THIRUKURAL
Index to this publication

* Introduction - This introductory text will serve well the purpose of providing some background information to both the original writing of the Tirukural some two millennia or more ago, and to this recent Tirukural translation, which was oversighted by Gurudeva, Sivaya Subramuniyaswami, student of the Sri Lankan sage Yogaswami (1872 - 1964), and the founder of the Himalayan Academy.

Part I ... On Virtue

• Prologue
  * Chapter 1 - In Praise of God
  * Chapter 2 - The Importance of Rain
  * Chapter 3 - Greatness of Renunciates
  * Chapter 4 - Asserting Virtue's Power

• Family Life - The Way of the Householder
  * Chapter 5 - Family Life
  * Chapter 6 - The Good Wife
  * Chapter 7 - The Blessing of Children
  * Chapter 8 - Possessing Love
  * Chapter 9 - Hospitality
  * Chapter 10 - Speaking Pleasant Words
  * Chapter 11 - Gratitude
  * Chapter 12 - Impartiality
  * Chapter 13 - Possession of Self-Control
  * Chapter 14 - Possession of Virtuous Conduct
  * Chapter 15 - Not Coveting Another's Wife
  * Chapter 16 - Possession of Forbearance
  * Chapter 17 - Avoidance of Envy
  * Chapter 18 - Avoidance of Covetousness
  * Chapter 19 - Avoidance of Backbiting
  * Chapter 20 - Avoidance of Pointless Speech
  * Chapter 21 - Dread of Sinful Deeds
  * Chapter 22 - Understanding One's Duty to Society
  * Chapter 23 - Charity
  * Chapter 24 - Glory

• Asceticism
  * Chapter 25 - Possession of Compassion
  * Chapter 26 - Abstaining from Eating Meat
  * Chapter 27 - Austerity
  * Chapter 28 - Ascetic Pretense
  * Chapter 29 - Avoidance of Fraud
  * Chapter 30 - Truthfulness
  * Chapter 31 - Avoidance of Anger
  * Chapter 32 - Avoidance of Injuring Others
  * Chapter 33 - Avoidance of Killing
  * Chapter 34 - Impermanence of All Things
  * Chapter 35 - Renunciation
  * Chapter 36 - Knowledge of Truth
  * Chapter 37 - Eradication of Desire

• Destiny
* Chapter 38 - Destiny

Part II - On Wealth

* Kingship

* Chapter 39 - The Merits of the King
* Chapter 40 - Learning
* Chapter 41 - The Neglect of Learning
* Chapter 42 - Listening to the Learned
* Chapter 43 - Possession of Wisdom
* Chapter 44 - Guarding Against Faults
* Chapter 45 - Gaining Support from the Great
* Chapter 46 - Avoidance of Base Company
* Chapter 47 - Deliberation Before Action
* Chapter 48 - Understanding Strength
* Chapter 49 - Understanding Timeliness
* Chapter 50 - Understanding the Right Place
* Chapter 51 - Testing and Trusting Men
* Chapter 52 - Testing and Employing Men
* Chapter 53 - Fellowship of Kindred
* Chapter 54 - Avoidance of Unmindfulness
* Chapter 55 - Just Reign
* Chapter 56 - Unjust Reign
* Chapter 57 - Avoidance of Tyranny
* Chapter 58 - The Kindly Look
* Chapter 59 - Espionage
* Chapter 60 - Possession of Industriousness
* Chapter 61 - Avoidance of Laziness
* Chapter 62 - Perseverance
* Chapter 63 - Being Undaunted by Troubles

* Ministers & Subjects - The Essentials of the State Ministers

* Chapter 64 - Essentials Of the State Ministers
* Chapter 65 - Eloquence
* Chapter 66 - Purity of Action
* Chapter 67 - Resoluteness of Action
* Chapter 68 - Modes of Action
* Chapter 69 - Ambassadors
* Chapter 70 - Associating with Monarchs
* Chapter 71 - Discerning Unspoken Thoughts
* Chapter 72 - Judging the Audience
* Chapter 73 - Not Dreading the Audience
* Chapter 74 - The Country
* Chapter 75 - Fortresses
* Chapter 76 - The Ways of Acquiring Wealth
* Chapter 77 - Merits of the Army
* Chapter 78 - Military Pride
* Chapter 79 - Friendship
* Chapter 80 - Testing Fitness for Friendship
* Chapter 81 - Old Friendship
* Chapter 82 - Harmful Friendship
* Chapter 83 - False Friendship
* Chapter 84 - Folly
* Chapter 85 - Ignorance
* Chapter 86 - Hatred
* Chapter 87 - Merits of Enmity
* Chapter 88 - Understanding the Nature of Enmity
* Chapter 89 - Internal Enmity
* Chapter 90 - Not Offending the Great
Chapter 91 - Being Led by Women
Chapter 92 - Wanton Women
Chapter 93 - The Avoidance of Drunkenness
Chapter 94 - Gambling
Chapter 95 - Medicine

The People

Chapter 96 - Nobility
Chapter 97 - Honor
Chapter 98 - Greatness
Chapter 99 - Perfect Goodness
Chapter 100 - Possession of Courtesy
Chapter 101 - Wealth That Benefits None
Chapter 102 - Possession of Modesty
Chapter 103 - Advancing the Family
Chapter 104 - Farming
Chapter 105 - Poverty
Chapter 106 - Begging
Chapter 107 - Dread of Begging
Chapter 108 - Baseness

Part III - On Love

Kama or Pleasure (Love)

Chapters 109 to 133 - At present un-translated by the Himalayan Academy.
**Introduction to the Holy Kural**

The following represents an inspired talk by Gurudeva, H.H. Sivaya Subramuniyaswami, on Saint Tiruvalluvar’s Guru Puja Day, February 15, 1979, introducing selections from the Holy Kural, the Saint’s 2,100 year-old Tamil classic on virtuous living:

**Scripture of Saivite Hinduism**

Many years ago when I was in Sri Lanka -- that was in 1949 -- I made a vow to bring together the best of the East and the best of the West. I was first introduced to the Holy Kural in those early days. To me it is one of the most important scriptures of the East. It is very practical. It contains wonderful insights of life and really teaches us how to deal with the various feelings and circumstances that come to us in our interactions with others. In this sense the Kural is the most relevant sacred text I know, applying to everyday matters and common concerns.

Although it has been translated into English by many scholars, the Holy Kural has never been widely known in the Western world. There is a similar work, written in modern times by the mystic Kahil Gibran, called the Prophet which has been widely distributed. Everyone knows and loves this great work. The Holy Kural parallels the Prophet in many ways. Both books speak in profound yet useful terms of love and friendship, of health and death, of joy and sorrow. It is my hope that the Holy Kural will soon find its place beside the Prophet and be known by the world for the gem that it is.

The Holy Kural was written by a weaver who lived with his wife, Vasuki, in what is today a part of Madras in South India in the 1st century before the birth of Christ. Details of his life are meager. It is known that his wife was the perfect example of devotion and obedience to her husband, and several stories are told depicting the harmony in their marriage. This was Tiruvalluvar’s only work, and though it is relatively short, it was sufficient to bring renown to a humble weaver, making him a venerated sage and lawgiver of the Tamil Dravidian people.

In the Tamil language "Tiru" means "holy" or "sacred," and "Kural" means anything that is brief or short. In this case it describes the very difficult and disciplined venpa meter in which the verses were written. Each verse is extremely short, containing only two lines of fourteen syllables. In fact, it is the shortest form of stanza in the Tamil language. In many ways these couplets are similar to the Sanskrit sloka. The entire scripture consists of 133 chapters with each chapter elucidating a different aspect of human virtue or human fault. There are ten kural couplets per chapter, making a total of 1,330 couplets in the entire scripture. In his work Tiruvalluvar chose a topic - such as children, friendship or avoidance of anger - and gave us ten different couplets on the one subject. To properly understand his perspective on a subject, each of the ten couplets must be read, for they are like facets of a gem - all reflecting the light of his understanding slightly differently and adding to the richness of his comprehension. It has been explained to me that the saint spent the fullness of his life quietly observing, simply observing the human condition. Then, toward the end of his life, he was asked to speak out and share the wisdom others in the community knew he possessed. The Holy Kural is his response.
This edition of the Holy Kural has been several years in the preparation. While in Sri Lanka in 1975 I asked one of the Sannyasin to bring into American English the essential meaning of the verses. There had never been a translation in modern American English. He studied the various translations. Later he returned to the monastery here in Hawaii and with another Sannyasin worked in the hours before dawn for many months. There were five objectives in their work - to be faithful to the original Tamil in meaning and style, to be clear and understandable, to be brief whenever possible so as to capture the saint's succinct style, to be subtle and profound, and finally to have the verses as graceful and refined in English as they are in Tamil. This was not an easy task, as you can imagine. It was further complicated by the fact that the text was written twenty centuries ago in a classical form of Tamil that is difficult to understand today. It is like trying to read the Old English works of Chaucer. They had to react on exactly what the saint meant, for often his verses are obscure and subtle. They had to catch the same meaning, the same insight, to discover the same area of consciousness which the saint held as he wrote. And then they had to speak out that perception in the vernacular of our day. Realizing that much meaning would be lost if the attempt was made to use rhyming verse in the translation, I asked the Sannyasins to not attempt that, but to work in prose instead.

As you will see, this abridged edition contains four of the ten verses for the first thirty-eight chapters. We have completed the abridged translations through chapter 108, but the limitations of the Inspired Talks do not allow all the chapters to be included here. The verses here are, to me, the most meaningful and pertinent ones to serve as an introduction to this ancient scripture in the West. They represent the essence of the saint's insights on the topics of the first chapters. We hope that this small selection will find its way into your heart and encourage further study of the Holy Kural in its fuller form.

The total scripture is divided into four sections: the Preface, Virtue, Wealth and Love. In not speaking of the fourth and final objective of human existence, moksha or spiritual liberation, Saint Tiruvalluvar was able to reach out with his message of goodness and touch the lives of many generations. Certainly he knew that in speaking of virtue and love he was leading the soul to the liberation which he perhaps held too sacred, or too advanced, to openly discuss. That is why it was awesome to be on San Marga today and to see the two larger-than-life black granite statues made for us in South India sitting together - the one who spoke on virtue wealth and love and the other who spoke so potently on liberation in his great work, The Tirumantiram. The whole of the way of Saivite Hinduism is contained in the world of these two eminent saints.

The Holy Kural should be used in everyday life - its verses committed to memory and meditated upon, quoted freely as your very own. You will sound wise if you do remember and share these jewels. One of the greatest benefits of this scripture is to guide our actions and our thoughts, to direct our purpose in life and refine our interactions with our fellow man. Problems can be resolved in the light of the saint's wisdom. If something is going along wrong in your life, bring the forces of life back into harmony by studying the Holy Kural and applying its knowledge. That is perhaps its main function - to perfect and protect our lives in the everyday world by preventing mistakes which can cause an unhappy karma, by preventing erroneous attitudes which can bring unnecessary sorrow into our experience. Yet, there is nothing in the Kural that has to be obeyed. Each of the couplets contains such insight, however, that we are drawn to it and want to obey.
Use the verses in this scripture to provide guidelines for effective and virtuous action in your life. It can be our refuge in times of confusion, a source of inspiration when we feel less than inspired, a central hub around which the endless play of Lord Siva's maya revolves. Of course, it can be studied so as to comprehend the nature of virtue and the difficulties caused by transgressing virtue's natural laws. It does not contain a single concept or expression that would offend another faith, and thus it is a fine introduction to the scriptures of the East. The Holy Kural may well be the meeting ground, the common ground, of all religions. It could be called a Common Creed for the modern world. But above all it is to be used by the individual to bring the wisdom of the ages, the wisdom of Saivite Hinduism, into our lives. I hope you will all allow Saint Tiruvalluvar's insights to speak your own intuition and reveal from within yourself the laws which he too discovered within himself. Do not look upon this scripture as something "out there." Meditation and reflection will reveal that its knowledge lies within, vibrantly alive, dynamically real. It is impossible to not be moved by the grand compassion and the direct discernment of the Kural. Let it enrich your life as you journey along this Eternal Path, the Sanatana Dharma. I would suggest that you commit to memory as many stanzas as you can. Many have done this, keeping them on the tip of their tongue and in the forefront of their mind. Impress them on the subconscious mind and thereby make a gridwork for living that takes you swiftly to the goal and brings joy in the process, for Hinduism is a joyous religion. I would also suggest that you teach these gems to the children.

This advice and admonition, coming from the world's most ancient faith and culture, will enrich every child's understanding of goodness, right conduct and right thought. It is one of the most astute scriptures in the world today. It should be memorized, especially by small children. It will create a positive conscience for their inner decisions, guiding how they will conduct themselves through life. Small children all through South India memorize the Holy Kural in order to be able to chant it verse after verse - many can recite the entire 1,330 verses by heart. This gives them a code of living that remains with them the rest of their lives. It is crucial that children be given the benefit of strong principles from an early age, especially in these times when television and the stories, plots and scenes that children see on television which form the code of living for their lives provide opposite and obscure values. The Holy Kural is therefore most important. It is essential that the values which are the substance of the Holy Kural - the do's as well as the don'ts - be carried over into the next generation with courage and persistence and fortitude so that our descendants, the heirs of a future which we are even now in the process of creating, are benefited by these age-old insights into universal laws, humanitarian laws and plain common sense.

This is the responsibility of all parents and those who teach our children. They may use this translation freely, drawing upon its storehouse of virtuous living. Quote from these verses freely. Use them as your very own.
In Saivite Hinduism we believe that the soul, man's soul created by Siva, is returning to the Source which it already is, and this maturation is effected and directed by karma, through experience, through a succession of lives that provide experience from which inner knowledge is attained. This passage through one life and then another brings the soul ever closer to its true, effulgent being. Saivites believe that the soul can and does ultimately merge with Siva, with God, Absolute Reality. It becomes one with God, united in an ultimate experience, or non-experience, called Self-realization, which in turn leads to moksha or liberation from the necessity for further incarnation. This is the final goal, and the Holy Kural provides a foundation upon which the quest for that goal may proceed with confidence and stability.

Gurudeva,
H.H. Sivaya Subramuniyaswami,
on Saint Tiruvalluvar’s Guru Puja Day,
February 15, 1979
In Praise of God

"A" is the first and source of all the letters. Even so is God Primordial the first and source of all the world.

Verse 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?

Verse 3
The Supreme dwells within the lotus of the heart. Those who reach His Splendid Feet dwell endearingly within unearthly realms.

Verse 4
Draw near the Feet of Him who is free of desire and aversion. And live forever free of suffering.

Verse 5
Good and bad, delusion's dual deeds, do not cannot cling Those who delight in praising the immutable, worshipful One.

Verse 6
A long and joyous life rewards those who remain firmly On the faultless path of Him who controls the five senses.

Verse 7
They alone dispel the mind's distress Who take refuge at the Feet of the Incomparable One.

Verse 8
They alone can cross life's other oceans who take refuge At the Feet of the Gracious One, Himself an ocean of virtue.

Verse 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.

Verse 10
The boundless ocean of births can be crossed, But not without intimate union with Infinity's Holy Feet.
The Importance of Rain

Verse 11
It is the unfailing fall of rain that sustains the world. Therefore, look upon rain as the nectar of life.

Verse 12
Rain produces man's wholesome food; And rain itself forms part of his food besides.

Verse 13
Though oceanic waters surround it, the world will be deluged By hunger's hardships if the billowing clouds betray us.

Verse 14
When clouds withhold their watery wealth, Farmers cease to pull their ploughs.

Verse 15
It is rain that ruins, and it is rain again That raises up those it has ruined.

Verse 16
Unless raindrops fall from the sky, Not a blade of green grass will rise from the earth.

