

Aloofness not Desirable

Alongside the observance of all that I have said, bear one thing in mind. Never, for any length of time, keep yourself aloof from the people, for to do so is to keep oneself ignorant of their affairs. It develops in the ruler a wrong perspective and renders him unable to distinguish between what is important and what is not, between right and wrong, and between truth and falsehood. The ruler is after all human, and he cannot form a correct view of anything which is out of sight.

There is no distinctive sign attached to truth which may enable one to distinguish between the different varieties of truth and falsehood. The fact is that you must be one of two things. Either you are just or unjust. If you are just, then you will not keep yourself away from the people, but will listen to them and meet their requirements. But, if you are unjust, the people themselves will keep way from you.

What virtue is there in your keeping aloof? At all events aloofness is not desirable, especially when it is your duty to attend to the needs of the people. Complaints of oppression by your officers or petitions for justice should not prove irksome to you.

Make this clear to yourself that those immediately about and around you, will like to exploit their position to covet what belongs to others and commit acts of injustice. Suppress such a tendency in them.

Make a rule of your conduct never to give even a small piece of land to any of your relations. That will prevent them from causing harm to the interests of others and save you from courting the disapprobation of both God and man.

Deal justice squarely, regardless of whether one is a relation or not. If any of your relations or companions violates the law, mete out the punishment prescribed by law, however painful it might be to you personally, for it will be all to the good of the state. If at any time people suspect, that you have been unjust to them in any respect, disclose your mind to them and remove their suspicions. In this way, your mind will get attuned to the sense of justice and people will begin to love you. It will also fulfill your wish that you should enjoy their confidence.

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