

# THE LAWS OF MANU<sup>1</sup>

(c. 1500 BC)

## CHAPTER I

### The creation of the world

1. The great sages approached Manu, who was seated with a collected mind, and, having duly worshipped him, spoke as follows:
2. Please, divine one, declare to us precisely and in due order the sacred laws of each of the four chief castes (varnas) and of the intermediate ones.
3. For thou, O Lord, alone knowest the purport, i.e., the rites, and the knowledge of the soul, taught in this whole ordinance of the Self-Existent Supreme Reality (Svayambhu), which is unknowable and unfathomable.
4. Manu, whose power is measureless, being thus asked by the high-minded great sages, duly honored them, and answered, Listen!
5. This universe existed in the shape of Darkness, unperceived, destitute of distinctive marks, unattainable by reasoning, unknowable, wholly immersed, as it were, in deep sleep.
6. Then the divine Self-Existent Supreme Reality (Svayambhu), himself indiscernible, but making all this, the great elements and the rest, discernible, appeared with irresistible creative power, dispelling the darkness.
11. From that first cause, which is indiscernible, eternal, and both real and unreal, was produced that male (Purusha), who is famed in this world under the appellation of Brahman.
14. From himself (atmanah), he also drew forth the mind, which is both real and unreal, likewise from the mind egoism, which possesses the function of self-consciousness and is lordly;
15. Moreover, the great one, the soul [Atman = Supreme Self], and all products affected by the three qualities, and, in their order, the five organs which perceive the objects of sensation.
22. He, the Lord, also created the class of the gods, who are endowed with life, and whose nature is action; and the subtle class of the Sadhyas [minor gods], and the eternal sacrifice.
23. But from fire, wind, and the sun he drew forth the threefold eternal Veda, called Rig, Yajur, and Sama, for the due performance of the sacrifice. [The scriptures called into being by the Supreme Reality, Brahman.]
31. But for the sake of the prosperity of the worlds, he caused the Brahmin, the Kshatriya, the Vaisya, and the Shudra [the four castes] to proceed from his mouth, his arms, his thighs, and his feet.
51. When he whose power is incomprehensible, had thus produced the universe and men, he disappeared within himself, repeatedly suppressing one period by means of the other.

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<sup>1</sup>George Bühler, translator [1886] (*Sacred Books of the East*, vol. 25. Manu was the legendary first man, the Adam of the Hindus. This is a collection of laws attributed to him. Spelling has been Americanized, and vocabulary and punctuation have been somewhat modernized.

52-57. When that divine one wakes, then this world stirs; when he slumbers in tranquilly, then the universe sinks to sleep. But when he reposes in calm sleep, the corporeal beings whose nature is action, desist from their actions and mind becomes inert. When they are absorbed all at once in that great soul [Atman = Supreme Self], then he who is the soul of all beings sweetly slumbers, free from all care and occupation. When this soul has entered darkness, it remains for a long time united with the organs of sensation, but performs not its functions; it then leaves the corporeal frame. Thus he, the imperishable one, by alternately waking and slumbering, incessantly revivifies and destroys this whole movable and immovable creation.

### **Caste duties and occupations**

87. But in order to protect this universe He, the most resplendent one, assigned separate duties and occupations to those who sprang from his mouth, arms, thighs, and feet [i.e., to the four castes].

88. To Brahmins he assigned teaching and studying the Veda, sacrificing for their own benefit and for others, giving and accepting of alms.

89. The Kshatriya he commanded to protect the people, to bestow gifts, to offer sacrifices, to study the Veda, and to abstain from attaching himself to sensual pleasures;

90. The Vaisya to tend cattle, to bestow gifts, to offer sacrifices, to study the Veda, to trade, to lend money, and to cultivate land.

91. One occupation only the lord prescribed to the Shudra, to serve meekly . . . these other three castes.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **Sacred rites**

26. With holy rites, prescribed by the Veda, must the ceremony on conception and other sacraments be performed for twice-born [upper-caste, Brahmin, Kshatriya, and Vaisya] men, which sanctify the body and purify from sin in this life and after death.

27. By burnt oblations during the mother's pregnancy, by the Gatakarman (the ceremony after birth), the Kauda (tonsure), and the Maungibandhana (the tying of the sacred girdle of Munga grass) is the sin and corruption [bad karma], inherited from both parents, removed from twice-born men.

28. By the study of the Veda, by vows, by burnt oblations, by the recitation of sacred texts, by the acquisition of the threefold sacred science, by offering to the gods, Rishis [seers], and manes [deified souls of the dead], by the procreation of sons, by the great sacrifices, and by Srauta rites, this human body is made fit for union with Brahman.

29. Before the navel-string is cut, the Gatakarman (birth-rite) must be performed for a male child; and while sacred formulas are being recited, he must be fed with gold, honey, and butter.

30. But let the father perform or cause to be performed the Namadheya (the rite of naming the child) on the tenth or twelfth day after birth, or on a lucky lunar day, in a lucky muhurta (under an auspicious constellation).

31. Let the first part of a Brahmin's name denote something auspicious, a Kshatriya's be connected with power, and a Vaisya's with wealth, but a Shudra's express something contemptible.

32. The second part of a Brahmin's name shall be a word implying happiness, of a Kshatriya's a word implying protection, of a Vaisya's a term expressive of thriving, and of a Shudra's an expression denoting service.

33. The names of women should be easy to pronounce, not imply anything dreadful, possess a plain meaning, be pleasing and auspicious, end in long vowels, and contain a word of benediction.

## Initiation

36. In the eighth year after conception, one should perform the initiation (upanayana) of a Brahmin, in the eleventh after conception that of a Kshatriya, but in the twelfth that of a Vaisya.

37. The initiation of a Brahmin who desires proficiency in sacred learning should take place in the fifth year after conception, that of a Kshatriya who wishes to become powerful in the sixth, and that of a Vaisya who longs for success in his business in the eighth.

38. The time for the Savitri (initiation of a Brahmin) does not pass until the completion of the sixteenth year after conception, of a Kshatriya until the completion of the twenty-second, and of a Vaisya until the completion of the twenty-fourth.

39. After those periods, men of these three castes who have not received the sacrament at the proper time become Vratyas (outcastes), excluded from the Savitri (initiation) and despised by the Aryans.

40. With such men, if they have not been purified according to the rule, let no Brahmin ever, even in times of distress, form a connection, either through the Veda or by marriage.

65. The ceremony called Kesanta (clipping the hair) is ordained for a Brahmin in the sixteenth year from conception; for a Kshatriya, in the twenty-second; and for a Vaisya, two years later than that.

66. This whole series of ceremonies must be performed for females also, in order to sanctify the body, at the proper time and in the proper order, but without the recitation of sacred texts.

67. The nuptial ceremony is stated to be the Vedic sacrament for women and to be equal to the initiation, serving the husband equivalent to the residence in the house of the teacher, and the household duties the same as the daily worship of the sacred fire.

## The First Stage of Life: Studentship

69. Having performed the rite of initiation, the teacher must first instruct the pupil in the rules of personal purification, of conduct, of the fire-worship, and of the twilight devotions.

70. But a student who is about to begin the Study of the Veda, shall receive instruction after he has sipped water in accordance with the Institutes of the sacred law, has made the Brahmanjali (proper salutation), has put on a clean dress, and has brought his organs under due control.

74. Let him always pronounce the syllable Om at the beginning and at the end of a lesson in the Veda; for unless the syllable Om precedes the lesson, it will slip away from him, and unless it follows it will fade away.

75. Seated on blades of Kusa grass with their points to the east, purified by Pavitras (blades of Kusa grass), and sanctified by three suppressions of the breath (Pranayama), he is worthy to pronounce the syllable Om.

88. A wise man should strive to restrain his organs which run wild among alluring sensual objects, like a charioteer his horses. [The said organs are the ear, the skin, the eyes, the tongue, the nose, the anus, the . . . [genitals], the hands, the feet, the organ of speech, and the internal organ (mind).]

93. Through the attachment of his organs to sensual pleasure a man doubtlessly will incur guilt; but if he keep them under complete control, he will obtain success in gaining all his aims.

94. Desire is never extinguished by the enjoyment of desired objects; it only grows stronger like a fire fed with clarified butter.

95. If one man should obtain all those sensual enjoyments and another should renounce them all, the renunciation of all pleasure is far better than the attainment of them.

96. Those organs that are strongly attached to sensual pleasures cannot so effectually be restrained by abstinence from enjoyments as by a constant pursuit of true knowledge.

97. Neither the study of the Vedas, nor liberality, nor sacrifices, nor any self-imposed restraint, nor austerities, ever procure the attainment of rewards to a man whose heart is contaminated by sensuality.

