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## Vidurniti And Chanakya Niti On Friendship

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### ABSTRACT

Mahatma Vidur is the soul of Vidurniti. He is the one personality in Mahabharata, the great epic, who was the Prime Minister of Hastinapur kingdom. He was uncle of both Pandavas and Kauravas. The most respected advisor of king Dhritrashtra. He was highly loyal to his kingdom but always stood for Pandavas in their ill-fate. He at times saved them from mind games of their cousin brothers. A simple yet firm, straightforward and honest person. He is known for his righteousness, sincerity and dedication towards his motherland. He is always remembered as the 'Saint' – minister whose guidance could have been very beneficial. He was the epitome of truth, his dutiful nature, impartial justice and moral teachings are very important even today. In contemporary world the people have stooped beyond periphery and the selfish and self-centred attitudes have made the people blind towards humanity. This book advises, counsels and instructs us for better.

In Indian politics he was a visionary of the era and an important writer of Sanskrit literature. No other person can catch his wisdom. His name is also mentioned as Vishnugupt. His father's name was Chanak. He is called Chanakya because of his father's name Chanak who was also a great scholar of Sanskrit literature.

There are several other names of Acharya Chanakya in various texts such as – Vatsayayan, Malnaam, Kautilya, Dramil, Pakshil Swami, Vishnugupt and Angal.

Due to this famous book 'Chanakyaniti' his 'Chanakya' name popularised among masses.

His one of the most famous name is 'Kautilya'. This name is based on his famous work - 'Kautilya's Arthashashtra'. In famous universities of the world 'Kautilya's Arthashashtra' is taught as a major subject in political science and economics.

From this famous master piece 'Kautilya's Arthashashtra' - Acharya Chanakya segregated 17 Chapters which he named as 'Chanakyaniti'.

Readers can understand the depth of Chanakyaniti easily and simply; with this in mind, the entire 17 chapters have been based on very important topics.

In these topics society, religion etc. everything is taken into consideration.

Every example has been given on the subjects like gentlemen and shrewd men. He has talked about several other topics such as women, religion and nationalism. Both books guide us for our betterment. My research paper here attempts to examine few verses from these books in order to find out their relevance in today's world.

**Keywords :** Vidurniti, Chanakyaniti, Kautilya, visionary, moral teaching, Arthashashtra, ethics, guide, relevance, companion.

Friendship is a relationship between two individuals who are devoted to each other. They both love, care and support each other. This bond is built on mutual respect, truth, trust, honesty and selfless attitude. True friends bear unconditional love for each without any expectations.

Acharya Chanakya acquaints us with his views on friendship-  
*Janiyat praeshane'bhrityan Bandhavaan'vyasanaagamae /*  
*Mitram cha'aapatikaleshu bharyam cha vibhavakshye //*

(11<sup>th</sup> Verse, Chapter-1)

To test relationships at the correct time- any servant can be clearly identified when he is sent on some very important mission or task while your near and dear ones can be known in the times of adversities, similarly a true friend can be identified in the testing times or great sorrows and above all a wife's true identity can be known when her husband's wealth is gone. So, one can easily recognise relatives, friends, and these bad times can reveal the true colours of these all. So, true friends, companions should always come forward in the times of distress.

*Parokshe karya'hantaram pratyakshe priyavadinam /*  
*Varjayetadrisham mitram vishwakumbham payomukham //*

(5<sup>th</sup> Verse, Chapter-2)

He further adds on -

That a person who hinders your work or spoils your work and image behind your back but at your face; speaks very sweetly; one should abandon or cease to be friends with such a poisonous person just like abandoning a pot filled with poison on the mouth of milkpot.

*Na vishwa'set'kumitrae cha mitre chaapinavishwa'set /*  
*Kadachit'kupitam mitram sarvam guham prakashyet //*

(6<sup>th</sup> Verse, Chapter-2)

Acharya Chanakya guides us by saying that one should never trust an unworthy friend or a good friend even because by chance if that friend got angry on you due to any reason he will blurt your secrets to other people. So, one should be very careful. A bad friend or friend if comes to know your secret things or very confidential things then he might threaten you in some unscrupulous things by black mailing you for his own selfish means. One should therefore never reveal one's dark secrets even to a true friend.

*Dura'chari cha Dur'drishti'rduraawasi cha durjanah /*  
*Yanmaitri Kriyatepu'mibh'rnrarah sikhra vinashyati //*

(19<sup>th</sup> Verse, Chapter-2)

*Sa'maane shobhate preeti ragyiseva cha shobhate /*  
*Vanijyam vyavhareshu streedivya shobhte grihe //*

(20<sup>th</sup> Verse, Chapter-2)

There could be adverse consequences of one's bad deeds.

An evil person being immoral himself who harms other people; has a very bad behaviour and nature; he also cannot have good friends. His friends also will be bad people who will influence him with their bad company.

'Melon changes colour after seeing the other melon' - This saying is quite apt here in this context. So, people who are surrounded by devil minds; the effect of their evil deeds will surely fall upon him. Therefore, it's always suggested to avoid the bad people's company (19<sup>th</sup> Verse).

Acharya Chanakya says that one should have friendships with the people of equal status. A king also should be ready for the service of his people. Similarly business suits to the merchant class people and a virtuous woman is the real wealth and beauty of one's house. So, what work suits these people, they should do as per their calibre.