Verse 17
The very nature of oceans, though vast, would diminish, If clouds ceased to take up water and give back rain's gifts.

Verse 18
Should the heavens dry up, worship here of the heavenly ones In festivals and daily rites would wither.

Verse 19
Unless the heavens grant their gifts, neither the giver's generosity Nor the ascetic's aloofness will grace this wide world.

Verse 20
No life on earth can exist without water, And the ceaseless flow of that water cannot exist without rain.
Greatness of Renunciates

The scriptures exalt above every other good
The greatness of virtuous renunciates.

Attempting to speak of the renunciate’s magnitude
Is akin to measuring the human multitudes who have ever died.

Behold those who have weighed the dual nature of things and followed
The renunciate’s way. Their greatness illumines the world.

He whose firm will, wisdom’s goading hook, controls his five senses
Is a seed that will flourish in the fields of heaven.

Such is the power of those who subdue the five senses that even Indra,
Sovereign of spacious heaven's celestials, suffered their curse.

The magnificent ones are they who can dispatch the most
Difficult tasks; the insignificant ones are they who cannot.

Touch, taste, sight, smell and hearing -

He who controls these five magically controls the world.

Their own secret sayings reveal to the world
The greatness of men whose words prove prophetic.

It is impossible to endure even a moment’s wrath of those
Who have scaled and stand upon the mountain called virtue.

Renunciates are called the priestly ones
For they are clothed in robes of compassion for all life.
**THIRUKURAL**

**Asserting Virtue's Power**

**Verse 31**

Virtue yields heaven's honor and earth's wealth.
What is there then that is more fruitful for a man?

**Verse 32**

There is nothing more rewarding than virtue,
Nor anything more ruinous than its neglect.

**Verse 33**

Be unremitting in the doing of good deeds.
Do them with all your might and by every possible means.

**Verse 34**

Keep the mind free of impurity. That alone is the practice of virtue.
All else is nothing but empty display.

**Verse 35**

Virtue is living in such a way that one does not fall into these four -
Envy, anger, greed and unsavory speech.

**Verse 36**

Don't tell yourself tomorrow you'll be wise enough to practice virtue.
Do it now, for it will be your deathless companion when you die.

**Verse 37**

It is decidedly unnecessary to inquire about virtue's benefits,
So evident in the difference between the palanquin's rider and bearer.

**Verse 38**

Allowing not a day to pass without doing some good
Is a boulder that will block your passage on the path to rebirth.

**Verse 39**

Only virtuous deeds abound in true joy.
All other deeds are empty and devoid of distinction.

**Verse 40**

Virtue is merely that which should be done,
And vice is merely that which men avoid in life.
**Family Life**

Verse 41

He alone may be called a householder who supports
Students, elders and renunciates pursuing well their good paths.

Verse 42

The virtuous householder supports the needs
Of renunciates, ancestors and the poor.

Verse 43

The foremost duty of family life is to duly serve these five:
God, guests, kindred, ancestors and one's self.

Verse 44

Gathering wealth without misdeeds and sharing meals without
miserliness, The householder's posterity will never perish.

Verse 45

When family life possesses love and virtue,
That is both its essence and fruition.

Verse 46

If a man masters the duties of married life,
What further merits could monkhood offer him?

Verse 47

Among those who strive for liberation, the foremost are they
Who live the blessed state of family life as it should be lived.

Verse 48

The householder dedicated to duty and to aiding
Ascetics on their path of penance endures more than they do.

Verse 49

Domestic life is rightly called virtue. The monastic path,
Rightly lived beyond blame, is likewise good.

Verse 50

He who pursues the householder's life well here on earth
Will be placed among the Gods there in heaven.
The Good Wife

Verse 51
She is the helpful wife who possesses the fullness of Household culture and spends within her husband’s means.

Verse 52
The fullest family life remains empty If the wife lacks the lofty culture of the home.

Verse 53
What does a man lack if his wife is worthy? And what does he possess if she is lacking worth?

Verse 54
What is more majestic than a woman Who preserves the prodigious strength of chastity?

Verse 55
Even the rains will fall at her command Who upon rising worships not God, but her husband.

Verse 56
A woman is one who vigilantly guards herself, Cares for her husband and protects their unblemished reputation.

Verse 57
Why do guardians protect women by confinement? Her own resolute chastity is a woman's paramount protection.

Verse 58
A women deeply devoted to the man who wed her Will be worthy of great rewards in the world where Gods delight

Verse 59
Unless the wife pursues praiseworthy purity, The husband cannot prance like a proud lion before his critics.

Verse 60
A worthy wife is the blessing of a home, And good children are its precious ornament.
The Blessing of Children

Verse 61
Of all a man's blessings we know of none greater than
The begetting of children endowed with intelligence.

Verse 62
Those who bear children of blameless character
Will themselves be born seven times, untouched by evil.

Verse 63
It is said that children are a man's real wealth,
And that this wealth is determined by his deeds.

Verse 64
Far sweeter than divine nectar is simple boiled rice
Stirred by the small hands of one's own child.

Verse 65
Being touched by one's children is a delight to the body,
And listening to them chatter is a joy to the ear.

Verse 66
"Sweet are the sounds of the flute and the lute," say those
Who have not heard the prattle of their own children.

Verse 67
A father can best benefit his son by preparing him
To sit in the vanguard of erudite councils.

Verse 68
What pleasure it is to human beings everywhere
When their children possess knowledge surpassing their own!

Verse 69
When a mother hears her son heralded a good and learned man,
Her joy exceeds that of his joyous birth.

Verse 70
The son's duty to his father is to make the world ask,
"By what great austerities did he merit such a son?"
Possessing Love

Verse 71
Can any lock keep love confined within,
When the loving heart's tiny tears escape and confess it?

Verse 72
The unloving belong only to themselves,
But the loving belong to others to their very bones.

Verse 73
They say it is to know union with love
That the soul takes union with the body.

Verse 74
Love makes a man affectionate toward all,
And affection affords the priceless treasure of friendship.

Verse 75
They say love's greatness is this: it yields to good families
Worldly happiness here and heavenly bliss there.

Verse 76
The uninformed say love stands by virtuous souls,
Unaware that love is also friend to all immersed in vice.

Verse 77
As the blazing sun dries up a boneless worm,
So does virtue scorch a loveless being.

Verse 78
Without love in the heart,
Life is like a sapless tree in a barren desert.

Verse 79
What good is a body perfect in outer ways,
If inwardly it is impaired by lack of love?

Verse 80
With love enshrined in the heart, one lives.
Without it, the body is but bone encased in skin.
**Hospitality**

The whole purpose of maintaining a home  
And earning wealth is to provide hospitality to guests.

To hoard one's meal when a guest is in the home is improper,  
Even if it happens to be the nectar of immortality.

The life of the man who daily cares for those who  
Come to him will never suffer poverty's painful ruin.

Wealth's goddess dwells in the hospitable home  
Of those who host guests with a smiling face.

If a man eats only after attending to guests' needs,  
What further sowing will his fertile fields require?

The host who, caring for guests, watches hopefully for more,  
Will himself be a welcomed guest of those whose home is heaven.

Charity's merit cannot be measured by gifts given.  
It is measured by measuring the receiver's merits.
Speaking Pleasant Words

Verse 91
Pleasant words fall from the lips of virtuous men,
Full of tenderness and free from deceit.

Verse 92
Better than a gift given with a joyous heart
Are sweet words spoken with a cheerful smile.

Verse 93
A kindly countenance and sweet words
Spoken from the heart are virtue’s way.

Verse 94
Poverty-provoking sorrow will not pursue
Those who speak joy-producing words to all they meet.

Verse 95
Humility and pleasant words are the jewels
That adorn a man; there are none other.

Verse 96
If a man seeks good works while speaking sweet words,
His virtues will wax and his vices wane.

Verse 97
Words yield spiritual rewards and moral excellence
When they do not wander far from usefulness and agreeableness.

Verse 98
Sweet speech which is stranger to pettiness
Imparts pleasure not only in this life, but in the next.

Verse 99
Why would anyone speak cruel words,
Having observed the happiness that kind words confer?

Verse 100
To utter harsh words when sweet ones would serve
Is like eating unripe fruits when ripe ones are at hand.
Gratitude

Verse 101
Heaven and earth are scant repayment
For help rendered where none was received.

Verse 102
A kindness done in the hour of need may itself be small,
But in worth it exceeds the whole world.

Verse 103
When help is rendered by weighing the receiver's need
And not the donor's reward, its goodness grows greater than the sea.

Verse 104
While aid may outwardly seem as puny as a mustard seed,
The knowing will deem it as imposing as a towering palm.

Verse 105
Help rendered another cannot be measured by the extent
Of assistance imparted. Its real measure is the recipient's worthiness.

Verse 106
Never forget fellowship with unsullied souls,
Nor forsake friendship with those who aided in adversity.

Verse 107
For seven lives in seven bodies the grateful will remember
Friends who nullified their anguish and affliction.

Verse 108
It is improper to ever forget a kindness,
But good to forget at once an injury received.

Verse 109
The deadliest injury is effaced the moment
The mind recalls a single kindness received from the injurer.

Verse 110
Having massacred every breed of goodness, one may yet escape,
But there is no escape for those who let gratitude die.
Impartiality

Verse 111
Justice may be called good when it acts impartially
Toward enemies, strangers and friends.

Verse 112
The wealth of those who possess justice will not perish;
Rather it will be posterity's soothing security.

Verse 113
However prosperous it may seem, all wealth gained
By loss of rightness must be relinquished that very day.

Verse 114
In their offspring one may doubtlessly discern
Who are the just and who the unjust.

Verse 115
Adversity and prosperity never cease to exist. The adornment
Of great men's minds is to remain unswervingly just under both.

Verse 116
When his heart forsakes fairness and his deeds turn depraved,
A man realizes deep within himself, "I am ruined."

Verse 117
Though a man is profoundly impoverished,
If he remains just, the world will not regard him as poor.

Verse 118
To incline to neither side like a balance scale's level beam
And thus weigh impartially is the wise one's ornament.

Verse 119
Speech uttered without bias is integrity,
Provided no unspoken bias hides in the heart.

Verse 120
Those businessmen will prosper whose business
Protects as their own the interests of others.
Possession of Self-Control

Verse 121
Self-control will place a man among the Gods, 
While lack of it will lead him into deepest darkness.

Verse 122
Guard your self-control as a precious treasure, 
For there is no greater wealth in life than this.

Verse 123
Comprehending and acquiring self-control 
Confers upon one the esteem of wise men.

Verse 124
More imposing than a mountain is the greatness of a man who, 
Steadfast in domestic life, has attained self-control.

Verse 125
Humility is a precious quality in all people, 
But it has a rare richness in the rich.

Verse 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.

Verse 127
Whatever you may fail to guard, guard well your tongue, 
For flawed speech unfailingly invokes anguish and affliction.

Verse 128
By a single word of injury 
Do all a man's virtues lose their goodness.

Verse 129
The wound caused by fire heals in its time; 
The burn inflicted by an inflamed tongue never heals.

Verse 130
Virtue will wait in the streets to meet a man 
Possessed of learning and self-disciplined, his anger subdued.
Possession of Virtuous Conduct

Verse 131
Virtuous conduct leads a man to eminent greatness, Therefore, it should be guarded as more precious than life itself.

Verse 132
In your striving, be mindful to preserve good conduct. In your deliberations, discover it is your staunchest ally.

Verse 133
Morality is the birthright of high families, While immoral conduct's legacy is lowly birth.

Verse 134
If a brahmin forgets the Vedas, he can relearn them. But if he falls from virtue, his high birth is forever effaced.

Verse 135
Prosperity is not for the envious, Nor is greatness for men of impure conduct.

Verse 136
The firm-minded never slacken in upholding virtuous conduct, For they know the miseries brought on by such neglect.

Verse 137
By honest conduct one achieves honorable eminence, While corrupt conduct brings one nothing but blame.

Verse 138
Good conduct is the seed in virtue's field; Wicked conduct's harvest is never-ending sorrow.

Verse 139
Men who conduct themselves virtuously Are incapable of voicing harmful words, even forgetfully.

Verse 140
Those who cannot live in harmony with the world, Though they have learned many things, are still ignorant.
Not Coveting Another's Wife

Verse 141
Those who know virtue's laws and property's rights
Never indulge in the folly of desiring another man's wife.

Verse 142
Among those who stand outside virtue, there is no greater fool
Than he who stands with a lustful heart outside another's gate.

Verse 143
No different from the dead are those who
Wickedly desire the wife of a friend.

Verse 144
Though a man's measure is mountainous, what good is it
If, without the minutest concern, he takes another's wife?

Verse 145
A man who seduces another man's wife, knowing she is easy,
Suffers a shame which neither dies nor diminishes.

Verse 146
Hatred, sin, fear and disgrace-these four
Never forsake the man who commits adultery.

Verse 147
He is decreed a worthy householder
Who holds no desire for the womanliness of another's wife.

Verse 148
The chivalry that does not look upon another's wife
Is not mere virtue - it is saintly conduct.

Verse 149
In a world imperiled by the fearsome sea, to whom do good things belong?
To men never impassioned to caress a married women.

Verse 150
Though a man deserts virtue and indulges in vice,
He keeps some decency by not wanting another's wife's womanliness.
**Possession of Forbearance**

**Verse 151**

Just as the Earth bears those who dig into her,  
It is best to bear with those who despise us.

**Verse 152**

It is always good to endure injuries done to you,  
But to forget them is even better.

**Verse 153**

It is impoverished poverty to be inhospitable to guests.  
It is stalwart strength to be patient with fools.

**Verse 154**

Desiring that his greatness should never cease,  
Let a man's conduct foster forbearance.

**Verse 155**

Worthless are those who injure others vengefully,  
While those who stoically endure are like stored gold.

**Verse 156**

The gratification of the vengeful lasts only for a day,  
But the glory of the forbearing lasts until the end of time.

**Verse 157**

Though unjustly aggrieved, it is best to suffer the suffering  
And refrain from unrighteous retaliation.

**Verse 158**

Let a man conquer by forbearance  
Those who in their arrogance have wronged him.

**Verse 159**

Those who patiently endure the rude remarks of the insolent  
Possess the ascetic's rare purity.

**Verse 160**

Great are those who suffer fasting's hardships;  
Yet they are surpassed by those who suffer hard words spoken.
Avoidance of Envy

Verse 161
The unenvious heart is to be valued
No less than virtuous conduct itself.

Verse 162
Among the profuse precious things a man may acquire,
None surpasses a nature free from envy toward all.

Verse 163
He who is jealous instead of joyous of another's wealth
Does not desire, they say, wealth and virtue of his own.

Verse 164
Envy will never cause one to commit wrongful deeds
Who rightly fathoms the disgrace which follows.

Verse 165
A man's own envy is foe enough to forge his ruin,
Even though he has no other enemies.

Verse 166
He who begrudges another's bounty
Will behold the death of his naked and starving kindred.

Verse 167
Fortune's Goddess, intolerant of men who cannot tolerate other's success,
Introduces them to her sister Misfortune and goes away.

Verse 168
The wicked one called envy consumes this world's wealth
Then consigns men to those worlds of hellish fire.

Verse 169
It is worth pondering that good men may be poor
While the envious in heart prosper.

Verse 170
There are no envious men who have risen to prosperity.
There are no men free from envy who have fallen from it.
Avoidance of Covetousness

In the very attempt to wrongly gain another's wealth,
A man loses his family's future and his own faultlessness.

Those who deem injustice shameful never commit
Guilt-yielding deeds driven by money-yielding desires.

Those who seek immortal bliss will not succumb
To immoral deeds which follow desire for fleeting delights.

With senses conquered and sight unclouded by depravity,
One will not covet others' wealth, even in destitution.

What avails a man's subtle and comprehensive learning,
If, in a covetous delirium, he still exploits others?

