

"And yet the men of the world continue to criticize, saying, 'If one takes no thought for what is beneficial or harmful to one's parents, how can this be called filial?'"

Mozi said, "Let us examine for a moment the way in which a filial son plans for the welfare of his parents. When a filial son plans for his parents, does he wish others to love and benefit them, or does he wish others to hate and injure them? It stands to reason that he wishes others to love and benefit his parents. Now if I am a filial son, how do I go about accomplishing this? Do I first make it a point to love and benefit other men's parents, so that they in return will love and benefit my parents? Or do I first make it a point to hate and injure other men's parents, so that they in return will love and benefit my parents? Obviously, I must first make it a point to love and benefit other men's parents, so that they in return will love and benefit my parents. So if all of us are to be filial sons, can we set about it in any other way than by first making a point of loving and benefiting other men's parents? And are we to suppose that the filial sons of the world are too stupid to be capable of doing what is right? . . .

"Now universal love and mutual benefit are both profitable and easy beyond all measure. The only trouble, as I see it, is that no ruler takes any delight in them. If the rulers really delighted in them, promoted them with rewards and praise, and prevented neglect of them by punishments, then I believe that people would turn to universal love and mutual benefit as naturally as fire turns upward or water turns downward, and nothing in the world could stop them."

[*Mozi jicheng* 4:10b-11b, 12b-14a, 15a-b, 18a-b, 20a  
— adapted from Watson, *Mo Tzu*, pp. 39-42, 44, 46-47, 49]

#### SECTION 26: THE WILL OF HEAVEN (PART 1)

Mozi said, "The gentlemen of the world today understand small matters but not large ones. How do we know this? We know it from the way they conduct themselves at home. If at home a man commits some offense against the head of the family, he may still run away and hide at a neighbor's house. And yet his parents, brothers, and friends will all join in warning and admonishing him, saying, 'You must be more cautious! You must be more circumspect! When you are living at home, how can it be right for you to offend the head of the family?'"

"This is true not only of a man who lives at home but of a man who lives in a state as well. If a man living in a state commits some offense against the ruler of the state, he may still run away and hide in a neighboring state. And yet his parents, brothers, and friends will all join in warning and admonishing him, saying, 'You must be more cautious! You must be more circumspect! How can you live in a state and still consider it right to offend the ruler of the state?'"

"If people warn and admonish a man this sternly when he still has someplace

to run away and hide, how much more sternly should they feel obliged to warn and admonish him if there is no place for him to run away and hide! There is a saying that goes, 'If you commit a crime here in the broad daylight, where will you run and hide?' There is no place to run and hide, for Heaven will spy you out clearly even in the forest, the valley, or the dark and distant place where no one lives! And yet with regard to Heaven the gentlemen of the world for some reason do not know enough to warn and admonish each other. Thus I know that the gentlemen of the world understand small matters but not large ones.

"Now what does Heaven desire and what does it hate? Heaven desires rightness and hates what is not right. Thus if I lead the people of the world to devote themselves to rightness, then I am doing what Heaven desires. If I do what Heaven desires, then Heaven will do what I desire. Now what do I desire and what do I hate? I desire good fortune and prosperity and hate misfortune and calamity. If I do not do what Heaven desires and instead do what Heaven does not desire, then I will be leading the people of the world to devote themselves to what will bring misfortune and calamity.

"How do I know that Heaven desires rightness and hates what is not right? In the world, where there is rightness there is life; where there is no rightness there is death. Where there is rightness there is wealth; where there is no rightness there is poverty. Where there is rightness there is order; where there is no rightness there is disorder. Now Heaven desires life and hates death, desires wealth and hates poverty, desires order and hates disorder. So I know that Heaven desires rightness and hates what is not right.

Moreover, rightness is what is right. Subordinates do not decide what is right for their superiors; it is the superiors who decide what is right for their subordinates. Therefore the common people devote their strength to carrying out their tasks, but they cannot decide for themselves what is right. There are gentlemen to do that for them. The gentlemen devote their strength to carrying out their tasks, but they cannot decide for themselves what is right. There are ministers and officials to do that for them. The ministers and officials devote their strength to carrying out their tasks, but they cannot decide for themselves what is right. There are the three high ministers and the feudal lords to do that for them. The three high ministers and the feudal lords devote their strength to managing the affairs of government, but they cannot decide for themselves what is right. There is the Son of Heaven to do that for them. But the Son of Heaven cannot decide for himself what is right. There is Heaven to decide that for him. The gentlemen of the world have no difficulty in perceiving that the Son of Heaven decides what is right for the three high ministers, the feudal lords, the gentlemen, and the common people. But the people of the world are unable to perceive that Heaven decides what is right for the Son of Heaven. . . .

"How do we know that Heaven loves the people of the world? Because it

enlightens them universally. How do we know that it enlightens them universally? Because it possesses them universally. How do we know that it possesses them universally? Because it accepts sacrifices from them universally. Because within the four seas, among all the people who live on grain,<sup>3</sup> there are none who do not feed their sacrificial oxen and sheep, fatten their dogs and pigs, prepare clean offerings of millet and wine, and sacrifice to the Lord-on-High and the spirits. Since Heaven possesses all the cities and people, how could it fail to love them?

