CHAPTER-VII

Practical wisdom of animals described in Fable Literature

One of the distinguishing features of a good fable is that it has a moral lesson at the end of each narration, and the reader is compelled to give it the same undeniable interpretation. It flows out so naturally which can be remembered easily.

It will, therefore, be seen that the teaching of the fables is not anti-life, but it teaches the art of life rather than a system of ethics. On the other hand, it promotes art. Morality should be an inherent part of the action which is of virtue and vice. The instruction conveyed by the fable is striking and effective. When studying the animal fables in Sanskrit literature like *Pañcatantra* and *Hitopadeśa*, everywhere one thing is found that the aim of these two great works is to inculcate the importance of a harmonious development of all the powers of man; to balance the needs and demands of the individual in society. So that the ethical, social, material and emotional aspects of personality may be integrated and lead to life that is lived wisely and well in the truest sense of these terms – which is called Nīti.

The *Pañcatantra* is a work that instructs Nīti. The purpose of these two works is to instruct to young and the old alike. Nīti applies at all levels. It is meant for all men and women.

Through the various animal fables found in these two (Sanskrit) works sets forth a much civilised view of life; a noble way of living which man can aspire to or desire it eagerly. Every fable in the *Pañcatantra* and the *Hitopadeśa* can still be applied to human character.
It is seen that a number of verses have been introduced in the *Pañcatantra* and the *Hitopadeśa*, which are taken from the great epics like the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*.

They are also taken from other authoritative works like the *Dharma śāstra* and *Nīti śāstra*. The verses have been quoted in order to justify the statements made by the characters. The characters are endowed with speech and reason of human beings. The reader always identifies with the characters and enjoys or suffered with them.

The lesson or moral of the *Pañcatantra* stories has nothing to do with an ethical imperative survive by outwitting the covert enemies. This secular moral — “Be wise and live” — “Outwit your enemies”—cannot be described as an ethical imperative. The imperatives of “Tantra” presuppose a world full of competition and the survival of the fittest. The author devices a new method of instruction through the fables.

“As an impression is made upon a raw earthen-pot can undergo no change afterwards – so (following the same principle) in this work, the science of conduct or (policy) is taught to the youths under the guise of stories”.

“*kathācalena bālānām nitistadiha kathyate*”

The fables teach moral principles in such a way that they do not go against the principles of the Dharma śāstra. In the stories of the *Pañcatantra* and the *Hitopadeśa* high morals itself is made an instrument of deceit and treachery.

There is a philosophical over tone as seen in the fables of the *Pañcatantra* and the *Hitopadeśa*. The *Pañcatantra* is mainly based on *Karma theory* for we come across a number of verses and stories in defence of the Karma theory, e.g. the story of ‘*the hunter and the pigeons*’.
A good illustration of this is the incident in the story of Citragrīva in the (Mitrasamprāptikam) chapter of the Pañcatantra.

At the request of Citragrīva the mouse-friend Hiranyaṅka proceeds to cut that part of the net which is holding the king Citragrīva. But the king says that Hiranyaṅka should cut that part of the net which is holding its servants. Hiranyaṅka reminds Citragrīva of worldly wisdom and that self-preservation is the first duty of a master and that the safety of the servants comes only in the second place.

But Citragrīva does not accept this advice. He refers to the Karma law and points out that good actions lead to heaven and bad ones lead us to hell. This good ness or badness of actions are not to be determined merely by worldly wisdom and expediency. This is illustrated by the pigeon. Citragrīva’s conduct on this occasion.

**Practical wisdom as found in the Mahābhārata and other animal fables in Sanskrit Literature**

The stories as found in the Sanskrit and other animal fable literature like the Pañcatantra, the Hitopadeśa and the Mahābhārata etc. relating to animal characters impart great valuable knowledge giving proper guidelines to conduct all aspects of human nature. It contains a fountain of "India’s Philosophical Wisdom" a fountain of nectar. It is said that anyone who imbibes the teachings of these books or works of wisdom, can face all the problems and situations in life with confidence.

