**CONFUCIUS, *The Analects***

**c. 479–221 B.C.E.**

1. The philosopher Yu said, “They are few who, being filial and fraternal, are fond of offending against their superiors. There have been none, who, not liking to offend against their superiors, have been fond of stirring up confusion…”

1. The Master said, “To rule a country of a thousand chariots, there must be reverent attention to business, and sincerity; economy in expenditure, and love for men; and the employment of the people at the proper seasons.”

1. The Master said, “A youth, when at home, should be filial, and, abroad, respectful to his elders. He should be earnest and truthful. He should overflow in love to all, and cultivate the friendship of the good. When he has time and opportunity, after the performance of these things, he should employ them in polite studies.”

1. Tsze-hsia said, “If a man withdraws his mind from the love of [beautiful women], and applies it as sincerely to the love of the virtuous; if, in serving his parents, he can exert his utmost strength; if, in serving his prince, he can devote his life; if, in his intercourse with his friends, his words are sincere: although men say that he has not learned, I will certainly say that he has.”

1. The philosopher Tsang said, “Let there be a careful attention to perform the funeral rites to parents, and let them be followed when long gone with the ceremonies of sacrifice; then the virtue of the people will resume its proper excellence.”

1. The Master said, “He who exercises government by means of his virtue may be compared to the north polar star, which keeps its place and all the stars turn toward it.”

1. The Master said, “If the people be led by laws, and uniformity sought to be given them by punishments, they will try to avoid the punishment, but have no sense of shame. If they be led by virtue, and uniformity sought to be given them by the rules of propriety, they will have the sense of shame, and moreover will become good.”

1. The Duke Ai asked, saying, “What should be done in order to secure the submission of the people?” Confucius replied, “Advance the upright and set aside the crooked, then the people will submit. Advance the crooked and set aside the upright, then the people will not submit.”

1. Chi K’ang asked how to cause the people to reverence their ruler, to be faithful to him, and to go on to nerve themselves to virtue. The Master said, “Let him preside over them with gravity; then they will reverence him. Let him be final and kind to all; then they will be faithful to him. Let him advance the good and teach the incompetent; then they will eagerly seek to be virtuous.”

1. The Master said, “If the will be set on virtue, there will be no practice of wickedness.”

The Master said, “Riches and honors are what men desire. If they cannot be obtained in the proper way, they should not be held. Poverty and meanness are what men dislike. If they cannot be avoided in the proper way, they should not be avoided.”

1. The Master said, “In serving his parents, a son may remonstrate (*argue*) with them, but gently; when he sees that they do not incline to follow his advice, he shows an increased degree of reverence, but does not abandon his purpose; and should they punish him, he does not allow himself to murmur.”

1. Fan Ch’ih asked what constituted wisdom. The Master said, “To give one’s self earnestly to the duties due to men, and, while respecting spiritual beings, to keep aloof from them, may be called wisdom.”

1. The Master said, “The superior man, extensively studying all learning, and keeping himself under the restraint of the rules of propriety, may thus likewise not overstep what is right.”

1. The Master’s frequent themes of discourse were the Odes, the History ,and the maintenance of the Rules of Propriety. On all these he frequently discoursed.

1. The Master was wishing to go and live among the nine wild tribes of the east. Some one said, “They are rude. How can you do such a thing?” The Master said, “If a superior man dwelt among them, what rudeness would there be?”

1. Chi Lu asked about serving the spirits of the dead. The Master said, “While you are not able to serve men, how can you serve their spirits?” Chi Lu added, “I venture to ask about death?” He was answered, “While you do not know life, how can you know about death?”

1. Yen Yuan asked about perfect virtue. The Master said, “To subdue one’s self and return to propriety, is perfect virtue. If a man can for one day subdue himself and return to propriety, all under heaven will ascribe perfect virtue to him.”

1. Chung-kung asked about perfect virtue. The Master said, “It is, when you go abroad, to behave to every one as if you were receiving a great guest; to employ the people as if you were assisting at a great sacrifice; not to do to others as you would not wish done to yourself; to have no murmuring against you in the country, and none in the family.”

1. Chi K’ang asked Confucius about government. Confucius replied, “To govern means to rectify. If you lead on the people with correctness, who will dare not to be correct?”

1. Truly, if the ruler is not a ruler, the subject not a subject, the father not a father, the son not a son, then even if there be grain, would I get to eat it?

1. The Master said, “Of all people, girls and servants are the most difficult to behave to. If you are familiar with them, they lose their humility. If you maintain a reserve toward them, they are discontented.”

Source: Confucius, *The Analects*, translated by James Legge (1893).