lying, and merely not lying, is beneficial for those who cannot or will not practice other virtues.
298. Water is sufficient to cleanse the body, but truthfulness alone can purify the mind.
299. Not all lamps give light. the lamp of not-lying is the learned man's light.
300. Among all great truths we have ever beheld, not a single one rivals the goodness of telling the truth.

## 31. Avoidance of Anger



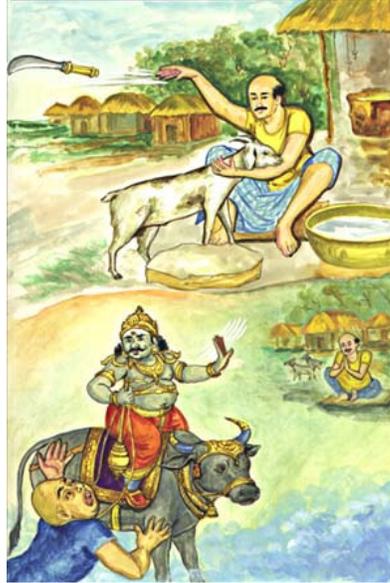
301. It is restraint that restrains rage when it can injure. If it cannot harm, what does restraint really matter?
302. Wrath is wrong even when it cannot cause injury, but when it can, there is nothing more evil.
303. Forget anger toward all who have offended you, for it gives rise to teeming troubles.
304. Anger kills the face's smile and the heart's joy. Does there exist a greater enemy than one's own anger?
305. If a man be his own guard, let him guard himself against rage. Left unguarded, his own wrath will annihilate him.
306. Anger's fire engulfs all who draw near it, burning even friends and family who risk rescue.
307. As a man trying to strike the ground with his hand can hardly fail, just as surely will one who treasures his temper be destroyed.
308. Though others inflict wrongs as painful as flaming torches, it is good if a man can refrain from inflammatory tantrums.
309. If hostile thoughts do not invade his mind, all his other thoughts may swiftly manifest.
310. As men who have died resemble the dead, so men who have renounced rage resemble renunciates.

## 32. Avoidance of Injuring Others



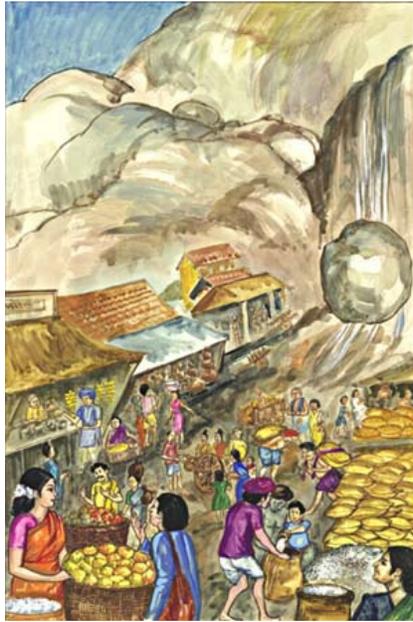
311. Even if injuring others would bring princely riches, the pure in heart would still avoid it.
312. It is the principle of the pure in heart never to injure others, even when they themselves have been hatefully injured.
313. Harming others, even enemies who harmed you and provoked, surely brings incessant sorrow.
314. If you return kindness for injuries received and forget both, Those who harmed you will be punished by their own shame.
315. What good is a man's knowledge unless it prompts him to prevent the pain of others as if it were his own pain?
316. Actions that are known to harm oneself should never be inflicted upon others.
317. The highest principle is this: never knowingly harm anyone at any time in any way.
318. Why does he who knows what injury to his own life is like inflict injury upon other living human beings?
319. If a man visits sorrow on another in the morning, sorrow will visit him unbidden in the afternoon.
320. All suffering recoils on the wrongdoer himself. Thus, those desiring not to suffer refrain from causing others pain.

### 33. Avoidance of Killing



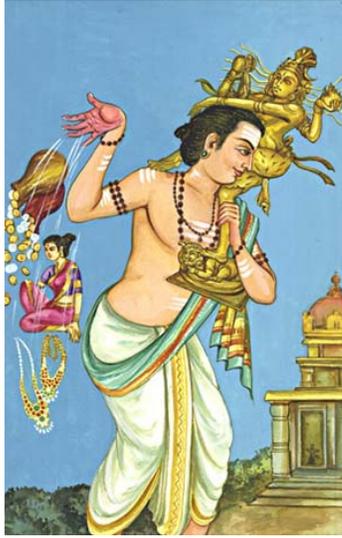
321. What is virtuous conduct? It is never destroying life, for killing leads to every other sin.
322. Of all virtues summed by ancient sages, the foremost are to share one's food and to protect all living creatures.
323. Not killing is the first and foremost good. The virtue of not lying comes next.
324. What is the good way? It is the path that reflects on how it may avoid killing any living creature.
325. Among all who disown the world out of dismay, the foremost, dismayed with killing, embrace non killing.
326. Life-devouring death will not lay waste the living days of one whose code of conduct is to never kill.
327. Refrain from taking precious life from any living being, even to save your own life.
328. By sacrifice of life, some gain great wealth and welfare, but great men scorn such odious gains.
329. Those whose trade is killing creatures are deemed defiled by men who know the defiling nature of being mean.
330. They say that beggars who suffer a depraved life in a diseased body once deprived another's body of its life.

## 34. Impermanence of All Things



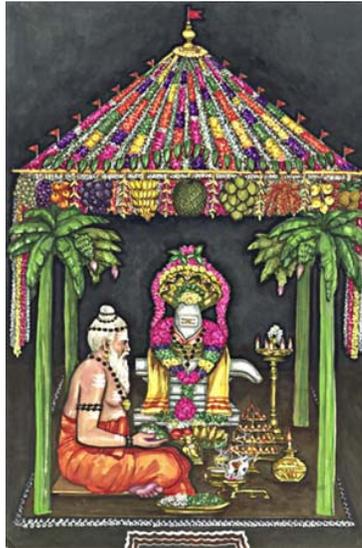
331. There is no baser folly than the infatuation that looks upon the ephemeral as if it were everlasting.
332. Amassing great wealth is gradual, like the gathering of a theater crowd. Its dispersal is sudden, like that same crowd departing.
333. Wealth's nature is to be unenduring. Upon acquiring it, quickly do that which is enduring.
334. Though it seems a harmless gauge of time, to those who fathom it, a day is a saw steadily cutting down the tree of life.
335. Do good deeds with a sense of urgency, before death's approaching rattle strangles the tongue.
336. What wondrous greatness this world possesses that yesterday a man was, and today he is not.
337. Men do not know if they will live another moment, yet their thoughts are ten million and more.
338. The soul's attachment to the body is like that of a fledgling, which forsakes its empty shell and flies away.
339. Death is like falling asleep, and birth is like waking from that sleep.
340. Not yet settled in a permanent home, the soul takes temporary shelter in a body.

## 35. Renunciation



341. Whatsoever a man has renounced, from the sorrow born of that he has freed himself.
342. The greatest gladness in the world comes after enunciation. Let men desiring that rapture renounce early in life.
343. The five senses must be subdued, and every desire simultaneously surrendered.
344. The ascetic's austerity permits not a single possession, for possessions draw him back into delusion.
345. What are life's petty attachments to the man who seeks severance from future births, when even his body is a burden?
346. One who slays the conceit that clamors "I" and "mine" will reach a realm above the celestials' world.
347. If one clings to his attachments, refusing to let go, sorrows will not let go their grip on him.
348. Those who perfectly renounce attain the highest peak; the rest remain ensnared in delusion's net.
349. Birth ceases when all attachments are severed; until then, one only sees life's impermanence.
350. Attach yourself to Him who is free from all attachments. Bind yourself to that bond so all other bonds may be broken.

## 36. Knowledge of Truth



351. The muddled mentality that mistakes the unreal for the Real is the genesis of woeful births.
352. For those of undimmed perception, free from delusion, darkness departs and rapture rushes in.
353. Heaven is nearer than Earth for those who dispel all doubt and know the Truth.
354. All knowledge acquired through the five senses is worthless to those without knowledge of Truth.
355. In everything of every kind whatsoever, wisdom perceives Truth in that thing.
356. Those who find the highest Reality here and now follow a path which never comes back to this world.
357. Having thought profoundly and realized fully That which is, one need never think of being born again.
358. Wisdom is that rare realization of Perfection's True Being, which banishes forever the folly of rebirth.
359. He who clings to life's true support clings not to lesser things. Sorrows, which destroy by clinging, no longer cling to him.
360. Desire, delusion and indignation--annihilation of these three terms is the termination of torment.

## 37. Eradication of Desire



361. At all times and to all creatures, the seed of ceaseless births is desire.
362. If you must desire, desire freedom from birth. That will only come by desiring desirelessness.
363. Here no fortune is as dear as desirelessness; and even there, nothing like it can be found.
364. Purity is but freedom from desire, and that comes from thirsting after Truth.
365. They say only those who have renounced desire are renunciates. Others, though they have renounced all else, are not.
366. As it is desire, above all else, which deceives a man, ascetics rightfully dread it.
367. Desisting from all desire-driven deeds, a renouncer finds liberation approaching, just as he desired.
368. He who has no desires has no sorrow. But where desire exists, endless sorrows ensue.
369. When desire, sorrow's sorrow, dies away, undying bliss prevails here on Earth.
370. It is the nature of desire never to be fulfilled, but he who utterly gives it up is eternally fulfilled at that very moment.

## Section IV

# Destiny

### *Introduction*

Ah! Destiny. Something that applies to both paths: that of the families and that of the renunciates. Call it karma, but never fate. Some have translated the Tamil word ooll as fate, equating fate with karma. However, fate implies an unavoidable doom, and that is not a description of karma. Webster's Dictionary says, "Fate refers to the inevitability of a course of events as supposedly predetermined by a God or other agency beyond human control.

Destiny refers to an inevitable succession of events as determined supernaturally or by necessity, but often implies a favorable outcome." I prefer the word destiny--from the Latin, meaning "determination," "fixed standing"--if either must be used, as it implies less inevitability and flows better with the reality that each soul creates its own future by its own actions.

Fortunately, in recent times, the word karma has been brought into English. Webster's defines it as, "A deed, act, fate. To make, form. Similar to the Welsh pryd: shape, time. 1) Hinduism, Buddhism: the totality of a person's actions in any one of the successive states of that person's existence, thought of as determining the fate of the next stage. 2) Loosely, fate, destiny." This reveals a combination of destiny, fate and karma to unfold the complexity of how the soul shapes its own future.

It is interesting to note that the originally Latin word fate ("pronouncement, prediction, prophecy") actually goes back to the times of the Greeks and Romans, when the Fates, as they were called (also Moirai for the Greeks and Parcae for the Romans), were three Goddesses--Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos--believed to guide human destiny. We might surmise that their role was or is like that of guardian devas, or even Mahadevas, who assist man in shaping his own destiny by revealing pathways that are auspicious and karmically positive. The Greeks say that Clotho is the spinner of the thread of destiny. Lachesis is the measurer of the thread of destiny. Atropos is the cutter of the fabric of destiny.

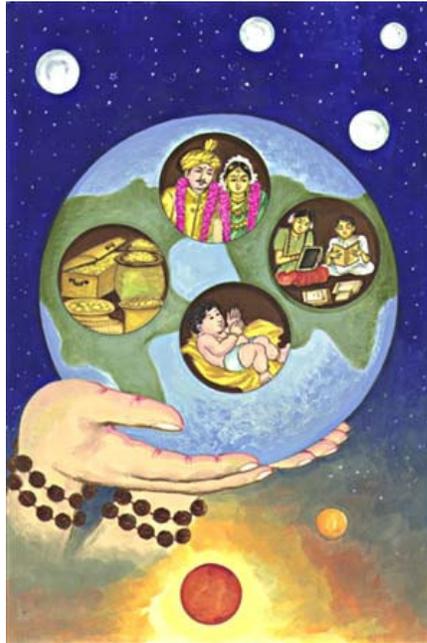
I have never liked the word fate. It has always reminded me of the strain of fatalism in the Abrahamic religions, preaching that everything is predetermined, foreordained, and there is nothing you can do if you are doomed. You are at the mercy of outside, and sometimes hurtful, forces. The burden is intolerable, in spite of some theologians' efforts to alleviate it by elaboration of the concept of free will.

The Vedic traditional view of karma is not of this kind. Jyotisha, Hindu astrology, tells us the stars only impel; they do not compel. Karmas are of man's own making, making him the creator of his own destiny, not the victim of some other force, whether divine or not. Bad karmas (kukarma in Sanskrit) can be mitigated through remorse, prayer and penance, called prayashchitta. Though karmas may be the worst of the worst, once they are mitigated and atoned for, one can lead a joyous, happy religious life.

Fate, on the other hand, is taken as a damnation, a curse from God if it is bad, and nothing, literally nothing, can be done to soften or avoid it. The concept of fate holds one who believes in it in a state of constant, ever-growing fear and hopelessness. Fate is a foreordained destiny imposed upon each person from some unseen outside force, whereas karma is of man's own making.

As we explain in *Dancing with Siva*, "Karma is not fate, for man acts with free will, creating his own destiny. The Vedas tell us, if we sow goodness, we will reap goodness; if we sow evil, we will reap evil. Karma refers to the totality of our actions and their concomitant reactions in this and previous lives, all of which determines our future. It is the interplay between our experience and how we respond to it that makes karma devastating or helpfully invigorating."

## 38. Destiny



371. When destiny ordains wealth, it gives birth to industriousness. When it decrees a life of loss, it inspires only idleness.
372. That destiny which decreases prosperity increases ignorance. That destiny which diminishes loss expands knowledge.
373. However subtle the sundry texts he studies, a man is left with his native intelligence.
374. Two natural ways are ordained in this world. Securing wealth is one. Seeking wisdom's light is another.
375. In karma's presence, sure success with wealth can fail, and certain failure can succeed.
376. Though you guard it well, what destiny does not decree disappears. Though you cast it aside, what destiny calls yours will not depart.
377. A man may amass millions, but its enjoyment will never exceed the portion allotted to him.
378. The poor are practically ascetics and would renounce if only karma, approaching with experiences yet to be, would pass them by.
379. Why should those who rejoice when destiny brings them good moan when that same destiny decrees misfortune?
380. What is there that is mightier than destiny? For it is present even in the plans we devise to overcome it.

# Section V

# Royalty

## *Introduction*

Yes, there are so few kings left on our planet today, but they are still here, and this section on government applies to them. but does it apply to them only? Is it not a course in human resource management, essential for all who aspire to climb the corporate ladder? Is it not a politician's handbook for those who aspire to the top and wish to remain there?

In today's world, the CEOs of large corporations far outnumber even the subjects of feudal kingdoms of the days in which Valluvar lived. Earth's population then was only 150 million or more, and now it is nearly six billion--forty times greater.

Here we learn that right thought, right speech and right action are a total must for right government for the corporation, the political arena, for a president of a large or small nation, or for a king. Indeed, these precepts apply to all of us who aspire to serve without conflict, to think ahead and prepare, to analyze and understand before we act. It is all here: an irrefutable and clear message for success.

There is no way to calculate how many Hindus have memorized and acted upon these verses and are now top in the computer industries, leaders in political circles, directors of hospitals or highly regarded engineers within their fields. Take, for example, the admonitions on choosing the right people to employ, to associate with and to trust. This is wisdom that needs to be known.

Certain men who commanded high esteem failed to comply with what is so clearly outlined here, and the thud of their fall was heard worldwide through the Internet, the television, the radio and the printed word. For this alone, Weaver's Wisdom is a must, for it is with great effort that one attains to a position of worth, and it is by even greater effort that he maintains this position to fulfill the initial vision of his chosen enterprise. It is for this that information "spies" are needed, that loyal and trusted advisors are needed, that wealth obtained by proper means is needed, that fairness to employees, constituents and the public at large is needed, and most of all the knowledge of exactly what fairness actually is, so as not to earn reproach.