The birds and beasts of India’s fable literature carry with them a vast stock of great practical wisdom for the benefit of the readers. In fact, the wise fable writers of India have transmit their hard gathered wisdom of
worldly realities through these animals for the dwellers of the human society of all ages.

The art of presenting the super mundane and mundane truths of great importance with the help of beasts and birds by wise men of ancient India is first noticed in a story of Satyakāma, a hermit’s son in the Čandogya Upaniṣad, where Satyakāma learns some very important spiritual lessons from the mouth of a bird and a bull, while returning from his Gurukula. The art has been nicely utilized in the post upaniṣadic period by the author of the Great Epic Mahābhārata to impart practical wisdom to worldly people through a number of fables. The art is certainly a highly entertaining medium for the receive of the wisdom.

In many ancient cultures, non-human forms of life, birds, and animals were believed to have super-human abilities and powers; to possess a special kind of wisdom and to bear a special relationship to the sacred.

In the Mahābhārata, the story of the ‘golden mongoose’ in the ‘Aśvamedhikā’ section of the Epic is of great didactic value particularly for the Indians who have been repeatedly advised to make gifts and offer adequate hospitality to incoming guests. The mongoose, whose body is partially golden, narrates his past experience of the charity and hospitality of a poor Brāhmaṇa family who lived in Kurukṣetra made a gift of a pound of maize flour and gave away the last morsel of the very small quantity of food to their guest and members of the family starved. But they earned extraordinary religion merits of their extraordinary act of charity and sacrifice. They would not keep over anything for the next day if they got more than they required for the day.

The mongoose which visited the dwelling of the Brāhmaṇa family became partially golden due to the grace of the mendacious act performed by the family.
Desirous of getting his body made of gold he has been trying every place when man perform great Yajñas and Penances. The intention of the ‘golden mongoose’ to visit that sacrificial ground of Yudhiṣṭhira, believing that “this sacrifice might come up to the standard, but it did not”. He regrets that even the great Aśvamedha sacrifice of Yudhiṣṭhira was not so great as the gift of flour which that Brāhmaṇa made to his guest. hence, it (the sacrifice of Yudhiṣṭhira) has failed to turn the other part of his golden, thereby suggesting that the making of sincerest gift and genuine hospitality is far superior even to great sacrifice, and every house-holder should stick to this religion.

In the Śāntiparvan of the Epic, again, there are two highly important fables which also prove the great practical wisdom of the animals concerned. They are animals in name only, but they represent some wise men of Epic India. In the first fable known as Vyāghragomāyu samvāda (Śāntiparvan.), Jackal which was a king in his previous birth and which now lives on a cremation ground discusses some very valuable matters of great practical wisdom. The wise jackal says to his fellow jackals that it is the self and not the ‘āśrama’ or the particular mode of life, say the life of an exotic, but kills a Brāhmaṇa, he does so at the instigators of his own self. Again, a man who does not live a particular way of life (āśrama), but makes a noble gift to worth person, he also does so at the inspiration of his self.

Thus, the āśrama is not in any way related his religious or irreligious deeds. The jackal dwell in the cremation ground but never ate the flesh or (dead) men like other members of his race, but always lived on fruits. The intelligent jackal at last cast off his body by sitting in prayā and proceeded to heaven as the reward of his good deeds on earth.

The tigress also in the same fable utters some words full of practical wisdom. She is unhappy with the behaviour of her son who rashly takes a
wrong decision against the jackal. She utters some of the important slokas (61-63). This means that, wicked individuals impute faults to even an honest person, moved by envy and rivalry. Enemies desirous of a quarrel cannot endure the elevation of an enemy brought about by his high feats. Faults are ascribed to even a person of pure soul engaged in penances.

