

To govern (政 zheng) and 孝(xiao)

1. The Night Sky

- The Master said, “To govern with virtue is like being the Pole Star. You stay put and all the stars venerate you.” 子曰：「為政以德，譬如北辰，居其所而眾星共之。」(2.1)
- Our illustrious father the King Wen greatly promoted virtue (德) and cautiously applied punishments (刑). 周文王為西伯伯也，自此下歷古無及焉。 2

2. Everything in its right place: 各安其位

- The Master said, “Govern people with politics and align them with punishments, they will evade and have no shame. Govern them with virtue and align them with Li, they will have decency and things will be in the right place (位).” 子曰：「政者，正也。君子以正己而正人，己正，則人聽命。政者，正也。君子以正己而正人，己正，則人聽命。」(2.3)
- Duke Jing of Qi asked about governing. Confucius said, “A ruler should be a ruler, a minister should be a minister, a father should be a father and a son should be a son.” The Duke said, “Lovely answer! Suppose a ruler is not a ruler, a minister is not a minister, a father is not a father and a son is not a son, then even if there may be grains of millet, how can I eat them?” 齊景公問政於孔子。孔子對曰：「君君，臣臣，父父，子子。」公曰：「善哉！信如君不君，臣不臣，父不父，子不子，雖有粟，吾知天下之無食也。」

3. Proper punishments (刑)

- **Pre-confucian sources:**
 - If governing is done properly, people will obey.

- With upright application of proper punishments, you should guide and govern people to make them splendid 齊之以刑，民無不敬(刑，民 3)

- Duke Ai asked, “What should I do to make people obey?” Confucius replied, “If you promote and employ the straight to grind out the crooked, people will obey. If you promote and employ the crooked to grind out the straight, people will not obey.” 直躬(2.19)

[illegible]

□□□□(13.3)

- The Master said, “A noble man cherishes virtue, a small man cherishes land. A noble man is mindful of punishment, a small man is mindful of benefit.”
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- **Post-confucian sources:**

- Through an upright application of punishments, let the people have the sense of shame. 刑罰之施 (刑, 罰 57)
- Li does not reach down to the rank and file. Punishment does not reach up to the magnates. 刑不上大夫 (刑, 罰 68). ??
- [When Confucius was appointed the Chief Law Enforcement Officer of Lu, he had executed a magnate Shao Zheng Mao (少正卯) on charges of corruption.] The words got around and a few months later, merchants selling pork or mutton did not try to rip off the customers; men and women used different sides of a road; no one touched lost or misplaced items in the street; and visitors from foreign countries obtained what they wanted from the officials without bribing them. (刑, 罰 19)

4. xiao (孝) in the context of Zhou feudalism

- Master You said, “A person who loves his parents and brothers and yet loves to attack his superiors is hard to find. A person who does not love to attack his superiors and yet loves to start a rebellion is unheard of. A noble man will strive to get the basics properly done. When the root is solidly established, the Way will flourish. Respect for parents and affection for brothers are the root of ethical integrity.” 孝悌為仁之本也

[illegible]

- The Master said, “When your father is alive, you should observe what he intends. When he is dead, you should observe what he did. If you do not change your father’s way for three years, you can be called a dutiful son. 〇〇〇

[illegible]

- Zi Zhang said, “In the Documents, there is a passage ‘Gao Zong did not speak for three years when his father died.’ What does that mean?” The Master answered, “Not only Gao Zong, but all rulers in olden days were like that. When a ruler dies, officials reported to the Prime Minister and the governing was done by the Prime Minister’s order. This continues for three years.” 〇〇〇〇

(14.40)

- (司馬, 卷 23): When the Emperor Xiao Yi died, his son Wu Ding [=Gao Zong] was established as the new emperor. Emperor Wu Ding wanted to rejuvenate Yin but he could not secure his aides. For three years, he did not speak. He let the governing be done by the Prime Minister's decisions and observed the trends of the country. 帝崩，子武丁立。武丁欲復興殷，不能得助。三年不語。政由冢宰，而觀國之勢。

- Master Zeng said, “I heard the Master saying as follows: Lord Meng Zhuang’s love for his parents can be emulated by others. But he did not replace his father’s ministers and he did not change his father’s policies. That is difficult to emulate.” 曾子聞之曰：『吾聞夫子之言曰：孟莊子之愛親，可以效之。然不更其父之政，不更其父之臣，此難及也。』

□□□□□□□□ (19.18)

- cf. Meng Zi's misunderstanding: When a ruler dies, the new ruler would let the Prime Minister do the governing. The new ruler would eat porridge, his face dark with sorrow. He keeps wailing upon acceding to the throne. Officials down to the lowest grade dare not fail to grieve. 齊宣王問孟子曰：「新君即位，百官皆哭，何也？」（齊，宣王 2）

- Confucius' own remarks about mourning period: Three year mourning is normally practised everywhere. (17.21)

5. Honesty (□)

- Duke She (齊) told Confucius, “In my village, there is a very honest person. When his father stole a sheep, he testified against it.” Confucius said, “In my village, honesty is different. A father may cover up his son’s deed. A son may cover up his father’s deed. Honesty can be there.” 齊景公問政於孔子。孔子曰：「君君，臣臣，父父，子子。」公曰：「善哉！信如君不君，臣不臣，父不父，子不子，雖有甲兵，無益於治。夫力不足者，中於天下。」(13.18)
- Duke She asked Zi Lu about Confucius. Zi Lu ignored him. The Master said, “Why didn’t you say that he is the kind of man who would forget about eating when he is outraged, forget his worries when he is happy and he does not know that old age will eventually get to him.” 齊景公問政於孔子。孔子對曰：「君君，臣臣，父父，子子。」公曰：「善哉！信如君不君，臣不臣，父不父，子不子，雖有甲兵，無益於治。夫力不足者，中於天下。」(7.19)
- Duke She asked about governing. The Master said, “If you make people near you happy, far away people will come to you.” 齊景公問政於孔子。孔子對曰：「君君，臣臣，父父，子子。」公曰：「善哉！信如君不君，臣不臣，父不父，子不子，雖有甲兵，無益於治。夫力不足者，中於天下。」(13.16)

What did Confucius say about honesty?