Valluvar explains how to learn and the importance of learning. He states that life is a continuum of constant learning, keeping up with the times. In today's

world, the times are moving rapidly, and there is a lot of keeping up to do. For leaders, it is a constant demand. The weaver admonishes those who neglect their learning, who are too indolent to tolerate a new idea, absorb a new duty or take on a new responsibility.

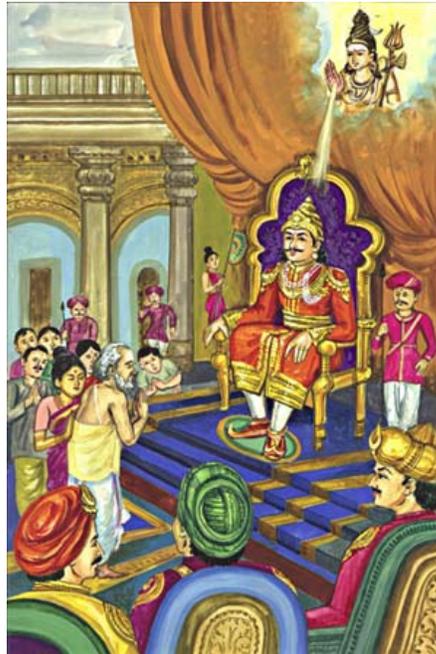
Skillfully, he divides the intellectual from the wise in chapter 43, for wisdom is the timely application of knowledge. Self-reflection is seen in chapter 44, where the weaver explains that we must be self-reflective, see our own faults and correct them before others see them and complain--a hallmark of good leadership.

We can do nothing on the way up the corporate ladder, or even beginning a political campaign, unless we gain the support of those in influence. It is in chapter 45 that the weaver explains how this is done and the necessity for it. Yes, of course, there are admonitions that leaders will fall by not following, such as the wisdom that not avoiding low-minded people leads to ruin.

Where would CNN, Doordarshan and other news media such as India Today, Newsweek, The Hindu and Wall Street Journal get their stories and their readership if all those in powerful positions heeded this chapter?

On and on he goes in creating the eminent management manual of all times, so precise are his statements, so true and so meaningful. He encourages all to persevere: "Laugh when troubles come your way. Nothing conquers calamity better than that."

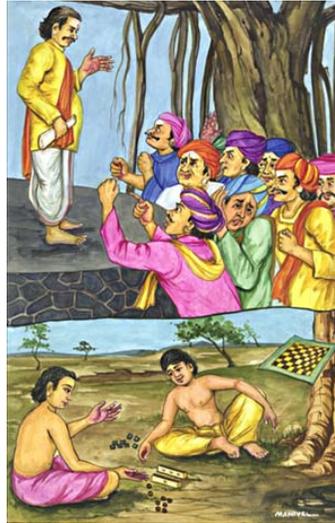
## 39. The Merits of the King



381. He is lion among kings who is well endowed with these six: army, citizens, wealth, ministers, allies and fortresses.
382. There are four attributes that cannot be absent in a king: fearlessness, generosity, wisdom and industriousness.
383. In those who rule the land, three traits must never lapse: vigilance, valor and virtuous learning.
384. The noble king is unswerving in virtue, restrains wrongdoing and courageously maintains his honor.
385. He who can produce a treasury of wealth, deposit it, preserve it and apportion it wisely--now, that is a king!
386. All peoples praise that nation whose sovereign is always accessible and never speaks harshly.
387. Behold the king who speaks graciously, gives generously and protects powerfully--the world considers his word its command.
388. Ruling righteously himself and safeguarding his subjects, a monarch may be deemed divine by his people.
389. The world lives protected beneath the umbrella of an ethical leader who can endure words bitter to the ear.
390. He is a light among rulers who is endowed with the four merits of generosity, graciousness, justice and care for the people.

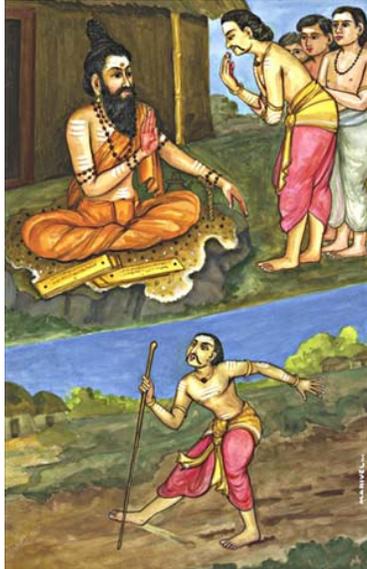


## 41. The Neglect of Learning



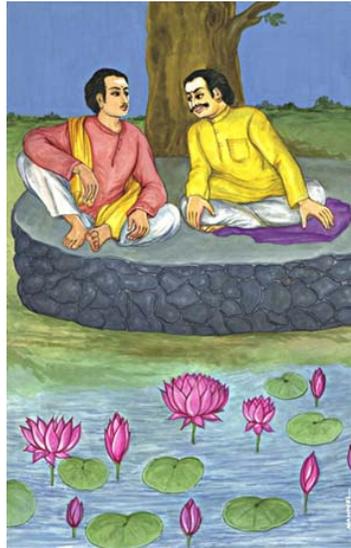
401. Speaking to a learned gathering without ample knowledge is like playing a dice game without the board.
402. An uneducated man desiring to be eloquent is like a breastless woman longing to be feminine.
403. Even the ignorant will be considered wise if they refrain from speaking in the presence of the learned.
404. However excellent an untaught man's knowledge may be, erudite men will never accept it.
405. An unschooled man's self-conceit will shrivel the moment he speaks to an assembly.
406. Like unproductive barren land is the man who has neglected learning. All that can be said about him is that he exists.
407. The handsome charm of him whose knowledge is neither subtle nor penetrating is like that of a painted clay doll.
408. Even more wretched than a learned man's poverty is the unlearned man's wealth.
409. Though he is humbly born, a lettered man's nobility transcends that of the illiterate nobleman.
410. As men are to wild beasts, so are the masters of brilliant texts to other men.

## 42. Learning by Listening



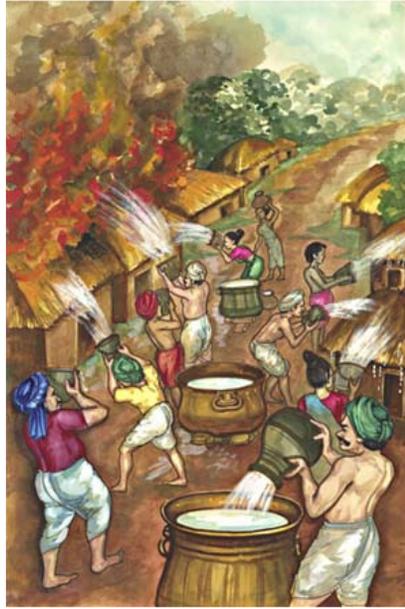
411. The most precious wealth is the wealth acquired by the ear.  
Indeed, of all wealth, that wealth is paramount.
412. Only when no fare can be found for the ear, is it time to offer the stomach a morsel.
413. In Heaven, Deities feed from sacrificial fires. On Earth, men who feast on listening are their equal.
414. Though he has no learning, if a man listens to the learned, that will serve as his staff of strength in adversity.
415. Words from the lips of upright men are like a steadying staff in a slippery place.
416. Let a man listen to good things, however little. Even that little will enlarge his greatness.
417. Those who have studied deeply and listened diligently never speak foolish words, even when they have misunderstood a matter.
418. If not pierced by acute listening, ears may hear and yet remain deaf.
419. Unless he has listened to learning's subtlety, it is rare indeed for a man to speak with humility.
420. There are those whose tongues taste but whose ears savor nothing. What does it matter whether they live or die?

## 43. Possession of Wisdom



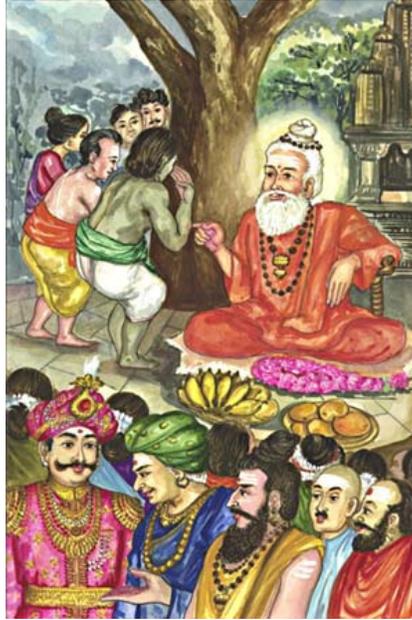
421. Wisdom is a weapon that can ward off destruction. It is an inner fortress that no enemy can assail.
422. Wisdom will harness the mind, diverting it from wrong and directing it toward right.
423. Whatever is heard from whomever's lips, wisdom will rightly discern its true meaning.
424. Wisdom speaks well, conveying each meaning clearly, and listens for the subtlest sense in others' speech.
425. The wise befriend the wise and keep that friendship constant, not opening and closing it like the petaled lotus.
426. It is wisdom to live in the world in the way that the world lives.
427. Those who know, know what will happen next. Such things are unknown to the unknowing.
428. It is folly not to fear what ought to be feared. So the wise dread what should be dreaded.
429. Fearsome sufferings shall never happen to knowing ones who guard against future happenings.
430. Those who possess wisdom possess everything. Whatever others possess, without wisdom they have nothing.

## 44. Guarding Against Faults



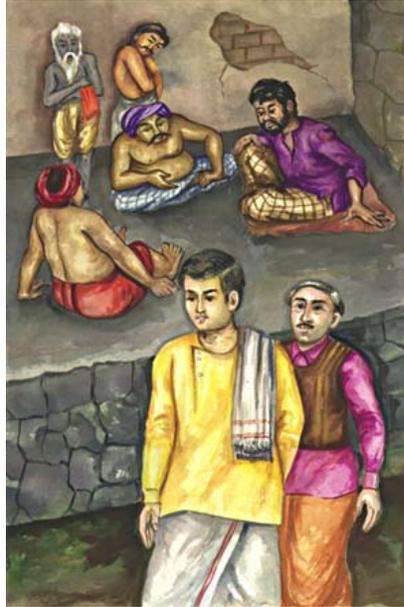
431. Those who are free from vanity, vulgarity and venomousness will prosper in deserving dignity.
432. Avarice, arrogance and crude amusements are flaws in the character of an unfit king.
433. Though their fault be as small as a millet seed, to those who dread disgrace it will appear as large as a palm tree.
434. One's own faults are one's mortal enemies. It follows that to guard against them is life's gravest concern.
435. The good fortune of a man who does not guard against failings before they manifest will perish like a stack of straw before a fire.
436. What fault remains in a king who expunges his own faults before examining the faults in others?
437. The wealth of him who, out of avarice, fails to do what should be done will vanish without the slightest vestige.
438. When all faults are reckoned, one remains unrivaled: the greedy grasping known as avarice.
439. Never indulge in admiring yourself. Never be drawn toward deeds that do not benefit others.
440. Delighting in life's pleasures in guarded privacy nullifies the conspiring schemes of enemies.

## 45. Gaining Support from the Great



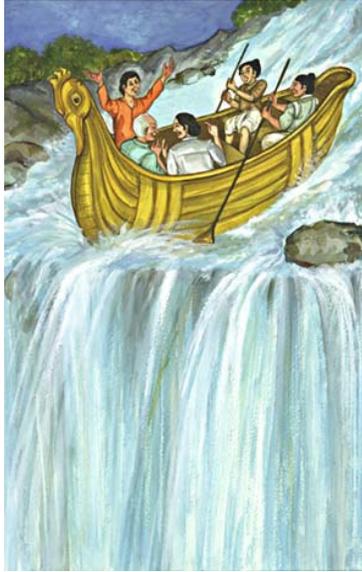
441. If men fathom what it means to have virtuous and wise friends, they will find the means to procure such friendships.
442. There are men who allay today's trials and avert tomorrow's troubles. Befriend and look after them.
443. To cherish and befriend men of greatness is the rarest of all rare things.
444. A man's greatest strength is meriting friendship with those greater than himself.
445. Knowing that they function as a monarch's eyes, a king looks at ministers meticulously before engaging them.
446. A man's foes are rendered ineffective if he can live in fellowship with the worthy.
447. Who can destroy the man who enjoys the friendship of aides who will not hesitate to admonish him?
448. With no one to reprove and thus protect him, a king will be destroyed, though no one seeks his destruction.
449. Profit is not for those who have no capital; nor is stability for those who lack the support of faithful friends.
450. While it is perilous to make a multitude of foes, it is ten times worse to give up the friendship of the worthy.

## 46. Avoidance of Base Company



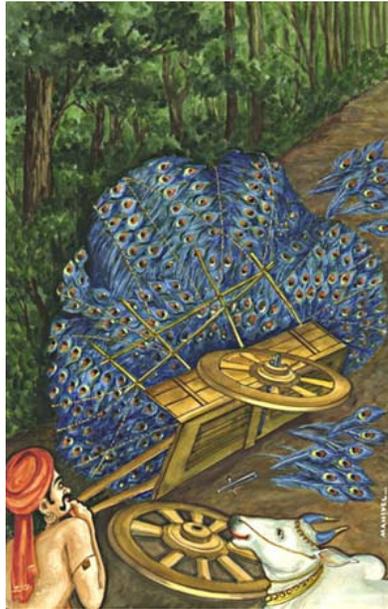
451. Men of greatness dread base company, while the low-minded consider them kinsmen.
452. As water changes according to the soil through which it flows, so a man assimilates the character of his associates.
453. By knowing his thoughts, a man's mind is discovered. By knowing his associates, his character is revealed.
454. Wisdom, appearing to originate in a man's mind, has its source in his companions.
455. Purity of mind and purity of conduct--these two depend upon the purity of a man's companions.
456. Praiseworthy progeny come to pure-minded men whose pure companions keep impure deeds away.
457. Wealth will be bestowed on good-minded men, and all renown will be granted by good company.
458. Even perfect men, possessing the mind's full goodness, are fortified by pious fellowship.
459. Goodness of mind leads to bliss in the next world, and even that is secured by the company of good men.
460. There exists no greater aid than virtuous fellowship, and no greater affliction than evil fraternity.

## 47. Deliberate Before Acting



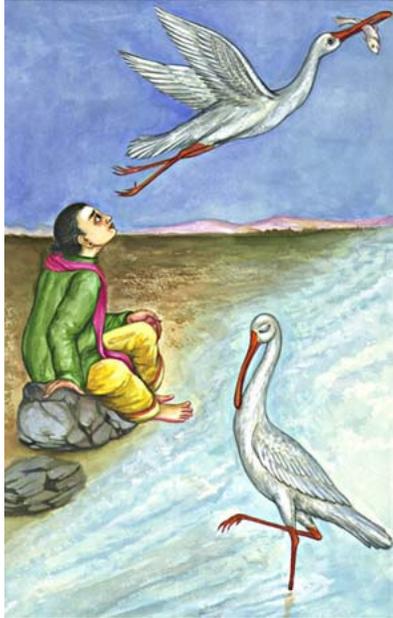
461. When action is needed, ponder what is to be gained, what lost, and what ultimately achieved, then proceed.
462. There is nothing too difficult for a man who, before he acts, deliberates with chosen friends and reflects privately.
463. The wise never undertake an enterprise that rashly risks existing capital to reach for potential profits.
464. Those who dread ridicule and disgrace will not commence any task that is unclear.
465. To sally forth without a well-conceived plan is one way to cultivate an enemy's strength.
466. Doing what should not be done will bring ruin, and not doing what should be done will also bring ruin.
467. Embark upon an action after careful thought. It is folly to say, "Let us begin the task now and think about it later."
468. Any task not methodically performed may go awry, though men in multitudes support it.
469. Even in doing good deeds a man may err if he does not consider the recipient's unique nature.
470. Having made his plans, let a man keep his actions above blame. The world will never approve of acts that are beneath him.