98. That man may be considered to have really subdued his organs who, on hearing and touching and seeing, on tasting and smelling anything, neither rejoices nor repines.

99. But when one among all the organs slips away from control, thereby man's wisdom slips away from him, even as the water flows through the one open foot of a water-carrier's skin.

108. Let an Aryan who has been initiated daily offer fuel in the sacred fire, beg food, sleep on the ground, and do what is beneficial to this teacher, until he performs the ceremony of Samavartana on returning home.

165. An Aryan must study the whole Veda together with the Rahasyas [secret interpretations], performing at the same time various kinds of austerities and the vows prescribed by the rules of the Veda.

173. The student who has been initiated must be instructed in the performance of the vows and gradually learn the Veda, observing the prescribed rules.

175. But a student who resides with his teacher must observe the following restrictive rules, duly controlling all his organs, in order to increase his spiritual merit.

176. Every day, having bathed, and being purified, he must offer libations of water to the gods, sages and manes, worship the images of the gods, and place fuel on the sacred fire.

177-179. Let him abstain from honey, meat, perfumes, garlands, substances used for flavoring food, women, all substances turned acid, and from doing injury to living creatures. [Let him also abstain from] anointing his body, applying collyrium to his eyes, [and] from the use of shoes and of an umbrella or parasol, [and] from sensual desire, anger, covetousness, dancing, singing, and playing musical instruments, [and also from] gambling, idle disputes, backbiting, and lying, [and] from looking at and touching women, and from hurting others.

180. Let him always sleep alone, let him never waste his manhood; for he who voluntarily wastes his manhood, breaks his vow.

199. Let him not pronounce the mere name of his teacher without adding an honorific title behind his back even, and let him not mimic his gait, speech, and deportment.

201. By censuring his teacher, though justly, he will become in his next birth an ass, by falsely defaming him, a dog; he who lives on his teacher's substance, will become a worm, and he who is envious of his merit, a larger insect.

### **Teacher, Father, Mother**

226. The teacher is the image of Brahman, the father the image of Prajapati (the lord of created beings), the mother the image of the earth, and an elder full brother the image of oneself.

227. That trouble and pain which the parents undergo on the birth of their children cannot be compensated even in a hundred years.

228. Let him always do what is agreeable to those two and always what may please his teacher; when those three are pleased, he obtains all those rewards which austerities yield.

229. Obedience towards those three is declared to be the best form of austerity; let him not perform other meritorious acts without their permission.

230. For they are declared to be the three worlds, they the three principal orders, they the three Vedas, and they the three sacred fires.

231. The father, forsooth, is stated to be the Garhapatya fire, the mother the Dakshinagni, but the teacher the Ahavaniya fire; this triad of fires is most venerable.

232. He who neglects not those three, even after he has become a householder, will conquer the three worlds and, radiant in body like a god, he will enjoy bliss in heaven.

233. By honoring his mother he gains this nether world, by honoring his father the middle sphere, but by obedience to his teacher the world of Brahman.

234. All duties have been fulfilled by him who honors those three; but to him who honors them not, all rites remain fruitless.

237. By honoring these three, all that ought to be done by man is accomplished; that is clearly the highest duty, every other act is a subordinate duty.

### **CHAPTER III**

#### **The Second Stage of Life: Householder**

1. The vow of studying the three Vedas under a teacher must be kept for thirty-six years, or for half that time, or for a quarter, or until the student has perfectly learnt them.

2. A student who has studied in due order the three Vedas, or two, or even one only, without breaking the rules of studentship, shall enter the order of householders.

4. Having bathed, with the permission of his teacher, and performed according to the rule the Samavartana the rite on returning home, a twice-born man shall marry a wife of equal caste who is endowed with auspicious bodily marks [on the palms of the hands and on the soles of the feet].

12. For the first marriage of twice-born men, wives of equal caste are recommended; but for those who through desire proceed to marry again the following females, chosen according to the direct order of the castes, are most approved.

13. It is declared that a Shudra woman alone can be the wife of a Shudra, she and one of his own caste the wives of a Vaisya, those two and one of his own caste the wives of a Kshatriya, those three and one of his own caste the wives of a Brahmin.

14. A Shudra woman is not mentioned even in any ancient story as the first wife of a Brahmin or of a Kshatriya, though they lived in the greatest distress.

15. Twice-born men who, in their folly, wed wives of the low (Shudra) caste, soon degrade their families and their children to the state of Shudras.

17. A Brahmin who takes a Shudra wife to his bed, will after death sink into hell; if he begets a child by her, he will lose the rank of a Brahmin.

#### **The Obligation to Honor Women**

55. Women must be honored and adorned by their fathers, brothers, husbands, and brothers-in-law, who desire their own welfare.

56. Where women are honored, there the gods are pleased; but where they are not honored, no sacred rite yields rewards.

57. Where the female relations live in grief, the family soon wholly perishes; but that family where they are not unhappy ever prospers.

58. The houses on which female relations, not being duly honored, pronounce a curse, perish completely, as if destroyed by magic.

59. Hence men who seek their own welfare, should always honor women on holidays and festivals with gifts of ornaments, clothes, and dainty food.

60. In that family, where the husband is pleased with his wife and the wife with her husband, happiness will assuredly be lasting.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **Becoming a Householder**

1. Having dwelt with a teacher during the fourth part of a man's life, a Brahmin shall live during the second quarter of his existence in his house, after he has wedded a wife.

### **Proper Means of Subsistence for a Brahmin**

2. A Brahmin must seek a means of subsistence which either causes no, or at least little pain to others, and live by that except in times of distress.

3. For the purpose of gaining bare subsistence, let him accumulate property by following those irreproachable occupations which are prescribed for his caste, without unduly fatiguing his body.

11. Let him never, for the sake of subsistence, follow the ways of the world; let him live the pure, straightforward, honest life of a Brahmin.

12. He who desires happiness must strive after a perfectly contented disposition and control himself; for happiness has contentment for its root, the root of unhappiness is the contrary disposition.

### **Duties of a Brahmin Householder**

14. Let him, untired, perform daily the rites prescribed for him in the Veda; for he who performs those according to his ability, attains to the highest state.

15. Whether he be rich or even in distress, let him not seek wealth through pursuits to which men cleave, nor by forbidden occupations, nor let him accept presents from any giver whosoever he may be.

16. Let him not, out of desire for enjoyments, attach himself to any sensual pleasures, and let him carefully obviate an excessive attachment to them by reflecting on their worthlessness in his heart.

17. Let him avoid all means of acquiring wealth which impede the study of the Veda; let him maintain himself anyhow, but study, because that devotion to the Veda-study secures the realization of his aims.

18. Let him walk here on earth, bringing his dress, speech, and thoughts to a conformity with his age, his occupation, his wealth, his sacred learning, and his race.

21. Let him never, if he is able to perform them, neglect the sacrifices to the sages, to the gods, to the Bhutas [cosmic spirits], to men, and to the manes.

29. No guest must stay in his house without being honored, according to his ability, with a seat, food, a couch, water, or roots and fruits.

30. Let him not honor, even by a greeting, heretics, men who follow forbidden occupations, men who live like cats, rogues, logicians, arguing against the Veda, and those who live like herons.

40-42. Let him, though mad with desire, not approach his wife when her courses appear; nor let him sleep with her in the same bed. If he avoids her while she is in that condition, his wisdom, energy, strength, sight, and vitality will increase.

60. Let him not dwell in a village where the sacred law is not obeyed, nor stay long where diseases are endemic; let him not go alone on a journey, nor reside long on a mountain.

61. Let him not dwell in a country where the rulers are Shudras, nor in one which is surrounded by unrighteous men, nor in one which has become subject to heretics, nor in one swarming with men of the lowest castes.

64. Let him not dance, nor sing, nor play musical instruments, nor slap his limbs, nor grind his teeth, nor let him make uncouth noises, though he be in a passion.

80-81. Let him not give to a Shudra advice, nor the remnants of his meal, nor food offered to the gods; nor let him explain the sacred law to such a man, nor impose upon him a penance. For he who explains the sacred law to a Shudra or dictates to him a penance, will sink together with that man into the [dreadful] hell called Asamvrita.

#### **Various Moral Rules for all Householders**

155. Let him, untired, follow the conduct of virtuous men, connected with his occupations, which has been fully declared in the revealed texts and in the sacred tradition (Smriti) and is the root of the sacred law.

156. Through virtuous conduct he obtains long life, through virtuous conduct desirable offspring, through virtuous conduct imperishable wealth; virtuous conduct destroys the effect of inauspicious marks [on the palms of the hands and on the soles of the feet].