Desiring grace and doing his duty, a man who desires wealth
And contrives to acquire it wrongly is destroyed nevertheless.

Do not seek the fortune that greed gathers,
For its fruit is bitter in the day of enjoyment.

To protect his own prosperity from decline
One must not crave the property held by others.

Just as wise men know the goodness of non-coveting,
So Fortune herself knows their goodness and draws near.

There is a desire for another's possessions which is thoughtlessly destructive.
There is a pride which, refusing to covet, is mindfully triumphant.
Avoidance of Backbiting

Verse 181
Silent about virtue and swift to act wrongly,
A man who does not slander others may still be called good.

Verse 182
More vile than violating virtue and committing crime
Is slanderously sabotaging a man, then smiling to his face.

Verse 183
Virtue declares that dying, not living, will bring better rewards
To defamers who dissemble and deceive.

Verse 184
Though you speak unkind words to a man's face,
Do not speak words behind his back heedless of consequent harm.

Verse 185
Though every word is full of kindly virtue,
A man's mean back-biting will betray his empty heart.

Verse 186
If a man spreads tales of others' faults,
His own worst faults will be exposed and spread.

Verse 187
Not knowing the companionable art of cheerful conversation,
Men estrange even friends by their divisive discourse.

Verse 188
If men are disposed to spread the faults of friends,
What deadly harm might they do to strangers?

Verse 189
Only because she weighs duty well does Earth bear the weight
Of those who wait for a man's departure to defame him.

Verse 190
If men perceived their own faults as they do the faults of others,
Could misfortune ever come to them?
Avoidance of Pointless Speech

Verse 191
Everyone is disgusted by a man
Who offends one and all with meaningless chatter.

Verse 192
Uttering useless words to crowds is worse
Than committing unkindnesses toward companions.

Verse 193
A long and pointless discourse itself declares
To all the speaker's lack of worth.

Verse 194
Worthless words are doubly unprofitable: the listeners'
Enjoyment is lost, and the speaker's own virtues vanish.

Verse 195
Prestige and popularity flee the best of men
The moment they speak inane and useless words.

Verse 196
Do not call him a man who enjoys displaying
His own empty words. Call him rather the chaff of men.

Verse 197
Let the wise, if they deem it necessary, speak even unpleasant words,
But it is good if they always refrain from pointless speech.

Verse 198
In search of extraordinary gains, the wise
Will never speak trivial or ungainful words.

Verse 199
The wise, faultless and free from ignorance,
Never utter pointless words, even forgetfully.

Verse 200
In your speaking, say only that which is purposeful.
Never utter words which lack purpose.
Dread of Sinful Deeds

Wicked men do not fear, but worthy men dread,
The arrogance of sinful deeds.

Verse 201

From evil springs forth more evil.
Therefore, evil is to be feared even more than fire.

Verse 202

To commit no wrong, even against one's enemies,
Is said to be supreme wisdom.

Verse 203

Only the forgetful plot another's ruin; others remember
That virtue itself devises a plotter's downfall.

Verse 204

Do not commit wrongful deeds, claiming to be poor.
For such deeds only cause one to be poorer still.

Verse 205

Let him who wishes to be free from afflictions' pain

Verse 206

Avoid inflicting harm on others.

Verse 207

One can escape from hate-filled enemies,
But one's own hateful acts will relentlessly pursue and destroy him.

Verse 208

As a man's shadow follows his footsteps wherever he goes,
Even so will destruction pursue those who commit sinful deeds.

Verse 209

If a man feels fond affection for himself,
Let him not indulge in immoral deeds, however insignificant.

Verse 210

Know that a man will be defended against destruction
If he does not deviate from Right and act iniquitously.
Understanding One’s Duty to Society

Verse 211

The benevolent expect no return for their dutiful giving.
How can the world ever repay the rain cloud?

Verse 212

It is to meet the needs of the deserving
That the worthy labor arduously to acquire wealth.

Verse 213

Of all duties, benevolence is unequaled in this world,
And even in celestial realms.

Verse 214

He who understands his duty to society truly lives.
All others shall be counted among the dead.

Verse 215

The wealth of the world-loving wise man
May be likened to a well-stocked village water tank.

Verse 216

Riches retained by generous men

Verse 217

Resemble a fruit tree ripening in the heart of a village.

Verse 218

In the hands of a benevolent man,
Wealth is like a medicinal tree whose healing gifts help all.

Verse 219

Those who deeply know duty do not neglect giving,
Even in their own unprosperous season.

Verse 220

The benevolent man considers himself poor only
When he is unable to render his accustomed service to humanity.

Were it said that loss of wealth is the price of benevolence,
Such loss is worth selling one’s self to procure.
Charity

Verse 221
Giving to the poor is true charity.
All other giving expects a recompense.

Verse 222
Though men may declare it a good path, gathering gifts is bad.
Though they decree it denies one heaven, giving gifts is good.

Verse 223
Men of good birth graciously give,
Never uttering the wretched excuse, "I have nothing."

Verse 224
How unpleasant a beggar's pleading can become,
Until one sees his face, so sweetly pleased.

Verse 225
Great indeed is the power acquired through austerity to endure hunger.
But greater still is the power of those who relieve the hunger of others.

Verse 226
Relieving the ravaging hunger of the poor
Is the most secure use of a rich man's wealth.
Glory

Verse 231
Give to the poor, and life will be richly graced. 
There is no greater profit for a man than this.

Verse 232
All who speak will proclaim abiding praise
For those who give alms to the poor.

Verse 233
Except for exalted glory which endures forever,
Everything on earth perishes.

Verse 234
So great is glory gained by men in this world
That celestials cease praising ascended sages.

Verse 235
The loss that is gain and the death that is life of immortal glory
Are attained only by the wise.

Verse 236
If you are born, be born for glory,
For those born without it would be better off without birth.

Verse 237
Why do those whose life is devoid of renown
Blame despising rivals, when they have themselves to blame?

Verse 238
Just as it is disgraceful to bear no children,
All men on earth deem it disgraceful to not beget fame.

Verse 239
When forced to bear the body of a man without eminence,
Even faultless, fruitful lands will lessen their yields.

Verse 240
Those who live without blame truly live.
Those who live without glory live not.
Possession of Compassion

Verse 241
Among the wealthy, compassionate men claim the richest wealth, For material wealth is possessed by even contemptible men.

Verse 242
Find and follow the good path and be ruled by compassion. For if the Various ways are examined, compassion will prove the means to liberation.

Verse 243
Those whose hearts are drawn toward compassion Will never be drawn into the dark and woeful world.

Verse 244
Evil deeds dreaded by the soul will not afflict The compassionate who foster and protect all life.

Verse 245
This wide and wind-swept fertile earth is witness to the truth That misery is not for men who keep compassion.

Verse 246
They say those who act cruelly by forsaking compassion Must have forgotten what it means to forsake morality.

Verse 247
As this world is not for the penniless,
Abstaining from Eating Meat

Verse 251
How can he practice true compassion
Who eats the flesh of an animal to fatten his own flesh?

Verse 252
Riches cannot be found in the hands of the thriftless,
Nor can compassion be found in the hearts of those who eat meat.

Verse 253
Goodness is never one with the minds of these two:
One who wields a weapon and one who feasts on a creatures' flesh.

Verse 254
If you ask, "What is kindness and what is unkind?"
It is not killing and killing. Thus, eating flesh is never virtuous.

Verse 255
Life is perpetuated by not eating meat.
The clenched jaws of hell hold those who do.

Verse 256
If the world did not purchase and consume meat,
There would be none to slaughter and offer meat for sale.

Verse 257
When a man realizes that meat is the butchered flesh
Of another creature, he must abstain from eating it.

Verse 258
Perceptive souls who have abandoned passion
Will not feed on flesh abandoned by life.

Verse 259
Greater then a thousand ghee offerings consumed in sacrificial fires
Do not do sacrifice and consume any living creature.

Verse 260
All that lives will press palms together in prayerful adoration
Of those who refuse to slaughter and savor meat.
Austerity

Verse 261

It is the nature of asceticism to patiently endure hardship and not to harm living creatures.

Verse 262

Austerity belongs to the naturally austere. Others may attempt it, but to no avail.

Verse 263

Is it because they must provide for renunciates that others forget to do penance?

Verse 264

Should he but wish it, an ascetics' austerities will ruin his foes and reward his friends.

Verse 265

In this world men do austerities assiduously, assured of the fulfillment of desired desires.

Verse 266

Those who perform austerities are fulfilling their destiny. All others are ensnared by desire and unknowingly work their own destruction.

Verse 267

As the intense fire of the furnace refines gold to brilliancy, so does the burning suffering of austerity purify the soul to resplendence.

Verse 268

He who has realized by himself his souls' Self will be worshiped by all other souls.

Verse 269

So potent is the power acquired through austerity that those who attain it may even stay the moment of death.

Verse 270

Few people perform penance, while the majority do not. For this reason the needy multitudes suffer deprivation.
Ascetic Pretense

Verse 271
Undeceived by a deceiver's duplicity,
His own five elements silently mock him.

Verse 272
Of what avail is an outer appearance of saintliness,
If the mind suffers inwardly from knowledge of its iniquity?

Verse 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.

Verse 274
He who conceals himself beneath saintly robes and commits sins
Is like the hunter who hides in the bushes to snare unwary birds.

Verse 275
When those who claim dispassion act deceitfully,
The day will come when they exclaim,"Alas! Alas! What have I done?"

Verse 276
None is so heartless as he who, without renunciation in his heart,
Poses as a renunciate and lives fraudulently.

Verse 277
Like the poisonous jequirity seed, with its bright and black sides,
There are outwardly dazzling men whose insides are dark.

Verse 278
Many are the men who piously bath in purifying waters,
While in their dark hearts impure conduct lies concealed.

Verse 279
The arrow is straight but cruel; the lute is crooked but sweet.
Therefore, judge men by their acts, not their appearance.

Verse 280
Neither shaven head nor long locks are required,
Provided one refrains from conduct condemned by the world.
Avoidance of Fraud

Verse 281
If a man wishes not to be scorned by others,
He will secure his own mind against the merest thought of fraud.

Verse 282
The mere thought of sin is sin. Therefore,
Avoid even the thought of stealing from another.

Verse 283
The fortune that is amassed by fraud may appear to prosper
But it will soon perish altogether.

Verse 284
Finding delight in defrauding others yields the fruit
Of undying suffering when those delights ripen.

Verse 285
Benevolent thoughts and affectionate feelings flee from those
Who watch for another’s unwatchfulness to swindle his property.

Verse 286
They who follow deceit’s desirous path
Cannot hope to work wisdom’s measured way.

Verse 287
The dark deceits of fraud cannot be found
In the hearts of those who desire the greatness called virtue.

Verse 288
As righteousness resides in the hearts of the virtuous,
So does deceit dwell in the hearts of thieves.

Verse 289
Knowing nothing but deviousness,
Men die each time they contrive their corrupt deeds.

Verse 290
Even the life in his body will abandon him who defrauds others,
But heaven itself never forsakes those who are honest.
**Truthfulness**

What is truthfulness? It is the speaking of words
Which are entirely free from harmful effects.

Verse 291

Even falsehood is of the nature of truth,
If it gives good results free from fault.

Verse 292

Let a man not speak as truth what he knows to be false,
For his conscience will scorch him when he has lied.

Verse 293

He who lives truly in his own heart,
Truly lives in the hearts of all people.

Verse 294

Those who speak only truth from the heart
Surpass even penitents and philanthropists.

Verse 295

No prestige surpasses the absence of falsehood;
All other virtues flow from it effortlessly.

Verse 296

Not lying, and merely not lying, is beneficial
For those who can't practice and won't practice other virtues.

Verse 297

Water is sufficient to cleanse the body,
But only truthfulness will purify the mind.

Verse 298

Not all lamps are effective lamps.
The lamp of nonlying is the wise man's lamp.

Verse 299

Among all great truths which we have ever beheld,
Not one can equal the goodness of veracity.

Verse 300
**Avoidance of Anger**

Verse 301
It is restraint that restrains anger when it can injure. If it cannot harm, what does restraint really matter?

Verse 302
Anger is wrong even when it cannot cause injury, But when it can, there is nothing more iniquitous.

Verse 303
Forget anger toward all who have offended you, For from anger springs a multitude of wrongs.

Verse 304
The face's smile and the heart's joy are slain by anger. Does there exist a greater enemy than one's own anger?

Verse 305
If a man would be his own guard, let him guard against anger. Left unguarded, his own wrath will slay him.

Verse 306
Drawing near it, men are engulfed in fury's' fire, Which burns even rescuing friends and family.

Verse 307
As a man trying to touch the ground with his hand cannot fail, So one who treasures his temper will doubtlessly be destroyed.

Verse 308
Even when others inflict wrongs as painful as the touch of blazing Torches, it is good if a man can refrain from anger.

Verse 309
If angry thoughts never invoke his mind, A man's other thoughts may instantly manifest.

Verse 310
As men who have died resemble the dead, So men who have renounced anger resemble renunciates.
Avoidance of Injuring Others

Verse 311
If hurting others would bring princely riches,
The pure in heart would still refuse.

Verse 312
It is the principle of the pure in heart never to injure others,
Even when they themselves have been hatefully injured.

Verse 313
Hating others, even enemies who harmed you unprovoked,
Assures incessant sorrow.

Verse 314
If you return kindness for injuries received and forget both,
Those who harmed you will be punished by their own shame.

Verse 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?

Verse 316
Any actions which a man knows would harm himself
He should not inflict on others.

Verse 317
The supreme principle is this: Never knowingly
Harm anyone at any time in any way

Verse 318
Why does he who knows what injury to his own life is like
Inflict injury on other living human beings?

Verse 319
If a man inflicts sorrow on another in the morning,
Sorrow will come to him unbidden in the afternoon.

Verse 320
All suffering recoils on the wrongdoer himself. Therefore, those who
Desire not to suffer refrain from causing others pain.
Avoidance of Killing

What is virtuous conduct? It is never destroying life,
For killing leads to every other sin.

Of all the virtues summed by ancient sages the foremost are these:
To partake of food one has shared and to protect all living creatures.

Not killing is the first and foremost good.
The virtue of not lying comes next.

What is the good way? It is the path that reflects on
How it may avoid killing any living creature.

Among all who disown the world out of dismay, the foremost are
They who, dismayed with death-dealing, embrace non-killing.

Life-devouring death will not assail the living days
Of one whose code of conduct is to never kill.

Refrain from taking precious life from any living being,
Even to save your own life.

By sacrifice of life some gain great wealth and good,
But sagacious men scorn such gains.

Those whose trade is killing creatures are deemed defiled
By men who know the defiling nature of being mean.

They say the beggar who suffers a sore ridden body and deprived life
Once deprived another's body of life.
Impermanence of All Things

Verse 331
There is no baser folly than the infatuation
That looks upon the transient as if it were everlasting.

Verse 332
Amassing great wealth is gradual, like the gathering of a theater
Crowd. Its dispersal is sudden, like that same crowd departing.

Verse 333
Wealth's nature is to be unenduring.
Upon acquiring it, do that which is enduring right away.

Verse 334
Though it seems a harmless gauge of time, a day,
To those who fathom its form, is a saw steadily cutting the tree of life.

Verse 335
Do good deeds with urgency,
Before death's approaching rattle strangles the tongue.

Verse 336
What wondrous greatness this world possesses -
That yesterday a man was, and today he is not.

Verse 337
Man does not know if he will live another moment,
Yet his thoughts are ten million and more.

Verse 338
The soul's attachment to the body resembles a fledgling
Which forsakes its empty shell and flies away.

Verse 339
Death is like falling asleep,
And birth is like waking from that sleep.