## 48. Understanding Strength



471. The prudent man acts after weighing the strength a deed demands, his own strength and the strengths of allies and opposition.
472. Nothing is impossible for those who perceive the nature and means of their task and proceed with determination.
473. Ignorant of their strengths, many plunge zealously into projects, only to miscarry midway.
474. How swiftly men who praise themselves perish, unappraised of their real measure, unable to live in peace with others.
475. Load too many of them, and even peacock feathers would break a sturdy cart's axle.
476. He who has climbed out to the tip of a tree branch and attempts to climb farther will forfeit his life.
477. Know the measure of your capacity to give, then give accordingly; such clarity is the way wealth is preserved.
478. A small income is no cause for failure, provided expenditures do not exceed it.
479. Prosperous as his life may appear, unless a man measures well his wealth, it will disappear without a trace.
480. How swiftly a generous man's riches dwindle and die, if he does not evaluate the limits of his means.

## 49. Understanding Timeliness



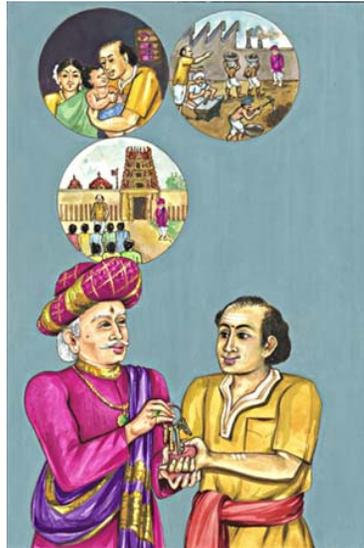
481. During the day, a crow can overcome the more powerful owl.  
Desiring to defeat his enemy, a king must pick the proper time.
482. A man may tightly bind himself to prosperity by the tether called timely action.
483. Is there any task too difficult for the man who acts at the right time and with the proper means?
484. One may aim to acquire the whole world and succeed, if actions target the right time and place.
485. Those who aim to own the world must wait, unruffled, for the fitting hour.
486. The powerful man's patient restraint is like the drawing back of the fighting ram before he strikes the stunning blow.
487. When irate, clear-minded men never show it then and there.  
Holding it within, they watch for an opportune moment.
488. Bow ever so humbly when meeting an enemy. His own head will hang humiliated when, in time, he meets defeat.
489. When a rare opportunity comes your way, do not hesitate to swiftly accomplish otherwise impossible tasks.
490. There are times to stay still as a stalking heron. There are times to move swiftly as a heron strikes.

## 50. Understanding the Right Place



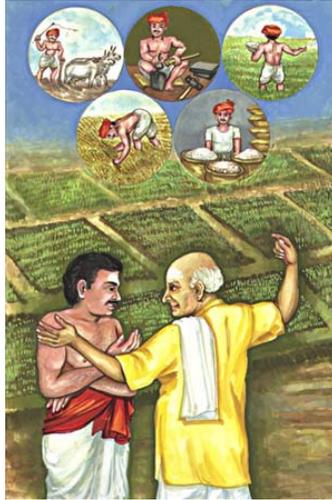
491. Neither ridicule the opposition nor initiate an offensive until you possess a strategic place from which to strike.
492. In battle, a fortified position yields plentiful advantages, even to those already possessing power and prowess.
493. Even the weak may prevail if they pick the right field of action, establish good defenses and then fight well.
494. When an attacker lays siege from a strategic location, his enemy's thoughts of conquest become unthinkable.
495. In a river's depths the crocodile is unconquerable, but others may defeat him if he leaves those waters.
496. A massive chariot with mighty wheels cannot sail the sea; nor can an ocean-going ship traverse the land.
497. Fearlessness is the only friend one needs, if he relentlessly ponders from which place to pounce.
498. Even a small army, if well-entrenched, can repel the power of a large army, forcing it to retreat.
499. Even if they are without firm forts and inferior in force, a people defending their own soil are difficult to defeat.
- 500.** The fearless elephant may slaughter a multitude of warriors, yet be slain by a single jackal if his legs sink in muddy marsh.

## 51. Testing and Trusting Men



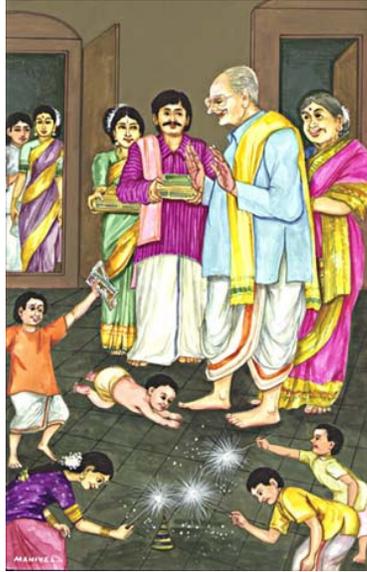
501. Pick that man who passes a four-fold test: how he handles virtue, wealth, pleasure and loss of life.
502. Place trust in a man of good family, free from faults, with a modest nature that dreads reproach.
503. Even faultless, deeply learned men, when closely examined, are rarely found to be entirely free from ignorance.
504. Weigh a man's merits and weigh his faults, then judge him according to the greater.
505. The touchstone that discloses a man's greatness or smallness is simply this: his deeds.
506. Beware of trusting men who have no kin. Unattached to people, they are unashamed of misdeeds.
507. When a man employs a know-nothing out of affection, he engages all kinds of foolishness.
508. To trust a stranger without investigation invites troubles so endless that even descendants must endure them.
509. Without investigation, trust no one. Having investigated, entrust a man with matters for which he is trustworthy.
510. To trust a man who has not been tested and to suspect a man who has proven trustworthy lead alike to endless ills.

## 52. Testing and Employing Men



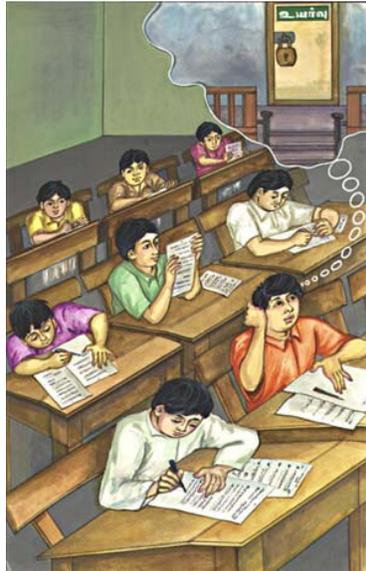
511. Employ men who discern the good and the bad in every situation and naturally choose the good.
512. Let him do the work who can increase profits, spread prosperity and search out problems.
513. He alone is trustworthy who fully possesses these four: kindness, intelligence, assurance and freedom from greed.
514. Though tested fully in simulated settings, many men function differently under working conditions.
515. Work should be entrusted to men based on their knowledge and diligence and not merely on bonds of affection.
516. Consider the work, choose the workman, calculate the timing with care, then commence.
517. Having decided, "This man is qualified to do this work in this way," leave him alone to perform it.
518. After ascertaining what work befits a man, assign him to a fitting function.
519. Wealth withdraws from the man who refuses to acknowledge the informal friendliness his workers wish to share with him.
520. The king should scrutinize his staff's conduct daily. If they do not go astray, the world will not go astray.

## 53. Fellowship of Kindred



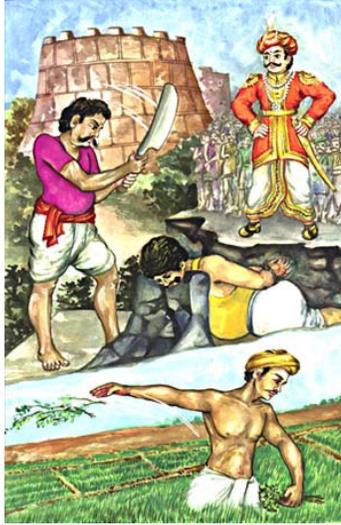
521. Should a man's wealth disappear, only his kinsmen will maintain their customary kindness.
522. If a man's kindred cling to him with unflinching love, his fortunes will never fail to flourish.
523. Pursuing a happy life without mixing with one's clan is like flooding a pond that has flimsy banks.
524. The real profit gained by gaining riches is that one may then live surrounded by relatives.
525. Scores of kin will crowd around the kindly man who gives generously and speaks sweetly.
526. In this wide world none enjoys a more faithful family than he who hands out large gifts and holds back all anger.
527. The crow does not conceal his food, but calls his kind to share it; prosperity will remain with men of such a nature.
528. The multitudes thrive when they observe their monarch observing each one's merits, not seeing mere sameness in all.
529. Close kinsmen who have become estranged will come back when the cause of disagreement goes away.
530. When one who left him returns with justifying reason, the ruler may, after careful reflection, accept him back.

## 54. Avoiding Unmindfulness



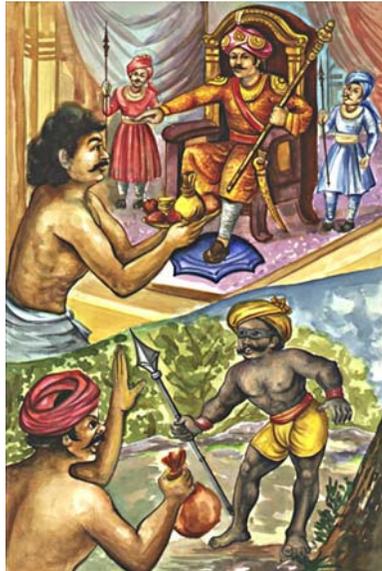
531. Excessive anger's harm is exceeded by excessive merriment's mindless mishaps.
532. Just as perpetual poverty slowly nullifies one's knowledge, so frequent forgetfulness destroys one's prestige.
533. Unmindful men will never know renown. This is the verdict of every virtuous text in the world.
534. Nothing will provide defense for the cowardly, and nothing will secure good for the unmindful.
535. The forgetful man who fails to take precautions against impending perils will regret his negligence afterwards.
536. Nothing can compare to watchfulness extended unfailingly to all people at all times.
537. There is nothing too difficult for the man who consciously conceives and carefully executes his work.
538. One should do that which men extol as praiseworthy. Forgetfully failing to do so brings deprivation lasting seven births.
539. Whenever the mind is engrossed in pleasant infatuations, one should remember men who were ruined by forgetfulness.
540. It is easy to get what you think of, if you can get yourself to think of it.

## 55. Just Reign



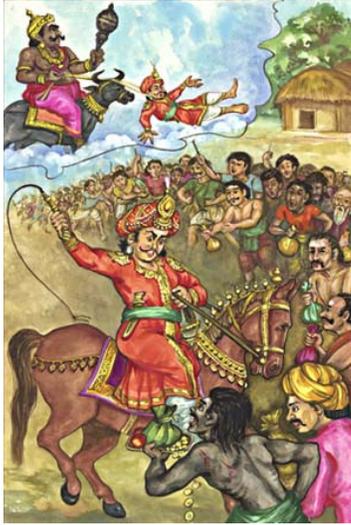
541. Investigate well, show favor to none, maintain impartiality, consult the law, then give judgment--that is the way of justice.
542. All the world looks to the rain cloud for sustenance. All the people look to the king's scepter for protection.
543. Even the Vedas of the brahmins and all dharma therein rely on the sovereign's sturdy staff for sustenance.
544. The world embraces the feet of a great kingdom's monarch who lovingly embraces subjects under his justice-wielding scepter.
545. Rain and rich harvests arise together in a country whose sovereign ruler raises his rod lawfully.
546. Victory is not won by the lance, but by the king's scepter, provided it is not crooked.
547. The potentate protects the whole world, and Justice protects him if he does not stray from Her.
548. An inaccessible ruler who listens and adjudicates inattentively will inevitably plummet from power and perish.
549. No fault befalls a king who, in guarding and caring for his subjects, punishes wrongdoers--for that is his duty.
550. A ruler's punishing cruel criminals by execution is like a gardener's removing weeds from his garden.

## 56. Unjust Reign



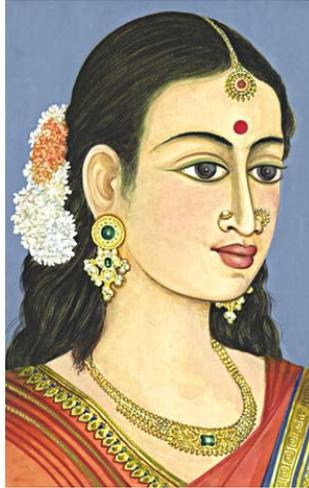
551. More malicious than a professional murderer is the monarch who rules his people with injustice and oppression.
552. A scepter-wielding king requesting a gift is like a lance-bearing robber demanding, "Give me all you have."
553. Day to day the king must seek out and punish unlawfulness, or day by day his country will plummet toward ruin.
554. Without thinking, a king rules crookedly, and thus forfeits his subjects' loyalty, together with his own fortune.
555. Are not the tears of a people who cannot bear their monarch's oppressive reign the force that erodes his prosperity?
556. Ruling rightly, a monarch may long endure. Without that, his majesty is rightfully unending.
557. As the Earth fares under a rainless sky, so do a people languish under an unkind king.
558. Possessions hold less pleasure than poverty for oppressed subjects living under an unjust king.
559. If the king acts contrary to justice, contrary seasons will befall the land and rain-laden clouds will fail to come forth.
560. If the people's protector fails to protect brahmins will forget the Vedas and cows' milk will dry up.

## 57. Avoidance of Tyranny



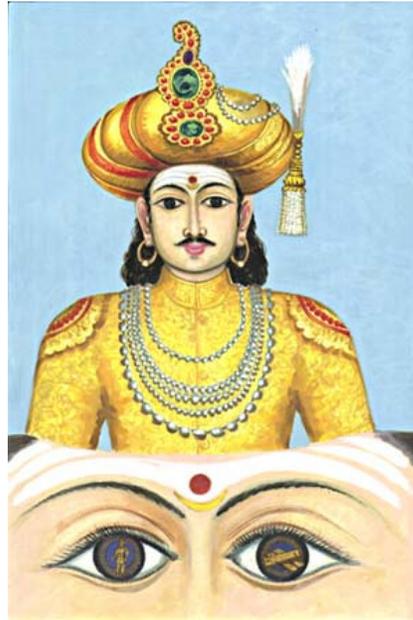
561. He is a true king who impartially investigates and then duly punishes so that the offense will not recur.
562. He who wishes his prosperity to long remain will raise the rod severely, but let it fall softly.
563. The tyrant who causes dread in his people will perish quickly and inevitably.
564. "Our king is cruel." When these bitter words are spoken, the monarch's life is shortened, and he soon succumbs.
565. If a man's countenance is harsh and access to him is hard, his wealth, however vast, might as well belong to a demon.
566. If a man is unkind and speaks cruelly, his vast wealth will not last long before perishing.
567. Harsh language and overly severe punishment, like a keen file, grind down a king's conquering powers.
568. A king's wealth wanes when, without thoughtful involvement, he lets ministers work, then furiously faults their efforts.
569. The sovereign who does not secure defenses will be seized by fear when wartime comes and promptly perish.
570. Earth bears no greater burden than crude counselors that a cruel-sceptered king binds to his court.

## 58. The Kindly Look



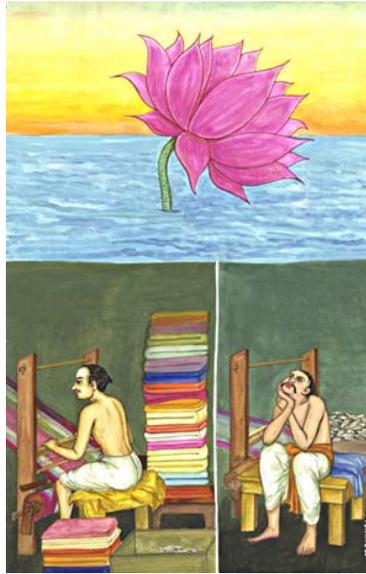
571. The fairest graciousness, they say, is a kindly look. Wherever it thrives, the whole world flourishes.
572. It is compassion that sustains the world's existence. The existence of those bereft of it is a burden to the Earth.
573. What use is melody in an unmusical song? What use are eyes that express no sympathy?
574. Other than being facial ornaments, what do eyes with no quality of kindness really do?
575. A compassionate glance is the eyes' true ornament. Without such kindness, eyes become unsightly sores.
576. Eyes that remain unmoved by pity might as well be unmovable tree stumps bound in earth.
577. Those who lack a kindly look are indeed without eyes, and those who truly have eyes never lack a gracious look.
578. This world belongs to those who, while neglecting no duty, never neglect to behold others benevolently.
579. To grant forbearing kindness even to those who aggrieve us is the foremost of virtues.
580. Desiring to be gracious above all else, guests may politely accept even poison they watched their host prepare and serve.