157. For a man of bad conduct is blamed among people, constantly suffers misfortunes, is afflicted with diseases, and short-lived.

158. A man who follows the conduct of the virtuous, has faith and is free from envy, lives a hundred years, though he be entirely destitute of auspicious marks.

172. Unrighteousness, practiced in this world, does not at once produce its fruit, like a cow; but, advancing slowly, it cuts off the roots of him who committed it.

173. If the punishment falls not on the offender himself, it falls on his sons; if not on the sons, at least on his grandsons; but an iniquity once committed never fails to produce fruit to him who wrought it.

174. He prospers for a while through unrighteousness; then he gains great good fortune; next he conquers his enemies; but at last he perishes branch and root.

175. Let him always delight in truthfulness, obedience to the sacred law, conduct worthy of an Aryan, and purity; let him chastise his pupils according to the sacred law; let him keep his speech, his arms, and his belly under control.

238. Giving no pain to any creature, let him slowly accumulate spiritual merit for the sake of acquiring a companion in the next world, just as the white ant gradually raises its hill.

239. For in the next world neither father, nor mother, nor wife, nor sons, nor relations stay to be his companions; spiritual merit alone remains with him.

240. Single is each being born; single it dies; single it enjoys the reward of its virtue; single it suffers the punishment of its sin.

## CHAPTER V

### Lawful and Forbidden Foods

1. The sages, having heard the duties of a Snataka thus declared, spoke to great-souled Bhrigu, who sprang from fire:
2. How can Death have power over Brahmins who know the sacred science – the Veda – and who fulfill their duties as they have been explained by thee, O Lord?
3. Righteous Bhrigu, the son of Manu, thus answered the great sages: Hear in punishment of what faults Death seeks to shorten the lives of Brahmins!
4. Through neglect of the Veda-study, through deviation from the rule of conduct, through being remiss in the fulfillment of duties, and through faults committed by eating forbidden food, Death becomes eager to shorten the lives of Brahmins.
21. Once a year a Brahmin must perform a Krikkhra penance in order to atone for unintentionally eating forbidden food; but for intentionally eating forbidden food, he must perform the penances prescribed specially.
28. The Lord of creatures (Prajapati) created this whole world to be the sustenance of the vital spirit; both the immovable and the movable creation is the food of the vital spirit.
33. A twice-born man who knows the law must not eat meat except in conformity with the law; for if he has eaten it unlawfully, he will, unable to save himself, be eaten after death by his victims.
39. Svayambhu, the Self-Existent [Supreme Reality] himself created animals for the sake of sacrifices; sacrifices have been instituted for the good of this whole world; hence the slaughtering of beasts for sacrifices is not slaughtering in the ordinary sense of the word.
40. Herbs, trees, cattle, birds, and other animals that have been destroyed for sacrifices are reincarnated in higher existences.
42. A twice-born man who, knowing the true meaning of the Veda, slays an animal for these purposes causes both himself and the animal to enter a most blessed state.
43. A twice-born man of virtuous disposition, whether he dwells in his own house, with a teacher, or in the forest, must never, even in times of distress, cause an injury to any creature which [injury] is not sanctioned by the Veda.
46. He who does not seek to cause the sufferings of bonds and death to living creatures, but desires the good of all beings, obtains endless bliss.
48. Meat can never be obtained without injury to living creatures, and injury to sentient beings is detrimental to the attainment of heavenly bliss; let him therefore shun the use of meat.
49. Having well considered the disgusting origin of flesh and the cruelty of fettering and slaying corporeal beings, let him entirely abstain from eating flesh.
51. He who permits the slaughter of an animal, he who cuts it up, he who kills it, he who buys or sells meat, he who cooks it, he who serves it up, and he who eats it, must all be considered as the slayers of the animal.
52. There is no greater sinner than that man who, though not worshipping the gods or the manes, seeks to increase the bulk of his own flesh by [consuming] the flesh of other beings.
54. By subsisting on pure fruit and roots, and by eating food fit for ascetics in the forest, one does not gain so great a reward as by entirely avoiding the use of flesh.

56. There is no sin in eating meat, in drinking spirituous liquor, and in carnal intercourse, for that is the natural way of created beings; but abstention brings great rewards.

### **The Duties of Women**

147. By a girl, by a young woman, or even by an aged one, nothing must be done independently, even in her own house.

148. In childhood a female must be subject to her father, in youth to her husband, when her lord is dead to her sons; a woman must never be independent.

149. She must not seek to separate herself from her father, husband, or sons; by leaving them she would make both her own and her husband's families contemptible.

150. She must always be cheerful, clever in the management of her household affairs, careful in cleaning her utensils, and economical in expenditure.

151. Him to whom her father may give her, or her brother with the father's permission, she shall obey as long as he lives, and when he is dead, she must not insult his memory.

152. For the sake of procuring good fortune to brides, the recitation of benedictory texts (svastyayana) and the sacrifice to the Lord of creatures (Prajapati) are used at weddings; but the betrothal by the father or guardian is the cause of the husband's dominion over his wife.

153. The husband who wedded her with sacred texts always gives happiness to his wife, both in season and out of season, in this world and in the next.

154. Though destitute of virtue, or seeking pleasure elsewhere, or devoid of good qualities, yet a husband must be constantly worshipped as a god by a faithful wife.

155. No sacrifice, no vow, no fast must be performed by women apart from their husbands; if a wife obeys her husband, she will for that reason alone be exalted in heaven.

156. A faithful wife, who desires to dwell after death with her husband, must never do anything that might displease him who took her hand, whether he be alive or dead.

157. At her pleasure let her emaciate her body by living on pure flowers, roots, and fruit; but she must never even mention the name of another man after her husband has died.

158. Until death let her be patient of hardships, self-controlled, and chaste, and strive to fulfill that most excellent duty which is prescribed for wives who have one husband only.

159-160. Many thousands of Brahmins who were chaste from their youth have gone to heaven without continuing their race. A virtuous wife who after the death of her husband constantly remains chaste reaches heaven, though she have no son, just like those chaste men.

161. But a woman who from a desire to have offspring violates her duty towards her deceased husband brings on herself disgrace in this world and loses her place with her husband in heaven.

162. Offspring begotten by another man is here not considered lawful, nor does offspring begotten on another man's wife belong to the begetter, nor is a second husband anywhere prescribed for virtuous women.

163. She who cohabits with a man of higher caste, forsaking her own husband who belongs to a lower one, will become contemptible in this world and is called a remarried woman (parapurva).

164. By violating her duty towards her husband, a wife is disgraced in this world, after death she enters the womb of a jackal, and is tormented by diseases as the punishment of her sin.

165-166. She who, controlling her thoughts, words, and deeds, never slights her lord resides after death with her husband in heaven and is called a virtuous wife. In reward of such conduct, a female who controls her thoughts, speech, and actions, gains in this life highest renown and in the next world a place near her husband.

167-168. A twice-born man, versed in the sacred law, shall burn a wife of equal caste who conducts herself thus and dies before him with the sacred fires used for the Agnihotra and with the sacrificial implements. Having thus, at the funeral, given the sacred fires to his wife who dies before him, he may marry again and again kindle the fires.

169. Living according to the preceding rules, he must never neglect the five great sacrifices and, having taken a wife, he must dwell in his own house during the second period of his life.

## CHAPTER VI

### The Third Stage of Life: The Forest Dweller

1. A twice-born Snataka, who has thus lived according to the law in the order of householders, may, taking a firm resolution and keeping his organs in subjection, dwell in the forest, duly observing the rules given below.

2. When a householder sees his skin wrinkled, and his hair white, and the sons of his sons, then he may resort to the forest.

3. Abandoning all food raised by cultivation and all his belongings, he may depart into the forest, either committing his wife to his sons, or accompanied by her.

4. Taking with him the sacred fire and the implements required for domestic sacrifices, he may go forth from the village into the forest and reside there, duly controlling his senses.

5. Let him offer those five great sacrifices according to the rule, with various kinds of pure food fit for ascetics, or with herbs, roots, and fruit.

6. Let him wear a skin or a tattered garment; let him bathe in the evening or in the morning; and let him always wear his hair in braids, the hair on his body, his beard, and his nails being unclipped.

7. Let him perform the Bali-offering with such food as he eats and give alms according to his ability; let him honor those who come to his hermitage with alms consisting of water, roots, and fruit.

8. Let him be always industrious in privately reciting the Veda; let him be patient of hardships, friendly towards all, of collected mind, ever liberal and never a receiver of gifts, and compassionate towards all living creatures.

22. Let him either roll about on the ground, or stand during the day on tiptoe, or let him alternately stand and sit down; going at the Savanas (at sunrise, at midday, and at sunset) to find water in the forest in order to bathe.