Verse 340
Not yet having a permanent home,
The soul takes temporary shelter in the body.
**Renunciation**

Verse 341

Whatsoever a man has renounced,
From the sorrow born of that he has freed himself.

Verse 342

After a man has renounced, he enjoys the many true things in this World. Let men desiring that renounce in time.

Verse 343

The five senses must be subdued
And every desire simultaneously surrendered.

Verse 344

The mendicant's poverty permits not a single possession,
For possessions draws him back into delusion.

Verse 345

What are life's petty attachments to the man who seeks severance From future births, when even his body is a burden?

Verse 346

He who slays the conceit which clamors "I" and "mine"
Will enter a realm above the celestials' world.

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Verse 347

If one clings to his attachments, refusing to let go,
Sorrows will not let go their grip on him.

Verse 348

Those who renounce totally reach the highest peak;
The rest remain ensnared in delusions net.

Verse 349

Birth ceases when all attachments are severed;
Otherwise, one beholds unceasingly the transitoriness of life.

Verse 350

Attach yourself to Him who is free from all attachments.
Bind yourself to that bond in order that all other bonds may be broken.
Knowledge of Truth

Verse 351
The delusion which mistakes the unreal for the Real
Is the genesis of woeful births.

Verse 352
For those of undimmed perception, free from delusion,
Darkness departs and rapture rushes in.

Verse 353
To those who have dispelled all doubt and perceive Truth,
Heaven is nearer than earth.

Verse 354
All knowledge acquired through the five senses is worthless
To those without knowledge of truth.

Verse 355
In everything of every kind whatsoever,
Wisdom perceives Truth in that thing.

Verse 356
Those who find Divine Truth in this world
Follow a path which never comes back to this world.

Verse 357
Those who think with certitude and ponder well that which is,
Need never think of being born again.

Verse 358
Banishing the folly of rebirth and thus beholding
Perfections True Being - that is wisdom.

Verse 359
The ruinous griefs that he is yet to suffer will not cleave to him who,
Renouncing other supports, realizes life's true Support.

Verse 360
Desire, detesting and delusion - the annihilation of these three names
Is the annihilation of suffering endured.
Eradication of Desire

Verse 361
At all times and to all creatures
The seed of ceaseless births is desire.

Verse 362
If you must desire, desire freedom from birth.
That will only come by desiring desirelessness.

Verse 363
Here no fortune is as dear as desirelessness;
And even there nothing like it can be found.

Verse 364
Purity is but freedom from desire,
And that is achieved by desiring to know Truth.

Verse 365
They say only those who have renounced desire are renunciates.
Others do not share the same attainment

Verse 366
As it is desire, above all else, which deceives a man,
Ascetics dread it judiciously.

Verse 367
When a renunciate ceases the deeds of desire,
Deliverance from life and death will come when he desires.

Verse 368
He who has no desires has no sorrow, but where there is desire
There will be ever-increasing sorrows.

Verse 369
When desire, sorrow's sorrow, dies away,
Undying bliss prevails even here on earth.

Verse 370
It is the nature of desire never to be fulfilled, but he who utterly
Gives it up realizes eternal fulfillment at that very moment.
**Destiny**

Industriousness comes to men whom Fortune favors,
But laziness approaches those whom Misfortune has chosen.

That destiny which decreases prosperity, increases ignorance.
That destiny which diminishes loss, expands knowledge.

However subtle the texts studied,
The native knowing destined one prevails.

Two natural ways are ordained in this world.
Acquiring wealth is one. Attaining wisdom is quite another.

When fate is against a man, his assured success in gathering wealth will
Fail; and when fate is with him, even certain failure will succeed.

Though you guard it well, what destiny does not decree disappears.
Though you cast it aside, what fate calls yours will not depart.

A man may amass millions, but its enjoyment,
Will never exceed the allotment allotted by him.

The destitute are almost ascetics and would renounce if only
Approaching fate, carrying experiences yet to be, would pass them by.

Why should those who rejoice when Destiny brings good
Moan when that same Destiny decrees misfortune?

What is there that is mightier than Destiny?
For it is there ahead of us even in the plans we devise to overcome it.
The Merits of the King

Verse 381
He is lion among kings who is well-endowed with these six possessions: Army, citizens, wealth, ministers, allies and fortresses.

Verse 382
Four are the characteristics which a king cannot lack: Fearlessness, generosity, wisdom and industriousness.

Verse 383
In those who rule the land these three must never lapse: Vigilance, valiance and virtuous learning.

Verse 384
He is a true king who, unswerving in virtue, Restrains wrongdoing, and, steadfast in courage, maintains his honor.

Verse 385
A king is he who can amass a treasury of wealth, Store it, guard it and expend it wisely.

Verse 386
All peoples praise that nation whose sovereign Is always accessible and never speaks severely.

Verse 387
Behold the King who speaks sweetly, gives generously and Protects powerfully - the world, esteems his word its command.

Verse 388
Ruling righteously himself and safeguarding subjects from others, A monarch may be deemed divine by his people.

Verse 389
The world abides protected beneath the umbrella Of a virtuous king who can abide words bitter to the ear.

Verse 390
He is a light ruler who is endowed with the four merits Of generosity, graciousness, justice and care for the people.
Learning

Verse 391
Learn perfectly all that you learn, and
Thereafter keep your conduct worthy of that learning.

Verse 392
Two are the eyes of those who truly live-
One is called numbers and the other letters.

Verse 393
The learned have eyes that see, they say.
The unlearned have but two sores on their face.

Verse 394
It is the learned man's prowess that meetings
Bring delight and departures leave pleasant thoughts.

Verse 395
Amidst the learned be humble, as those possessing nothing are before
The prosperous. Those who fail thus to learn are the lowest of men.

Verse 396
The deeper a sand-well is dug the freer is its flow of water.
Even so, the deeper a man's learning the greater is his wisdom.

Verse 397
When every country our village could be his own,
How can a man dwell unlearned to his death?

Verse 398
Learning a man secures in one birth
Will secure his well-being in seven.

Verse 399
When the learned see that the learning that delights them
Delights the world as well, they love learning even more.

Verse 400
A man's learning is an imperishable and precious wealth.
All other possessions are less golden.
The Neglect of Learning

Verse 401
Speaking to a learned gathering without full knowledge,
Is like playing a dice game without the board.

Verse 402
An unlearned man desiring to be eloquent,
Is like a breastless women longing to be feminine.

Verse 403
Even the ignorant will be deemed wise
If they refrain from speaking in the presence of the learned.

Verse 404
However excellent an unlearned man's knowledge may be,
Knowledgeable men will never take it.

Verse 405
An unlearned man's self-conceit will shrivel
The moment he speaks to an assembly.

Verse 406
Like unproductive barren land is the man who has neglected learning.
All that can be said about him is that he exists.

Verse 407
The goodness and beauty of him whose knowledge
Is neither subtle nor penetrating are like that of a painted clay doll.

Verse 408
Even more wretched than a learned man's poverty
Is the unlearned man's wealth.

Verse 409
Though humbly born, a learned man's nobility
Transcends that of the unlearned noble man.

Verse 410
As men are to feral beasts, so are the luminaries
Of knowledge compared to unlearned men.
**Listening to the Learned**

Verse 411
The most precious wealth is the wealth acquired by the ear
Indeed, of all wealth that wealth is the crown.

Verse 412
Only when no nourishment exists for the ear
Is it time to offer the stomach a morsel.

Verse 413
There are men who find listening a feast for their ears.
On earth they resemble deities who feast from sacrificial fires.

Verse 414
Even though he has no learning, if a man but listens to the learned
That will be his staff of strength in adversity.

Verse 415
Words from the lips of upright men
Are like a steadying staff in a slippery place.

Verse 416
However little, let a man do good things
Even that little will enhance his greatness.

Verse 417
Those who have studied deeply and listened diligently will never speak
Foolish words, even when they have wrongly understood a matter.

Verse 418
Ears may hear and yet remain deaf
If not pierced by sharp listening.

Verse 419
For a man to speak with humility is indeed rare,
Unless he has listened to learning's subtlety.

Verse 420
There are men whose tongues can taste but whose ears never savor.
What does it matter that they live or die.
Possession of Wisdom

Verse 421
Wisdom is a weapon with which a man may ward off destruction; It is an inner fortress which no enemy can assail.

Verse 422
Wisdom will harness the mind, diverting it From wrong and directing it toward right.

Verse 423
In whatever matter and from whomever heard, Wisdom will witness its true meaning.

Verse 424
Wisdom speaks well, conveying each meaning clearly, And listens for the subtlest sense in others’ speech.

Verse 425
Men of wisdom befriend the wise and keep that friendship constant, Not opening and closing like the petaled lotus.

Verse 426
It is wisdom to live in the world As the world lives.

Verse 427
Those who know, know what it is to be. The unknowing know this not.

Verse 428
It is folly not to fear what ought to be feared. Therefore, the wise dread what ought to be dreaded.

Verse 429
Fearsome sufferings shall never happen To the wise who guard against future happenings.

Verse 430
Those who possess wisdom possess everything. Whatever others possess, without wisdom they have nothing.
Guarding Against Faults

Verse 431
Those who are free from arrogance, anger, and lust
Will prosper in great dignity.

Verse 432
Avarice, arrogance and crude amusements are flaws
In the characters of an unfit king.

Verse 433
Though their fault is as small as a millet seed,
To those who dread disgrace it will appear as large as a palm tree.

Verse 434
His own faults are a man's mortal enemies.
Therefore, to guard against them is life's gravest concern.

Verse 435
The fortune of a man who does not guard against failings before they
Manifest will perish like a stack of straw before a flaming fire.

Verse 436
What fault exists in a king who eradicates his own faults
Before examining the faults in others?

Verse 437
The wealth of one who, out of avarice, fails to do what should be done
Will vanish without the slightest vestige.

Verse 438
When faults are reckoned, one remains apart -
The greedy grasping known as avariciousness.

Verse 439
Never indulge in admiring yourself.
Never desire deeds that do not benefit others.

Verse 440
Delighting in life's pleasures privately
Nullifies the conspiring schemes of foes.
Gaining Support from the Great

Verse 441
Those who ponder the value of friends whose wisdom and goodness
Are mature, will plan the means, then acquire such friendships.

Verse 442
There are men who allay today's trials and avert tomorrow's troubles.
Befriend and look after them.

Verse 443
To cherish and befriend men of greatness
Is the rarest of all rare things.

Verse 444
To live among advising friends who are greater than himself
Is foremost among a man's strength.

Verse 445
Knowing that ministers function as a monarch's eyes,
A king looks at ministers meticulously before engaging them.

Verse 446
A man's foes are rendered ineffective
If he can live in fellowship among the worthy.

Verse 447
Who can destroy the man who has the friendship
Of helpful advisors who will not hesitate to admonish him?

Verse 448
With no one to reprove and thus protect him,
A king will be destroyed, though no one seeks his destruction.

Verse 449
Profit is not for those who have no capital, nor is stability
For those who lack the support of faithful friends.

Verse 450
It is harmful to make a multitude of foes, but it is ten times worse
To give up the friendship of the worthy.
Avoidance of Base Company

Verse 451
Men of greatness dread base company,
But the low-minded consider them kinsmen.

Verse 452
As water changes according to the soil through which it flows,
So does a man assimilate the character of his associates.

Verse 453
By knowing his thoughts, a man's mind is discovered.
By knowing his associates, his character is revealed.

Verse 454
Wisdom, appearing to originate in a man's mind,
Has its source in his companions.

Verse 455
Purity of mind and purity of conduct - these two
Depend upon the purity of a man's companions.

Verse 456
Good progeny comes to a pure-minded men.
Their pure companions keep pure deeds away.

Verse 457
Wealth will be given to good-minded men,
And all glory granted by good company.

Verse 458
Even perfect men, possessing the mind's full goodness,
Are fortified by good fellowship.

Verse 459
Goodness of mind leads to bliss in the next world,
And even this is secured by the company of good men.

Verse 460
There exists no greater aid than good fellowship,
And no greater affliction than evil fraternity.
Deliberation Before Action

Verse 461
Before undertaking a project, ponder what will be gained,
Lost and ultimately achieved.

Verse 462
There is nothing too difficult for a man who, before he acts,
Deliberates with chosen friends and reflects privately.

Verse 463
The wise never undertake an enterprise
Which rashly risks existing capital to reach for potential profits.

Verse 464
Those who dread derision and disgrace
Will not commence a task that is unclear.

Verse 465
To strike out without a well-pondered plan
Is one way to cultivate an enemies' strength.

Verse 466
To do that which ought not to be done will bring ruin,
And not to do that which ought to be done will also bring ruin.

Verse 467
Embark upon an action after careful thought. It is folly to say,
"Let us begin the task now and think about it later."

Verse 468
Unless painstakingly performed, a task will not succeed
Even if men in multitudes support it.

Verse 469
Even in the performance of good deeds a man may err,
If he does not consider the recipient's unique nature.

Verse 470
Having reflected, let a man's actions lie above blame.
The world will never approve of acts which lie beneath him.
Understanding Strength

Verse 471
The prudent act after weighing the strength a deed demands, 
One's own strength and the strengths of allies and opposition.

Verse 472
Nothing is impossible for those who perceive the nature and the means 
Of their task and proceed with determination.

Verse 473
Ignorant of their strengths, many plunge zealously 
Into projects, only to miscarry midway.

Verse 474
How swiftly men perish who praise themselves, unappraised of 
Their real measure and unable to live peacefully with others.

Verse 475
Load too many of them and even peacock feathers 
Would break the cart's axle.

Verse 476
He who has climbed out to the tip of a tree branch 
And attempts to climb further will forfeit his life.

Verse 477
Know the measure of your capacity to give, then give accordingly - 
Such clarity is the way wealth is preserved.

Verse 478
A small income is no cause for failure, 
Provided expenditures do not exceed it.

Verse 479
The wealth of a man who lives unaware of his own measure, 
Appears to exist, then disappears without a trace.

Verse 480
Unless weighed with prudence, a philanthropist's wealth 
Will promptly perish, measure by measure.
Understanding Timeliness

Verse 481
A crow can overcome a powerful owl in the daytime.
A king desiring to defeat his enemy must pick the proper time.

Verse 482
A man may firmly bind himself to prosperity
By the cord called timely action.

Verse 483
Is there any task too difficult for the man who acts
At the right time and employs the proper means?

Verse 484
One may aim to acquire the whole world and succeed,
If actions are aimed at the right time and place.

Verse 485
Those who aim to own the world
Must wait, unruffled, for the fitting hour.

Verse 486
The patient restraint of the powerful man is like the drawing back
Of the fighting ram before it smites the stunning blow.

Verse 487
When angered, men of understanding never show it outwardly then and
There. Holding it inside, they watch for an opportune moment.

Verse 488
Bow humbly when greeting an enemy.
His own head will bow humiliated when in time he greets defeat.

Verse 489
When a rare opportunity comes, do not hesitate,
But swiftly accomplish tasks that are otherwise impossible.

Verse 490
There are times to stay still as a stalking heron.
There are times to move swiftly as a heron's strike.
**Understanding the Right Place**

**Verse 491**
Neither deride the opposition nor initiate a campaign
Until you possess the strategic place from which to strike.

**Verse 492**
In battle a fortified place yields numerous advantages,
Even to those possessing power and prowess.

**Verse 493**
Even the weak may powerfully prevail if they choose the right
Field of action, establish good defenses and then fight well.

**Verse 494**
When an attacker attacks from a strategic location
His enemies’ thoughts of conquest become unthinkable.

**Verse 495**
In the river’s depths the crocodile is unconquerable,
But others may defeat it if it departs those waters.

**Verse 496**
The massive chariot with mighty wheels cannot sail the sea,
Nor can the ocean-going ship travel the land.

**Verse 497**
Fearlessness is the only friend one needs,
If ceaselessly he ponders from which place to pounce.

**Verse 498**
If a large army assails a well-entrenched small army,
Its power will be repelled and it will retreat.

**Verse 499**
Even if they have neither potent resources nor strong fortresses,
It is difficult to conquer a people on their own soil.

