

## 8. Tai Bo (太伯)

1. The Master said, “Tai Bo (太伯) can be considered to have attained the ultimate virtue. Three times he relinquished the rulership of the whole world. And yet, people had no knowledge of it and no way of praising him.”

太伯自居於野，三讓天下，而民不知，故曰至德。

2. The Master said, “When modesty is not grounded on Li, it becomes slavish; when cautiousness is not grounded on Li, it becomes cowardly; when courage is not grounded on Li, it becomes disruptive; when honesty is not grounded on Li, it becomes a snare. When the ruler genuinely serves his parents, people will rise up to ethical integrity. If he does not desert his old friends, people will not be shallow.”

謙不衷於禮則褻，慎不衷於禮則懦，勇不衷於禮則亂，信不衷於禮則罔。君親其大，民自敬；君不背舊，民不薄。

3. Master Zeng was ill. He summoned his students and said, “Uncover my feet. Uncover my hands. In the Poems, it is said, ‘I fear and I tremble; as if I am on the verge of a deep water; as if I tread on a wafer-thin ice.’ I know that from henceforth I am released from this, my dear students!”

曾子病，召弟子曰：「履我，袒我。詩云：『戰戰兢兢，如臨深淵，如履薄冰。』吾知自今以往，吾可以無所懼矣。」

4. Master Zeng was ill. Meng Jing Zi (孟敬子) paid a visit. Master Zeng spoke thus: “When a bird is about to die, its sound becomes sad. When a man is about to die, his speech becomes good. A noble man will think highly of these three in his pursuit of the Way: When you move about, you should avoid being rough or lazy. You should maintain a determined look so that you can inspire confidence. When you speak, you should avoid being vulgar and rowdy. As for complying with the ceremonial details, that is what a steward is there for.”

曾子病，孟敬子往。曾子曰：「鳥將死，鳴也哀；人將死，言也善。君子無所苟，無所苟，無所苟。行，無苟；言，無苟；禮，無苟。」

5. Master Zeng said, “While he was capable he nevertheless

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11. The Master said, "You may have superb talents like the Duke of Zhou. But if you are arrogant and condescending, the

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13. The Master said, "With full confidence, proceed to learning. Have the deadly determination to abide by the good Way. If the country is dangerous, do not enter. If the country is turbulent, do not stay. If the Way prevails in the world, come to the surface. If the Way is lost, lie low. If the country has the Way and you have no wealth or honour, you should be ashamed. If the country has lost the Way and you still have wealth or honour, you should be ashamed."

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18. The Master said, "How majestic! Shun and Wu, they had the

whole world but they did not exploit it."

19. The Master said, "Great indeed was the way Yao governed! How majestic! Only the Heaven is great; only Yao could emulate the greatness. Vast and serene! People had no words to describe it. Majestic is he who brought his endeavour to completion! Brilliant is he who had the splendid civilization!"

20. Shun had five ministers and he could govern the whole world. King Wu [周 武王] had also said, "I only have ten capable ministers." The Master said, "Talent is hard to get by. What else could be the reason? During the period between Tang and Wu, those few managed to achieve the prosperity. [As for the reign of King Wu], not counting the woman, nine people managed it in fact. Having conquered two thirds of the whole world, Zhou nevertheless respectfully served Yin. The virtue of Zhou can certainly be called the ultimate of the virtues."

21. The Master said, "About Wu, I have nothing to reproach. Simple were his food and drinks. But he served ghosts and spirits to the utmost. Ragged were his clothes. But his ceremonial robe and cap were of utmost beauty. Ignoble were his palace and residence. But he devoted all his force to build canals and aqueducts. About Wu, I have nothing to reproach."