23. In summer let him expose himself to the heat of five fires, during the rainy season live under the open sky, and in winter be dressed in wet clothes, thus gradually increasing the rigor of his austerities.

24. When he bathes at the three Savanas (sunrise, midday, and sunset), let him offer libations of water to the manes and the gods and, practicing harsher and harsher austerities, let him dry up his bodily frame.

25. Having repositied the three sacred fires in himself, according to the prescribed rule, let him live without a fire, without a house, wholly silent, subsisting on roots and fruit,

26. Making no effort to procure things that give pleasure, chaste, sleeping on the bare ground, not caring for any shelter, dwelling at the roots of trees.

27. From Brahmins who live as ascetics, let him receive alms barely sufficient to support life, or from other householders of the twice-born castes who reside in the forest.

28. Or the hermit who dwells in the forest may bring food from a village, receiving it either in a hollow dish of leaves, in his naked hand, or in a broken earthen dish, and may eat eight mouthfuls.

29-30. These and other observances must a Brahmin who dwells in the forest diligently practice and, in order to attain complete union with the supreme Soul [Atman = Supreme Self], he must study the various sacred texts contained in the Upanishads, as well as those rites and texts which have been practiced and studied by the sages (Rishis) and by Brahmin householders in order to increase their knowledge of Brahman, and [also] their austerity, and in order to sanctify their bodies;

31. Or let him walk, fully determined and going straight on, in a north-easterly direction, subsisting on water and air, until his body sinks to rest.

32. A Brahmin, having got rid of his body by one of those modes practiced by the great sages, is exalted in the world of Brahman, free from sorrow and fear.

#### **The Fourth Stage of Life: The Wandering Ascetic (Sannyasin, Sadhu)**

33. But having thus passed the third part of a man's natural term of life in the forest, he may live as an ascetic during the fourth part of his existence, after abandoning all attachments to worldly objects.

34. He who after passing from order to order, and after offering sacrifices and subduing his senses, becomes tired with giving alms and offerings of food, [is] an ascetic [who] gains bliss after death.

36. Having studied the Vedas in accordance with the rule, having begat sons according to the sacred law, and having offered sacrifices according to his ability, he may direct his mind to the attainment of final liberation.

37. A twice-born man who seeks final liberation without having studied the Vedas, without having begotten sons, and without having offered sacrifices, sinks downwards.

38. Having performed the Ishti, sacred to the Lord of creatures (Prajapati), where he gives all his property as the sacrificial fee, having repositied the sacred fires in himself, a Brahmin may depart from his house as an ascetic.

40. For that twice-born man, by whom not the smallest danger even is caused to created beings, there will be no danger from any quarter after he is freed from his body.

41. Departing from his house fully provided with the means of purification (Pavitra), let him wander about absolutely silent, caring nothing for enjoyments that may be offered to him.

42. Let him always wander alone, without any companion, in order to attain final liberation, fully understanding that the solitary man, who neither forsakes nor is forsaken, gains his end.

43. He shall neither possess a fire nor a dwelling; he may go to a village for his food, [but] he shall be indifferent to everything, firm of purpose, meditating and concentrating his mind on Brahman.

44. A piece of broken pottery instead of an alms-bowl, the roots of trees for a dwelling, coarse worn-out garments, life in solitude, and indifference towards everything – these are the marks of one who has attained liberation.

45. Let him not desire to die; let him not desire to live; let him wait for his appointed time as a servant waits for the payment of his wages.

47. Let him patiently bear hard words; let him not insult anybody; and let him not become anybody's enemy for the sake of this perishable body.

48. Against an angry man let him not in return show anger; let him bless when he is cursed; and let him not utter speech devoid of truth . . . .
49. Delighting in what refers to the Soul [Atman = True Self], sitting in the postures prescribed by Yoga, independent of external help, entirely abstaining from sensual enjoyments, with himself for his only companion, he shall live in this world, desiring the bliss of final liberation.
50. Let him seek to obtain alms without explaining prodigies and omens, without using his skill in astrology and palmistry, without giving advice, and without offering exposition of the Shastras.
51. Let him not in order to beg go near a house filled with hermits, Brahmins, birds, dogs, or other mendicants.
52. His hair, nails, and beard being clipped, carrying a broken pot, a staff, and a water-pot, let him continually wander about, controlling himself and not hurting any creature.
55. Let him go to beg once a day; let him not be eager to obtain a large quantity of alms. An ascetic who eagerly seeks alms attaches himself also to sensual enjoyments.
56. When no smoke ascends from the kitchen, when the pestle lies motionless, when the embers have been extinguished, when the people have finished their meal, when the remnants in the dishes have been removed, then let the ascetic go to beg.
57. Let him not be sorry when he obtains nothing nor rejoice when he obtains something; let him accept so much only as will sustain life; let him not care about the quality of his utensils.
59. By eating little, and by standing and sitting in solitude, let him restrain his senses, if they are attracted by sensual objects.
60. By the restraint of his senses, by the destruction of love and hatred, and by the abstention from injuring creatures, he becomes fit for immortality.
- 61-64. Let him reflect on the transmigrations of men, caused by their sinful deeds, on their falling into hell, and on the torments in the world of Yama [the God of Death]; on the separation from their dear ones, on their union with hated men, on their being overpowered by age and being tormented with diseases; on the departure of the individual soul from this body and its new birth in another womb, and on its wanderings through ten thousand millions of existences; on the infliction of pain on embodied spirits, which is caused by demerit, and the gain of eternal bliss, which is caused by the attainment of their highest aim, gained through spiritual merit.
65. By deep meditation let him recognize the subtle nature of the supreme Soul [Atman = Supreme Self], and its presence in all organisms, both the highest and the lowest.
68. In order to preserve living creatures, let him always by day and by night, even with pain to his body, walk, carefully scanning the ground.
69. In order to expiate the death of those creatures which he unintentionally injures by day or by night, an ascetic shall bathe and perform six suppressions of his breath.
73. Let him recognize by the practice of meditation the progress of the individual soul through beings of various kinds, a progress hard to understand for unregenerate men.
74. He who possesses true insight into the nature of the world is not fettered by his deeds; but he who is destitute of that insight, is drawn into the circle of births and deaths.
75. By not injuring any creatures, by detaching the senses from objects of enjoyment, by the rites prescribed in the Veda, and by rigorously practicing austerities, men gain that state even in this world.

76-77. Let him quit this dwelling [his body], composed of the five elements, where the bones are the beams, which is held together by tendons instead of cords, where the flesh and the blood are the mortar, which is thatched with the skin, which is foul-smelling, filled with urine and ordure, infested by old age and sorrow, the seat of disease, harassed by pain, gloomy with passion, and perishable.

78. He who leaves this body, be it by necessity as a tree that is torn from the river-bank or freely like a bird that quits a tree, is freed from the misery of this world, which is dreadful like a shark.

79. Making over the merit of his own good actions to his friends and the guilt of his evil deeds to his enemies, he attains the eternal Brahman by the practice of meditation.

80. When by the disposition of his heart he becomes indifferent to all objects, he obtains eternal happiness both in this world and after death.

81. He who has in this manner gradually given up all attachments and is freed from all the pairs of opposites reposes in Brahman alone.

82. All that has been declared above depends on meditation; for he who is not proficient in the knowledge of that which refers to the Soul [Atman = Supreme Self] reaps not the full reward of the performance of rites.

83. Let him constantly recite those texts of the Veda which refer to the sacrifice, those referring to the deities, and those which treat of the Soul [Atman = True Self] and are contained in the concluding portions of the Veda (Vedanta, Upanishads).

85. A twice-born man who becomes an ascetic after the successive performance of the above-mentioned acts shakes off sin here below and reaches the highest Brahman.

## CHAPTER VII

### The Duties of Kings

1. I will declare the duties of kings and show how a king should conduct himself, how he was created, and how he can obtain highest success.

2. A Kshatriya, who has received according to the rule the sacrament prescribed by the Veda must duly protect this whole world.

3. For when these creatures, being without a king, were through fear dispersed in all directions, the Lord created a king for the protection of this whole creation,

8. Even an infant king must not be despised from an idea that he is a mere mortal; for he is a great deity in human form.

13. Let no man, therefore, transgress that law which the king decrees with respect to his favorites, nor his orders which inflict pain on those in disfavor.

16. Having fully considered the time and the place of the offence, the strength and the knowledge of the offender, let him justly inflict that punishment on men who act unjustly.

18. Punishment alone governs all created beings; punishment alone protects them; punishment watches over them while they sleep; the wise declare punishment to be identical with the law.