**Verse 500**
The fearless elephant may slaughter a multitude of warriors
Yet be slain by a single jackal if his legs sink in muddy marsh.
Testing and Trusting Men

A man should be chosen after passing the four-fold test
Of virtue, wealth, pleasure and fear of death.

Verse 501

Place trust in a man of good family, free from faults
Of a modest nature that dreads reproach.

Verse 502

Even faultless and deeply learned men, when closely examined,
Are rarely found to be entirely free from ignorance.

Verse 503

Weigh a man's merits and weigh his faults
Then judge him according to the greater.

Verse 504

The touchstone which discloses a man's greatness
Or smallness is simply this - his deeds.

Verse 505

Being attached to people, they are unashamed of peccancy.

Verse 506

When one employs a know-nothing out of affection,
He engages all kinds of foolishness.

Verse 507

To trust a stranger without investigation
Invite troubles so endless even descendants must endure.

Verse 508

Lacking investigation, lend your trust to no one. Having investigated
Entrust a man with matters for which he has proven trustworthy.

Verse 509

To trust a man who has not been tested and to suspect a man
Who has proven trustworthy lead to endless ills.

Verse 510
Testing and Employing Men

Verse 511
Employ those men who discern the good and the bad effects
In every undertaking and choose the good.

Verse 512
Let him do the work who can supplement revenues,
Spread prosperity and search out problems.

Verse 513
Let him alone be trusted who fully possesses these four:
Kindness, intelligence, assurance and freedom from greed.

Verse 514
Though tested fully under simulated conditions,
Many men function differently under working conditions.

Verse 515
Work should be entrusted to men on the basis of their knowledge
And diligence and not merely on the bonds of affection.

Verse 516
Consider the work, choose the workman,
Conceive the timing with care, then commence.

Verse 517
Having decided, "This man is qualified to do this work in this way,"
Entertrust him to his task.

Verse 518
After ascertaining what work befits a man,
Assign him to a fitting task.

Verse 519
Wealth withdraws from the man who won't understand
The natural friendliness his workers wish to share with him.

Verse 520
Let the king scrutinize his staff's conduct daily.
If they do not go astray, the world will not go astray.
Fellowship of Kindred

Verse 521
When a man's wealth has disappeared, his kinsmen alone
Will maintain their customary kindness.

Verse 522
If a man's kindred cleave to him with unfailing love,
His fortunes will never fail to flourish.

Verse 523
Pursuing a happy life without mixing with kinsmen
Is like pouring water into a barrel which has no staves.

Verse 524
The real profit gained by giving riches
Is as one may then live surrounded by kindred.

Verse 525
Multitudes of kinsmen will gather around the man
Who gives generously and speaks sweetly.

Verse 526
In this wide world none enjoys a more faithful family
Than he who hands out large gifts and holds back anger.

Verse 527
The crow does not conceal its food but calls its kind to share it;
Prosperity will abide with men of such a nature.

Verse 528
The multitudes thrive when they perceive their monarch
Perceiving each one's merits, not seeing mere sameness in all.

Verse 529
Close kinsmen who have become estranged
Will come back when the cause of disagreement goes away.

Verse 530
When one who left him returns with good reason,
The king may, after careful reflection, receive him back.
Avoidance of Unmindfulness

Verse 531
Excessive anger is a great harm, but greater still is 
The unmindfulness born of excessive pleasure.

Verse 532
Just as perpetual poverty slowly slays one’s knowledge, 
So does frequent forgetfulness destroy one’s prestige.

Verse 533
Unmindful men will never know renown. 
This is the verdict of every virtuous text in the world.

Verse 534
There is nothing that will provide defense for the cowardly, 
And there is nothing that will produce good for the incautious.

Verse 535
The unmindful man who fails to guard beforehand 
Against impending threats will afterwards regret his negligence.

Verse 536
Nothing can compare to unforgetfulness. 
Extended unfailingly to all people at all times.

Verse 537
There is nothing too difficult for the man who 
Consciously conceives and carefully executes his work.

Verse 538
One should do that which men extol as praiseworthy. Forgetting 
This and failing to perform brings deprivation lasting seven births.

Verse 539
Whenever the mind is engrossed in pleasant infatuations, 
One may remember men ruined by forgetfulness.

Verse 540
It is easy to get what you think of, 
If you can get yourself to think of it.
**Just Reign**

**Verse 541**
Investigate well, show favor to none, maintain impartiality,
Consult the law, then give judgment - that is the way of justice.

**Verse 542**
All the world looks to the rain cloud for sustenance.
All the people look to the king's scepter for protection.

**Verse 543**
Even the priest's scriptures and all virtues therein
Rely on the king's scepter for sustenance.

**Verse 544**
The world will enduringly embrace the feet of a great kingdom's monarch
Who lovingly embraces subjects under his justice-wielding scepter.

**Verse 545**
Rain and rich harvests arise together.
In a country whose sovereign swing his scepter lawfully.

**Verse 546**
Victory is not won by the lance,
But by the king's scepter, provided it is not unjust.

**Verse 547**
A potentate protests all earthly realms.
Will undoubtedly fall from power and perish.

**Verse 548**
A ruler who remains inaccessible, neither listening nor judging
Attentively will undoubtedly fall from power and perish.

**Verse 549**
No fault befalls the king, who, in guarding and caring for his
Subjects, punishes wrongdoers - for that is his duty.

**Verse 550**
A king punishing cruel criminals by execution
Is like a farmer removing weeds from cultivated fields.
Unjust Reign

Verse 551

More malicious than a professional murderer is the king
Who rules his people with injustice and oppressiveness.

Verse 552

The scepter-wielding king who requests a gift is like
The lance-bearing robber who demands, "Give me all you have."

Verse 553

Unless the king day-to-day seeks out and punishes unlawful acts,
His country will day-by-day fall to ruin.

Verse 554

The unthinking king who rules crookedly
Forfeits both his subjects’ fealty and his own fortune.

Verse 555

Are not the tears of a people who cannot endure an oppressive reign
The instrument that wears away their king's prosperity?

Verse 556

Ruling rightly, a monarch may long endure.
Without that, his majesty is rightly unenduring.

Verse 557

As the earth fares under a rainless sky,
So do a people languish under an unkind king.

Verse 558

Possessions are less pleasant than poverty
To the oppressed living under an unjust king.

Verse 559

If the king acts contrary to justice, contrary seasons will befall
And rain-laden will not come forth.

Verse 560

If the people's protector fails to protect,
Priests will forget the Vedas and cows' milk will dry up.
Avoidance of Tyranny

Verse 561
He is a true king who impartially investigates
And then duly punishes so that the offense will not reoccur.

Verse 562
He who wishes his prosperity to long remain
Will raise the rod severely, but let it fall softly.

Verse 563
The tyrant who causes terror to his people
Will perish quickly and certainly.

Verse 564
"The king is cruel." Should these bitter words be spoken,
The monarch's life is shortened and he soon dies.

Verse 565
If his countenance is harsh and access to him is hard,
A man's wealth, however vast, might as well belong to a demon.

Verse 566
If he is unkind and speaks cruelly,

Verse 567
A man's lofty wealth cannot last long - it ends right there.

Verse 568
Virulent language and overly severe punishment,
Like a keen file, grind down a king's conquering powers.

Verse 569
The king's wealth will waste away if, without thoughtful involvement, he lets
Ministers work, then works himself into anger, raging at their performance.

Verse 570
The sovereign who does not secure defenses will be seized by fear
When war time comes and promptly perish.

Verse 567
The earth bears no greater burden than the unlearned counselors
Whom the cruel-sceptered king binds to himself.
**The Kindly Look**

Verse 571

The world thrives when that great beauty
Called the kindly look flourishes.

Verse 572

The world's existence is sustained by kindliness.
The very existence of those bereft of it burdens the earth.

Verse 573

What use is a melody in an unmusical song?
What use are eyes which express no kindness?

Verse 574

Other than a facial appearance, what do eyes
With no quality of kindness really do?

Verse 575

A kindly look is the ornament of the eyes.
Without kindness the eyes are two unsightly sores.

Verse 576

Eyes may be fixed in their face, but those without
A kindly look might as well be tree stumps fixed in dirt.

Verse 577

Those who lack a kindly look are indeed without eyes,
And those who truly have eyes never lack a gracious look.

Verse 578

The world belongs to men who can behold others benevolently,
Without being distracted from their duty.

Verse 579

To grant forbearing kindness even to those
Who grieve us is the foremost of virtues.

Verse 580

Those desiring gracious goodness above all else could accept with
Friendliness poison they watched their host prepare and serve.
**Espionage**

Verse 581

Competent spies and the esteemed codes of law -
Consider these two as the eyes of a king.

Verse 582

It is the duty of the monarch to acquire at once
Knowledge of all that happens each day among all men.

Verse 583

Without assessing the intelligence reports of spies
A king cannot enjoy conquests.

Verse 584

The working staff, close kindred and known enemies -
All such men are the investigation of spies.

Verse 585

An able spy is he who can assume an unsuspicious disguise,
Is fearless when caught and never betrays his secrets.

Verse 586

Disguised as a monk or a mendicant, the worthy spy moves about
Investigating all, never growing careless, whatever may be done.

Verse 587

A spy must ferret out hidden facts,
Assuring himself that knowledge found is beyond doubt.

Verse 588

Before believing a spy's espionage,
Have another spy espy the information.

Verse 589

See that spies do not know each other, and accept their findings
Only when three reports agree.

Verse 590

One must not openly honor spies.
To do so is to divulge one's own secrets.
Possession of Industriousness

Verse 591
Possessing belongs only to the industrious. Do those Who lack such energy really possess their possessions?

Verse 592
Those who own an inner ardor possess a thing of worth. Material Wealth is an unenduring possession that takes leave and departs.

Verse 593
Those who possess persevering industry Will never say in despair, "We have lost our wealth."

Verse 594
Good Fortune of its own accord ferrets out and Finds the man of unfailing industry.

Verse 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.

Verse 596
Let all thoughts be thoughts of noble progress, For then even failing cannot be called a failure.

Verse 597
The elephant stands firm even when wounded by a barrage of arrows. The strong-willed are not discouraged when they encounter disaster.

Verse 598
Without a zealous spirit, one will never enjoy The proud exhilaration of earthly generosity.

Verse 599
The enormous elephant with his tapered tusks Still shrinks in fear when the tiger attacks.

Verse 600
A strong-willed mind is a man's true estate. Those who lack it are mere vegetables in the form of men.
Avoidance of Laziness

Verse 601
The eternal flame of a family vanishes
When eclipsed by that dark cloud called laziness.

Verse 602
Let those who wish their family to be a noble family
Call laziness "laziness" and live without it.

Verse 603
A man whose actions are ruled by ruinous indolence
Will see his family fall before his own destruction.

Verse 604
Their family will perish and their vices will thrive when men,
Ensnared in sloth, do not put forth earnest exertion.

Verse 605
Procrastination, forgetfulness, laziness and sleep - these four
form the coveted ship which bears men to their destined ruin.

Verse 606
Seldom do men possessed by sloth achieve anything special,
Even when supported by the earth's wealthy proprietors.

Verse 607
The lazy ones, inept in noble exertion,
Invite sharp scoldings and must endure the shame of scornful words.

Verse 608
If lassitude is allowed to live in aristocrats,
They will be forced into servitude under foes.

Verse 609
Disgrace that has come upon a man and his family
Will disappear the moment he casts out laziness.

Verse 610
A king who is devoid of indolence will procure thereby,
All that cosmic province measured by God's immeasurable strides.
Perseverance

Verse 611
Never say in weakness, "This task is too difficult,"
For perseverance will give the ability to accomplish it.

Verse 612
Beware of leaving any work undone, for the world
Will abandon those who abandon their work unfinished.

Verse 613
The pride of profuse giving dwells only
With the dignity of diligent effort.

Verse 614
Like the swordsmanship of an effimate man,
The philanthropy of those who avoid hard work will end in failure.

Verse 615
He who prefers work to pleasure supports his family
Like a pillar, sweeping away their every sad sorrow.

Verse 616
Perseverance creates prosperity,
And the lack of it produces poverty.

Verse 617
They say the black ogress called Misfortune lurks in laziness,
While goddess Fortune lingers in the laboring toils of active men.

Verse 618
To be devoid of good fortune is no one’s disgrace.
But shame belongs to those destitute of knowledge and tenacity.

Verse 619
Though destiny decrees one’s deeds will fail,
The wages for determined work are always paid.

Verse 620
Those who strive with tireless exertion and remain undaunted
Will see the backside of retreating Fate.
THIRUKURAL

**Being Undaunted by Troubles**

*Verse 621*

Laugh when troubles come your way.
There is nothing better to conquer calamity.

*Knowing this body to be the prey of misery,*
*High souls, expecting troubles, do not accept them troubled.*

*Verse 622*

A flood of troubles will vanish the moment
The mind of a wise man collects itself to face them.

*Declaring difficulties to be quite natural,*
*Those who do not pursue life's pleasures will not suffer its sorrows.*

*Verse 623*

Trouble itself they send away troubled
Who do not trouble themselves at the sight of it.

*He who does not long for joy in joy*
*Will not suffer sorrow in sorrow.*

*Verse 624*

Troubles will be troubled before the man who faces them
Like the determined bullock that wades through every difficulty.

*He who does not distinguish pain from pleasure*
*Becomes so distinguished even enemies hope to pay homage.*

*Verse 625*

Though massed upon him like a mountain,
A man's afflictions will be afflicted by his undaunted will.

*Verse 626*

Those who do not guard wealth gathered and boast, "I earned it,"
Will not, in poorer times, bemoan, "I have become destitute."
Essentials Of the State Ministers

A minister is he who can conceive a great enterprise, rightly choose
the ways, The means and the time, then successfully accomplish it.

A minister is he who, in addition to the above five, is well-endowed
With steadfastness, protection of the people, learning and perseverance.

He who can divide the enemy, bind friends more firmly
And reunite estranged allies is indeed a minister.

Call him a minister who comprehends things,
Executes them effectively and directs others firmly.

The helpful minister is he who understands virtue, is learned and
Deliberate in speech and discerns what is fit in every situation.

When subtle intelligence combines with scholastic study,
Who can stand before such peerless subtlety?

Though you have learned theoretical methods,
Act only after you know the world's practices.

Though his leader lacks knowledge and repels advice,
The loyal minister's obligation is to cry out his counsel.

Better for the king to face 700 million distant foes
Than befriend a single counselor who conspires at his side.

Though they may devise the perfect plan,
Those without executive abilities never finish their work.
Eloquence

Verse 641
Among a man's many good possessions,  
A good command of speech has no equal.

Verse 642
Prosperity and ruin issue from the power of the tongue. 
Therefore, guard yourself against thoughtless speech.

Verse 643
The content of worthy speech binds friends more closely,  
And its eloquence draws even enemies to listen.

Verse 644
Judge the nature of your listeners and speak accordingly.  
There is nothing more virtuous or valuable than this.

Verse 645
Speak out your speech. Once it is known,  
No speech can be spoken to refute that speech.

Verse 646
To speak so listeners long to hear more and to listen  
So others' meaning is grasped are the ideals of the impeccably great.

Verse 647
In a war of words none can defeat an eloquent man  
Who never succumbs to fear or confusion.

Verse 648
Upon finding men whose forceful speech is couched  
In cogent and enchanting ways, the world swiftly gathers around.

Verse 649
Unaware of the artful use of a few flawless words,  
Men become enamored with excessive syllables.