With respect to even an ascetic living in the woods and employed in his own (harmless) acts, are raised three parties, viz, friends, neutral and foes. "They that are rapacious hate them that are pure. The idle hate the active. The unlearned hate the learned. The poor hate the rich. The unrighteous hate the righteous. The ugly hate the beautiful. Many amongst the learned, the unlearned the rapacious and the deceitful would falsely accuse an innocent person even if the latter happens to be possessed of the virtues and intelligence of Brahaspati himself."

In other fable of the Mahabharata already mentioned by us, a rat enters into friendship with a wild in order to save its own life from other strong enemies, a mongoose and an owl. The same story offers in the Kathasarit sagara also. The rat discusses with the cat some very important matters of great significance. The rat tells the cat which offers the hand of friendship to the rat that there are many enemies in the garb of friends in the world. Again, there are many friends appearing as enemies. In fact, there is neither any enemy nor any friend in this world. Thus, friends remain under different circumstances.

The rat further says - that friendship in which there is fear and which cannot be kept up without fear, should be maintained with great caution. No body is anybody's friend; nobody is anybody's well-wisher; persons become friends or foes only from motives of interest.

The rat again said to the cat that friend should be well examined. Foes also should be well studied. In this world, a task like this is regarded
by even the learned as a difficult one depending upon acute intelligence.
Friends assume the guise of foes; the foes assume the guise of friends.
When compacts of friendship are formed, it is difficult the parties to understand whether the other parties are really moved by lust and wrath.

The rat again points out some valuable advice, which are full of practical wisdom that there is no such thing as a foe, and there is no such thing in existence as a friend. It is force of circumstances that creates friends and foes. Both friends and foes arise from considerations of interest and gain. Friendship becomes changed into enmity in the course of time. A foe also becomes a friend. Self interest is very powerful. One should not repose trust upon a person undeserving of trust, nor should one trust too much a person deserving of trust.

Coming to the post epic period, we notice some other animals of Sanskrit fables also possessing a store-house of practical wisdom. Thus, we hear in the Tantrākhyāyikā that wicked serpent that it is waiting for the opportune moment when it will kill all the frogs. It says that intelligent men must wait for the proper moment when he can strike against the enemy.

Again, in the story of Valivadana (a monkey) and the foolish porpoise also, the monkey Valibadana proves that he is a store house of worldly wisdom.

We have already referred to several animals of the Pañcatantra which display their great practical wisdom. There are many other stories in the Pañcatantra which proves this character. In this context, we refer to the wise monkey of the story of king Candra and the monkey, and the intelligent monkey in the story of Vānaramakara kathā.

In the first story, it is illustrated that he who does a deed through greed and pays no heed to the result, meets with mortification like king Candra. The wise monkey correctly observes that there is constant quarrel...
between the royal cook and lamb intruding into the kitchen. The monkey wisely observes that some day all the monkeys would fall in some misfortune. The monkey was so clever that on one occasion while moving on the bank of a lake, it saw the footprints of animals entering into the lake but there was no footprints towards the opposite direction. It immediately understood that there was a demon inside the lake. Therefore, it tore a lotus stalk and drank water from the bank without stepping into the water.

The monkey was always afraid of the death of the monkeys in the hands of the king. It rightly knew that one day the cooks' would beat the incoming lambs with burning wood. Then the wool in the bodies of the lambs would burn. In that state if lambs entered into the stable, the fire would burn the horses. When the mishap would occur, doctors would treat the burning wounds of horses with fat of monkey as directed in the śālihotra śāstra, and the entire folk of monkeys moving in the royal palaces would be killed.

A second instance of such practical thinking is never read in any other book of the world.

For instance, in the fourth Book of Pancafantra about the 'clever monkey and the cunning crocodile'.

Let us now come to the story of the monkey Raktamukha and the crocodile in the fourth Book of Pañcatantra. The monkey even after being betrayed by the wicked crocodile, teaches him some lessons of worldly importance in the way of taunting him for his treachery.