19. If punishment is properly inflicted after due consideration, it makes all people happy; but inflicted without consideration, it destroys everything.

20. If the king did not, without tiring, inflict punishment on those worthy to be punished, the stronger would roast the weaker, like fish on a spit.

22. The whole world is kept in order by punishment, for a guiltless man is hard to find; through fear of punishment the whole world yields the enjoyments which it owes.

24. All castes (varnas) would be corrupted by intermixture; all barriers would be broken through; and all men would rage against each other in consequence of mistakes with respect to punishment.

25. But where Punishment with a black hue and red eyes stalks about, destroying sinners, there the subjects are not disturbed, provided that he who inflicts it discerns well.

26. They declare that king to be a just inflicter of punishment who is truthful, who acts after due consideration, who is wise, and who knows the respective value of virtue, pleasure, and wealth.

35. The king has been created to be the protector of the castes (varnas) and orders who, all according to their rank, discharge their several duties.

87-88. A king who, while he protects his people, is defied by foes, be they equal in strength, or stronger, or weaker, must not shrink from battle, remembering the duty of Kshatriyas: Not to turn back in battle, to protect the people, to honor the Brahmins, are the best means for a king to secure happiness.

89. Those kings who, seeking to slay each other in battle, fight with the utmost exertion and do not turn back go to heaven.

99-100. Let him strive to gain what he has not yet gained; what he has gained let him carefully preserve; let him augment what he preserves, and what he has augmented let him bestow on worthy men. Let him know that these are the four means for securing the aims of human existence; let him, without ever tiring, properly employ them.

102. Let him be ever ready to strike, his prowess constantly displayed, and his secrets constantly concealed, and let him constantly explore the weaknesses of his foe.

103. Of him who is always ready to strike, the whole world stands in awe; let him therefore make all creatures subject to himself even by the employment of force.

111. That king who through folly rashly oppresses his kingdom will, together with his relatives, ere long be deprived of his life and of his kingdom.

144. The highest duty of a Kshatriya is to protect his subjects, and the king . . . is bound to discharge that duty.

169-170. When the king knows that at some future time his superiority is certain and that at the time present he will suffer little injury, then let him have recourse to peaceful measures; but when he thinks all his subjects to be exceedingly contented, and that he himself is most exalted in power, then let him make war.

171-172. When he knows his own army to be cheerful in disposition and strong and that of his enemy the reverse, then let him march against his foe; but if he is very weak in chariots and beasts of burden and in troops, then let him carefully sit quiet, gradually conciliating his foes.

180. Let him arrange everything in such a manner that no ally, no neutral, no foe may injure him; that is the sum of political wisdom.

198-200. He should however try to conquer his foes by conciliation, by well-applied gifts, and by creating dissension, used either separately or conjointly, never by fighting, if it can be avoided. For when two princes fight, victory and defeat in the battle are, as experience teaches, uncertain; let him therefore avoid an engagement. But if even those three before-mentioned expedients fail, then let him, duly exerting himself, fight in such a manner that he may completely conquer his enemies.

201. When he has gained victory, let him duly worship the gods and honor righteous Brahmins; let him grant exemptions; and let him cause promises of safety to be proclaimed [to his opponents].

202. But having fully ascertained the wishes of all the conquered, let him place there a relative of the vanquished ruler on the throne, and let him impose his conditions.

205. All undertakings in this world depend both on the ordering of fate and on human exertion; but among these two the ways of fate are unfathomable; in the case of man's work, action is possible.

## **CHAPTER VIII**

### **Crimes and Punishments**

#### **Assault, Battery, Trespass**

1. A king, desirous of investigating law cases, must enter his court of justice, preserving a dignified demeanor, together with Brahmins and with experienced councilors.

2. There, either seated or standing, raising his right arm, without ostentation in his dress and ornaments, let him examine the business of suitors . . . .

279. With whatever limb a man of a low caste does hurt to a man of the three highest castes, even that limb shall be cut off.

280. He who raises his hand or a stick, shall have his hand cut off; he who in anger kicks with his foot, shall have his foot cut off.

281. A low-caste man who tries to place himself on the same seat with a man of a high caste shall be branded on his hip and be banished, or the king shall cause his buttock to be gashed.

282. If out of arrogance he spits on a superior, the king shall cause both his lips to be cut off; if he urinates on him, the penis; if he breaks wind against him, the anus.

283. If he lays hold of the hair of a superior, let the king unhesitatingly cut off his hands; likewise if he takes him by the feet, the beard, the neck, or the scrotum.

284. He who breaks the skin of an equal or fetches blood from him shall be fined one hundred panas; he who cuts a muscle six nishkas; he who breaks a bone shall be banished.

285. According to the usefulness of the several kinds of trees a fine must be inflicted for injuring them; that is the settled rule.

286. If a blow is struck against men or animals in order to give them pain, the judge shall inflict a fine in proportion to the amount of pain caused.

287. If a limb is injured, a wound is caused, or blood flows, the assailant shall be made to pay to the sufferer the expenses of the cure, or the whole (both the usual cash penalty plus the expenses of the cure) as a fine to the king.

288. He who damages the goods of another, be it intentionally or unintentionally, shall give satisfaction to the owner and pay to the king a fine equal to the damage.

289. In the case of damage done to leather, or to utensils of leather, of wood, or of clay, the fine shall be five times their value; likewise in the case of damage to flowers, roots, and fruit.

299-300. A wife, a son, a slave, a pupil, and a younger brother of the full blood, who have committed faults, may be beaten with a rope or a split bamboo, but on the back part of the body only, never on a noble part; he who strikes them otherwise will incur the same guilt as a thief.

### **Theft and Robbery**

302. Let the king exert himself to the utmost to punish thieves; for if he punishes thieves, his fame grows and his kingdom prospers.

303. That king, indeed, is ever worthy of honor who ensures the safety of his subjects; for the sacrificial session (sattra), which he, as it were, performs thereby, ever grows in length, the safety of his subjects representing the sacrificial fee.

307. A king who does not afford protection yet takes his share in kind, his taxes, tolls and duties, daily presents and fines, will after death soon sink into hell.

310. Let him carefully restrain the wicked by three methods: (1) by imprisonment; (2) by putting them in fetters; and (3) by various kinds of corporal punishments.

319. He who steals the rope or the water-pot from a well, or damages a hut where water is distributed, shall pay one masha as a fine and restore the article abstracted or damaged in its proper place.

320. On him who steals more than ten kumbhas of grain corporal punishment shall be inflicted; in other cases he shall be fined eleven times as much, and shall pay to the owner the value of his property.

321. So shall corporal punishment be inflicted for stealing more than a hundred palas of articles sold by the weight, i.e., of gold, silver, and so forth, and of most excellent clothes.

322. For stealing more than fifty palas, it is enacted that the hands of the offender shall be cut off; but in other cases, let him pay a fine of eleven times the value.

325. For stealing cows belonging to Brahmins, piercing the nostrils of a barren cow, and for stealing other cattle belonging to Brahmins, the offender shall forthwith lose half his feet.

335. Neither a father, nor a teacher, nor a friend, nor a mother, nor a wife, nor a son, nor a domestic priest must be left unpunished by a king, if they do not keep within their duty.

337-338. In a case of theft, the guilt of a Shudra shall be eightfold, that of a Vaisya sixteenfold, that of a Kshatriya two-and-thirtyfold, that of a Brahmin sixty-fourfold, or quite a hundredfold, or even twice four-and-sixtyfold; each of them knowing the nature of the offence.

343. A king who punishes thieves according to these rules will gain fame in this world and after death unsurpassable bliss.

### **Violence in General**

344. A king who desires to gain the throne of Indra and imperishable eternal fame shall not, even for a moment, neglect to punish the man who commits violence.

345. He who commits violence must be considered as the worst offender, more wicked than a defamer, than a thief, and than he who injures another with a staff.

346. But that king who pardons the perpetrator of violence quickly perishes and incurs hatred.

## Adultery

352. Men who commit adultery with the wives of others, the king shall cause to be marked by punishments which cause terror, and afterwards [the perpetrators must be] banished.

353. For by adultery is caused a mixture of the castes (varnas) among men; thence follows sin, which cuts up even the roots and causes the destruction of everything.

354. A man formerly accused of such offences, who secretly converses with another man's wife, shall pay the first or lowest fine.

355. But a man, not before accused, who thus speaks with a woman for some reasonable cause, shall not incur any guilt, since in him there is no transgression.

356. He who addresses the wife of another man at a Tirtha [crossroad], or outside the village, or in a forest, or at the confluence of rivers, shall suffer the punishment for adulterous acts (samgrahana).