- One should live with honesty. If you live crookedly, all you can manage, if lucky, is to avoid being caught.” 子曰：“無巧詐，無阿諛，無諂媚，無隱情，無曲諫，無諛諂，無諂諂，無諛諂，無諛諂（《論語》6.19）
- The Master said, “There are three types of helpful friends and three types of harmful friends. Honest friends, sympathetic friends and erudite friends are beneficial. Bigoted friends, slippery friends and silver-tongued friends are harmful.” 子曰：「有教朋友三，無教朋友三。教友，直、信、諷也；無教友，諂、諛、佞也。」（《論語》16.4）
- Zi Zhang asked, “What should an officer do to become a successful person?” The Master said, “What do you mean by ‘success’?” Zi Zhang answered, “Renowned in the

country, renowned in the family.” The Master said, “That is a renown. It is different from ‘success’. A successful person is honest in his substance and is fond of righteousness. He cautiously observes people’s speeches and appearances. He is considerate to people who are below him. Such a person is a success wherever he may be. A renowned person puts on an appearance of being ethical but his actions are against it. He remains and indulges in his position without self reflection. Such a person is bound to be renowned in the country and in the family.” 名者，實之賓也，不可以不重。夫苟實，則名從之。故君子有言則忠，有行則信，小人則不然。小人則有言則詐，有行則詐，故君子有言則忠，有行則信，小人則不然。小人則有言則詐，有行則詐，故君子有言則忠，有行則信，小人則不然。 (Lunyu 12.20).

- When honesty is not in accordance with Li, it becomes a snare. 名者，實之賓也，不可以不重。 (Lunyu 8.2),
- When you cherish honesty and does not cherish learning, you end up in a straight jacket. 名者，實之賓也，不可以不重。 (Lunyu, 17.8)
- Learning will make you overcome inflexibility. 名者，實之賓也，不可以不重。 (Lunyu 1.8)
- Zi Gong said, “Does a noble man also have hatred?” The Master said, “Of course. He hates those who speak ill of others. He hates those who live a lowly life and slander superior people. He hates those who have courage and yet fail to abide by Li. He hates those who are bold and yet have a closed mind.” The Master then said, “Ci (齊), do you also have hatred?” Zi Gong replied, “I hate those who beat around the bush and treat it as wisdom. I hate those who are rude and think that they are courageous. I hate those who rat on others and think that they are honest.” 名者，實之賓也，不可以不重。 (Lunyu 17.24)
- Modern debates about Lunyu 13.18 largely miss the complexity of honesty. Instead, they were lost in the maze created by introducing xiao (孝), ren (仁) and criminal procedural technicalities into the discussion:
 - H Rosemont, R Ames, “Family Reverence (xiao 孝) as the Source of Consummatory Conduct (ren 仁)” Dao, 7

(1), 9-19 (2008)

- Xiaomei Yang, "Reframing the Issue in 13.18 of the 'Analects of Confucius': Family Privileges in Criminal Litigation and the Confucian Insight", Dao, 23(3), 377-395 (2024)

6. Mencius (372-289 BCE), Warring States Period (475-221 BCE), "xiao (孝) fundamentalism"

- Emperor Shun (舜) (legendary, 2294-2184)
- His father Gu Sou (瞽叟)
- Justice Minister Gao Yao (皋陶)
- Gu Sou commits a murder and is arrested. Shun smuggles out Gu Sou. Shun and Gu Sou escape to a seaside town and they live happily ever after.
- Ethical Black Hole (悖论, 孟子 35; 孟子 1-3)

Xiao, Di (孝, 弟) should apply beyond the family

- Lord Ji Kang asked, "What should I do to encourage people to be respectful and loyal?" The Master said, "Face them with splendour, they will be respectful. Show them filial love and compassion, they will be loyal. Take the good examples to teach those who are less able, that is to encourage." (2.20)
- Someone said to Confucius, "Sir, why are you not engaged in governing?" The Master said, "In the Documents, it is said, 'Filial love and brotherly love. Apply them to governing. (孝悌也者 民之所由 歸也).'" What I do is also governing. Is it not governing?" (2.21)
- The Master said, "Hey guys, when you are at home, have filial love (孝 xiao). When you are outside, have brotherly love (弟 di). Be earnest and trustworthy. Comprehensively love all living beings but closeness

should be based on ethical integrity. Conduct should come first. Then, study culture and civilisation when you have energy to spare.” (1.6)

- Si Ma Niu was unhappy and said, "Everybody has brothers. But I am all alone." Zi Xia said, "I heard thus: Life and death take their course as ordained. Wealth and poverty are made in Heaven. A noble man will tread cautiously and will not make mistakes. A noble man will respect people and abide by Li. If you conduct yourself in this manner, within the four seas, everyone is your brother. How can a noble man worry about not having a brother?" 吾聞之曰：死生有命，富貴在天。君子慎乎其所，敬乎其所。小人則不然，一至於此。此言君子之慎也。(12.5)
- [Actually, Si Ma Niu had a brother, 卞 Huan Tui, who attempted to assassinate Confucius. Analect 7.23. Zuo Zhuan, Duke Ai, 14]