The monkey says that nobody should throw a friend into the ocean on the advice of a wife however dear she may be to him. He condemns the crocodile for being hen-pecked. The crocodile, again, however, faithless he might be towards his benefactor, possesses enough worldly wisdom. The
crocodile realizes his mistake of trying to kill the monkey in a treacherous manner on the advice of his wife.

In this regards the monkey wisely says -

‘upakāriśu yah sādhuh sādhutve tasya ko guṇah
apakāriśu yah sādhuh sa sādhuh sadbhiruye ye’.

It means that a man remaining loyal to a benefactor cannot be described as a good man as he merely shows his loyalty as a reward for the benefit he derived from his friend. A good man in the true sense is he who shows favour to a man who is harmful.

In the story of monkey and the porpoise in the Kathāsāritsāgara it is observed that with an invitation the porpoise beguiled the monkey and induced him to come down into the water in order to fulfil its motive. The wise monkey ‘Valimukha’ while heard the dreadful speech of the porpoise, he immediately reflected that the porpoise is overpowered by infatuation for a female, and is ready to plot treachery against his friend he think – ‘will not a person possessed by a demon eat his own flesh with his teeth?’ So, with perfect presence of mind the monkey cleverly returned to the sea-shore and hardly saved his life from the wicked porpoise.

This story illustrates that ‘a wise person should place no confidence in a wicked person. How can he, who confides in a wicked person or a black cobra, enjoy prosperity?’ One can gain lost wealth, prestige and reputation but trust once betrayed can never be regained.

The story of ‘the Crane, the Snake and the Mongoose’ shows that the grieved Cranes to protect their nestlings from the snake took the advice of a crab and strewed pieces of fish from the dwelling of a mongoose as far as the hole of the snake. The mongoose following up the pieces of fish led
to the hole of the snake and killed him and ate the offspring. Here, each one is the natural enemy of another and there is no mercy.

The wisdom implies here that, ‘a deed done with an unrighteous mind is sure to bring calamity, therefore, one should do it with a righteous mind’, as the crane did to the snake.

In the story of ‘the Monkey, the Firefly and the Bird’\(^24\), the foolish monkey thought the ‘firefly is a real fire’ and while they tried to warm up themselves with the firefly, the bird Sūchimukha earnestly dissuaded them that the firefly is not ‘fire’ and need not fatigue themselves. But the monkeys did not desist and being annoyed they killed the bird.

So, one ought not to admonish him, who will not act on good advice. This story illustrates whoever says much to a person who despises good advice, incurs thereby misfortune like Sūchimukha from the ape and this is the **practical wisdom**.

‘Prudence indeed is power and who is devoid of prudence cannot do everything though he is powerful.’ This practical wisdom is reflected through two different stories in the *Kathāsarit sāgara*. Firstly, the wise hare device an expedient which reflects the wisdom that he is truly brave who does not become bewildered even in the time of calamity.

Though the **lion** is majestic and powerful in his own jungle yet, the lion being lack of prudence consented and followed the tiny **hare** to face his rival-lion into the well, where the fool was drowned because he believed its own reflection in the well to be a real lion. The hare escaped death by his wisdom and saved other animals also having delivered from death\(^25\).

In the first Book of the *Pañcākhyānaka*, also, under the frame story (*Lion and the bull*) we find some more knowledge of practical importance from some wise animals. Thus, in the story of ‘the wise hare and the lion’\(^26\)
we find that the raging lion in the wild woods was laid low by a humble hare.

“The hare bounded back, exultant to the assembly of animals and apprised them of all that had taken place and the happy outcome of his mission. Granted, the hare did succeed in luring the lion to his death, but it is still unwise on the part of a weak person to practice deceit on the high and mighty and hope to get away with it.”

Secondly, the sagacious makara with complete presence of mind and prudence had cut off the head of the wicked crane whose intellect was blinded with the smell of the flesh of makara.