Verse 650
Men who cannot communicate their knowledge to others  
Resemble a bouquet of unfragrant flowers in full bloom.
Purity of Action

Verse 651
Good friendships bring wealth to a man,
But goodness of action fulfills his every desire.

Verse 652
Actions which bring fame but no real benefit
Are to be avoided always.

Verse 653
Declaring that their future will be brighter,
Men desist from deeds that darken glory’s light.

Verse 654
However troubled the times, men of unperturbable perception
Never commit shamful or sordid deeds.

Verse 655
Do nothing that would make you regret, "What have I done!"
However, do not remain regretful if regretable deeds do occur.

Verse 657
The worst poverty of worthy men is far better
Than wealth amassed by improper means.

Verse 658
Even when accomplished, forbidden deeds afflict sorrow
On those who seek after, rather than shun, them.

Verse 659
What is gained by tears will go by tears. In the end, goodness
Reaps many good things, though it begins with loss.

Verse 660
Protecting the country by wrongly garnered wealth
Is like preserving water in an unbaked pot of clay.

Resoluteness of Action

Verse 661
What is called resoluteness of action is, in truth,
Resoluteness of mind. All other qualities are not that.

Verse 662
Though he must behold his own mother's hunger,
Let a man refrain from deeds that wise men condemn.
To avoid all action that is bound to fail and not to be discouraged by Failures are said to be the two guiding principles of reflective men. 

Verse 663

To reveal an action only after completion is resoluteness. To disclose that action earlier causes countless difficulties.

Verse 664

It is easy for anyone to speak of a plan, But it is difficult indeed to execute what has been spoken.

Verse 665

The strong-willed actions of eminent men Earn the crown's respect and the crowd's renown.

Verse 666

Those who think will have their thoughts fulfilled, Just as they thought, provided they possess the strength of will.

Verse 667

Do not disparage men who appear small, for there are those, Seemingly insignificant, who are like the linchpin of a mighty chariot.

Verse 668

Visualize actions with unclouded clarity, Then forcefully undertake them without delay or indecision.

Verse 669

Despite dire hardships, hold to strength of mind And do those deeds which yield joy of heart.

Verse 670

Whatever other strengths they may possess, the world neither needs Nor likes those who have no need for action's strength.
**Modes of Action**

**Verse 671**
When a decision is reached, deliberation ends.
To delay that decision's execution is detrimental.

**Verse 672**
Slumber when sleepy work awaits,
But never rest when actions demand sleepless vigilence.

**Verse 673**
Direct action is good whenever feasible,
but when it is not, seek other means of success.

**Verse 674**
Reflect on this: Both efforts and enemies, if left unfinished,
Can destroy like an unextinguished fire.

**Verse 675**
Before acting resolve all doubts through consideration of these five:
Cost, means, time, place and the action itself.

**Verse 676**
Discern a deed's outcome, obstacles and opulent earnings
Successful effort affirms - then act.

**Verse 677**
The way to accomplish any task is to ascertain
The inmost thoughts of an expert in that task.

**Verse 678**
Just as one elephant may be used to tether another,
So one task may be the means of accomplishing another.

**Verse 679**
Rather than bestow kind favors on friends,
Hasten to befriend your unkind enemies.

**Verse 680**
Fearing their people's inner apprehensions,
Men of minor realms bow before mightier rulers, accepting terms.
Ambassadors

Kindliness, high birth, and a nature pleasing to kings -
These are the qualities of an ambassador.

Verse 681

Kindliness, knowingness and deliberateness of speech
Are three necessities for an ambassador.

Verse 682

The ambassador who presents to lance-bearing monarchs plans
That portend victory to his own king must be a scholar among scholars.

Verse 683

Send him on mission who possesses these three:
Well-winnowed wisdom, ample learning and an imperturbable presence.

Verse 684

The good which an ambassador procures derives from succinct speech
Cheerful conversation and avoidance of argument.

Verse 685

An envoy is learned, eloquently persuasive, unfearing of the fiercest
Stare and understanding of what fits the moment.

Verse 686

He is superior who knows duty and place,
Judges the appropriate time and thinks before he speaks.

Verse 688

Integrity, influence and intrepidity - these three along with truthfulness
Are the qualities of a man who faithfully delivers his monarch's message.

Verse 689

Commission him to deliver the monarch's mandates
Who, firm of vision, never blurts out flawed words.

Verse 690

An ambassador is he who fearlessly extends his king's glory,
Though he may expend his own life.
THIRUKURAL

**Associating with Monarchs**

*Verse 691*
Those who associate with irascible kings should be like men who
Warm themselves at a fire, moving neither too near nor too far away.

*Verse 692*
Do not desire what the king desires
And the king himself will confer enduring wealth.

*Verse 693*
One wishing to be wary must beware of his grave faults.
Once suspicions are aroused, they are rarely removed.

*Verse 694*
In the presence of the great ones never speak
In whispers or exchange smiles with others.

*Verse 695*
The emissary neither eavesdrops nor inquires into matters.
Rather he listens raptly when secrets are revealed.

*Verse 696*
Sensing unspoken thoughts and ascertaining the ripe moment,
Speak of vital matters pleasantly, without offending others.

*Verse 697*
Speak useful ideas of interest to the king,
But always leave useless thoughts unspoken - even if he inquires.

*Verse 698*
Never criticize the king because he's young or your own kin.
Rather respect the luminous dignity kingship commands.

*Verse 699*
Men whose wisdom is unwavering
Do not use the high esteem to excuse lowly behavior.

*Verse 700*
Those who do unworthy deeds, expecting indulgence for their
Long-standing friendship with the monarch, ensure their own ruin.
**Discerning Unspoken Thoughts**

Verse 701

He who can discern through looking the unspoken thoughts of another
Is an ornament to this earth, encircled by ever unchanging seas.

Verse 702

He who can divine without any doubt what is in the king's
Mind should be held equal to a god.

Verse 703

Give whatever is required to gain an advisor
Who, knowing his own mind, can read another's thoughts.

Verse 704

Those who grasp the unspoken thoughts of others possess the same
physical features as those who do not - yet they are different.

Verse 705

Of what use are the body's eyes, if they cannot discern
Another's intentions by beholding their own?

Verse 706

As a crystal reflects objects that are nearby,
So does the face reflect what is foremost in the heart.

Verse 707

What is more perceptive than the face? For whether the heart
Is angry or glad, it is the face that expresses it first.

Verse 708

If you find a man who knows the truth of things by looking into the
Mind, it is enough to stand silently looking into his face.

Verse 709

If you find a man who knows the eye's language,
The eyes will speak of hidden hate and love.

Verse 710

Observe those who claim subtle discernment -
Their only measuring rod is their eyes.
**Judging the Audience**

**Verse 711**
Let pure men of studied eloquence study the audience
Before speaking deliberate words.

**Verse 712**
Let those good men who have the gift of eloquence await
The right moment and then speak with clear knowledge.

**Verse 713**
Those who do not assess an audience before venturing to speak
Are unaware of the way of words and remain ineffective.

**Verse 714**
Be brilliant before brilliant men; but assume
The dullness of white mortar before the unlearned.

**Verse 715**
Among all good things the best is that diffidence
Which refrains from speaking first with elders.

**Verse 716**
To blunder before perceptive, erudite men
Is to slip and fall from a high place.

A learned man's learning shines brightest
Among luminaries who can capably critique his language.

Speaking to an audience of understanding men
Is like watering a bed of growing plants.

Those who speak good things to good and learned gatherings
Should never say them to ignorant groups, even forgetfully.

Speaking before men of alien mind
Is like pouring sweet nectar down a drain.
Not Dreading the Audience

Verse 721
Pure men of skillful discourse may speak unfalteringly
Before the powerful, provided they understand the audience.

Verse 722
Those who can convincingly express what they have learned
Before a learned assembly are the learned among learned men.

Verse 723
Those who can brave death on the battlefield are common.
But rare are they who can face an audience without fear.

Verse 724
Speak confidently before the learned what you have mastered;
And learn from those more learned still what you do not know.

Verse 725
Study the science of logic so that
You may fearlessly reply in any assembly.

Verse 726
What does a coward do with a sword?

Verse 727
What does a man who fears a subtle council do with books?

Verse 728
The learning of those who fearfully face an audience
Is like the shining sword of womanly men amid foes.

Verse 729
Having learned many things, men remain useless
If they cannot expound effectively in chambers of excellence.

Verse 730
The learned who are intimidated by gatherings of good men
Are alluded to as less than the illiterate.

Verse 731
Men whose fear of assemblies forbids them to share
Their knowledge may be alive, yet may as well be dead.
The Country

Verse 731
Where unfailing fertile fields, worthy men
And wealthy merchants gather - that is a country.

Verse 732
A land coveted for its vast wealth, free from calamities
And yielding in abundance is indeed a country.

Verse 733
Call that a land which bears every burden that befalls,
Yet pays in full all tariffs owed the king.

Verse 734
Free of famine, endless epidemics and ravaging foes -
Now that is a flourishing nation.

Verse 735
Profuse factions, ruinous civil subservisives and murderous gangs
That harass the king - a real land is without these.

Verse 736
An incomparable country is one never devastated,
Yet, if devastated, would prosper undiminished.

Verse 737
Rain waters, underground waters, well-situated water shedding mountains
And strong fortresses are the features of a good country.

Verse 738
Five are the ornaments of a country: good health, abundant harvests,
Wealth, happiness and safety from invasions.

Verse 739
A place where prosperity comes effortlessly deserves the name land,
Not one where wealth entails laborious toils.

Verse 740
Even if a country has all these blessings, it is worth nothing
If it lacks harmony between the ruler and the ruled.
To aggressors and to those in fear who seek defense
A fortress is an important asset.

A good fort has crystal clear water, arable lands,
A hill and lovely shaded woods.

The texts prescribe four features of a fort's ramparts -
High, thick, solid and virtually impregnable.

The ideal fortress is spacious but vulnerable in very few places
And is capable of depleting the foe's determined will to storm it.

A good garrison is hard to assail siege, amply provisioned
And well-suited to accommodate well those within.

A worthy fortress, stocked with all needed goods,
Needs good men to fend off all attack.

It is impossible to capture a strong fort, whether by employing
Launching artillery, tunneling beneath or encircling siege.

However forcefully the offensive may press,
The fort offers allies defense and foes defeat.

A fortress earns greatness by enabling courageous defenders
To gloriously defeat the enemy at the battle's very outset.

Whatever excellent qualities a fortress may possess,
It will be of no avail to men who lack action's excellence.
**The Ways of Acquiring Wealth**

**Verse 751**
There is nothing like wealth for lending consequence
To an inconsequential man.

**Verse 752**
Wealth is a dependable lamp whose light,
Reaching every imaginable land, dispels darkness.

**Verse 753**
Wealth is a dependable lamp whose light,
Reaching every imaginable land, dispels darkness.

**Verse 754**
Wealth that is acquired by proper means in a manner
That harms none will yield both virtue and happiness.

**Verse 755**
Do not embrace but rather eschew wealth
That is acquired without compassion and love.

**Verse 756**
Wealth with no owner, wealth of defeated foes,
Wealth from tax and customs - these are the royal revenues.

**Verse 757**
Compassion, which is the child of Love,
requires for its care the bountiful nurse called Wealth.

**Verse 758**
To undertake an enterprise with sufficient wealth in hand
Is like watching an elephants fight from the top of a hill.

**Verse 759**
Make money-that is the sharpest blade scalpel
For paring down an enemy's pride.

**Verse 760**
Having acquired well abundant wealth, acquisition of two
Other treasurers - duty and delight - is effortless.
**Merits of the Army**

An army which is complete and conquers fearlessly
Is foremost among all a king's possessions.

Only seasoned soldiers can confront the desperate adversity
Of decimating attacks with intrepid tenacity.

So what if an army of rats roars like the raging sea?
The mere hiss of a cobra will deaden their din.

A true army is one which has a long tradition of valor
And knows neither defeat nor desertion.

That is unquestionably truly an army which stands together,
Even when faced with death's fury.

Valor, honor, trustworthiness, and a tradition nobly upheld -

These four are an army's protective armor.

The well-trained army will withstand every onslaught,
Then outflank and storm the foe.

Even without a winning offense and defense,
A well-appointed army may win renown acclaim.

An army will prevail as long as there is
No attrition, no animosity and no afflictions.

Even with an abundance though it enlists legions of troops,
An army cannot endure without commanders.
**Military Pride**

**Verse 771**
O enemies, stand not against my monarch!
Many who did now stand as stone monuments.

**Verse 772**
There is greater fulfillment in carrying a lance which missed an Elephant than an arrow which pierced a forest-dwelling rabbit.

**Verse 773**
Fierce courage is what they call valor,
And chivalry to the fallen forms its sharp edge.

**Verse 774**
Having hurled his spear at a huge bull elephant,
The hero finds another piercing his body and grabs it with glee.

**Verse 775**
Is it not a disgraceful defeat to the courageous warrior
If his glaring eyes so much as blink when the lance is hurled at him?

**Verse 776**
When recounting his days, the hero considers all days
On which no battle wounds scars were sustained as squandered.

**Verse 777**
To fasten the warrior's anklet to one who wants glory
More than life is adorning to adorn greatness with beauty.

**Verse 778**
Men of courage who do not fear their lives in battle do not forfeit their ardor even if the king prohibits their fighting.

**Verse 779**
Who dares deride as defeated
Men who die fulfilling valor's vow?

**Verse 780**
Heroic death which fills with tears the emperor's eyes
Is death worth begging and then dying for.
Friendship

Verse 781
What is as difficult to secure as friendship?
And what greater security is there against foes?

Verse 782
Among wise men, friendship waxes like the crescent moon;
Among fools it wanes as surely as the full moon must.

Verse 783
The bonds that good men share, like good bound books,
Reveal new enjoyments at each new encounter.

Verse 784
The object of friendship is not merrymaking
But a stern rebuking when friends go astray.

Verse 785
It is not constant meeting and companionship
But mutual sensibilities that confer the alliance of friendship.

Verse 786
Friendship is not seen on a friendly face,
But felt deep within a friendly heart.

Verse 787
To divert a man from wrong, direct him toward the right
And share his sorrow in misfortune is friendship.

Verse 788
As swiftly as the hand moves to seize a slipping garment,
Friendship acts to assuage a friend's distress.

Verse 789
Where does Friendship hold her court? It is where friends
May find constant support in every possible circumstance.

Verse 790
To boast, "He means so much to me and I to him,"
Merely belittles a friendship.
Testing Fitness for Friendship

Verse 791
There is no greater harm than forming a friendship without first Testing, for once formed, it cannot be abandoned by the faithful.

Verse 792
Unless it begins with testing and proving, Friendship may end in mortal sorrow.

Verse 793
Consider a man’s character, family background, faults And loyal associates and then befriend him.

Verse 794
Pay any price to possess the friendship Of well-born men who cannot bear rebuke and blame.

Verse 795
Seek out and befriend those who speak and move you to repent, Reprove your wrong-doing and teach you the right ways.

Verse 796
There is a benefit even in misfortune, for it is the rod With which a man can measure the loyalty of friends.

Verse 797
To give up friendship with fools and quit their company - Such loss is said to be the greatest gain.

Verse 798
Don’t dwell on thoughts that dim your spirit, Don’t befriend those who flee you in affliction.

Verse 799
Even in the hour of death, the thoughts of friends Who left you in your hour of need will hurt the heart.

Verse 800
Hold tight to friendship with pure men; Let go of those who lack propriety, even by paying them off.
Old Friendship

What is old friendship? It is when neither friend objects To the liberties taken by the other.

Liberties taken by a friend are friendship's rightful Possession, and to accept them is the duty of wise men.

Of what purpose is longstanding fellowship If friends' familiar actions are not accepted as one's own?

Familiar with familiarity, the wise are not annoyed When friends do things without asking.