## 59. Espionage



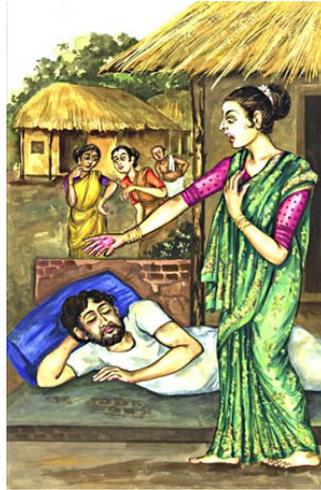
581. Competent spies and the respected codes of law-- consider these two the eyes of a king.
582. Duty requires the monarch to swiftly acquire knowledge of all happenings among all men each day.
583. Without assessing the intelligence reports of informants, a king can never achieve victory.
584. The working staff, close kindred and known enemies--all such people are the legitimate study of spies.
585. An able spy is one who can assume an unsuspecting disguise, is fearless when caught and never betrays his secrets.
586. Disguised as a monk or a mendicant, the master spy moves about investigating all, never careless, come what may.
587. A spy must ferret out hidden facts, assuring himself that knowledge found is beyond doubt.
588. Before believing one spy's espionage, have another spy espy the information.
589. See that informants do not know one another, and accept their findings only when three reports agree.
590. One must not openly honor operatives. To do so is to divulge one's deepest secrets.

## 60. Possession of Industriousness



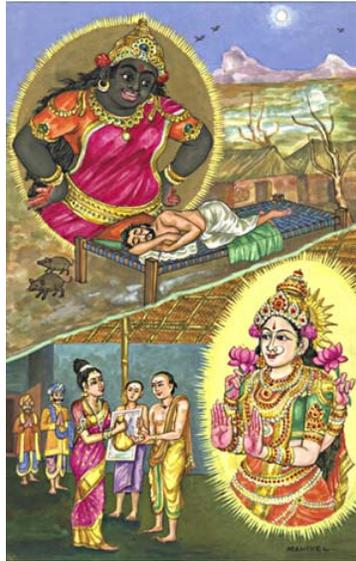
591. Possessing belongs only to the industrious. Do those who lack such energy really possess their possessions?
592. Those who own a mental energy possess a thing of worth. Material wealth is an unenduring possession that goes away.
593. Those who possess persevering industry will never say in despair, "We have lost our wealth."
594. Good fortune of its own accord ferrets out and finds the man of unflagging energy.
595. The length of the lotus stalk depends on the water's depth. Even so, a man's greatness is proportionate to his mind's energy.
596. Let all thoughts be thoughts of noble progress, for then even failing cannot be called a failure.
597. Elephants stand firm even when wounded by a barrage of arrows. Strong-willed men are not discouraged when they meet disaster.
598. Without a zealous spirit, one will never enjoy the proud exhilaration of the world's generosity.
599. The towering elephant, with his tapering tusks, still shrinks in fear when a fierce tiger attacks.
600. An industrious mind is a man's real wealth. Lacking it, he is immobile--more tree-like than human.

## 61. Avoidance of Idleness



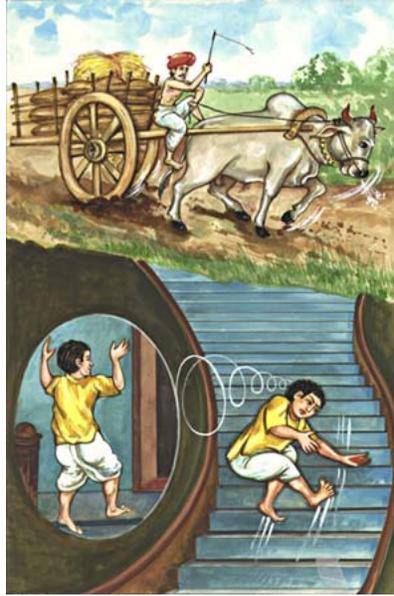
601. The eternal flame of a family vanishes when eclipsed by that dark cloud called idleness.
602. Let those who wish their family to be a noble family call laziness "laziness" and live without it.
603. The simpleton whose actions are stifled by ruinous indolence will see his family perish before he dies.
604. Their families decrease and their vices increase when men, ensnared in sloth, do not put forth earnest effort.
605. Procrastination, forgetfulness, sloth and sleep-- these four shape the ship bearing those destined for ruin.
606. Seldom do languid men achieve anything special, even when supported by the world's wealthy proprietors.
607. Idle men, incapable of honorable exertion, invite scorn and suffer the shame of scolding words.
608. If languor is allowed to linger in aristocrats, they will be forced into servitude under foes.
609. Disgrace that has come upon a man and his family will disappear the moment he casts out laziness.
610. A king devoid of indolence will thereby procure all that cosmic expanse measured by God's immeasurable strides.

## 62. Perseverance



611. Never say in weakness, "This task is too difficult." Perseverance will confer the ability to accomplish it.
612. Beware of leaving any work undone, remembering that the world abandons those who abandon their work unfinished.
613. The pride of profuse giving dwells only with the dignity of diligent effort.
614. Like the swordsmanship of an effeminate man, the philanthropy of those who avoid hard work will end in failure.
615. Standing like a pillar, he who prefers work to pleasure supports his family and sweeps away their every sad sorrow.
616. Perseverance generates prosperity, and the lack of it engenders poverty.
617. They say the black ogress called Misfortune lurks in laziness, while Goddess Fortune lingers in the laboring toils of active men.
618. To be destitute of good fortune is no one's disgrace, but shame belongs to those devoid of wisdom and tenacity.
619. Though destiny decrees that one's deeds will fail, the wages for determined work are always paid.
- 620.** Those who strive with tireless exertion and remain undaunted will live to behold the backside of retreating Fate.

## 63. Being Undaunted by Troubles



621. Laugh when troubles come your way. Nothing conquers calamity better than that.
622. A tide of troubles will recede the moment an intelligent man's mind collects itself to face them.
623. Trouble itself they send away troubled who do not trouble themselves at the sight of it.
624. Troubles will feel troubled facing a man who faces them like the determined bullock that wades through every difficulty.
625. Though massed upon him like a mountain, a man's afflictions will be crushed by his undaunted will.
626. Those who do not clutch their wealth, boasting, "I have so much," will not, in poorer times, bemoan, "I have so little."
627. Knowing this body to be the prey of misery, high souls, expecting troubles, do not find them troublesome.
628. Declaring difficulties to be perfectly natural, those who do not pursue life's pleasures will not suffer its sorrows.
629. He who does not long for joy in joy will not suffer sorrow in sorrow.
630. The man who does not distinguish pain from pleasure becomes so distinguished that even enemies hope to pay homage.

# Section VI

## Ministers

### *Introduction*

Here we have a manual that is invaluable for those who wish to train themselves to become useful to a president, prime minister, king or any head of state, CEO of a corporation or to become a Senator, Congressman or military leader--all jobs that are today more complex and sophisticated than any prime minister's in the courts of the weaver's day. These verses are explicit, helpful and informative, even to managers and workers who aspire to be first-rate second men. It is amazing that Valluvar has been able to accomplish offering so much of practical advice in so few words.

Any corporate manual would have used hundreds of pages to explain what he illumines in ten--a total of one hundred verses explaining everything from what a minister must do to attain and maintain his office to the necessity of having no dread of speaking to an audience.

It is here that we can see into the politics of two thousand years ago and sense the society that existed in the centuries before Valluvar lived and, reaching its height, led to his making these observations so eloquently and pricelessly. This one section of the book has been memorized and taken to heart, put into practice, by councilmen, barristers and political personages as well as religious leaders and others whose mission it is to articulate their cause.

Chapters 64 through 73 belong to everyone who has a calling. Actors, journeymen, salespeople, graduates and soon-to-be graduates of any field will find the verses in section six of Weaver's Wisdom most helpful.

It was the literary style in those far-off days to write concisely. The weaver chose a difficult form, usually four words in the first line and three in the second line--seven measures in all. This concise, disciplined style is easily memorized, placed into the subconscious mind to later manifest in action, for a change in beliefs makes a change in attitude, and this in turn changes the image of the person, to himself as well as to others. Finally, all that the verses so memorized contain become his personality, his mode of operation and who he is.

We can do the same, now that the same verses are available in modern English. Choose those you want to mold yourself into. Memorize them, read and reread them nightly just before sleep. When you are most sleepy is the best time for their meaning to slip into the subconscious mind. Then, during the night, the mind of the soul, the super conscious, will work with the subconscious, and slowly, ever so slowly, a transformation into the new you will occur.

In the chapter on associating with monarchs are invaluable bits of advice. Then we have the advice of intuiting another's thoughts by reading facial expressions, body movements and all that is unspoken--a valued tool for any leader or one aspiring to a higher position in any occupation. For the public speaker, the weaver gives a lesson in judging an audience, describing all the good that will happen as well as all the problems to be expected by failure to heed this advice.

Discussing how to deal with opposition as well as success, he advises, "Before acting, resolve all doubts by pondering five points: cost, means, time, place and the action itself." Many a failed business, small or large, would still be in business today had the owners but known and followed these five points.

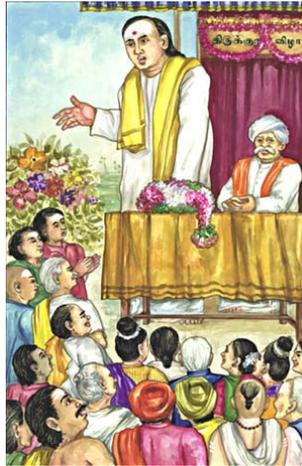
In chapter 66 Valluvar explains the difference between good money earned by right means and bad money earned by wrongful means. This advice involves the never-flinching law of karma. Wrongful acquisition, such as accepting bribes or, worse, give them, slowly destroys the morality of the community. Money earned from illegal enterprises has bad karmic consequences: You can't do good things with bad money. It can never, ever be cleansed.

## 64. Ministers



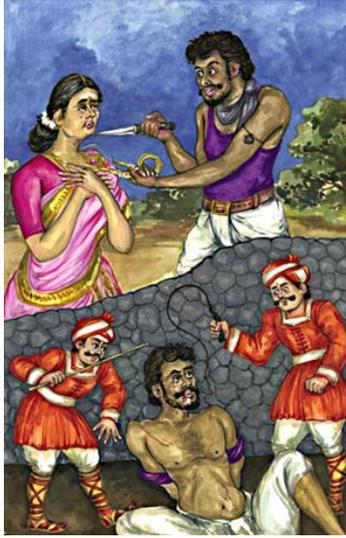
631. A minister is he who can conceive a great enterprise, rightly choose the ways, means and time, then carry it out.
632. Added to the above five, a minister is well-endowed with steadfastness, learning, perseverance and protection of the people.
633. He who can divide enemies, bind friends more firmly and reunite estranged allies is unequivocally a minister.
634. Call him a minister who comprehends things, effectively executes them and competently directs others.
635. The helpful aide understands codes of conduct, discerns what is fitting in every situation and speaks with learned deliberation.
636. When shrewd intelligence combines with scholastic study, who can stand before such peerless subtlety?
637. Though thoroughly learned in theoretical methods, one should act only after fathoming the world's proven practices.
638. The loyal minister's duty is to communicate his counsel, even if his leader is a dullard who spurns advice.
639. Better for the king to face 700 million far-off foes than to retain a single counselor who conspires at his side.
640. Little matter that they can devise the perfect plan; those without executive skills never finish their work.

## 65. Eloquence



641. Among a man's many good possessions, none can equal having a good tongue.
642. Prosperity and ruin issue from the power of the tongue. Therefore, guard yourself against thoughtless speech.
643. The substance of artful speech holds friends spell-bound, and its eloquence enchants even enemies.
644. Judge the nature of your listeners and speak accordingly. There is nothing more virtuous or valuable than this.
645. Speak out your speech after ascertaining that no speech can be spoken to refute that speech.
646. To speak so that listeners long to hear more and to listen so that others' meaning is grasped are ideals of the impeccably great.
647. In a war of words, none can defeat a persuasive man who never succumbs to fear or forgetfulness.
648. Upon finding men whose forceful speech is couched in cogent and enchanting ways, the world swiftly gathers around.
649. Unaware of the artful use of a few flawless words, men become enamored with excessive verbiage.
650. Men who cannot communicate their knowledge to others resemble a bouquet of unfragrant flowers in full bloom.

## 66. Purity of Action



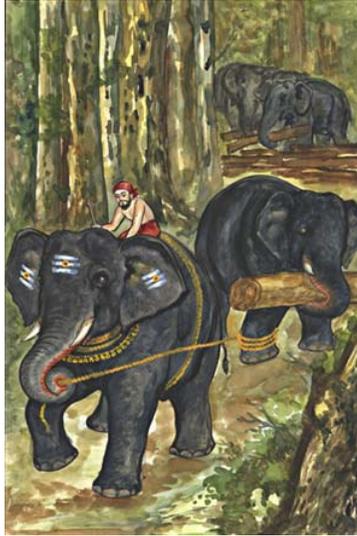
651. Good friendships bring wealth to a man, but goodness of action fulfills his every wish.
652. Fame-garnering actions of no real benefit should always be strictly avoided.
653. Declaring that their future will be brighter, men must desist from deeds that darken glory's light.
654. However troubled the times, men of imperturbable perception never commit shameful or sordid deeds.
655. Do nothing that would make you regret, "What have I done!" However, if regrettable deeds occur, do not remain regretful.
656. Though he must behold his own mother's hunger, let a man desist from deeds condemned by wise men.
657. The worst poverty of worthy men is more worthwhile than the greatest wealth amassed by wrongful means.
658. Forbidden deeds, however well accomplished, inflict sorrow in those who seek after rather than shun them.
659. What is gained by tears will go by tears. Even if it begins with loss, in the end, goodness gives many good things.
- 660.** Protecting the country with wrongly garnered wealth is like preserving water in an unbaked clay pot.

## 67. Resoluteness of Action



661. What is called resoluteness of action is, in truth, resoluteness of mind. It is a quality unlike any other.
662. Avoiding all failure-prone action and remaining undiscouraged by failures are said to be the dual directives of wise men.
663. Revealing an action after its completion is resoluteness. Disclosing an action midway causes endless misery.
664. It is easy for anyone to speak of a plan, but difficult indeed to execute what has been spoken.
665. Strong-willed exploits of virtuous men win the crown's respect and the crowd's acclaim.
666. Those who think will have their thoughts fulfilled, just as they thought, provided they possess strength of will.
667. Do not disparage men who appear small, for there are those, seemingly insignificant, who are like the linchpin of a mighty chariot.
668. Visualize actions with unclouded clarity, then forcefully undertake them without delay or indecision.
669. Despite dire hardships, hold to strength of mind and do those deeds which yield joy of heart.
670. The world has no use for those who have no use for resolute action, whatever other strengths they may possess.

## 68. Modes of Action



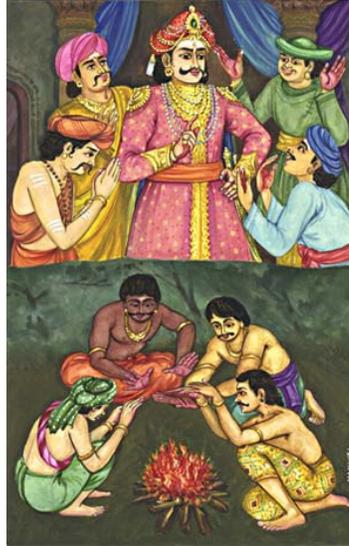
671. Deliberation ends when a decision is reached. To delay that decision's execution is detrimental.
672. Slumber when sleepy work awaits, but never rest when actions demand sleepless vigilance.
673. Direct action is good whenever possible, but when it is not, seek other means of success.
674. Reflect on this: efforts and enemies, if left unfinished, can both ravage you like an unextinguished fire.
675. Before acting, resolve all doubts by pondering five points: cost, means, time, place and the action itself.
676. Discern the outcome of an enterprise, the obstacles and the opulent earnings that successful effort assures--then act.
677. The way to accomplish any task is to ascertain the inmost thoughts of an expert in that task.
678. Just as one elephant may be used to tether another, so one task may be the means of accomplishing another.
679. Before bestowing kind favors on friends, hasten to befriend those still estranged.
680. Sensing with trepidation their peoples' fears, leaders of minor realms bow and accept the terms of mightier rulers.