"Moreover, I say that he who kills one innocent person will invariably suffer one misfortune. Who is it that kills the innocent person? It is man. And who is it that sends down the misfortune? It is Heaven. If Heaven did not love the people of the world, then why would it send down misfortune simply because one man kills another? Thus I know that Heaven loves the people of the world. . . ."

Mozi said, "The intent of Heaven is to me like a compass to a wheelwright or a square to a carpenter. The wheelwright and the carpenter use their compass and square to measure what is round or square for the world, saying, 'What fits these measurements is right; what does not fit them is wrong.' Now the books of the gentlemen of the world are too numerous to be listed, and their sayings too many to be examined in full. In the higher circles the gentlemen lecture to the feudal lords, and in lower circles they expound to men of honor. And yet on matters of humaneness and rightness they are far apart. How do I know? Because I measure them by the clearest standard in the world [i.e., the intent of Heaven]."

[*Mozi jicheng* 7:1a-3a, 4a-b, 5a — adapted from Watson, *Mo Tzu*, pp. 78-80, 81-83]

#### SECTION 27: THE WILL OF HEAVEN (PART 2)

Mozi said, "The intent of Heaven does not desire that large states attack small ones, that large families overthrow small ones, that the strong oppress the weak, the cunning deceive the stupid, or the eminent lord it over the humble. This is what Heaven does *not* desire. But this is not all. It desires that among men those who have strength will work for others, those who understand the Way will teach others, and those who possess wealth will share it with others. It also desires that those above will diligently attend to matters of government, and those below will diligently carry out their tasks. If those above diligently attend to matters of government, then the state will be well ordered. If those below diligently carry out their tasks, then there will be enough wealth and goods."

[*Mozi jicheng* 7:6b — adapted from Watson, *Mo Tzu*, pp. 85-86]

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3. I.e., the Chinese, as opposed to the nomadic tribes surrounding China.

SECTION 39: AGAINST CONFUCIANS (PART 2)<sup>4</sup>

"The Confucians say, 'There are degrees to be observed in treating relatives as relatives, and gradations to be observed in honoring the worthy.'<sup>5</sup> They prescribe differences to be observed between close and distant relatives and between the honored and the humble. Their code of rites says, 'Mourning for a father or mother should last three years; for a wife or eldest son, three years; for a paternal uncle, brother, or younger son, one year; and for other close relatives, five months.' Now if the length of the mourning period is determined by the degree of kinship, then close relatives should be mourned for a long period and distant relatives for a short one. Yet the Confucians mourn the same length of time for a wife or eldest son as for a father or mother. And if the length of the mourning period is determined by the degree of honor due, then this means that the wife and eldest son are honored the same as the father and mother, while the paternal uncles and brothers are placed on the same level as younger sons! What could be more perverse than this?<sup>6</sup> . . .

"When a Confucian takes a wife, he goes to fetch her in person. Wearing a formal black robe, he acts as his own coachman, holding the reins and handing her the cord by which to pull herself up into the carriage, as though he were escorting an honored parent. The wedding ceremonies are conducted with as much solemnity as the sacrifices to the ancestors. High and low are turned upside down, and parents are disregarded and scorned. Parents are brought down to the level of the wife, and the wife is exalted at the expense of service to the parents. How can such conduct be called filial? . . .

"In addition, the Confucians believe firmly in the existence of fate and propound their doctrine, saying, 'Long life or early death, wealth or poverty, safety or danger, order or disorder are all decreed by the ordinance of Heaven<sup>7</sup> and cannot be modified. Failure and success, rewards and punishments, good fortune and bad, are all fixed. Human wisdom and strength can do nothing.' If the various officials believe such ideas, they will be lax in their duties; and if the common people believe them, they will neglect their tasks. . . .

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4. This chapter, while numbered part 2 in the Mozi text, is actually the only surviving chapter of this pair, part 1 having been lost.

5. The *Mean*, a section of the Confucian *Record of Rites*, contains a passage much like this: "Humaneness is what it means to be human, and being affectionate toward one's kin is the greatest part of it. Rightness is doing what is right, and honoring the worthy is the greatest part of it. The diminishing degree of affection due to one's kin and the different gradations of honor owed to the worthy are born of ritual" (*Zhong yong* 20:5). See ch. 10, pp. 333–39.

6. Mozi is assuming that there is a closer relationship between a man and his parents than between a man and his wife and children and that he owes greater respect to his parents and elder relatives than to his younger ones. The Confucians agreed in principle with these assumptions but, as we may see from their rules for mourning, modified them somewhat in practice.

7. The Chinese term is *tianming*, elsewhere translated as the "Mandate of Heaven."

"Moreover, the Confucians corrupt men with their elaborate and showy rites and music and deceive parents with lengthy mournings and hypocritical grief. They propound fatalism, ignore poverty, and behave with the greatest arrogance. . . .

"The Confucians say, 'The noble person must use ancient speech and wear ancient dress before he can be considered humane.' But we answer, 'The so-called ancient speech and dress were all modern once, and if at that time the men of antiquity used such speech and wore such dress, then they must not have been noble persons. Must we then wear the dress of those who were not noble persons and use their speech before we can be considered humane?'"

[*Mozi jicheng* 9:16a-18b, 19b-20a — adapted from Watson, *Mo Tzu*, pp. 124-28]