In the story of frog ‘Gangadatta and the Cobra,’ ‘Priyadarśana’ the frog however foolish he might be was otherwise a wise being. He also possessed great practical knowledge which can be understood from a significant remark made by him about a hungry person. Gangadatta remarks:

“bubhuksitah kim na karuti pāpam kṣiṇā janā niśkaramā bhavan
tākhyaḥi bhadra priyadarśanasya na Gangadattāḥ punaret kiṣpam.

The wise says that one should never trust a hungry person and they have no sense of mercy.

Gangadatta’s wife also possesses similar wisdom. When the serpent killed every member of Gangadatta’s family, except his wife, Gangadatta started to cry. At that moment his wife wisely remarks:...........

‘kim krandasi durākranda svapakṣa kṣayakāraka
svapakṣasya kṣaye jāte ko nasnātā vabiṣyat’

When tears welled into his (Gangadatta’s) eyes, she opined that he himself had invited the destruction of his entire clan. He should have taught earlier that if he planned destruction of his own people he himself was
bound to be destroyed one day. Gangadatta’s wife remonstrated that in spite of he being so wise how could he take this foolish step to invite the snake into their home. She knows full well that the members of one’s family and its saviours in difficult time.

When all members of the family except some weak ones are already dead in the hands of the enemy, there is none to save others and their death is sure. Therefore, the very policy of inviting the enemy to kill one’s kith and kin is an unscrupulous and suicidal one.

In the *Pañcatantra* itself we see a very large number of animal characters which are full of great worldly wisdom. Even the ‘Cobra’ in the story of *Haridatta Brāhmaṇa and the Cobra* whose hood was broken by the Brāhmaṇa’s greedy son tells the Brāhmaṇa -

“bhinnāśliṣṭā to yā prītiṁra sā snehena vardhate.”

The Brāhmaṇa extended the hand of friendship once more to Cobra after the tragic death of his son who was bitten to death by the serpent. The Cobra refuses to accept it and says that once there is a serious sifs in the friendship between two persons, it can never be mended even by pouring out more love.

In the *Kākolūkīyaṃ* Section of the *Pañcatantra*, the owl minister Raktākṣa shows his great practical wisdom and resorts in an impregnable fort with his attendance in order to avoid any possible catastrophe coming from the side of the enemy. The owl king foolishly made friendship with the wicked crow Meghavarna. But Raktākṣa scented an imminent danger from the enemy. He discussed the thoughtless action of his master and its consequence and left with them before the catastrophe fell upon the owl king due to the clever trick played by Meghavarna on him.
In this regard, *Raktākṣa* wisely remarks:

\[\text{"anāgatam yah kurute sa subhate } \\
\text{sa socyate ya na karutyanāgatam"}^{32}\]

In the fables of the Epic and Post-Epic periods, even some otherwise negligible animals are also found as store-houses of great practical knowledge. They have imparted many lessons of practical importance to the future generations.

Thus, the fish *Anāgatavidhāta* in the *Mahābhārata* (*Śāntiparvan*), the *Pañcatantra*, and the *Hitopadeśa* leaves his paternal abode a lake in order to avoid his sure death in the hands of fisher men in the next day. *Pratyutpannamati*, another fish decided to take an appropriate instant decision the next day if the fisher men at all cast a net in the lake to catch fish. Both fish could save their lives due to their practical approach to the situation.\(^{33}\)

In the *Hitopadeśa*, we can gather some more knowledge of practical importance from some wise animals. Thus, in the story of *the washerman, the dog and the ass*, the dog rightly says that nobody ever interferes in others’ affairs. The dog was certainly a practical animal in the story. The dog was dissatisfied with the washer man for his maltreatment and refused to bark at the sight of a thief entering the households.\(^{34}\) However, the Ass seeing the selfishness of the Dog to its master remarks in a rage, that-

\[\text{"One should enjoy the heat of the sun } \\
\text{From (by exposing) the back-side, } \\
\text{Fire by the stomach, } \\
\text{A master with all one's heart and soul, } \\
\text{And the next world with absence of deceit (a pure heart)"}^{35}\]

The ass which was loyal to his master found the dog disloyal to him and started to bray loudly to arouse the master at the sight of a thief entering...
into the household. The washer man woke up and started to beat the ass mercilessly. The ass received the reward of interfering in others’ affairs.