## 69. Ambassadors



681. Kindliness, high birth and a nature congenial to kings comprise the innate disposition of an ambassador.
682. Kindliness, knowingness and deliberateness of speech are three necessities a diplomat finds indispensable.
683. An envoy sent to announce to lance-bearing monarchs his own king's imminent victory must be a pandit among pandits.
684. Send him on mission who possesses three attractive traits: well-winnowed wisdom, modest dignity and ample learning.
685. Whatever good an ambassador procures derives from succinct speech, cheerful conversation and avoidance of argument.
686. An envoy is educated, eloquently persuasive, unafraid of the fiercest stare and knows what befits the moment.
687. He is unsurpassed who knows duty and place, judges the suitable time and thinks before he speaks.
688. Integrity, influence and intrepidity--these three and truthfulness are qualities of one who faithfully delivers his monarch's message.
689. Commission him to deliver the monarch's mandates who has a steady gaze and never blurts out flawed words.
690. An ambassador fearlessly extends his king's glory, though he might thereby expend his own life.

## 70. Associating with Monarchs



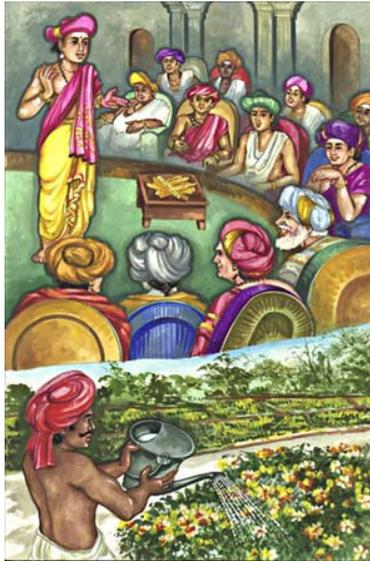
691. Associates of contentious kings should be like men warming themselves by a fire, moving neither too near nor too far away.
692. Do not desire to get what the king desires to have, and the king himself will confer enduring wealth.
693. One wishing to be wary must beware of his own indiscretions. Once suspicions are aroused, they are rarely removed.
694. In the presence of the great ones, never speak in whispers or exchange smiles with others.
695. The emissary neither eavesdrops nor meddles into matters. Instead, he listens raptly when secrets are revealed.
696. Sensing unspoken thoughts and ascertaining the ripe moment, speak of vital matters amiably, without offending others.
697. Speak useful ideas that interest the sovereign. Always leave useless thoughts unspoken--even if he inquires.
698. Never criticize the king because he is young or your own kin. Rather respect the resplendent dignity that kingship commands.
699. Men whose wisdom is unwavering do not use their high reputation to excuse lowly behavior.
700. Men who do unworthy deeds, expecting the king's indulgence because of a long-standing friendship, warrant their own ruin.

## 71. Discerning Unspoken Thoughts



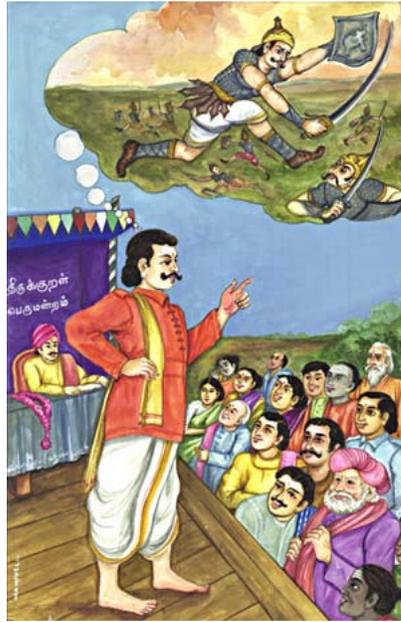
701. He who can discern another's unspoken thoughts by merely looking is an emerald on an Earth encircled by equable seas.
702. Regard as god-like those who can divine without hesitation what is in the minds of others.
703. Give whatever is required to gain an advisor who, knowing his own mind, can read another's intentions.
704. Those who grasp others' unspoken thoughts have the same physical features as most folks--yet how different they are.
705. Of what benefit are eyes in a body, if they cannot by their observing powers perceive another's intentions?
706. As a crystal mirror reflects objects that are nearby, so the face reflects what is foremost in the heart.
707. What is more forthrightly profound than the face? For whether the heart is angry or glad, the face expresses it first.
708. If you find a man who understands matters by looking into the mind, it suffices to stand silently looking into his face.
709. If you find men who know the eye's language the eyes will speak to them of hidden hate and love.
710. Observe those who are said to see subtly with their mind's eye--their singular measuring rod is their eyes.

## 72. Judging the Audience



711. Pure men of studied eloquence should study an audience before speaking deliberate words.
712. Let good men who know the orator's art knowingly await the right moment to articulate their good knowledge.
713. Failing to assess an audience before venturing to speak is to be unaware of the way of words and remain ineffective.
714. Be brilliant before brilliant men; but assume the dullness of pale mortar before dullards.
715. Of all good things, the best is the polite reserve that refrains from speaking first when with elders and superiors.
716. To blunder before perceptive, erudite men is like slipping and falling from a very high place.
717. A learned man's learning shines the brightest among luminaries capable of critiquing his language.
718. Speaking to an audience of thinking men is like watering a bed of growing plants.
719. Those who speak good things to good and learned gatherings should never repeat them to ignorant groups, even forgetfully.
720. Expounding to a throng of unfit men is like pouring sweet nectar into an open gutter.

## 73. Not Dreading the Audience



721. Unsullied men, skilled in discourse, may speak unflinching before the powerful, provided they understand their audience.
722. Only the learned among learned can convincingly express what they have learned before a learned assembly.
723. Men who can brave death on the battlefield are common; but rare are they who can face an audience without fear.
724. Speak confidently before the learned what you have mastered; and learn from those more learned what you do not know.
725. Study the science of logic in order that you may fearlessly reply in any assembly.
726. What can a coward do with a sword? What can a man who fears an astute council do with books?
727. The learning of those who fearfully face an audience is like the shining saber of effeminate men facing foes.
728. Having learned many things, men remain useless if they cannot speak well in good assemblies.
729. Literary men intimidated by gatherings of good men are said to be inferior to the illiterate.
- 730.** Men whose fear of assemblies forbids them to share their knowledge, though living, may as well be dead.

## Section VII

# Qualities of a Country

### *Introduction*

Every seated parliamentarian, president and his staff can readily relate to the first chapter of this section, describing the merits of a country in stanzas such as these: "Where unfailing fertile fields, worthy men and wealthy merchants come together--that is a country." "Rain waters, underground waters and rivers shed from well-situated mountains, plus strong fortresses, are features of a fine country." "Five ornaments adorn a country: good health, abundant harvests, wealth, happiness and safety from invasions." The wise old weaver urges good relations between politicians and those they serve, saying, "Even if a country acquires all these blessings, it is worth nothing if it lacks harmony between the ruler and the ruled."

We all can strongly relate to the above, now in the twenty-first century, having seen countries come and go, or endure and thrive. Conflict between leaders and their countrymen usually was at the core of those that failed. After explaining about fortresses and the way to attain wealth and protect it, the weaver speaks on the merits of military force, just as important in his day as in ours.

In the long, long ago battles were fought over a bargaining table, with lofty bands of well-armed men standing at attention behind each monarch. If it looked as if a bloody battle would cause one side to win and the other to lose, then and there a deal was made. With a standoff occurring between two well-armed citizens on each side, both leaders exchanged gifts, had tea and departed back to their realms peacefully. But nearly always a stronger country overtook a weaker one that could not manage its affairs properly. This was considered to be a duty.

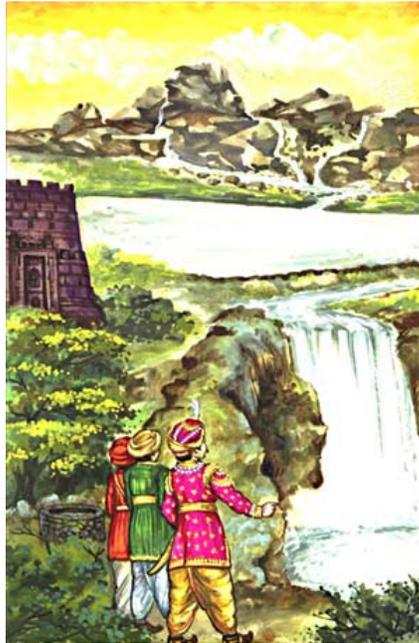
Then the weaver explains what makes up and holds together a country and its government, a family and its elders, a state, county or any group--the essentials of friendship. He says friendship must be cultivated and continue to be cultivated, and false friends, those who are with you when life is good, but when calamity or a problem comes up, are nowhere to be seen or heard from, must be guarded against. They distance themselves to protect whatever they think they have, rather than come forward in the time of need. Good advice, I would say, then as today, for everyone wishing to move forward, is the weaver's wisdom on the testing of friendships. Many suffer today who have joined gangs and found themselves in deep trouble by listening to and being guided by harmful friendships. They should read chapter 82 over and over so when the cycle of exploring new acquaintances comes around again they make the right choices.

The weaver speaks of hatred in a way that would be a credit to any modern psychologist, and he advises how to handle troubled feelings within oneself and among others. Such valuable insights are rarely spoken about today, unless, of course, in technical manuals of the well-informed, such as professional analysts.

There is much more of the issues of his time of which he speaks that applies to our time. It is heartening to note that this advice has sustained a nation and a culture in now South India for well over 2,200 years. Tamil Nadu, the land of the Tamil-speaking Dravidian people, an ancient Caucasian branch, is now and has always been their homeland. Now a state of India with a population of sixty million, but formerly an independent empire, it survived, sustained itself and thrived on these 108 chapters of its Tirukural throughout the ups and downs, century after century after century.

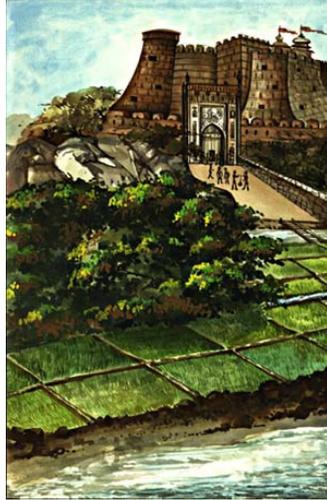
To this day, the Tamil people are still reading and memorizing this treatise, which is sworn on in their courts of law and permanently enshrined in Chennai's Valluvar Kottam, where every verse is carved in granite in a great hall for all to read, appreciate, learn from and endeavor to live up to.

## 74. The Country



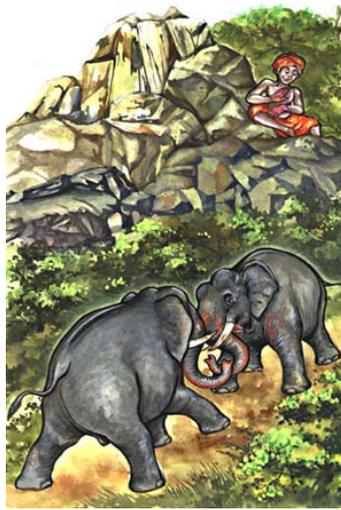
731. Where unfailingly fertile fields, worthy men and wealthy merchants come together--that is a country!
732. A land coveted for its vast wealth, free from calamities and yielding in abundance is indeed a country.
733. Call that a nation which bears every burden that befalls it, yet pays in full all tariffs owed to the king.
734. Free of famine, endless epidemics and ravaging foes--now that is a flourishing country.
735. Proliferating factions, ruinous subversives and murderous gangs harassing the king--a real country is free from all these.
736. An incomparable state is one never devastated; yet if devastated, it would not diminish, but prosper.
737. Rain waters, underground waters and rivers shed from well-situated mountains, plus strong fortresses, are features of a fine country.
738. Five ornaments adorn a country: good health, abundant harvests, wealth, happiness and safety from invasions.
739. A land where prosperity comes easily deserves the name country, not one where wealth entails laborious toil.
740. Even if a country acquires all these blessings, it is worth nothing if it lacks harmony between the ruler and the ruled.

## 75. Fortresses



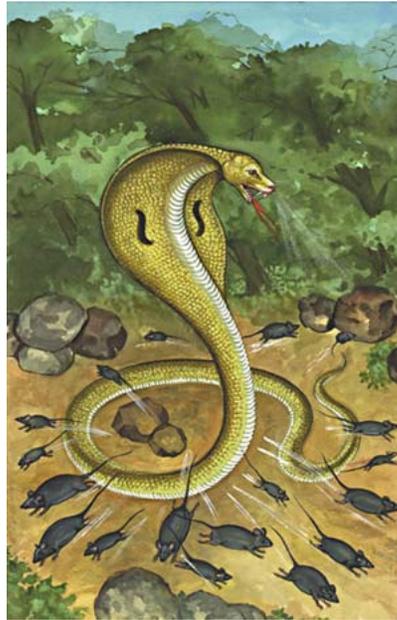
741. A fortress is a strategic asset both to aggressors and to those in fear who seek defense.
742. An effective fort has crystal-clear water, arable lands, a hill and lovely shaded woods.
743. The expert texts ordain four features for a fort's barricades: that they be high, thick, solid and impregnable.
744. The ideal fortress is spacious, vulnerable in very few places and, of itself, defies a determined foe's designs to storm it.
745. A good garrison is hard to assail, amply provisioned and accommodates inmates well.
746. The most formidable fortress, stocked with all needed goods, still needs men of good stock to fend off attack.
747. Whether by hurling artillery, tunneling beneath or encircling to lay siege, it is impossible to capture a strong fort.
748. However forcefully assailants may press, a secure fortress promises allies defense and foes defeat.
749. A fortress earns greatness by enabling courageous defenders to gloriously defeat the enemy at the battle's very onset.
750. Whatever excellent qualities a fortress may possess, it will be of no avail without men of excellent action.

## 76. The Ways of Acquiring Wealth



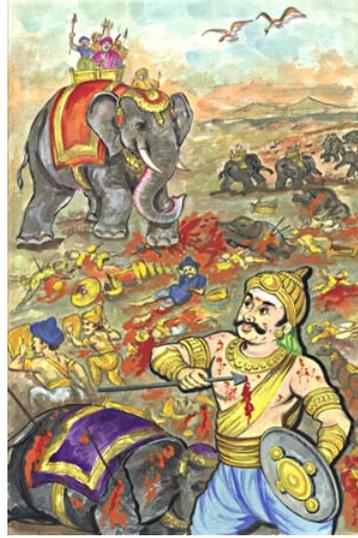
751. There is nothing like wealth for lending consequence to an inconsequential man.
752. Those who have nothing have everyone's contempt, while the rich are exalted by one and all.
753. Wealth is an unfailing lamp whose light reaches every imaginable land, dispelling darkness.
754. Riches acquired by mindful means, in a manner that harms no one, will bring both piety and pleasure.
755. Wealth acquired without compassion and love is to be cast off, not embraced.
756. Wealth with no owner, wealth of defeated foes, wealth from tax and customs--these constitute the royal revenues.
757. Compassion, which is the child of Love, requires for its care the bountiful nurse called Wealth.
758. Undertaking an enterprise with sufficient resources in hand is like standing on a hilltop watching elephants fight below.
759. Make money--that is the sharpest scalpel for paring down an enemy's pride.
760. Having acquired affluence, the acquisition of two other treasures--duty and delight--is effortless.