When friends do things that hurt you, attribute it either To unawareness or to the privileges of friendship.

Bound by friendship, true friends never break the bond

With an old comrade, even if he brings them loss.

Old friends do not abandon loving friendships, Even when those they cherish happen to do them harm.

A strong, close friend will not listen to a friends' faults, And on the day a friend offends, he celebrates his silence.

The world will cherish those faithful men Who never forsake old, unbroken friendships.

Even ill-wishers will wish them well Who never abandon affection for old friends.
Harmful Friendship

Verse 811
Though unscrupulous men will seem to consume you in friendship,
Their companionship grows more delightful as it declines.

Verse 812
What does it matter if one gains or loses the friendship
Of manipulators who gainfully befriend and otherwise forsake?

Verse 813
Prostitutes, thieves and those who make friends
To make money are all alike.

Verse 814
Loneliness is far better than friendship with men who are like
The untrained horse which throws its rider on the battlefield.

Verse 815
Far better to forfeit than to obtain the friendship
Of inferior men who stay away when they should stay and help.

Verse 816
The enmity of the wise is ten million times
Better than the intimate friendship of fools.

An enemy's enmity is 100 million times more worthwhile
Than the company of companions who always clown around.

Verse 818
If friends feign inability to perform possible tasks,
Remain silent and gradually give up their friendship.

Verse 819
The fellowship of men whose acts
Belie their spoken words is bitter, even in dreams.

Verse 820
There are men who will cherish you at home but censure you
In public - avoid their every befriending approach.
False Friendship

Verse 821
The friendship of those who feign affection is an anvil
On which to hammer you when the opportunity arises.

Verse 822
The friendship of those who act like friends but are not,
Will fluctuate like the mind of a fickle woman.

Verse 823
Though their scholarship is good and abundant,
Ignoble men rarely learn goodness of heart.

Verse 824
Fear the cunning friend who smiles sweetly to your face
But conceals wickedness in his heart.

Verse 825
Distrust whatever words may come from
Men whose hearts are not in harmony with your own.

Verse 826
While sounding like a good friend's words,
A rival's words are readily revealed.

Verse 827
Do not trust an enemy though he bends low in his speech,
For the bending of the bow forebodes nothing but harm.

Verse 828
Folded in respect, a foe's hands may hide a dagger.
So too, his tears dare not be trusted.

Verse 829
Men may amply aid you, yet hate you in their heart;
Make them laugh, but let feigned friendship die.

Verse 830
When the time comes that foes pose as friends,
Keep a friendly face but banish their brotherhood from your heart.
Folly

What is folly? It is holding on to that which is harmful
And throwing away that which is beneficial.

Verse 832

The folly of all follies is to enjoy doing
What one is forbidden to do.

Verse 833

To be shameless, uninquisitive, loveless and uncaring
Are the fool's four failings.

Verse 834

No fool is more foolish than one who eagerly expounds
His learning to others while failing to follow it himself.

Verse 835

In a single birth a fool may earn by his efforts
A mire of hellish suffering in the subsequent seven.

Verse 836

If a fool who knows not how to act undertakes an enterprise
He will not only fail, he will shackle himself in chains.

Verse 837

When a fool falls upon a great fortune,
Strangers will feast while his family starves.

Verse 838

If a fool happens to acquire something of value,
He will act like a madman who is intoxicated.

Verse 839

Friendship among fools is profoundly sweet,
For at their parting there is not the slightest pain.

Verse 840

A fool stepping into a saintly council
Is like entering a clean bed with filthy feet.
Ignorance

Verse 841
Dearth of wisdom is dire destitution. Other forms of poverty the world deems less impoverishing.

Verse 842
All merit for a gift given gladly by an ignoramus Is nothing but the goodness gained by the recipient’s past penance.

Verse 843
The suffering that ignorant men inflict upon themselves Can hardly be caused even by their enemies.

Verse 844
What is stupidity? It is that vanity Which dares to declare, “I am wise.”

Verse 845
He who pretends to knowledge that he does not possess Raises doubts as to those things that he really knows.

Verse 846
Fools follow a wayward path, clothing a well-formed, naked body But failing to conceal their deformed mind.

Verse 847
The ignorant man who neglects valuable advice Will cause himself himself his own great misery.

Verse 848
Neither following another’s orders nor fathoming himself what to do - Such a creature causes only pain until he leaves this life.

Verse 849
He who tries to open the eyes of those who will not see is himself Blind, for the unseeing man sees only the ways of his own mind.

Verse 850
He is deemed an earthly demon who denies as false What that which the world declares to be true.
Hatred

Verse 851

It is said that hatred is the disease that spreads
The plague of discord among all living creatures.

Verse 852

Though men plot disunity and deliberately harm you,
The highest path is not to plan hateful retribution.

Verse 853

Removing the incurable cancer called hatred
Reveals one's undying, undiminishing radiance.

Verse 854

The destruction of hatred, that sorrow of sorrows,
Yields to man the joy of joys.

Verse 855

Who is there who could conquer those
Who keep themselves free of all hostilities?

Verse 856

To those who claim they take delight in hatred,
Failure and life's ruin are quite near.

Verse 857

Men immersed in animosities, knowingly causing harm,
Can never see that triumph comes from noble truths.

Verse 858

Wealth waxes when a man walks away from confrontation
And wanes whenever he encourages it.

Verse 859

Seeing a prosperous season approach, men neglect hatred.
In times of ruin, they nurture it to profusion.

Verse 860

From hatred springs all suffering,
But cheerful friendship yields good fortune's joys.
Merits of Enmity

Verse 861
Rein in antagonism against the strong,
But unleash animosity against weak adversaries.

Verse 862
How can the man who is unloving and who has neither powerful allies
Nor the strength to stand alone overcome his mighty enemies?

Verse 863
He who is fearful, ignorant, unfriendly and uncharitable
Is an easy prey to his enemies.

Verse 864
Letting go of his secrets but not his anger,
A man becomes easy prey to anyone, anywhere, anytime.

Verse 865
Even one who is lacking character, conscience
Piety and propriety can be delightful - to his enemies!

Verse 866
Hatred is a desireable thing when it comes from
Scoundrels siezed by blinding rage and addictive lust.

Verse 867
Some men undertake a task then undermine it unawares.
Acquire their hatred - indeed, pay money for it.

Verse 868
If a man has no virtues and many vices, he will have no allies,
And this will be an advantage to his enemies.

Verse 869
If the foe is ignorant and afraid to fight,
The victor's joy cannot be far away.

Verse 870
Fame will escape the grasp of those who fail to grasp
The wealth of fools who failed to learn.
Understanding the Nature of Enmity

Verse 871
One should never wish for the accursed thing
Called enmity - even in jest.

Verse 872
Though you may incur the enmity of those who reap a livelihood by their
Bow do not provoke the hatred of those who sow and reap with their words.

Verse 873
A solitary man who provokes hatred from many
Is more of an idiot than lunatics are.

Verse 874
The world abides beneath the greatness
Of noble natured rulers who befriend their enemies.

Verse 875
Finding he faces two foes with no allies,
A lone man lures one to side with him.

Verse 876
When distress dawns, neither draw near nor depart from
New friends and foes - rather, leave them alone.

Verse 877
Never reveal your troubles to those who cannot comprehend them,
Nor expose your weaknesses to your enemies.

Verse 878
Engineer a plan, execute that plan well and ensure your security -
Thus is the vanity of foes forever vanquished.

Verse 879
Chop down a thorny tree while it is young.
Left to grow mature, it will cut the cutter's hand.

Verse 880
Those who fail to quell an acrimonious rival's conceits
Will be blown away by the mere fact he still breathes.
Internal Enmity

Verse 881
Even shade and water are unpleasant if they breed disease. 
So too may relatives be unpleasant if they cause harm.

Verse 882
Do not fear the foe who is like the drawn sword, 
But fear the friendship of the enemy who poses as kinsman.

Verse 883
Dread hatred from within and defend against it. 
In calamitous times it will cut deeper than a potter's knife.

Verse 884
Hidden hatreds may lurk only in the mind, 
Yet they can manifest myriad miseries among kin.

Verse 885
Hate hidden in a kinsman's heart will cause 
More than many miseries - it will kill a man.

Verse 886
When hatred arises, dissention destroys unity, 
And men fall inescapably toward every-ready death.

Verse 887
A house that harbors hatred will never form a united whole though, 
Like a vessel and its lid, it may appear to be united.

Verse 888
As iron is worn away by frequent filing, 
A family's strength is eroded by inner frictions.

Verse 889
Internal dissention may be minute as a divided sesame seed, 
Yet it maintains the sufficient power to destroy.

Verse 890
Living with those who cannot dwell in harmony 
Is like living in a hut with a cobra.
Not Offending the Great

Verse 891
The greatest way to guard oneself is to not belittle
The powers of men of prowess.

Verse 892
If a man by his conduct offends the great ones,
Through them he will bring on himself immeasurable miseries.

Verse 893
If you desire destruction, don't heed the rules -
Simply provoke those who, if they desire, can destroy.

Verse 894
For the powerless to wreak harm upon the powerful
Is to summon Death with the hand.

Verse 895
Having incurred a stalwart king's withering wrath,
One is doomed, wherever he wanders, whatever he does.

Verse 896
Though burned by a fire one may survive;
But there is no survival for those who offend the great.

Verse 897
Of what avail is a man's many gloried life and splendorous wealth
If he incurs the wrath of great and righteous men?

Verse 898
When men of mountainous stature are meagerly esteemed,
Men who seemed enduring as the earth will die, as will their kin.

Verse 899
The most kingly king will tumble from his throne midway
And die, should he arouse an avowed sage's righteous wrath.

Verse 900
Though a king commands peerless powers of protection,
He cannot survive the anger of sages with powers of spirit.
THIRUKURAL

**Being Led by Women**

**Verse 901**

Those who dote upon their wives will not achieve great success,
And those of great ambition avoid that very thing.

**Verse 902**

The riches of a man who rashly follows a woman's ways
Will buy him only shameful shame.

**Verse 903**

An abnormal submissiveness to his spouse
Will earn a man endless disgrace among decent men.

**Verse 904**

Though he has mastered the doing of deeds,
The henpecked husband merits little in this life or the next.

**Verse 905**

A man's fears of his own wife will make him
Constantly fearful of offering good to good folks.

**Verse 906**

Though providence has filled his life,
A man who fears his graceful spouse is empty of simple dignity.

**Verse 907**

A woman's shy ways show great dignity,
Unlike a man who lives to work a woman's bidding.

**Verse 908**

Those who live obeying their wife's wishes
Can neither satisfy the needs of friends nor benefit others.

**Verse 909**

Neither virtuous deeds nor vast wealth nor other accomplishments
Will be found with men who carry out their wife's commands.

**Verse 910**

Prosperous men whose thoughts dwell in the mind
Never indulge in the folly of doting on their wives.
Wanton Women

Verse 911
The sweet words of beautifully bangled women who desire
A man's wealth and not his love cause his fall into disgrace.

Verse 912
Weigh the worth and abandon the company of unvirtuous women
Who weigh the profit and talk of their virtues.

Verse 913
A mercenary woman pretends intimate embrace,
But in the darkened room she holds a stranger's corpse.

Verse 914
Men seeking spiritual treasures are too richly wise
To touch tawdry women who treasure only material riches.

Verse 915
Men of innate good sense and acquired sagacity
Never touch tramps who share their shameful beauty with all.

Verse 916
Men who desire to extend their own goodness
Will not embrace desireable women who extend lewd charms to all.

Verse 917
Only men devoid of a chaste mind will lie in the arms of women
Whose hearts covet other things as they embrace.

Verse 918
It is said that men devoid of discerning wisdom
Succumb to a deceiving damsel's embrace as to a siren's song.

Verse 919
The soft arms of the elegantly jewelled harlot
Are an infernal pit wherein base, ignorant men are engulfed.

Verse 920
Two-faced females, besotting brew and addictive dice
Befriend the men whom fortune has forsaken.
The Avoidance of Drunkenness

Those who crave intoxicating drink each day
Will neither be feared nor famed.

Verse 921

Do not drink liquor. If some wish to, let it be those
Who have no wish for the esteem of exemplary men.

Verse 922

The sight of the drunken man's revelry is unbearable
Even to his own mother. How must it then appear to the wise?

Verse 923

The virtuous damsel called decency will turn her back
On men who indulge in the grievously vile vice called drunkenness.

Verse 924

To spend one's wealth to purchase self-oblivion
Is the result of being oblivious to what constitutes proper conduct.

Verse 925

Those who always sleep are akin to the dead.
And those who constantly drink are like men who have taken poison.

Verse 927

The drooping eyes of those who drink secretly reveal that secret,
Drawing forth their neighbor's endless ridicule.

Verse 928

Stop denying, "I never drink." For next time you drink
The mind's hidden secret will be told, then and there.

Verse 929

One may as well carry a candle underwater to search
For a drowned man as use reason to sober one drowned in drink.

Verse 930

Cannot the drunkard who sees while he is sober the drunken state of
Another realize the shameful degradation of his own drunkenness?
Gambling
Verse 931
Do not take to gambling even if you can win,
Or your wins will be like the baited hook that the fish swallows.

Verse 932
To win once, a gambler loses a hundred times.
Is that the way to win either happiness or prosperity?

Verse 934
Gambling brings on many woes and erodes a man’s good name.
There is nothing which ends in more wretched poverty.

Verse 935
Those enamored of the dice, the gambling hall
And their lucky hand lose everything in their desire to win.

Verse 936
Gambling is misfortune's other name, and fools ensnared
By her will suffer an empty stomach and a surfeit of sorrow.

Verse 937
Spending time in the gambling hall wastes
Ancestral wealth and diminishes an individual's worth.

Verse 938
Gambling will consume a man's wealth and corrupt his honesty.
It will end his benevolence and bring on him misery.

Verse 939
Those who take to gambling’s fickle gain forfeit these five:
Raiments, riches, rations, renown and urudition.

Verse 940
The gambler's passion increases with the losses incurred.
Even so does the soul's craving for life grow with the griefs suffered.
**Medicine**

Verse 941

Disease is but deficiency or excess of three life forces Defined in learned texts as air, fire and water.

Verse 942

The body requires no medicine if you eat Only after the food you have already eaten is digested.

Verse 943

If digestion is complete, let a man eat with moderation, For that is the way to prolong the life of the body.

Verse 944

Certain the last meal has digested and sensing appetite's keen edge, Savor only foods which are fully agreeable.

Verse 945

Life remains unharmed when one eats with restraint, Refraining from foods proven disagreeable.

Verse 946

The joy of health abides in the man who eats moderately. Even so, the pain of illness dwells with him who eats excessively.

Verse 947

The thoughtless glutton who gorges himself beyond His digestive fire's limits will be consumed by limitless ills.

Verse 948

Diagnose the illness, trace its cause, Seek the proper remedy and apply it with skill.

Verse 949

An erudite doctor offers healing remedy after heeding The patient's nature, the disease's nature and the time of year.

Verse 950

Medicine consists of a patient, physician, prescription And nursemaid - each commanding four parts.
Nobility

An innate sense of rights and shying away from wrong
Are found together only in the nobly born.

Men of noble birth will never fall from three:
Virtuous conduct, truthfulness, and modesty.

Four are the attributes of the true gentleman: a smiling face,
A generous hand, a courteous disposition and kindly words.

Men of good birth will not do demeaning deeds
Even though millions and millions may be gained thereby.

Time-honored families may be parted from prosperity’s charitableness,
But will never sever themselves from proper conduct.

Those committed to their family’s flawless fame
Dare not commit deceitful, dishonorable deeds.

In high-born men blemishes are clearly seen,
Just as the moon's elevation makes it more visible.

When a man with good background lacks loving affection,
Doubts arise whether he arose from that family.