The jackals Karaṭaka and Damanaka though very wicked, were also some other animals in the Pañcatantra, the Tantrākhāyikā, the Pañcākhāyāna and the Hitopadeśa who utter many words of great worldly wisdom.

In the frame story of the first book of the Pañcatantra we find Damanaka the shrewd jackal promised to Karaṭaka the other jackal (brother) that the bull (Sanjīvaka) will have to be killed by a trick. Relating the story of the “wise hare and the proud lion” the jackal uttered that nothing is impossible or un-achievable for a wise person. One who has talent, has strength. The jackal had depended on the strength of his talent and create a strife between the lion and the bull. Both the jackals (Karaṭaka and Damanaka) got jealous over their friendship because they were ignored by the king lion. The humiliated jackals were anxious to find the way to end the friendship between the lion and the bull to revive their subdued power.

So, the jackal when feel aggrieved at the lost of his position he pointed out some misdeed of the lion through the story of the Blue jackal that when a low person gets into some high position much above his capabilities he would always try to keep away from his own people to prove his high pedigree. Hence, one should not ignore or discards one’s own people and makes out siders close to him once he becomes powerful, for they are bound to feel aggrieved and would plot one’s downfall as happened in the case of Candarava.

The story also reveals the practical wisdom that, the sagacity of the jackal, who wore a blue coat of dignity and greatness, is merely an external part but it remains the jackal onward.
Again, one’s inherent nature can never be changed. It is rightly says that –

‘Whatever indeed would be one’s innate nature.
One would find it difficult to conquer it:
If a dog is made a king.
Does he not still gnaw at a shoe”\(^9\)

The relatives of jackal have acted in such a way that he is exposed.

In order to consolidate jackal’s lost position which depends on one’s own efforts he remarks that ‘no one in this world is generous towards; beloved by or wicked to another; it is man’s own actions alone lead him to greatness or the opposite. In this connection Damanaka wisely remarks:

>“āropyate śilāśaile yatnena mahatā yathā
nipātyate kṣaṇenādhatathātmā guṇadoṣayoh
yātyadho ‘dho brajati uccaīh narah svaīreva karmabhīh
kūpasya khanitā yatvat prākārasyeva kārakah”\(^{40}\)

That means- ‘just as a stone is raised to the top of a hill with great efforts but hurled down in a moment, so is the soul led to virtue or vice’.

Very much inclining to regain its lost position the jackal (Damanaka) opined that - “In this world even a brother would not hesitate to stab another one in the back for kingdom or position and wealth. If one is to think of morality all the time how could he improve his status in life?

>“The road to power is not paved with ideals and good conduct” etc.

In this regard the jackal pointed out some improper actions of the Lion king also (Pingalaka) who had abandoned his old servants and promoted the new comer, the stranger, bull ‘Sanjīvaka’.
Again one should understand how to make use of servants. The jackal uttered some wise and legal words (related to kingdom) such as, difference between master and servant and some qualities of a perfect individual, to his master with an intention to sow the seeds of discord between them which however draws the ‘practical wisdom’ or knowledge that is to be applied by any person.

Such as — “One should not do away with old servants.

And honour a new comer.

There is no greater fault than this,

for it breaks up the kingdom”41

The Jackal further exemplifies some wise sayings that,

• He is affectionate, who protects one from evil.

• That is an action, which is free from sins.

• That is wife, who is obedient.

• He is learned, who is honoured by the god.

• That is wealth, which does not produce arrogance.

• He is happy, who is free from desire.

• He is a friend, who is not artificial.

• He is a man, who is not subdued by his senses42.