## 77. Merits of the Army



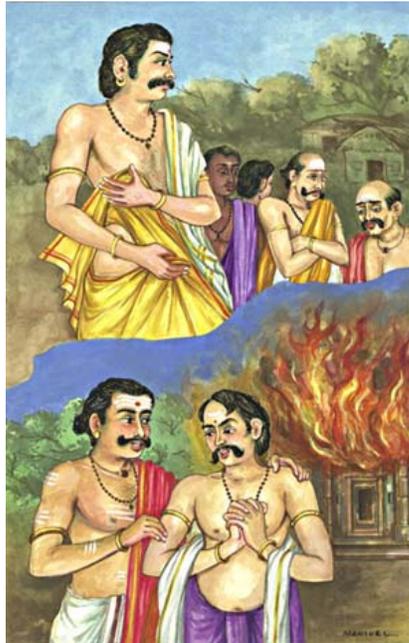
761. Foremost among a monarch's possessions stands a conquering army, complete and fearless.
762. Only seasoned soldiers remain bravely determined when onslaughts decimate them and threaten defeat.
763. So what if a legion of rats roars like the raging sea? The mere hiss of a cobra will deaden their din.
764. Commanding a long tradition of valor, acquainted with neither defeat nor desertion--that defines an army.
765. That indeed is an army which stands together, even when faced with death's grim fury.
766. Valor, honor, trustworthiness and a tradition nobly upheld-- these four are an army's protective armor.
767. Well-trained armed forces will withstand every attack, then outflank and storm the foe.
768. Even without a winning offense and defense, an army of splendid appearance may still win acclaim.
769. An army will prevail as long as there is no desertion, no privation and no contention.
770. Though courageous troops abound, there can be no army without commanders.

## 78. Military Pride



771. Dare you not, my enemies, to stand against my monarch! Many who did now stand as stone monuments.
772. It is more gratifying to carry a lance that missed an elephant than to hold an arrow that hit a thicket-dwelling rabbit.
773. Intrepid courage is what they call valor, and clemency toward the defeated is its sharp edge.
774. Having hurled his spear at a battlefield elephant, the hero found another piercing his side and grasped it with glee.
775. Is it not a disgraceful defeat to the courageous warrior if his defiant eyes so much as blink when a lance is hurled at him?
776. When recounting his days, the heroic soldier regards all those on which no battle scars were sustained as squandered.
777. To fasten the warrior's anklet on one who desires glory more than life is to decorate heroism with distinction.
778. Men of courage who do not fear for their lives in battle do not forfeit soldierly ardor, even if the king prohibits their fighting.
779. Who would dare deride as defeated men who die fulfilling valor's vow?
780. Heroic death that fills the sovereign's eyes with tears worth begging for and then dying for.

## 79. Friendship



781. What is as difficult to secure as friendship? And what greater security is there against foes?
782. With wise men, friendship waxes like the crescent moon; with fools, it wanes as surely as the full moon must.
783. The bonds that good men share are like good bound books, revealing new enchantments at each new encounter.
784. What matters in making friends is not merrymaking, but a stern rebuking when friends go astray.
785. It is not constant meeting and companionship, but shared sensibilities that confer the alliance of friendship.
786. A smiling face is no sure sign of friendship. Friendship is found deep within a smiling heart.
787. To divert a man from wrong, direct him toward right and share his sorrow in misfortune is comradeship.
788. As swiftly as the hand moves to seize a slipping garment, friendship acts to assuage a friend's distress.
789. Where does Friendship hold her court? It is where friends find constant support in every possible circumstance.
790. To boast, "He means so much to me, and I to him," merely belittles a friendship.

## 80. Testing Fitness for Friendship



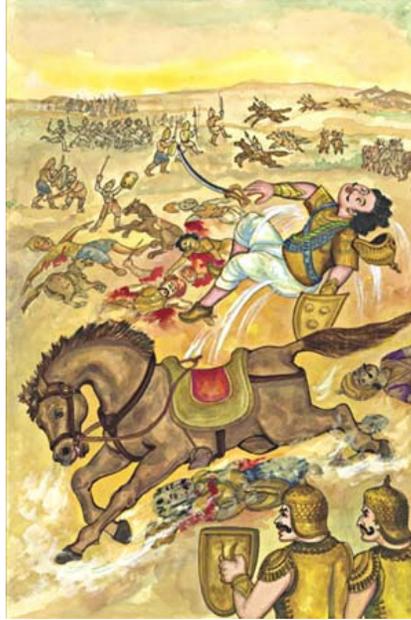
791. Nothing is more grievous than friendship formed without first testing, for once adopted, it cannot be abandoned by the faithful.
792. Unless it begins with testing and proving, friendship may end in mortal sorrow.
793. Before you befriend him, consider a man's character, family background, faults and faithful allies.
794. Pay any price to possess the friendship of well-born men who cannot bear rebuke and shame.
795. Seek out and befriend those who, speaking out, move you to repent, reprove your wrongdoing and teach you the right ways.
796. There is a benefit even in misfortune, for it is the rod with which a man may measure the loyalty of friends.
797. To give up friendship with fools and quit their company-- such loss is said to be a man's greatest gain.
798. Don't dwell on thoughts that dim your spirit. Don't befriend those who flee you in affliction.
799. Even in the hour of death, the thoughts of friends who left you in your hour of need will hurt the heart.
800. Hold tight to friendship with pure men; let go of unfit fellows, even by paying them off.

## 81. Old Familiarity



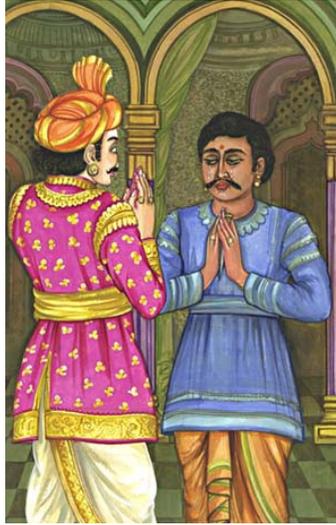
801. What is old familiarity? It is when neither friend objects to liberties taken by the other.
802. Liberties taken by a friend are friendship's rightful possession; to allow them is the willing duty of wise men.
803. What is the purpose of long-standing fellowship if friends' familiar actions are not accepted as one's own?
804. Familiar with familiarity, the wise are never annoyed when friends do things without asking.
805. When friends do things that hurt you, attribute it to unawareness or to the privileges of friendship.
806. Bound by brotherhood, true friends never break their bond with an old comrade, even if he brings them loss.
807. Old friends do not forsake loving fellowships, even when those they cherish happen to do them harm.
808. An intimate of any strength will never listen to faults said of friends; and on the day a friend offends, he is content to keep silent.
809. The world cherishes faithful men who never forsake old friendships, worn by time but unbroken.
810. Even ill-wishers will wish those well who never abandon affection for old friends.

## 82. Harmful Friendship



811. Though unscrupulous men may seem to consume you in friendship, their companionship grows more delightful as it declines.
812. What does it matter if one gains or loses the friendship of manipulators who befriend to gain and otherwise forsake?
813. Prostitutes, thieves and people who make friends to make money are all alike.
814. Some men are like an untrained horse that throws its rider on the battlefield. Loneliness is better than their friendship.
815. Better to give up than to gain the friendship of inferior men who stay away when they should stay and help.
816. The enmity of the wise is ten million times better than intimate friendship with fools.
817. An enemy's rancor is a hundred million times more worthwhile than companionship with fellows who always clown around.
818. If friends feign inability to discharge reasonable tasks, remain silent and gradually give up their friendship.
819. The fellowship of men whose acts belie their spoken words is bitter, even in dreams.
820. There are men who will cherish you in private but censure you in public--avoid their every befriending approach.

## 83. False Friendship



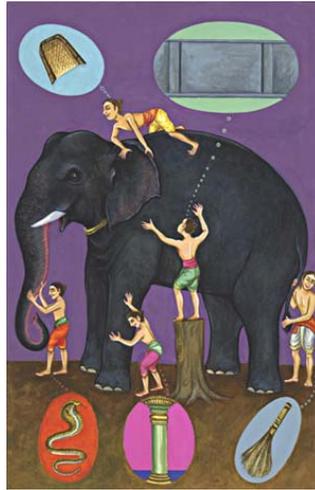
821. The friendship of those who feign affection is an anvil on which they hammer you when the opportunity arises.
822. For those who act like friends, but are not, friendship fluctuates like a fickle woman.
823. Though their learning may be abundantly good, ignoble men rarely learn goodness of heart.
824. Fear the cunning friend who, harboring wickedness in his heart, smiles sweetly to your face.
825. Distrust whatever words may come from men whose hearts do not beat in harmony with your own.
826. Sounding very much like a good friend's words, a rival's words are nonetheless known very quickly.
827. Knowing how the bending of a bow forebodes nothing but harm, never trust an enemy, though he bends low in his speech.
828. Folded in respect, a foe's hands may hide a dagger. So, too, his tears dare not be trusted.
829. Men may amply aid you, yet despise you in their heart; make them laugh, but let feigned friendship die.
830. When the time comes that foes pose as friends, keep a friendly face but banish their brotherhood from your heart.

## 84. Folly



831. What is folly? It is holding on to that which is harmful and throwing away that which is helpful.
832. The folly of all follies is to find pleasure in doing what one is forbidden to do.
833. To be shameless, uninquisitive, loveless and uncaring are four failings common among all fools.
834. No fool is more foolish than one who eagerly expounds his learning to others while failing to follow it himself.
835. It only takes a single birth for a fool to earn by his efforts a morass of misery in the succeeding seven births.
836. Not knowing how to act, when a fool undertakes an enterprise, he doesn't just fail, he shackles himself in chains.
837. Should a fool fall upon a great fortune, strangers will feast while his family starves.
838. If a fool happens to acquire something of value, he will behave like a drunken lunatic.
839. Friendship among fools is particularly sweet, for there is not the slightest pain when they part.
840. A fool's stepping into a saintly council is like entering a clean bed with filthy feet.

## 85. Ignorance



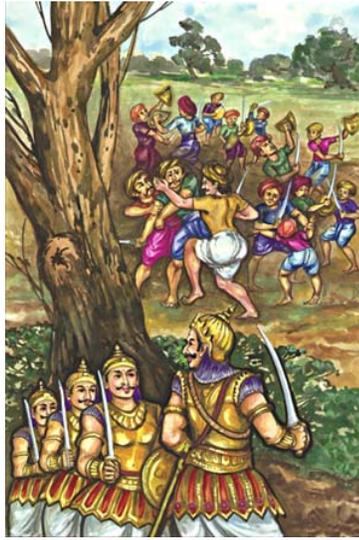
841. Dearth of wisdom is the direst destitution. Other poverties the world deems less impoverishing.
842. If any merit is gained when a fool gives a gift, however gladly, it is due to the recipient's past penance and nothing else.
843. The suffering that ignorant men inflict upon themselves can hardly be contrived by their enemies.
844. What is stupidity, you ask? It is the conceit that dares to declare, "I am wise."
845. He who pretends to knowledge he does not possess raises doubts about the things he really knows.
846. Fools follow a perverse path, clothing their well-formed naked body, yet never thinking to conceal their deformed mind.
847. Neglecting valuable advice, an ignorant man becomes the cause of his own misery.
848. That soul who neither follows another's orders nor fathoms what to do himself creates nothing but torment until he leaves this life.
849. As an unseeing man sees only the ways of his own mind, whoever attempts to open the eyes of those who will not see is himself blind.
850. He who denies as false what the world declares to be true is deemed to be an earthly demon.

## 86. Hatred



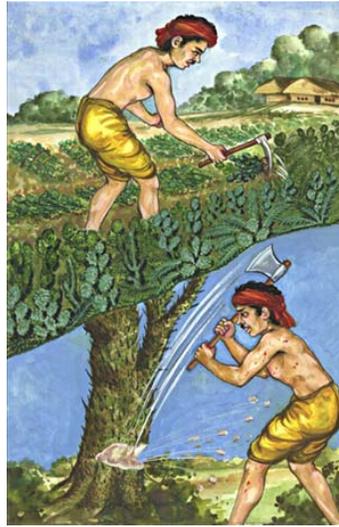
851. It is said that hatred is the disease that spreads the plagues of discord among all living creatures.
852. Though men devise disunity and deliberately harm you, the highest path plots no hateful retribution.
853. Removing the incurable cancer called hatred reveals one's immortal, undiminishing splendor.
854. The quelling of hatred, that sorrow of sorrows, confers on man the joy of joys.
855. Who is there who can conquer those who have relinquished all hostilities?
856. For all who boast that they take delight in hatred, failure and death are drawing near.
857. Men filled with hatred, knowingly causing harm to others, never see that their hoped-for triumph lies in God's true grace.
858. Wealth increases when a man walks away from hatred and diminishes whenever he draws it near.
859. Seeing a prosperous season approach, men neglect hatred. In times of ruin, they nurture it lavishly.
860. Out of hatred springs all bitter suffering, while cheerful friendship yields good fortune's every joy.

## 87. The Merits of Enmity



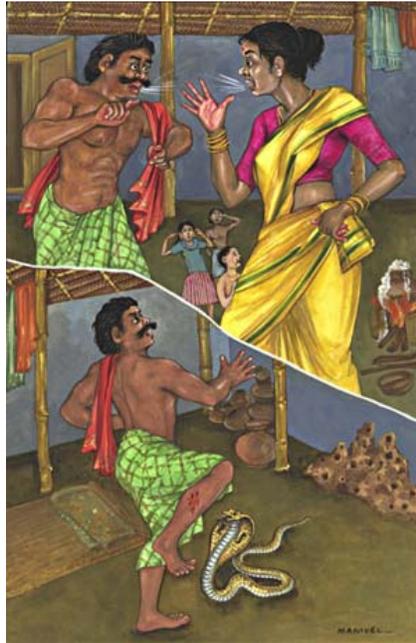
861. Rein in antagonism against the strong, but unleash animosity against feeble adversaries.
862. How can an unloving man, with neither powerful allies nor the strength to stand alone, overcome mighty enemies?
863. He who is fearful, ignorant, unfriendly and uncharitable proves an easy prey to his enemies.
864. Letting go of his secrets but not his antipathy, a man becomes easy prey to anyone, anywhere, anytime.
865. Without character, conscience, piety and propriety, a man may yet be delightful--to his enemies!
866. Even hatred can be a welcome thing, when it comes from scoundrels seized by blind rage and indulgent lust.
867. Some men undertake a task, then undermine it unawares .Acquire their hatred--indeed, pay good money for it.
868. If a man has no virtues and many vices, he will surely have no allies, and this will be his enemies' surest advantage.
869. Finding that his foe is ignorant and afraid to fight, the attacker's cheerfulness cannot forsake him.
870. Fame will flee the grasp of one who fails to grasp the wealth of an enemy who is angry and unlearned.

## 88. Understanding the Nature of Enmity



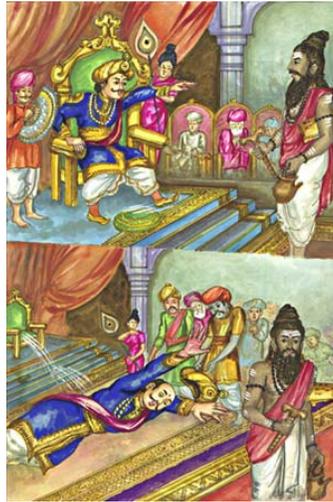
871. So accursed is the thing called hatred that one should never wish for it--even in jest.
872. It is bad enough to incur the enmity of those who live by the bow, but never provoke the hatred of those who sow and reap with words.
873. One man who, all by himself, arouses hatred in many is crazier than any lunatic.
874. The world abides beneath the greatness of noble-natured rulers who befriend even their enemies.
875. Finding that he faces two foes and has no allies, a lone man lures one to side with him.
876. When distress dawns, neither draw near nor depart from new friends and foes--rather, leave them alone.
877. Never tell your troubles to those who cannot comprehend them, nor expose your weaknesses to your enemies.
878. Engineer a plan, execute that plan well and ensure your security--thus is the joy of rivals forever ruined.
879. Chop down a thorny tree while it is young. Left to grow mature, it will one day cut the cutter's hand.
880. Those who fail to quell a hostile rival's pride will be blown away by the mere fact that he still breathes.