*"Rahiman vipada hoon bhali, jo thore din hoy /*  
*Jaan parat ya jagat mein, hit anhit sab koye" //*

- Abdul Rahim khan khana

Tulsidasji says in Ramcharitmanas -

*"Kupath niwari supanth chalawa, gun prakate avgunan durawa /*  
*det let man sank na dhrahin, bal anumani sada hit karahin //*

*Vipati kaal kar satyun neha, shruti kahe sat, Mitra gun aiha //*

-Kishkindha Kand , Ram Charitmanas

*Vidya mitram pravaseshu bharyamitram griheshu cha /*  
*Vyadhitya aushadham mitram dharmo mritasya cha //*

(15<sup>th</sup> Verse, Chapter-5)

Acharya Chanakya adds on -

When a person is out of town then his education/ wisdom is his true friend, and when at home then his wife is his true friend and well-wisher. Medicine is true friend of a diseased or sick person and after one's death only religion or his good deeds are his true friends.

*Aaturae Vyasa'ne prapte dur'bhikshe shatru'sankate /  
Rajdware shamshane cha  
Yas'tishthati sa badhavh //*

(12<sup>th</sup> Verse, Chapter-1)

Here, also Acharya Chanakya states that the one who helps during illness, or a person under enemies threat, a person who accompanies the dead body till cremation area after demise, such a person is a true relative or a true friend.

One can easily find a true friend or an opportunist during the times of adversities. True well wishers always become support system and others who come and go are mere selfish and self-centred relatives or friends.

*'Dharmanugo gachhati jeev ekah /  
'Dharmo rakshati rakshitah //*

Tulsidasji further adds on –

*"Aage kahe mridu baat banai,  
Paachhe anhit man kutilai/  
Jaker chit ahi gati sam bhai,  
Ass kumitra parihare bhalai //*

- Kishkindha Kand – Ramcharitmanas

*"Sang ten jati kumantra te Raja,  
Maan te gyan paan ten Laja"'*

- Aranya Kand, Ramcharitmanas

Mahatma Vidur also has same views regarding friends -

*Asantyagaat paapkritam 'papam'stulyo dandah sprishate mitrabhavaat /  
Shushke'naadram daha'te mishra' bhavaat  
Tasmaat papehsahsandhimnakuryaat //*

(70<sup>th</sup> Verse, Chapter-2)

Meaning -

If innocent people do not abandon the sinful and wicked people around and stay with such people; then for them also same kind of punishment is there.

So, one should never be in the bad company of such evil and wicked people.

Vidurji gives example of wet wood; when it comes in contact with dry wood, it also catches fire. Therefore, friendship with wicked people should always be avoided.

*Yadi santam sevate yad'santam  
Tapaswinam yadiwa stenmev/  
Waso yatharang'wasamprayatitatha,  
Sa tesham wasamabhyupyeti//*

(10<sup>th</sup> Verse, Chapter-4)

Mahatma Vidur is absolutely right in his words stating that a person's company matters a lot. If a person stays with ascetic, or a wicked person or serves a thief or so; he comes or acts under control their control.

Similar manner a cloth can take the form of the colour of the dye in which it is dyed.

*Ya'drishesanni'vishateya'drisham'schopsevate/  
Ya'drigicchevbhavitumta'drigbhavatipurushah//*

(13<sup>th</sup> Verse, Chapter-4)

So, it is quite obvious that a person becomes like the people or the society in which he lives in or with. Therefore, his life is affected by the company he keeps. What kind of ideas he manifests or wants for himself, he become the same as per his choices and decisions.

*Na shradya' dhatikalyanamparebh'yoap'yatm'sankitah /  
Nirakarotimitrani, yoye, so' adhampurushah //*

(19<sup>th</sup> Verse, Chapter-4)

A selfish and mean person in his own self doubt can never believe in welfare of other people and even keeps his own friends aside; such a vile person is a suspicious personality.

Mahatma Vidur throws light on the qualities of a true friend by adding on -

*Na tan'mitram yasyakopaad vibeti,  
Yad wa mitram shankiteno pacharyam /*

*Yasmin mitre pitari'washva'seet tad vye,  
mitramsangtani'tarani //*

(37<sup>th</sup> Verse, Chapter-4)

*Yakashchid'apya'sambadho mitrabhaven vartate /  
Sa yevbandhu'stan'mitram sagati'stat parayanam //*

(38<sup>th</sup> Verse, Chapter-4)

If one has to be afraid while reaching out to a friend and such a friend while doing service for him, one has to be suspicious. A true friend is the one who can be relied upon just like a father figure, others then are just mere companions.

Similarly true friends even though one had no previous relation with us; still one can trust on them; they are the only ones whose company can provide support and shelter.

*Satkritasch shrutarthasch mitranam, nabhavanti ye /  
Taanmritanapi kravyadah, Kritaghna'n op' bhunjate //*

(42<sup>th</sup> Verse, Chapter-4)

*Acharyadev mitrani sa'tiva'asati wadhane,  
Naan'arthyan prajanati mitranam, saar'falgutaam //*

(43 Verse, Chapter 4)

Mahatma Vidur further expounds that-people who after receiving hospitality and all respect from their friends, still remain ungrateful towards their friends, such pathetic and ungrateful people when die; their flesh is not at all eaten by flesh eating dogs or carnivorous animals. Whether your friend is rich or poor; one should always remain grateful to his friends.

So, whether one has money or not; one should always respect their friends. Never ask for anything from the friends which they will not be able to fulfil and never doubt their worth. Therefore, regarding friendship Acharya Chanakya and Mahatma Vidur both have the same thoughts.

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