357. Offering presents to a woman, romping with her, touching her ornaments and dress, sitting with her on a bed, all these acts are considered adulterous acts (samgrahana).

358. If one touches a woman in a place which ought not to be touched or allows oneself to be touched in such a spot – all such acts done with mutual consent are declared to be adulterous (samgrahana).

359. A man who is not a Brahmin ought to suffer death for adultery (samgrahana; for the wives of all the four castes must always be carefully guarded).

360. Mendicants, bards, men who have performed the initiatory ceremony of a Vedic sacrifice, and artisans are not prohibited from speaking to married women.

361. Let no man converse with the wives of others after he has been forbidden to do so; but he who converses with them in spite of a prohibition shall be fined one suvarna.

362. This rule does not apply to the wives of actors and singers, nor of those who live on the intrigues of their own wives; for such men send their wives to others or, concealing themselves, allow them to hold criminal intercourse.

363. Yet he who secretly converses with such women, or with female slaves kept by one master, or with female ascetics, shall be compelled to pay a small fine.

364. He who violates an unwilling maiden shall instantly suffer corporal punishment; but a man who enjoys a willing maiden shall not suffer corporal punishment, if his caste be the same as hers.

365. From a maiden who makes advances to a man of high caste, he shall not take any fine; but she who courts a man of low caste will be forced to live confined in her house.

366. A man of low caste who makes love to a maiden of the highest caste shall suffer corporal punishment; he who addresses a maiden of his own caste shall pay the nuptial fee, if her father desires it.

367. But if any man through insolence forcibly contaminates a maiden, two of his fingers shall be instantly cut off, and he shall pay a fine of six hundred panas.

368. A man of equal caste who defiles a willing maiden shall not suffer the amputation of his fingers, but he shall pay a fine of two hundred panas in order to deter him from a repetition of the offence.

369. A damsel who pollutes another damsel must be fined two hundred panas, pay the double of her nuptial fee, and receive ten lashes with a rod.

370. But a woman who pollutes a damsel shall instantly have her head shaved or two fingers cut off and be made to ride through the town on a donkey.

371. If a wife, proud of the greatness of her relatives or her own excellence, violates the duty which she owes to her lord, the king shall cause her to be devoured by dogs in a place frequented by many.

372. Let him cause the male offender to be burnt on a red-hot iron bed; they shall put logs under it until the sinner is burned to death.

373. On a man once convicted, who is again accused within a year, a double fine must be inflicted; even thus must the fine be doubled for repeated intercourse with a Vratya [outcaste] and a Kandali.

374. A Shudra who has intercourse with a woman of a twice-born caste (varna), guarded or unguarded, shall be punished in the following manner: if she was unguarded, he loses the offending part and all his property; if she was guarded, everything even his life.

375. For intercourse with a guarded Brahmin, a Vaisya shall forfeit all his property after imprisonment for a year; a Kshatriya shall be fined one thousand panas and be shaved with the urine of an ass.

376. If a Vaisya or a Kshatriya has connection with an unguarded Brahmin, let the king fine the Vaisya five hundred panas and the Kshatriya one thousand.

377. But even these two, if they offend with a Brahmini not only guarded but the wife of an eminent man, shall be punished like a Shudra or be burnt in a fire of dry grass.

378. A Brahmin who carnally knows a guarded Brahmini against her will shall be fined one thousand panas; but he shall be made to pay five hundred if he had connection with a willing one.

379. Tonsure of the head is ordained for a Brahmin instead of capital punishment; but men of other castes shall suffer capital punishment.

380. Let the king never slay a Brahmin, though the Brahmin has committed all possible crimes; let the king banish such an offender, leaving all his property to him and his body unharmed.

381. No greater crime is known on earth than slaying a Brahmin; a king, therefore, must not even conceive in his mind the thought of killing a Brahmin.

382. If a Vaisya approaches a guarded female of the Kshatriya caste, or a Kshatriya a guarded Vaisya woman, they both deserve the same punishment as in the case of an unguarded Brahmin female.

383. A Brahmin shall be compelled to pay a fine of one thousand panas if he has intercourse with guarded females of those two castes; for offending with a guarded Shudra female, a fine of one thousand panas shall be inflicted on a Kshatriya or a Vaisya.

384. For intercourse with an unguarded Kshatriya a fine of five hundred panas shall fall on a Vaisya; but for the same offence a Kshatriya shall be shaved with the urine of a donkey or pay the same fine.

385. A Brahmin who approaches unguarded females of the Kshatriya or Vaisya castes, or a Shudra female, shall be fined five hundred panas; but for intercourse with a female of the lowest castes, one thousand.

386-387. That king in whose town lives no thief, no adulterer, no defamer, no man guilty of violence, and no committer of assaults, attains the world of Sakra (Indra). The suppression of those five in his dominions secures to a king paramount sovereignty among his peers and fame in the world.

## CHAPTER IX

### Duties of Husband and Wife

2. Day and night woman must be kept in dependence by the males of their families and, if they attach themselves to sensual enjoyments, they must be kept under one's control.
3. Her father protects her in childhood, her husband protects her in youth, and her sons protect her in old age; a woman is never fit for independence.
4. Reprehensible is the father who gives not his daughter in marriage at the proper time; reprehensible is the husband who approaches not his wife in due season; and reprehensible is the son who does not protect his mother after her husband has died.
5. Women must particularly be guarded against evil inclinations, however trifling they may appear; for, if they are not guarded, they will bring sorrow on two families.
11. Let the husband employ his wife in the collection and expenditure of his wealth, in keeping everything clean, in the fulfillment of religious duties, in the preparation of his food, and in looking after the household utensils.
13. Drinking spirituous liquor, associating with wicked people, separation from the husband, rambling abroad, sleeping at unseasonable hours, and dwelling in other men's houses, are the six causes of the ruin of women.
14. Women do not care for beauty [in men], nor is their attention fixed on [a man's] age; thinking, it is enough that he is a man, they give themselves to the handsome and to the ugly [and to the old as well as to the young?].
15. Through their passion for men, through their mutable temper, through their natural heartlessness, they become disloyal towards their husbands, however carefully they may be guarded in this world.
16. Knowing their disposition, which the Lord of creatures laid in them at the creation, to be such, every man should most strenuously exert himself to guard them.
27. The production of children, the nurture of those born, and the daily life of men, of these matters woman is visibly the cause.
28. Offspring, the due performance on religious rites, faithful service, highest conjugal happiness, and heavenly bliss for the ancestors and oneself, depend on one's wife alone.
33. By the sacred tradition, the woman is declared to be the soil, the man is declared to be the seed; the production of all corporeal beings takes place through the union of the soil with the seed.
- 38-39. In this world seeds of different kinds, sown at the proper time in the land, even in one field, come forth each according to its kind. The rice called vrihi and that called sali, mudga-beans, sesame, masha-beans, barley, leeks, and sugar-cane, all spring up according to their seed.
41. Never therefore must a prudent well-trained man, who knows the Veda and its Angas and desires long life, cohabit with another's wife.
49. Those who, having no property in a field, but possessing seed-corn, sow it in another's soil, do indeed not receive the grain of the crop which may spring up.
50. If one man's bull were to beget a hundred calves on another man's cows, they would belong to the owner of the cows; in vain would the bull have spent his strength.

51. Thus men who have no marital property in women, but sow their seed in the soil of others, benefit the owner of the woman; but the giver of the seed reaps no advantage.

77. For one year let a husband bear with a wife who hates him; but after the lapse of a year let him deprive her of her property and cease to cohabit with her.

78-79. She who shows disrespect to a husband who is addicted to some evil passion, is a drunkard, or diseased, shall be deserted for three months and be deprived of her ornaments and furniture; but she who shows aversion towards a mad or outcast husband, a eunuch, one destitute of manly strength, or one afflicted with such diseases as punish crimes, shall neither be cast off nor be deprived of her property.

80. She who drinks spirituous liquor, is of bad conduct, rebellious, diseased, mischievous, or wasteful, may at any time be superseded by another wife.

88-89. To a distinguished, handsome suitor of equal caste should a father give his daughter in accordance with the prescribed rule, though she have not attained the proper age; but a maiden, though marriageable, should rather stay in the father's house until death than that he should ever give her to a man destitute of good qualities.

90-91. Three years let a damsel wait, though she be marriageable; but after that time let her choose for herself a bridegroom of equal caste and rank. If, being not given in marriage, she herself seeks a husband, she incurs no guilt, nor does he whom she weds.

95. The husband receives his wife from the gods; he does not wed her according to his own will; doing what is agreeable to the gods, he must always support her while she is faithful.

96. Women were created to be mothers, and men to be fathers; religious rites, therefore, are ordained in the Veda to be performed by the husband together with the wife.