## 89. Internal Enmity



881. Even shade and water are unpleasant if they breed disease. So, too, may relatives be unpleasant if they cause harm.
882. Fear not the foe who is like a drawn sword; rather fear the friendship of an enemy who poses as kin.
883. Dread hatred from within and defend yourself against it. In calamitous times it will cut deeper than a potter's knife.
884. Hidden hatreds may lurk only in the mind, yet among kin they can manifest many miseries.
885. Hate hidden in a kinsman's heart will cause many miseries, and more--it will kill a man.
886. When hatred arises, dissension destroys unity, and men fall inescapably toward ever-ready death.
887. A house that harbors hatred will never be a united whole, though, like a vessel and its lid, it may appear to be one.
888. As iron is worn away by frequent filing, a family's strength is eroded by incessant inner frictions.
889. Internal dissension may seem as small as a split sesame seed, yet there is enough power in it to destroy.
890. Living with those who cannot dwell in harmony is like living in a hut with a deadly cobra.

## 90. Not Offending the Great



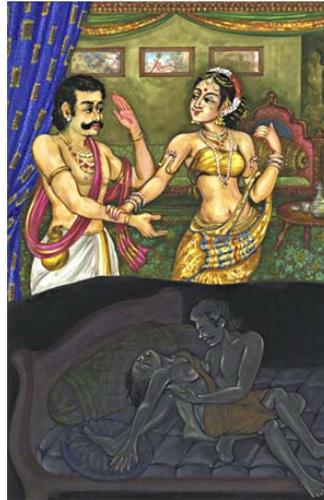
891. Of all the ways to protect oneself, the foremost is this: do not belittle the prowess of powerful men.
892. Disrespectful conduct toward great men will bring, through those great men, unremitting miseries.
893. If you desire destruction, simply ignore the rules and provoke those who, if they desire, can destroy you.
894. For the powerless to wreak harm upon the powerful is to summon Death with a gesturing hand.
895. Once he incurs a fierce king's withering wrath, one is doomed, wherever he wanders, whatever he does.
896. Though burned by a blazing fire, one may still survive; but there is no survival for those who offend great men.
897. What is the use of a man's varied life and splendid wealth if he reaps the wrath of great and righteous men?
898. If men of mountainous stature are meagerly esteemed, others who seemed as enduring as earth will die, as will their kin.
899. The most kingly king will tumble from his throne and die, should he unleash a towering sage's bridled temper.
900. Though he commands unrivaled powers of protection, a king cannot survive the wrath of powerful ascetics.

## 91. Being Led by Women



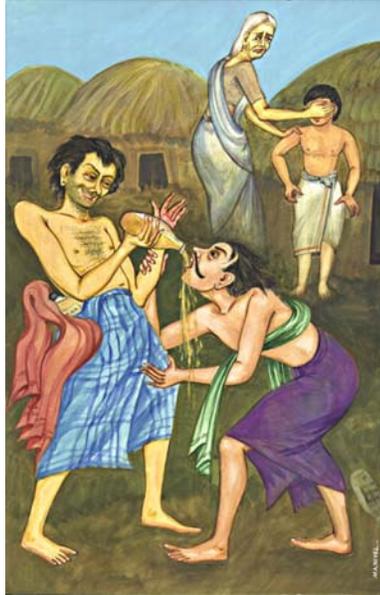
901. Men who dote upon their wives never achieve great gains, and men of great ambition avoid that very thing.
902. The riches of a man who fawningly follows a woman's lead will buy him only shameful shame.
903. An abnormal submissiveness to his spouse will earn a man endless disgrace among decent men.
904. Though he has mastered the doing of deeds, the henpecked husband merits little in this life or the next.
905. A man's fears of his own wife will make him constantly fearful of doing good for good folks.
906. Though providence has filled his life, a man who fears his graceful spouse is devoid of dignity.
907. A woman's shy ways show great dignity, unlike a man who lives to do a woman's bidding.
908. Those who live only to fulfill their wife's wishes can neither satisfy the needs of friends nor benefit others.
909. Neither virtuous deeds nor vast wealth nor domestic joys will be found with men who carry out their wife's commands.
910. Moneyed men whose thoughts dwell in the mind never dwell foolishly on relationships with women.

## 92. Wanton Women



911. The sweet words of beautifully bangled women who desire a man's wealth and not his love decree his fall into disgrace.
912. Weigh the worth and abandon the company of wanton women who, weighing their profit, prattle about their virtues.
913. A mercenary woman pretends intimate embrace, but in the darkened room, she caresses a stranger's carcass.
914. Men seeking spiritual treasures are too worldly wise to touch tawdry women who treasure only material riches.
915. Men of innate good sense and acquired wisdom never touch tramps who shamelessly share their beauty with all.
916. Desiring to maintain their jubilant goodness, men will not embrace enticing women who proffer lewd charms to all.
917. Only men of unchaste mind will lie in the arms of women whose hearts chase after other things as they embrace.
918. It is said that men devoid of discerning wisdom succumb to a deceiving damsel's embrace as to a siren's song.
919. The soft arms of the elegantly bejeweled harlot are a murky mire that engulfs wicked, stupid men.
- 920.** Two-faced females, besotting brew and addictive dice befriend the men whom fortune has forsaken.

## 93. Avoidance of Drunkenness



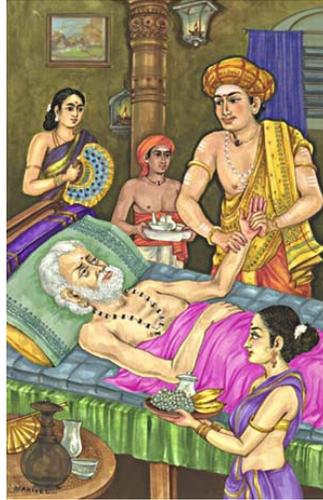
921. Those who crave intoxicating drink each day will never be feared and never find fame.
922. Do not drink liquor. If some wish to, let it be those who have no wish for the esteem of exemplary men.
923. The sight of a drunken man's revelry is unbearable even to his own mother. How, then, must it appear to the wise?
924. The virtuous damsel called Decency will turn her back on men who indulge in the vile vice called drunkenness.
925. Spending one's wealth to purchase self-oblivion results from being oblivious to proper conduct.
926. Those who always sleep are akin to the dead. Those who constantly drink are like men who take poison.
927. The drooping eyes of those who secretly drink betray that secret, evoking their neighbor's relentless ridicule.
928. Stop denying, "I never drink," for next time you drink, your mind's hidden deception will be betrayed then and there.
929. One may as well carry a candle under water to search for a drowned man as use reason to sober a drunk drowned in drink.
930. Why can't the drunkard who, when sober, sees another's drunken stupor realize the degrading shame of his own drunkenness?

## 94. Gambling



931. Do not take to gambling, even if you can win, for your wins will be like the baited hooks that fish swallow.
932. To win once, a gambler loses a hundred times. What a way to procure happiness and prosperity!
933. Incessantly calling bets on rolling dice causes a man's rich reserves and potential revenues to run elsewhere.
934. Gambling brings on many miseries and erodes one's good name. Nothing else ends in such wretched poverty.
935. Desiring to win everything, those who love the dice, the gambling hall and their lucky hand lose it all.
936. Gambling is Misfortune's other name. Fools ensnared by her will suffer an empty stomach and distressing sorrows.
937. Spending time in the gambling hall squanders ancestral wealth and wastes personal worth.
938. Gambling will consume a man's wealth and corrupt his honesty. It will curtail his benevolence and increase his torment.
939. Those who take to gambling's fickle gain forfeit these five: raiments, riches, rations, renown and erudition.
940. The gambler's passion increases with the losses incurred. Even so does the soul's craving for life grow with the grief suffered.

## 95. Medicine



941. Disease is but deficiency or excess of three life forces, defined by writers of scientific texts as air, fire and water.
942. The body requires no medicine if you eat only after the food you have already eaten is digested.
943. Once digestion is complete, eat with moderation; that is the way to prolong the life of the body.
944. Assured the last meal has digested and sensing a keen appetite, savor only foods that are fully agreeable.
945. Life remains unharmed when one eats with restraint, refraining from foods that have proven disagreeable.
946. The pleasures of health abide in the man who eats moderately. The pains of disease dwell with him who eats excessively.
947. The thoughtless glutton who gorges himself beyond the limits of his digestive fires will be consumed by limitless ills.
948. Diagnose the illness, trace its cause, seek the appropriate remedy and apply it skillfully.
949. An accomplished doctor prescribes a remedy after considering the patient's nature, the disease's nature and the time of year.
950. Medicine consists of a patient, a physician, a prescription and a nurse--each of these having four parts.

# Section VIII

## *Introduction*

The last section of Weaver's Wisdom is simply about the qualities of the people. It is somewhat of a Who's Who of mankind. Have you ever wondered about the qualities of the noble? Have you ever wondered about bad money and good money? Have you ever, in your secret thoughts, had the desire to surround yourself with the best of people, not knowing how you found yourself in the midst of disappointments and surprises?

Choosing proper friends is more important than choosing an automobile or the furniture to surround yourself with in your home or office. There is a great difference between friends and acquaintances. In today's world this is not well understood. Reading these thirteen chapters will shed a great deal of light on who is who among relatives, friends and acquaintances.

Everyone today, in one way or another, is wanting to improve themselves. In the verses of this section we find simple, not-to-be-disputed guidelines. Wondering whom to vote for out of a display of contenders for governmental office? Advice in abundance is all here to read, understand, absorb and put into action for a better life for the individual and community.

The weaver has no mercy when he speaks of the preservation of honor--no mercy at all. And he extols greatness. Greatness and accomplishment are what the first gurus of a youth, the parents, should impart. Yes, everyone has a guru. The world itself is the teacher of most people living on the planet, for they have no other mentor, nor even want one.

I call this great guru, the world, Sri Sri Sri Vishvaguru Maha-Maharaj, and he teaches his followers to learn by their own mistakes. By following the weaver's wisdom, we can circumvent Vishvaguru and avoid the many errors, mishaps and sorrows he uses as teaching tools for learning painful lessons.

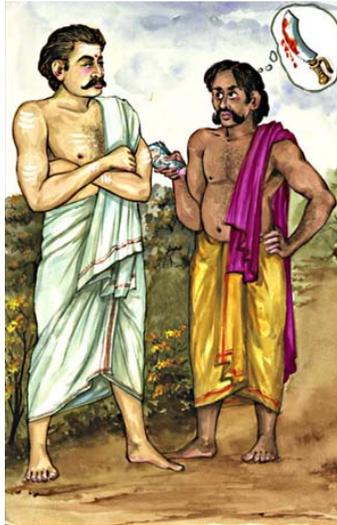
What is needed today more than anything else, in the home, in the village, among leaders and followers, is what is explained to the nth degree in chapter 100. This can be read time and again, memorized, then put into daily practice. Offering a new angle on courtesy, the weaver talks of what we know so well happens in most homes: "Disparaging words are painful, even when uttered in jest. Hence, knowers of human nature are courteous even to enemies."

In the ancient days of the Tamil people, modesty prevailed in personal relations, and it was extolled in poems, songs, paintings and architecture.

Today modesty is regarded among these amazing people as a treasure more valuable than a treasury of gold and jewels. Modesty, a good family and well-chosen friends of proven loyalty are the crosswise threads that crisscross the warp as life's patterns unfold. Remember, if there are troubles in the family, which is a group brought together because of past karmas that cannot be erased, it is crucial for family members to huddle and take care of, support, one another against internal turmoil and the onslaughts of the world. To harbor resentment against mother, father, brother, sister or close and distant relatives is to weaken the fabric of one's life. It would be like stringing a loom with strong, taut, lengthwise threads interspersed with weak, breakable ones. Then the colorful, crisscross threads, dark and bright, of life's experiences would produce an emotionally disturbing pattern, and the fabric would not be smooth to the touch, but frail and rough in spots, prone to tear and break when stressed. Today this is called a discouraged family.

The wise old weaver has taken us on a great journey, giving us a loom on which to weave our life to our heart's content. He begins with the greatest God, ends with the lowest of men and covers everything in between. Quite an achievement, I would say, for a mere 1,080 verses inscribed on palm leaves 2,200 years ago for us to live up to today.

## 96. Nobility



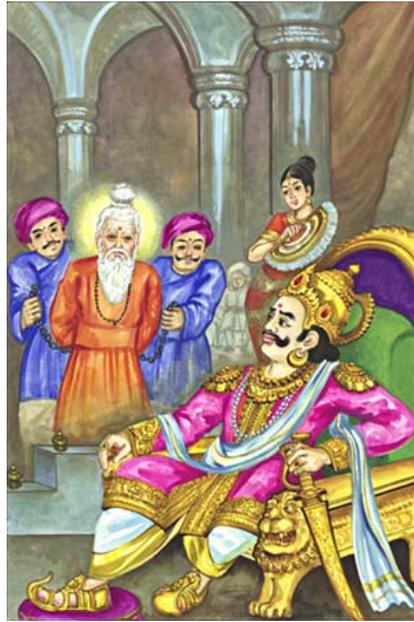
951. An innate sense of right and shying away from wrong are found together only in the nobly born.
952. Men of noble birth will never fall away from these three: correct conduct, truthfulness and modesty.
953. Four traits define the true gentleman: a smiling face, a generous hand, a courteous demeanor and kindly words.
954. Though millions upon millions could be gained by it, men nobly born would never commit a demeaning deed.
955. Though their means of charitableness may be cut off, venerable families will never be severed from propriety.
956. Those committed to their family's flawless fame dare not commit deceitful, dishonorable deeds.
957. In high-born men, blemishes are clearly seen, just as the moon's elevation makes it more visible.
958. When a man with good background lacks loving affection, doubts arise whether he arose from that family.
959. The nature of a soil is known by the seedlings it sprouts. The nature of a man's family is known by the words he speaks.
960. Those desiring greatness must desire modesty. Those seeking their family's honor must seek to be respectful to all.

## 97. Honor



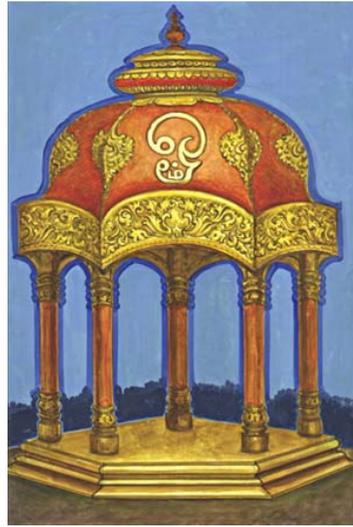
961. Shun any actions that will diminish honor, even if they are vital for the preservation of life.
962. Those who honorably pursue glory never act ingloriously, even if glorious fame is to be gained.
963. Cultivate modesty in the midst of good fortune, but in times of adversity preserve your dignity.
964. Honorable men fallen from high status are like useless hair fallen from the head.
965. Unworthy acts, though mustard-seed small, will bring down a man, though he towers like a mountain.
966. It offers neither Earth's renown nor Heaven's refuge, so why do men run after and stand by those who revile them?
967. Better to die right where you stand, the saying goes, than to live running after those who despise you.
968. Will any medicine preserve the body of the high-born man whose honor has already perished?
969. Shorn of its hair, the yak will refuse to live. Such men do exist who prefer death to the loss of honor.
- 970.** The world will extol and exalt honorable men who exult in death rather than endure dishonor.