These are the facts that a person could develop his ability in such a matter like, how to recognize a person and his nature of action, wealth that he possesses, and who ruled over his senses etc. All these developed traits of his mind help him to do his job well in his practical life.

In the Mitrabheda chapter of the Pañcatantra, the bull Sanjīvaka, on the other hand, shows much more learned having sharp practical knowledge about the treasury as well as of laws and rules which are relevant to running a kingdom.
There should be no conflict between the master and the servant, because any one who increases enmity without finding out about the strength of the enemy is insulted and defeated before his enemy. Here the jackal referring the story of ‘Pewit couple and the ocean’ he said that ‘one’ must not take enmity against a person without knowing his actual powers).

It cannot be denied that whether a person is powerful or powerless, the Gods themselves befriend those who are ready and persist in their efforts. When men are determined, gods come through for them to help.

It is rightly said ———

“sadodyatānām devā api sahāyayino bhavanti”

Also, “kṛte vinascaye pumsām, devā yānti sahāyatām”

It is true that, once conflicts develop between friends, it leads to destruction. Through the story of the lion and the poor camel, the author illustrates that when many wicked people get together, they do something, whatever it is proper or improper. Just the same way, many small animals including the crow had killed the huge camel.

The innocent camel, ‘Krathanaka’ had he been follow the rule “look before he leapt” he would not paid with his life for associating with and trusting the wicked and the cunning, because he emulated their (crow, tiger and jackal) examples, failed to see through their treachery and so came to grief.

The wicked may be small, but it is not right for good people to live amongst them. By any means they always try to kill the good person.

There is a wise saying that “truth can never be stifled in a crowd”. The story of the “Cunning stork and the Crab” gives the wisdom that those who try to harm others by fraud, meet a tragic end by themselves.
Again, "The faithful Mongoose" in the fifth book of the Pañcatantra gives a great wisdom that, 'without ascertaining the real facts of the matter one who yields to anger, is afterwards overcome with grief.'

Therefore, one should give up these six - passion, wrath and attachment, greed, pride and intoxication, when these are given up a man becomes happy.

In a story of the Hitopadesa, the author illustrates that a mean person should never be appointed to a rank of the great. A low person after obtaining a respectable position desires to kill the master.

Thus, in a story of Hitopadesa a sage has turned a mouse into a tiger. However, the sage always behaved the tiger as a mouse. In his part the mouse while humiliated by the sage and the villagers, the tiger distressed at heart and after being turned into a tiger got ready to kill the sage, its benefactor.

In the Third Book of the Pañcatantra (Kākolūkiyam) there is an illustrious 'practical wisdom' that "untruth, repeated over and again, becomes the truth" – which is learnt from a story of the "Three thagues and a pious Brāhmaṇa". The practical wisdom draws from this story that, "one who is deft at deceit can cheat anyone", just as those deceived the Brāhmaṇa who was taking a 'goat' but not the 'dog'. Even learned people may be easily deceived by the frauds, for it is well known that if a lie is repeated continuously, it can pass of as truth. It is true that while thinking of a remedy, a wise man should obviously think of the danger too.

Like animal fables the birds stories are also equally rich in practical wisdom as found in the Sanskrit fable literature like Pañcatantra, Hitopadesa and Mahābhārata etc.

In one story of Pañcākhyānaka, we can gather even more important practical wisdom from the story 'Self sacrificed doves and the
which is really heart touching. The story however originated in the Mahābhārata, it is found in the Pāñcatantra also. It shows that the guest is God’s incarnate, hence, unfortunate is the person who cannot feed a guest. It reminds every householder in respect of a guest—

"yah sayamatithim pṛāptam yathā sakti na pujayet
tasyāsao duskrtaṃ dattvā sukṛtam cāpaktvāt"

The female dove argued that “In this world behaves according to his in born nature, but it does not mean that one should forget his prime duty of entertaining a guest whoever it may be - cruel or kind”.