101. Let mutual fidelity continue until death. This is the summary of the highest law for husband and wife.

102. Let man and woman, united in marriage, constantly exert themselves, that they may not be disunited and may not violate their mutual fidelity.

## CHAPTER X

### Castes

1. Let the three twice-born castes (varnas), discharging their prescribed duties, study the Veda; but among them the Brahmin alone shall teach it, not the other two; that is an established rule.

2. The Brahmin must know the means of subsistence prescribed by law for all, instruct the others, and himself live according to the law.

3. On account of his pre-eminence, on account of the superiority of his origin, on account of his observance of particular restrictive rules, and on account of his particular sanctification, the Brahmin is the lord of all castes (varnas).

4. The Brahmin, the Kshatriya, and the Vaisya castes (varnas) are the twice-born ones, but the fourth, the Shudra, has one birth only; there is no fifth caste.

5. In all castes (varnas), those children only which are begotten in the direct order on wedded wives, equal in caste and married as virgins, are to be considered as belonging to the same caste as their fathers

## Mixed Castes

6. Sons begotten by a twice-born man on wives of the next lower castes are similar to their fathers, but they are to be blamed on account of the fault inherent in their mothers.

8. From a Brahmin with the daughter of a Vaisya is born a son called an Ambashtha, with the daughter of a Shudra a Nishada, who is also called Parasava.

9. From a Kshatriya and the daughter of a Shudra springs a being called Ugra, resembling both a Kshatriya and a Shudra, ferocious in his manners and delighting in cruelty.

10. Children of a Brahmin by women of the three lower castes, of a Kshatriya by wives of the two lower castes, and of a Vaisya by a wife of the one caste below him are all six called base-born (apasada).

11. From a Kshatriya by the daughter of a Brahmin is born a son called according to his caste (jati) a Suta; from a Vaisya by females of the royal and the Brahmin castes spring a Magadha and a Vaideha.

12. From a Shudra are born an Ayogava, a Kshattri, and a Kandala, the lowest of men; by Vaisya, Kshatriya, and Brahmin females, sons who owe their origin to a confusion of the castes.

13. As an Ambashtha and an Ugra, begotten in the direct order on women one degree lower than their husbands are declared to be, even so are a Kshattri and a Vaidehaka, though they were born in the inverse order of the castes from mothers one degree higher than the fathers.

14. Those sons of the twice-born, begotten on wives of the next lower castes, who have been enumerated in due order, they call by the name Anantaras belonging to the next lower caste on account of the blemish inherent in their mothers.

24. By adultery committed by persons of different castes, by marriages with women who ought not to be married, and by the neglect of the duties and occupations prescribed to each, are produced sons who owe their origin to a confusion the castes.

45. All those tribes in this world, which are excluded from the community of those born from the mouth, the arms, the thighs, and the feet of Brahman, are called Dasyus, whether they speak the language of the Mlekkhas (barbarians) or that of the Aryans.

46. Those who have been mentioned as the base-born offspring (apasada) of Aryans, or as produced in consequence of a violation of the law (apadhvamsaga), shall subsist by occupations disdained by the twice-born.

47-49. To Sutas belongs the management of horses and of chariots; to Ambashthas, the art of healing; to Vaidehakas, the service of women; to Magadhas, trade; killing fish to Nishadas; carpenters' work to the Ayogava; to Medas, Andhras, Kunkus, and Madgus, the slaughter of wild animals; to Kshattris, Ugras, and Pukkakas, catching and killing animals living in holes; to Dhigvanas, working in leather; to Venas, playing drums.

50. Near well-known trees and burial-grounds, on mountains and in groves, let these tribes dwell, known by certain marks, and subsisting by their peculiar occupations.

51-56. But the dwellings of Kandalas and Svapakas shall be outside the village; they must be made Apapatras, and their wealth shall be dogs and donkeys. Their dress shall be the garments of the dead; they shall eat their food from broken dishes; black iron shall be their ornaments; and they must always wander from place to place. A man who fulfils a religious duty shall not seek intercourse with them; their transactions shall be among themselves; and their marriages with their equals. Their food shall be given to them by others (but not by Aryans) in a broken dish; at night they shall not walk about in villages and in towns; by day they may go about for the purpose of their work, distinguished by marks at the king's command, and they shall carry out the corpses of persons who have no relatives; that is a settled rule. By the king's order they shall always execute the criminals, in accordance with the law, and they shall take for themselves the clothes, the beds, and the ornaments of such criminals.

57-58, 61. A man of impure origin, who belongs not to any caste (varna) but whose character is not known, who, though not an Aryan, has the appearance of an Aryan, one may discover by his acts. Behavior unworthy of an Aryan – harshness, cruelty, and habitual neglect of the prescribed duties – betray in this world a man of impure origin. But that kingdom in which such bastards, sully the purity of the castes, are born, perishes quickly together with its inhabitants.

63. Abstention from injuring creatures, veracity, abstention from unlawfully appropriating the goods of others, purity, and control of the organs, Manu has declared to be the summary of the law for the four castes.

64-65. If a female sprung from a Brahmin [man] and a Shudra female bears children to one of the highest caste [a Brahmin man], the inferior tribe attains the highest caste within the seventh generation. Thus, a Shudra attains the rank of a Brahmin, and in a similar manner a Brahmin sinks to the level of a Shudra; but know that it is the same with the offspring of a Kshatriya or of a Vaisya.

66-68. If a doubt should arise . . . [as to the preeminence of a son of an Aryan father and a non-Aryan mother as opposed to a son of a Brahmin woman and a non-Aryan father], the decision is as follows: He who was begotten by an Aryan on a non-Aryan female may become like to an Aryan by his virtues; he whom an Aryan mother bore to a non-Aryan father is and remains unlike to an Aryan. The law prescribes that neither of the two shall receive the sacraments, the first being excluded on account of the lowness of his origin, the second because the union of his parents was against the order of the castes.

69. As good seed, springing up in good soil, turns out perfectly well, even so the son of an Aryan by an Aryan woman is worthy of all the sacraments.

### Occupations

74-75. Brahmins who are intent on the means of gaining union with Brahman and firm in discharging their duties, shall live by duly performing the following six acts, which are enumerated in their proper order: Teaching, studying, sacrificing for himself, sacrificing for others, making gifts, and receiving them are the six acts prescribed for a Brahmin.

76. But among the six acts ordained for him, three are his means of subsistence: (1) sacrificing for others, (2) teaching, and (3) accepting gifts from pure men.

77. Passing from the Brahmin to the Kshatriya, three acts incumbent on the former are forbidden [to the latter]: (1) teaching, (2) sacrificing for others, and (3) the acceptance of gifts.

78. The same are likewise forbidden to a Vaisya, that is a settled rule; for the lord of creatures (Prajapati) has not prescribed them for men of those two castes.

79. To carry arms for striking and for throwing is prescribed for Kshatriyas as a means of subsistence; to trade, to rear cattle, and agriculture for Vaisyas . . . .

80. Among the several occupations the most commendable are teaching the Veda for a Brahmin, protecting the people for a Kshatriya, and trade for a Vaisya.

81. But a Brahmin, unable to subsist by his peculiar occupations just mentioned, may live according to the law applicable to Kshatriyas; for the latter is next to him in rank.

82. If it be asked, how shall it be if he [a Brahmin] cannot maintain himself by either of these occupations?, the answer is, he may adopt a Vaisya's mode of life, employing himself in agriculture and rearing cattle.

83. But a Brahmin or a Kshatriya living by a Vaisya's mode of subsistence shall carefully avoid the pursuit of agriculture, which causes injury to many beings and depends on others.

85. But he who, through a want of means of subsistence, gives up strictness with respect to his duties, may sell, in order to increase his wealth, the commodities sold by Vaisyas . . . .

90-91. But he [a Brahmin] who subsists by agriculture may at pleasure sell unmixed sesame grains for sacred purposes, provided he himself has grown them and has not kept them long. If he applies sesame to any other purpose but food, anointing, and charitable gifts, he will be born again as a worm and, together with his ancestors, be plunged into the ordure of dogs.

92-93. By selling flesh, salt, and lac, a Brahmin at once becomes an outcaste; by selling milk he becomes equal to a Shudra in three days; but by willingly selling in this world other forbidden commodities, a Brahmin assumes after seven nights the character of a Vaisya.

95. A Kshatriya who has fallen into distress may subsist by all these means; but he must never arrogantly adopt the mode of life prescribed for his betters.

96. A man of low caste who through covetousness lives by the occupations of a higher one, the king shall deprive of his property and banish.

97. It is better to discharge one's own appointed duty incompletely than to perform completely that of another; for he who lives according to the law of another caste is instantly excluded from his own.