The nature of a soil is known by the seedlings that sprout.
Even so, the nature of a man's family is known by the words he speaks.

Those desiring greatness must desire modesty. And those seeking
their family's honor must seek to be respectful to all.
Honor

Verse 961
Refrain from those actions that would degrade honor
Even though they should be indispensable for the preservation of life.

Verse 962
Those who pursue glory honorably never act ingloriously,
Even if fame is assured.

Verse 963
Cultivate modesty in the midst of good fortune,
But in times of adversity preserve your dignity.

Verse 964
Honorable men fallen from high position
May be likened to odious hari fallen from the head.

Verse 965
Even men grand as a mountain will become small
If they commit an unworthy act though as small as a mustard seed.

Verse 966
It offers neither earth's renown nor heaven's refuge,
So why would one run after or even stand before a man who reviles him?

Verse 967
Better to die right where you stand, the saying goes,
Than to live running after those who despise you.

Verse 968
Will any medicine save the body of the high-born man
When his honor has perished?

Verse 969
Shorn of its hair, the yak will refuse to live;
Such men exist, who prefer death to the loss of honor.

Verse 970
The world will extoll and exalt honorable men
Who exult in death rather than dishonor.
Greatness

Verse 971

Life's light is the aspiration for glorious achievement.
And disgrace is the dark thought that says, "I shall live without it."

Verse 972

Birth decrees to all men who live a common circumstance.
Diverse actions define their unique specialness.

Verse 973

Lowly men are never high, even when elevated.
High souls are never low, even when downtrodden.

Verse 974

Even as chastity in a woman, greatness must be guarded
By being true to one's own self.

Verse 975

A man possessing greatness possesses the power
To perform uncommon deeds.

Verse 976

"We will befriend great men and become like them,"
Such thoughts rarely intrude upon small minds.

Verse 977

When small-minded men do achieve some distinction,
It only serves to augment their arrogance.

Verse 978

Greatness is always humble. But pettiness
is self-adorned with words of praise.

Verse 979

Greatness abides in the absence of arrogance.
Smallness proudly parades its haughtiness.

Verse 980

Greatness conceals through silence the weaknesses of others.
But pettiness proclaims such things to all.
**Perfect Goodness**

**Verse 981**

It is said that all good things are natural to those
Who know their duty and walk the path of perfect goodness.

**Verse 982**

Perfect men hold as good their own good character.
No other goodness is so perfectly good.

**Verse 983**

Love, modesty, propriety, kindly look, and truthfulness -
These are the five pillars on which perfect goodness rests.

**Verse 984**

Penance is that goodness which refrains from killing.
Perfection is that goodness which refuses to tell others' faults.

**Verse 985**

Humility is the strength of the strong and the weapon
With which the wise conquer their foes.

**Verse 986**

The touchstone of one's unalloyed character
Is accepting defeat from inferiors unabashedly.

**Verse 987**

Of what avail is perfect goodness if it does not do good
Even to those who have caused pain?

**Verse 988**

Deprived of all else, one remains undisgraced
If endowed with strength of character.

**Verse 989**

Destiny's last days may surge with oceanic change,
Yet men deemed perfectly good remain, like the shore, unchanged.

**Verse 990**

Should the perfect virtue of perfect men diminish,
The robust earth would bear our burdensomeness no more.
Possession of Courtesy

Verse 991
If a man is easy of access to all, then the virtue of courtesy
Will be easily accessible to him.

Verse 992
Loving kindness and birth to lofty kindred -
These two confer on one a gracious manner.

Verse 993
That their limbs look alike does not render likeness among human.
Real similarities derive from similarly civil features.

Verse 994
The world commends the civil character of those
Who combine usefulness with impartial benevolence.

Verse 995
Disparaging words pain a man even when uttered in jest. Therefore,
those who know human nature are courteous even to their enemies.

Verse 996
The world goes on because civilized men exist.
Without them it would collapse into mere dust.

Verse 997
Though their minds are as sharp as a rasp,

Verse 998
Men without human decency are as wooden as a tree.

Verse 999
It is disgraceful to be discourteous,
Even toward the unfriendly who treat you unjustly.

Verse 1000
To those who cannot smile in joy the wide world
Lies engulfed in darkness even in broad daylight.

Verse 1001
Great wealth amassed by men devoid of that virtue called courtesy
Is like good milk that has soured in an unclean vessel.
Wealth That Benefits None

Verse 1001
Whoever hoards wealth, neither enjoying nor expending it, Is as lifeless as his unused heap.

Verse 1002
Believing wealth is everything, yet giving nothing, The miser will himself be possessed in a miserable birth.

Verse 1003
The mere sight of men who crave wealth's accumulation, And care nothing of renown is a burden to the earth.

Verse 1004
Unloved by even a single soul, What could such a man imagine he might leave behind.

Verse 1005
Amid accumulated millions a man remains poor If he neither gives nor enjoys his wealth.

Verse 1006
Vast wealth can be a wretched curse to one who neither Gladdens himself in its worth nor gives to the worthy.

Verse 1007
The wealth of a man who gives nothing to the needy Is like a beautiful maiden growing old unwed.

Verse 1008
The wealth of the man whom no one loves is like a poisonous tree That bears fruit in the heart of a village.

Verse 1009
Strangers will one day seize his wealth, who, To pile it high, preffered self-denial, forsaking love and dharma.

Verse 1010
The short-lived poverty of the benevolent wealthy man Is like the temporary dryness of the rain cloud.
Possession of Modesty

Verse 1011
For fair-faced maidens virtue's modesty brings bashfulness,
But the deeper modesty shies away from wrongful deeds.

Verse 1012
Food, clothing and such are not much different among people,
It is modesty that distinguishes good men from others.

Verse 1013
All life clings to a body,
Perfect goodness clings to all that is modest.

Verse 1014
Is not modesty the jewel of the great? Without it,
Is not their strut an affliction for the eye to behold?

Verse 1015
Those men who for others' disgrace and their own feel equally ashamed
Are regarded by the world as the abode of modesty.

Verse 1016
The great would rather defend themselves with modesty's barricade
Than breach it to acquire the vast world itself.

Verse 1017
Those who prize unpretentiousness will forsake life to preserve it.
But they would never forsake modesty for the sake of life.

Verse 1018
If a man does not feel ashamed of that which others feel ashamed,
Virtue itself will be ashamed of him.

Verse 1019
One's family will be consumed in the fire of failure to act well;
But everything good will be incinerated by dwelling in shamelessness.

Verse 1020
The movements of men devoid of innate modesty
May be likened to wooden puppets suspended on a string.
Advancing the Family

Verse 1021
There is no greater dignity than that of the man who declares, "I will never cease in laboring to advance my family."

Verse 1022
Perseverance and sound understanding - These two are what exalt a man's family.

Verse 1023
When a man declares he will advance his family, God Himself will wrap His robes and lead the way.

Verse 1024
When a man's effort to raise high his family is unremitting, His work will prosper of itself even if he makes no plans.

Verse 1025
The world will surround and wish to befriend the man Who, without wrongdoing, prospers in life to uplift loved ones.

Verse 1026
It is said that true manliness consists In becoming the head and provider for one's family.

Verse 1027
On a battlefield the burden falls upon the brave; In the family, a comparable weight is carried by the most competent.

Verse 1028
Those seeking to improve their family await no reason, For delays and undue regard for dignity will destroy it.

Verse 1029
Behold the man who shields his family from all suffering. Has not his body become a willing vessel for affliction.

Verse 1030
Without good men to hold it up, The family house will fall when misfortune descends.
Farming

Verse 1031
Wherever it may wander, the world must follow the farmer.
Thus despite all its hardships, farming is the most esteemed work.

Verse 1032
Farmers are the linchpin of the world, for they support all those
Who take to other work, not having the strength to plow.

Verse 1033
Those who cultivate their food live in self-sufficiency.
All others follow them and subsist in self-made dependence.

Verse 1034
Those in the shade of abundant sheaves of grain
Will see many nations overshadowed by their own.

Verse 1035
Those who eat food harvested with their own hands will
Never beg and never refuse a beggar's outstretched palm.

Verse 1036
When those who plough the fields stand idly with folded arms,
Even completely desireless ascetics will not subsist.

Verse 1037
If soil is dried so one ounce become one-quarter ounce,
Abundant yields will not require a single handful of fertilizer.

Verse 1038
It's better to fertilize than to furrow a field.
Having weeded, it's better to watch a field than to water it.

Verse 1039
If the lord of the land fails to visit his fields,
They will sulk (I think) as surely as a neglected wife.

Verse 1040
Mother Earth laughs to herself when she sees the slothful
Pleading poverty and crying, "Alas, I have nothing to eat."
**Poverty**

Verse 1041

Ask what is more miserable than being poor
And the answer comes - only poverty pains like poverty.

Verse 1042

Poverty, the cruelest of demons, deprives a man
Of every joy in this life as well as the next.

Verse 1043

That poison called poverty will destroy obliterate at once
The honor of ancient descent and the refinement of speech.

Verse 1044

Privation produces unmindfulness which gives birth
To improper words, even in men of proper birth.

Verse 1045

This one affliction called poverty
Brings in its train a multitude of miseries.

Verse 1046

The poor may perceive profoundly and speak skillfully,
Yet their meaningful words are always forgotten.

Verse 1047

Poverty, destitute of all virtue, estranges a man
Even from the mother who bore him.

Verse 1048

Will wretched poverty which is killing me so (I think)
Come again today as of yesterday?

Verse 1049

Men may slumber even in the midst of fire,
But none can find repose in poverty's presence.

Verse 1050

Having become fatally impoverished, let a man fully renounce,
Lest he fatally exhaust his neighbor’s vinegar and salt.
Begging

Verse 1051
If you meet a man of means, you may beg his help. If he refuses, the fault is his, not yours.

Verse 1052
Even begging can prove pleasurable When what is begged for comes without a sense of burden.

Verse 1053
Begging has its own beauty if one supplicates Before dutiful men whose hearts never say no.

Verse 1054
There are men who never deny a request even in a dream. Begging from such men is as good as giving.

Verse 1055
Because men do exist on earth who never begrudge giving, Others dare to plead before men's gaze.

Verse 1056
The evils of begging will flee at the mere sight Of those who are free from the evil of refusal.

Verse 1057
There is rejoicing in a jubilant heart Upon seeing those who give without scoffing or scorning.

Verse 1058
Deprived of its beggars, this vast and verdant (I think) earth Would be reduced to a sphere for the wooden play of puppets.

Verse 1059
What glory would generous men have If there were none to beg and receive their gifts?

Verse 1060
One who begs and is refused should not be angry For his own poverty is sufficient proof.
Dread of Begging

Verse 1061

It is ten millions better not to beg, even from those Precious few who find joy in generosity and thus never refuse.

Verse 1062

Were it the world's Creator who wished men to live by begging, Men might well wish that He Himself also die a wanderer.

Verse 1063

There is no greater foolhardiness than saying to oneself, "I shall end the pains of poverty by begging."

Verse 1064

The entire world is too small to contain the dignity of men Who stoop not to beg even in the midst of destitution.

Verse 1065

Though it is only gruel thin as water, nothing is more savory Than the food that is earned by the labor of one's hands.

Verse 1066

The tongue finds nothing more distasteful than begging Even to simply plead for the cow's drinking water.

Verse 1067

This I beg of all beggers, "If beg you must, beg not from (of) misers."

Verse 1068

The unsturdy ship called begging will break apart The moment it crashes against the rock of refusal.

Verse 1069

Thoughts of the beggar's plight must melt one's heart, But thoughts of refusals he receives crushes it completely.

Verse 1070

Is there any place a miser can safely hide When inside him resounds the word "no" which slays beggars?
**Baseness**

Outwardly, vile men resemble human beings.  
Never have we witnessed such a remarkable likeness.

The low-minded are happier than men who know the good,  
For they are never troubled by the pains of conscience.

Wicked rogues resemble the gods,  
For they, too, live doing whatever they want.

When the vile meets the wicked he will outdo him  
In his vices and pride himself on the achievement.

Fear is the primary motive force of base men.  
Apart from that, the desire for gain may motivate them, but only a little.

Base men are like a bass drum,  
For they sound off to others every secret they happen to hear.

The wretched are too inhospitable to even shake the moisture from their  
Just-washed hands, unless the visitor can shatter their jaw with clenched fist.

The worthy yield their gifts when told of the need,  
But, like the sugar cane, the low will yield theirs only by a deathly crushing.

Let a low man see others well clothed and fed  
And instantly their faults assail his sight.

Is there anything for which ignoble men are suited?  
Well, whenever crisis comes no one sells themselves more swiftly!
Credits & Acknowledgements

The Himalayan Academy

The Himalayan Academy was formed over time by Gurudeva, Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami, and has been responsible for the translation and the original recent publication of the Tirukural. For those students of life who wish to make a personal copy of Tirukural, the original publication, located within the Himalayan Academy’s website, is structured as a single 145K html document, and might prove easier to manage than the separated chapters 108 which have been presented in this web publication.

This publication on the Tirukural is the second to have been sourced from the wealth of the Himalayan Academy, the first being the inspiring The Words of the Master, a collection of the sayings of Yogaswami, of Sri Lanka (1872 - 1964), gathered by a number of his disciples. The students of life who travel through here are encouraged to spend some time perusing the wealth of the Himalayan Academy’s publications, and the the Classical Yoga Teachings of Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami, known to many as Gurudeva.

Gurudeva also hosts absolutely free and contemplative Daily E-Mail subscription routines, whereby one can receive, on each new day of the year, short thought-provoking quotations, and in some cases commentary, on the substance of publications such as the Nandinatha Sutras, the Tirukural, and Dancing with Siva.

In closing this section, which provides full acknowledgement of the text, translation and commentary to Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami, is might be appropriate to duplicate the original 1994 and 1995 copyright notice of the Himalayan Academy:

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Hinduism Today

This long standing web publications organisation has been responsible for the presentation of articles of great interest for many years now, not only in the realm of Hindu culture, religion and history, but also in relation to world affairs and other articles which have always proved of interest to its broad range of readers.

There have been a number of separate informational articles concerning the Tirukural in the editions of Hinduism Today over the years. Acknowledgements are also therfore also directed to Hinduism Today for some of the source of this current web publication of the Tirukural, and my thanks is directed to the Editor, Acharya Palaniswami, for his support during this project.

Editorial Comments

The substance of the Tirukural is for daily contemplation, and the application of its precepts and observations into the processes of personal and individual life by those who know themselves as its students.
Any global collation of the publications of peace and of great souls would not be complete without first hand reference to this two thousand year-old text of wisdom from the weaver Saint Tiruvalluvar. The Age may gradually change like the mist rising out of the high mountain valleys, but the nature of the daylight - of the substance of wisdom - is beyond the terrestrial realms of time ... for it represents expression of the nature of the the cosmic environment.

There is a continuing evolution of aspiration and thought such that the recognition of this inner human cosmic environment, over and above the day-to-day terrestrial environment, must also indeed form a foundational part of the inner environmental nature of humanity and its myriad individuals. The expression of these eternal principals are the expressions of the evolving human soul - expressions of Global Terrestrial Nativity and the Cosmic Solidarity of the Human Soul. In all lands beneath the sun, and in all Ages which have flowed with their great rivers and oceans over the face of this planetary cradle of continuously emergent life, the spirit of a deeper truth has been echoing through the words and actions of the scattered folk out of the scattered tribes of man.

The scope of the Tirukural is broad in its approach to the realms of life, and its observations engender contemplation for the students. And we are all - each of us - the students of life.

I would like again to congratulate the unceasing efforts of the Himalayan Academy in their labors of translation and original publication of this text. It is hoped that this publication has been found a resource to its readers, and that the wisdom of the Holy Kural will once again find its place in the emergent world of the third millenia after its origination within the pristine southern lands of ancient India.

All the best,