The story of “the wise vultures and the cunning cat” (Hitopadesa) shows how a blind vulture (Jaradvaga) fell victim to the cat’s flattery by trusting a complete stranger.

This tale draws the practical wisdom that any kind of friendship sought suddenly with a stranger is not wise thing.

However, the cunning cat tried to convince the blind vulture and reminds him some of the duties of a house-holder that——

“Even to an enemy-
Proper hospitality should be shown.
When he visits someone’s home,
The tree does not withdraw its shade over its cutter”.

Also,

“If there is no wealth, a guest should be honoured.
with at least kind words”.

The hare further says——

“If a guest returns
Disappointed in his hope from some one’s home.
He transfers his sins to the latter.
And takes away his merits.”
However, the character of vulture, ‘Dūradasṛfi’ is certainly the most exalted character endowed with supreme knowledge of worldly wisdom. The vulture (Dūradasṛ) plays a very important role in Peace and War section of the Hitopadeśa. Here, the vulture emerges as a wise bird and representative of wise diplomat, who tried to establish permanent peace between two warring groups of birds.

The author describes that at the end of the Sandhi part of the Hitopadeśa, this wise vulture preferred that there be peace called Kāṇcana concluded between these two kings in which ‘speaking of truth’ is the eminent future. Because, truth alone weighs more than thousand of horse sacrifices. The learned Dūradasṛ prefers –

“upahāṛatra tasmāt sandhiranyo na vidyate”

That is, ‘upahāra sandhi’ alone is the only real kind of peace out of four types of peace which are — Mutual obligation, friendship, relationship and gifts. Following the advice of the vulture both the bird kings accepted the peace plan.

Thus, the vulture as a great counselor proves that he is a store house of worldly wisdom and people should follow these practical wisdom for the benefit of his own.

The crow is another character in bird stories of Hitopadeśa. In the first part of the book (Mitralabha) the ‘crow’ proves itself as a wise bird. According to the crow, “Friendship should develop and tested and tried in times of need”. In this chapter, Hiranyaka, the mouse, was not willing to make friendship with a fickle-natured, wild crow. In this connection the mouse rightly says that “Inborn tendencies are hard to shed. Fire can never be cool. If one develops enmity due to some temporary cause, it can be ended. Their enmity (crow and mouse) is natural, and inborn enmity that cannot be washed away”.
But, *Laghupatakana* the crow was determined to make friendship with the mouse.

According to the crow-

"*Friendship with a wicked man is like jar of clay.*

*Easy to break and difficult to join.*

*While with a virtuous man it is like a jar of gold.*

*Hard to break and easy to join.*

The story of the “Two Swans and the Tortoise” in the *Pañcatantra* gives the wisdom that is to be practically followed by any individual that *patience is the key of any success.* If the tortoise would remain silent as advised by the swans, (*Saṁkata* and *Vikata*) then he could have saved his life. This story has a valuable lesson that ‘one who disregards the advice of one’s well-wishers always suffers heavily.’

In this way, it is observed that the Sanskrit fables related to bird and beasts are the store house of practical wisdom, which are applicable even in the modern society. All these wise sayings of the fables writers can influence the people as well as growing children to overcome the problems they faced in their lives.

In all these animal fables the prudence or practical wisdoms are extracted from the Sanskrit literature which are based mainly on five principles as follows –

1. *Creating bad-blood between two combined enemies.*
2. *Acquiring true and faithful friends.*
3. *Acquiring wisdom and using it tactfully.*
4. *Acting with determination when it is necessary.*
5. *Precautions for dealing with unforeseen problems.*
These five principles of practical wisdom, if observed carefully and intelligently, are sure to bring in safety, prosperity, true friends, tactful wisdom and success at every step in life.

The moral of these fables serves as a guide and gives an insight into human nature and teaches how to choose friends on the basis of their reliability and trustworthiness, how to meet obstacles in life wisely and tactfully and how to aim at living a life of peace and harmony in the face of hypocrisy and deceit.

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