98. A Vaisya who is unable to subsist by his own duties may even maintain himself by a Shudra's mode of life, avoiding however acts forbidden to him, and he should give it up when he is able to do so.

99. But a Shudra, being unable to find service with the twice-born and threatened with the loss of his sons and wife through hunger, may maintain himself by handicrafts.

101-104. A Brahmin who is distressed through a want of means of subsistence and pines with hunger, but who is unwilling to adopt a Vaisya's mode of life and resolved to follow his own prescribed path, may act in the following manner: A Brahmin who has fallen into distress may accept gifts from anybody; for according to the law it is not possible to assert that anything pure can be sullied. By teaching, by sacrificing for, and by accepting gifts from despicable men Brahmins in distress commit no sin; for they are as pure as fire and water. He who, when in danger of losing his life, accepts food from any person whatsoever, is no more tainted by sin than the sky by mud.

112. However, a Brahmin who is unable to maintain himself should rather glean ears or grains from the field of any man; gleaning ears is better than accepting gifts, and picking up single grains is declared to be still more laudable.

115. There are seven lawful modes of acquiring property: (1) inheritance, (2) finding or friendly donation, (3) purchase, (4) conquest, (5) lending at interest, (6) the performance of work, and (7) the acceptance of gifts from virtuous men.

116. There are ten modes of subsistence permitted to all men in times of distress (1) Learning, (2) mechanical arts, (3) work for wages, (4) service, (5) rearing cattle, (6) traffic, (7) agriculture, (8) contentment with little, (9) alms, and (10) receiving interest on money.

121. If a Shudra, unable to subsist by serving Brahmins, seeks a livelihood, he may serve Kshatriyas, or he may also seek to maintain himself by attending on a wealthy Vaisya.

122. But let a Shudra serve Brahmins, either for the sake of heaven, or with a view to both this life and the next; for he who is called the servant of a Brahmin thereby gains all his ends.

123. The service of Brahmins alone is declared to be an excellent occupation for a Shudra; for whatever else besides this he may perform will bear him no fruit.

128. The more a Shudra, keeping himself free from envy, imitates the behavior of the virtuous, the more he gains, without being censured, exaltation in this world and the next.

## CHAPTER XII

### Transmigration

3. Action [karma], which springs from the mind, from speech, and from the body, produces either good or evil results; by action are caused the various conditions of men, the highest, the middling, and the lowest.
4. Know that the mind is the instigator here below, even to that action which is connected with the body and which is of three kinds, has three locations, and falls under ten heads.
  5. The three kinds of sinful mental action: (1) Coveting the property of others, (2) thinking in one's heart of what is undesirable, and (3) adherence to false doctrines.
  6. The four kinds of evil verbal action: (4) Abusing others, (5) speaking untruth, (6) detracting from the merits of all men, and (7) talking idly.
  7. The three kinds of wicked bodily action: (8) Taking what has not been given, (9) injuring creatures without the sanction of the law, and (10) holding criminal intercourse with another man's wife.
8. A man obtains the result of a good or evil mental act in his mind, that of a verbal act in his speech, that of a bodily act in his body.
9. In consequence of many sinful acts committed with his body, a man becomes in the next birth something inanimate; in consequence of sins committed by speech, a bird or a beast; and in consequence of mental sins he is reborn in a low caste.
10. That man is called a true tridandin in whose mind these three, (1) the control over his speech (vagdanda), (2) the control over his thoughts (manodanda), and (3) the control over his body (kayadanda), are firmly fixed.
11. That man who keeps this threefold control over himself with respect to all created beings and wholly subdues desire and wrath thereby assuredly gains complete success.
20. If the soul chiefly practices virtue and vice to a small degree, it obtains bliss in heaven, clothed with those very elements.
21. But if it chiefly cleaves to vice and to virtue in a small degree, it suffers, deserted by the elements, the torments inflicted by Yama [the lord of death].
22. The individual soul, having endured those torments of Yama, again enters, free from taint, those very five elements, each in due proportion.
23. Let man, having recognized even by means of his intellect these transitions of the individual soul, which depend on merit and demerit, always fix his heart on the acquisition of merit.
24. Know Goodness (sattva), Activity (rajas), and Darkness (tamas) to be the three qualities of the Self, with which the Great One always completely pervades all existences.
25. When one of these qualities wholly predominates in a body, then it makes the embodied soul eminently distinguished for that quality.
26. Goodness is declared to have the form of knowledge, Darkness of ignorance, Activity of love and hatred; such is the nature of these three which is all-pervading and clings to everything created.
39. I will briefly declare in due order what transmigrations in this whole world a man obtains through each of these qualities.
40. Those endowed with Goodness reach the state of gods; those endowed with Activity the state of men; and those endowed with Darkness ever sink to the condition of beasts. That is the threefold course of transmigrations.

41. But know this threefold course of transmigrations that depends on the three qualities to be again threefold, low, middling, and high, according to the particular nature of the acts and of the knowledge of each man.

**Darkness:**

42. Immovable beings, insects, both small and great, fishes, snakes, tortoises, cattle, and wild animals are the lowest conditions to which the quality of Darkness leads.

43. Elephants, horses, Shudras, despicable barbarians, lions, tigers, and boars are the middling states, caused by the quality of Darkness.

44. Karanas, Suparnas, hypocrites, Rakshasas, and Pisakas belong to the highest rank of conditions among those produced by Darkness.

**Activity:**

45. Ghallas, Mallas, Natas, men who subsist by despicable occupations, and those addicted to gambling and drinking form the lowest order of conditions caused by Activity.

46. Kings and Kshatriyas, the domestic priests of kings, and those who delight in the warfare of disputations constitute the middling rank of the states caused by Activity.

47. The Gandharvas, the Guhyakas, and the servants of the gods, likewise the Apsarases, all belong to the highest rank of conditions produced by Activity.

**Goodness:**

48. Hermits, ascetics, Brahmins, the crowds of the Vaimanika deities, the lunar mansions, and the Daityas form the first and lowest rank of the existences caused by Goodness.

49. Sacrificers, the sages, the gods, the Vedas, the heavenly lights, the years, the manes, and the Sadhyas constitute the second order of existences caused by Goodness.

50. The sages declare Brahma, the creators of the universe, the law, the Great One, and the Undiscernible One to constitute the highest order of beings produced by Goodness.

81. But with whatever disposition of mind a man forms any act, he reaps its result in a future body endowed with the same quality.

**Supreme Bliss**

83. Studying the Veda, practicing austerities, the acquisition of true knowledge, the subjugation of the organs, abstention from doing injury, and serving the Guru are the best means for attaining supreme bliss.

84-85. If you ask whether among all these virtuous actions performed here below there be one which has been declared more efficacious than the rest for securing supreme happiness to man, the answer is that the knowledge of the Soul [Atman = True Self] is stated to be the most excellent among all of them; for that is the first of all sciences, because immortality is gained through that.

86-87. Among those six kinds of actions enumerated above, the performance of the acts taught in the Veda must ever be held to be most efficacious for ensuring happiness in this world and the next. For in the performance of the acts prescribed by the Veda, all those others are fully comprised, each in its turn in the several rules for the rites.

88-90. The acts prescribed by the Veda are of two kinds: (1) such as procure an increase of happiness and cause a continuation of mundane existence (pravritta); and (2) such as ensure supreme bliss and cause a cessation of mundane existence (nivritta). Acts which secure the fulfillment of wishes in this world or in the next are called pravritta (such as cause a continuation of mundane existence); but acts performed without any desire for a reward, preceded by the acquisition of true knowledge, are declared to be nivritta (such as cause the cessation of mundane existence). He who persistently performs acts leading to future births (pravritta) becomes equal to the gods; but he who is intent on the performance of those causing the cessation of existence, nivritta indeed, passes beyond the reach of the five elements.

91. He who sacrifices to the Self alone, equally recognizing the Self in all created beings and all created beings in the Self, becomes independent like an autocrat and self-luminous.

95. All those traditions (smriti) and those despicable systems of philosophy that are not based on the Veda produce no reward after death, for they are declared to be founded on Darkness.

102. In whatever order a man who knows the true meaning of the Veda may dwell, he becomes – even while abiding in this world – fit for union with Brahman.

104. Austerity and sacred learning are the best means by which a Brahmin secures supreme bliss; by austerities he destroys guilt; by sacred learning he obtains the cessation of births and deaths.

125. He who thus recognizes the Self through the Self in all created beings becomes equal-minded towards all and enters the highest state, Brahman.

126. A twice-born man who recites these Institutes, revealed by Manu, will be always virtuous in conduct and will reach whatever condition he desires.