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Negotiate life's path carefully

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When rivers have to be crossed, small animals can swim across and larger lightweight animals can swiftly walk across. But watch an elephant who is about to make the crossing. He does not step out briskly like other creatures. First he tests the riverbed for hardness or softness, making sure not to put his whole weight on his forefoot, then, when he is sure of his ground, he sets forth. Even once launched, his progress is slow for he is still afraid of becoming irremediably stuck in soft mud. He proceeds with caution, testing the riverbed at every step.

Who taught the elephant to do this? Surely it must have been God who gave him his instinct for survival. God has set this example to show us that when there are signs of danger in our path, we should not advance carelessly, but should move with similar caution gauging the nature of the "ground ahead".

Man is endowed with far greater brain power than the elephant. No one lights a fire near reserves of gun powder. No engine driver is careless in shunting petrol bogies. But most of us tend to forget that this is a principle to be followed in social life. Every society is comprised of a variety of people who create different types of environment. In every society there are "marshy places", there is "petrol" there are "thorns" and there are "pits". The wise are those who try to avoid such difficult, even explosive situations thus saving themselves from the trammels of confrontation.

Those who have some goal or the other before them never allow themselves to become enmeshed in such things because that would mean diversion from their objective. A purposeful man always looks ahead to the future, straight forward and not towards right or left. He always thinks of long-lasting consequences rather than momentary considerations.

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