## 98. Greatness



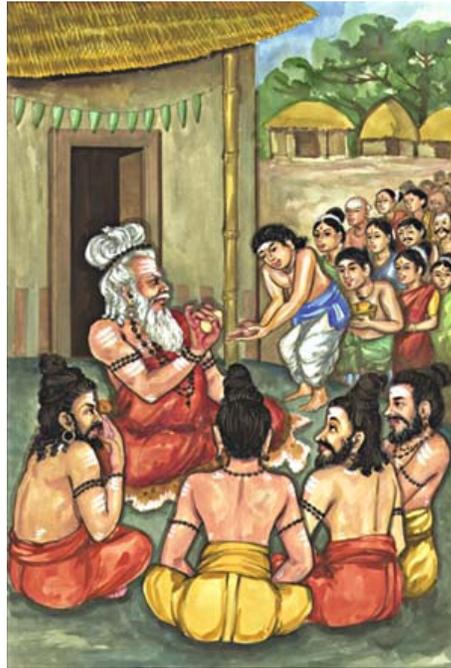
971. The aspiration for glorious achievement is the light of life. Disgrace is the dark thought that says, "I can live without it."
972. All men who live are alike at birth. Diverse actions define their distinction and distinctiveness.
973. Lowly men are never high, even when elevated. High souls are never low, even when downtrodden.
974. Like chastity in a woman, greatness is guarded by being true to one's own self.
975. A man possessing greatness possesses the power to effectively perform uncommonly difficult deeds.
976. "We will befriend great men and become like them." Such thoughts seldom intrude upon small minds.
977. When small-minded men do achieve some distinction, it only serves to augment their arrogance.
978. Greatness is always humbly self-effacing, while pettiness adorns itself with words of praise.
979. Greatness abides in the absence of arrogance. Smallness proudly parades its fulsome haughtiness.
980. Greatness conceals by silence the weaknesses of others. Pettiness promptly proclaims such things to all.

## 99. Perfect Goodness



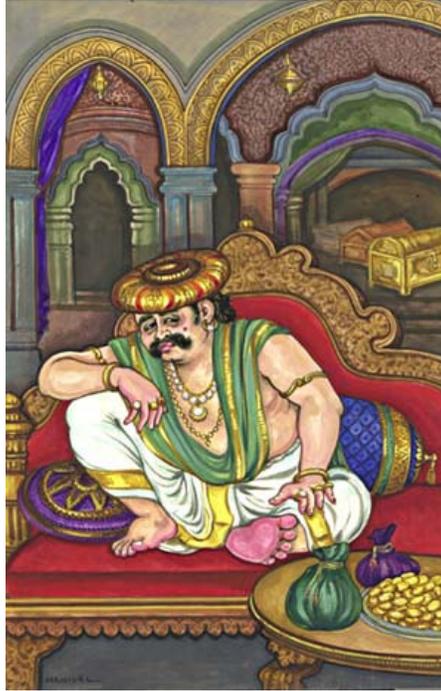
981. It is said that all good things are natural to those who know their duty and walk the path of perfect goodness.
982. Perfect men hold as good their own good character. They count no other goodness so genuinely good.
983. Love, modesty, propriety, a kindly eye and truthfulness-- these are the five pillars on which perfect goodness rests.
984. Penance is the goodness that refrains utterly from killing.  
Perfection is the goodness that refuses to utter others' faults.
985. Humility is the strength of the strong and the instrument the wise use to reform their foes.
986. The touchstone of perfect character is accepting with dignity defeat from one's inferiors.
987. Of what gain is perfect goodness if it does not do good to all, even to those who have done painful things to others?
988. Deprived of all else, one remains undisgraced if still endowed with strength of character.
989. Destiny's last days may surge with oceanic change, yet perfectly good men remain, like the shore, unchanged.
990. Should the perfect virtue of perfect men ever diminish, this mighty Earth would bear our burdensome weight no more.

## 100. Possession of Courtesy



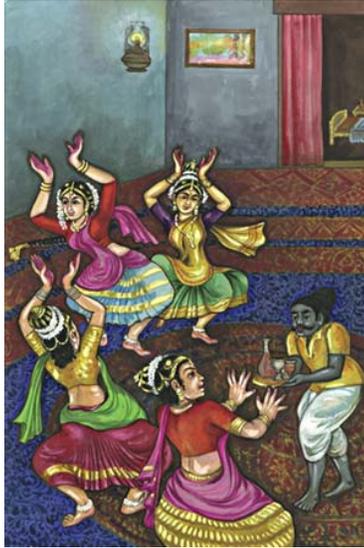
991. They say if a man is easily accessible to everyone, the virtue of courtesy will be easily accessible to him.
992. Loving kindness and birth in a good family-- these two are said to confer on one a gracious manner.
993. Resemblance among humans is not that their bodies look alike. Real similarities come from similar traits of courtesy.
994. The world commends the civility of those who combine fruitful effort and kindly benevolence.
995. Disparaging words are painful even when uttered in jest. Hence, knowers of human nature are courteous even to enemies.
996. The world exists because civilized men exist. Without them, it would collapse into mere dust.
997. Though their minds are as sharp as a wood rasp, men without human decency are as wooden as a tree.
998. It is disgraceful to be discourteous towards others, even to unfriendly fellows who treat you unjustly.
999. To those who cannot smile in joy, this wide world lies engulfed in darkness, even in broad daylight.
1000. Great wealth amassed by men who lack sweet courtesy is like good milk turned sour in an unclean vessel.

## 101. Wealth That Benefits No One



1001. He who has amassed great wealth but does not enjoy it is reckoned as dead, like his unused heap.
1002. Believing wealth is everything, yet giving away nothing, the miser himself will be possessed by a miserable birth.
1003. The mere sight of men who lust after wealth, caring nothing for renown, is a burden to the Earth.
1004. What could a man, unloved by even a single soul, imagine he might leave to posterity?
1005. Amid millions heaped high, a man remains poor if he neither gives away his wealth nor enjoys it himself.
1006. Vast wealth can be a wretched curse to one who neither gladdens himself in its worth nor gives to the worthy.
1007. The wealth of a greedy man who gives nothing to the needy is like the beauty of a maiden growing old unwed.
1008. The wealth of a man whom no heart loves is like fruits on a poisonous tree in the heart of a village.
1009. He who casts out love and dharma and chooses self-denial so wealth can pile high will see it seized by strangers.
1010. The short-lived poverty of a benevolent rich man is like the temporary dryness of a bountiful rain cloud.

## 102. Possession of Modesty



1011. For fair-faced maidens, modesty means bashfulness, but the deeper modesty shies away from shameful karmas.
1012. Food, clothing and such do not differ much among people; what distinguishes good men from others is modesty.
1013. All life clings to a body; perfect goodness clings to all that is modest.
1014. Is not modesty a jewel adorning perfect men? Without it, is not their strut an awful blemish to behold?
1015. The world decrees that men who are as ashamed by others' disgrace as by their own are modesty's fondest home.
1016. The great would rather hold themselves behind modesty's barricade than breach it to acquire the vast world.
1017. Those who prize unpretentiousness will forsake life to preserve it. But they never forsake modesty for the sake of life.
1018. If a man does not feel ashamed of what makes others feel ashamed, virtue itself will be ashamed of him.
1019. Failing to observe good conduct, one sets his family on fire. Living in shamelessness, he incinerates everything good.
1020. The movements of men devoid of modesty mock life, like wooden puppets suspended on a string.

## 103. Advancing the Community



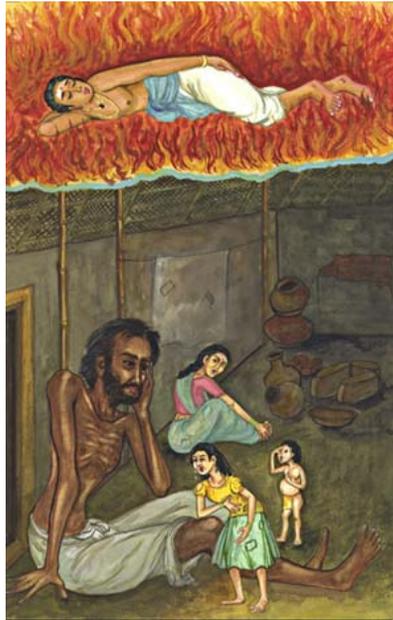
1021. No greater dignity exists than when a man resolutely declares, "I will never cease in laboring to fulfill my karmas."
1022. One prolongs his clan by prolonged exertion in both perseverance and sound understanding.
1023. When a man vows to advance his community, God Himself will wrap His robes and lead the way.
1024. When a man's effort to raise his community high is unremitting, his work will prosper on its own, even if he makes no plans.
1025. The world will surround and befriend him who, without fault, lives to advance his community.
1026. It is said that true manliness consists in becoming head and provider of the clan one was born into.
1027. As on a battlefield the burden falls upon the brave, in the community weight is carried by the most competent.
1028. Those seeking to improve their clan await no season, for delays and undue regard for dignity will destroy it.
1029. When a man shields his family from every suffering, doesn't his body become a vessel filled with their afflictions?
1030. Without good men to hold it up, the family home will fall the moment misfortune's axe comes down.

## 104. Farming



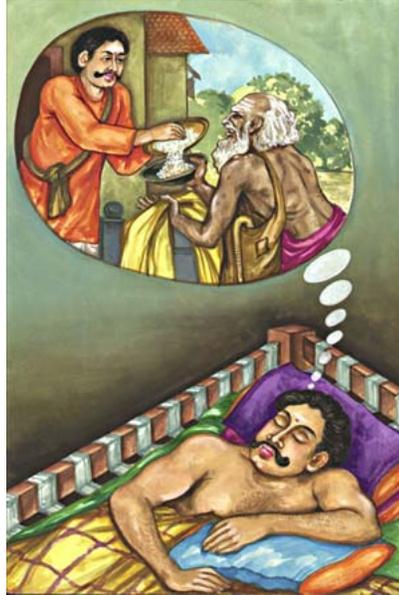
1031. Wherever it may wander, the world follows the farmer's plow. Thus despite all its hardships, farming is the foremost occupation.
1032. Farmers are the linchpin of the world, for they support all who take up other work, not having the strength to plow.
1033. Those who live by the plow live in self-sufficiency. All others lean on them to simply subsist.
1034. Those whose fields lie shaded by abundant sheaves of grain will see many nations overshadowed by their own.
1035. Those who eat food harvested with their own hands will never beg and never refuse a beggar's outstretched palm.
1036. When plowers of the fields stand idly with folded arms, even desireless ascetics will not last long.
1037. If soil is dried so that one ounce shrinks to one-quarter ounce, fruitful yields will not require a single handful of fertilizer.
1038. It is better to fertilize than to furrow a field. After weeding, it is more important to watch over a field than even to water it.
1039. If the lord of the land fails to visit his fields, they will sulk as surely as a neglected wife.
1040. Mother Earth laughs when she sees lazy men crying, "We are so poor."

## 105. Poverty



1041. Ask what is more miserable than being poor, and the answer comes--only poverty pains like poverty.
1042. Poverty, the cruelest of demons, deprives a man of every joy in this life, then takes them from the next life.
1043. Craving, another name for poverty, will obliterate at once ancestral honor and dignity of speech.
1044. Privation produces unmindfulness, which gives birth to improper words, even in men of proper birth.
1045. Poverty is that single sorrow which gives rise to a multitude of miseries.
1046. Even when the poor perceive profoundly and speak skillfully, their most meaningful words are always forgotten.
1047. He who is impoverished and estranged from virtue will be regarded as a stranger even by his own mother.
1048. Will the wretched poverty that nearly killed me yesterday come again today?
1049. Men may slumber even in the midst of fire, but none can find repose in the midst of poverty.
1050. Lacking a morsel of food, a man may either slay every desire or kill off his neighbor's salt and rice broth.

## 106. Begging



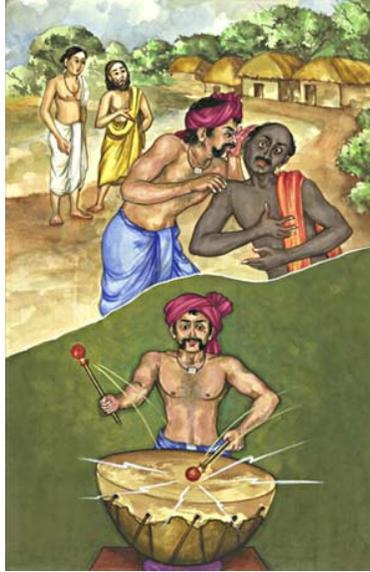
1051. If you meet a man of means, by all means beg his help. If he refuses, the fault is his, not yours.
1052. Even begging can prove pleasurable when what is begged for comes with no sense of burden.
1053. Begging has its own beauty when one supplicates before dutiful men whose hearts never say no.
1054. There are men who never deny a request, even in their dreams. Begging from them is the same as giving.
1055. Because men do exist on Earth who never begrudge giving, others dare to plead their needs before men's gaze.
1056. The miseries of begging will flee at the mere sight of those who are free from refusal's miserable manners.
1057. A jubilant heart rejoices upon seeing those who give without scoffing or scorning.
1058. Deprived of beggars, this vast and verdant Earth would become uncharitable, a ball for the play of wooden puppets.
1059. What glory would generous men enjoy if there were none to beg for and receive their gifts?
- 1060.** One who begs and is refused should not be angry, for his own poverty is sufficient proof of giving's limits.

## 107. Dread of Begging



1061. It is ten million times better not to beg, even from those precious men whose joy is giving and who thus never refuse.
1062. Were it the World-Creator's wish for men to live by begging, men might wish that He, too, die a wandering beggar.
1063. There is no greater foolhardiness than to say, "I shall end the pains of poverty by begging."
1064. This entire world is too small to contain the dignity of men who will not stoop to beg, even in the direst destitution.
1065. Though it is only gruel, thin as water, nothing is more savory than food that is earned by the labor of one's own hands.
1066. The tongue finds nothing more distasteful than begging, even just to beg drinking water for a cow.
1067. This I beg of all beggars: "If you must beg, beg not from misers."
1068. The unsturdy ship called begging will break apart the moment it crashes against the rock of refusal.
1069. Thoughts of a beggar's plight melt the heart. Thoughts of refusals he receives crush it completely.
1070. Having said "no" to a beggar, knowing it might kill the poor man, where is a miser going to hide from his word?

## 108. Baseness



1071. Outwardly, vile men resemble human beings. We have never witnessed such a remarkable likeness.
1072. The low-minded are happier than men who know goodness, for they are never troubled by the pangs of conscience.
1073. Wicked rogues resemble the Gods, for they, too, live doing whatever they want.
1074. When a vile man meets a wicked one, he will outdo him in his vices and pride himself on the achievement.
1075. Fear is the primary force motivating base men. Besides that, the desire for gain may motivate them--a little.
1076. Base men are like a bass drum, sounding off to others every secret they happen to hear.
1077. Some men are too crude to even shake the water off their just-washed hands, except for those who could break their jaw with a fist.
1078. Worthy men yield their gifts when told of a need, but like sugarcane, base men give only when crushed and squeezed.
1079. Let a base man behold others dressing and dining well, and instantly their faults are all that he can see.
1080. Is there anything for which lowly men are suited? Well, when crises come, they are the first to offer themselves for sale!

# Conclusion

## *Mutiverai*

We have taken great pleasure in presenting this edition to the world of seekers for a better life. Heeding the wisdom herein is a dharma that has been tried and tested century after century. Decision-making in planning the future and understanding the past while living in the present is made easy through these 1,080 verses. All who look to India as the land of spirituality will find here the best of the East augmenting the best of the West, making a wholesome whole in claiming the weaver's wisdom as their own lifestyle.

There is a new age ahead, and we are certain that the Tamil people, and those who have chosen to live as they once lived, will take a needed and welcome lead. We here at our Hawaiian ashram base our decisions, which are many and made daily, upon the weaver's precepts. By doing so, a concise and precise governing body, otherwise imperceptible, gives consistent advice to followers worldwide.

As the hereditary guru of the Jaffna Tamil community of Sri Lanka--now in diaspora as refugees flee because of war--my decisions for community welfare and future development made on the Tirukural's understanding of dharma keep decision-making consistent with priests and elders in over twenty nations where we have established temples and encouraged traditional ways of worship and culture. For a new age to really be a new age, two things must happen: first, spiritual leaders must be strong enough to influence community leaders by example and unfailing advice; and second, corporal punishment must end and harmony must exist in every school and home.