XIAO JING –
THE CLASSIC OF XIAO
With English Translation

孝经

英语译

By Zeng Zi (505 - 436 B.C.E)
曾子著（前 505 – 436 年）

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开宗明义章第一

CHAPTER ONE: OPENING EXPLANATION

仲尼居，曾子侍。子曰：「先王有至德要道，以顺天下，民用和睦，上下无怨，汝知之乎？」

Zhong Ni (Confucius) was at home, and Zeng Zi was in attendance. The Teacher said, "The Former Kings have a most important virtue and way of conduct, to make the world harmonious, the people practice peace and cordiality, and neither above nor below have resentment. Do you know what it is?"

曾子避席曰：「参不敏，何足以知之？」

Zeng Zi got off his mat and said, "I, Shen, am not clever; how would I know it?"

子曰：「夫孝，德之本也，教之所由生也。复坐，吾语汝。

The Teacher said, "*Xiao* is the foundation of virtue, and is what all teaching grows out of. Sit down; I will tell you.

「身体发肤，受之父母，不敢毁伤，孝之始也。

"The body, hair and skin, all have been received from the parents, and so one doesn't dare damage them—that is the beginning of *xiao*.

立身行道，扬名于后世，以显父母，孝之终也。

"Establishing oneself, practicing The Way, spreading the fame of one's name to posterity, so that one's parents become renowned—that is the end of *xiao*.

「夫孝，始于事亲，中于事君，终于立身。

"Thus *xiao* starts with serving one's parents, progresses with serving one's lord, and ends with establishing oneself.

大雅云：『无念尔祖，聿修厥德。』」

"The 'Great Refined Odes' say, 'Do not just commemorate your ancestors; cultivate your virtue[1].'"

天子章第二

CHAPTER TWO: THE SON OF HEAVEN

子曰：「爱亲者不敢恶于人，敬亲者不敢慢于人。爱敬尽于事亲，而德教加于百姓，刑于四海。盖天子之孝也。

The Teacher said, "He who loves his parents does not dare to do evil unto others; he who respects his parents does not dare to be arrogant to others. Love and respect are exerted to the utmost in serving the parents, and this virtue and teaching is extended to the people; the example is shown to the whole world beyond China. That is the *xiao* of the Son of Heaven.

《甫刑》云：『一人有庆，兆民赖之。』

[1] According to the Tang Dynasty (618—907 A.D.) annotations of *Xiao Jing* by Xing Bing 邢昺, the word "*wu* 無" in the phrase "wu nian er zu 無念爾祖" means "always" rather than the usual "not". See *Xiao Jing* 孝經, "*The Thirteen Classics* 十三經", published by Zhonghua Shudian 中華書店, Beijing, 1980, Vol. II, p. 2,545. I, however, beg to differ. Nowhere else in *Xiao Jing* is "*wu*" used as anything other than its regular meaning: "none" or "no". I think that "*wu*" here really does mean "do not" the way "*wu*" usually does. Thus the sentence means, "Do not just commemorate your ancestors; cultivate your virtue."

"The book *Fu on Law* says, 'One person has cause to celebrate; the multitudes rely on that.'

诸侯章第三

CHAPTER THREE: THE DUKES

「在上不骄，高而不危。制节谨度，满而不溢。高而不危，所以长守贵也。满而不溢，所以长守富也。富贵不离其身，然后能保其社稷，而和其民人。盖诸侯之孝也。

"Above others but not arrogant, then one can dwell on high but not be in danger. To economize and calculate carefully, then one can be full and not spill. *(Translator's note: being full without spilling means having lots of wealth but not wasting it – X.F.)* To dwell on high without danger, then noble rank can long be maintained. To be full without spilling, then wealth can long be maintained. With noble rank and wealth not leaving his person, then one can protect one's state[2] and make one's people harmonious. That is the *xiao* of the feudal dukes.

《诗》云：『战战兢兢，如临深渊，如履薄冰。』

"The *Book of Poetry* says, 'Apprehensive and cautious, as if approaching a deep abyss, as if walking on thin ice.'

卿大夫章第四

CHAPTER FOUR: THE MINISTERS

[2] 社稷 *she ji*, literally "God of Land and God of Grain of a Country," the ritual sacrifices to which are the duties of the head of state in traditional China, is a term normally used to mean "a country" or "a state."

「非先王之法服不敢服，非先王之法言不敢道，非先王之德行不敢行。是故非法不言，非道不行。口无择言，身无择行。言满天下无口过，行满天下无怨恶。三者备矣，然后能守其宗庙。盖卿大夫之孝也。

"They dare not wear what is not of the Former Kings' Method of clothing, or speak what is not of the Former Kings' Method of speech, or practice what is not of the Former Kings' virtuous conduct. Therefore if not of the Method it is not spoken; if not of the Way it is not practiced. In speaking there is no choice in what to say; in conduct there is no choice in what to practice. One's speech fills the world yet there are no wrong words; one's acts fill the world yet there are no complaints of vice. When one is qualified in those three things, then one can maintain one's ancestral temples. That is the *xiao* of the Ministers.

《诗》云：『夙夜匪懈，以事一人。』

"The *Book of Poetry* says, 'Never unprepared day or night, to serve one person.'

Translator's Explanatory Comment: *The "one person" is the ministers' Lord, usually the Duke who governs the state.*

士章第五

CHAPTER FIVE: THE OFFICERS

「资于事父以事母而爱同，资于事父以事君而敬同。故母取其爱，而君取其敬，兼之者父也。故以孝事君则忠，以敬事长则顺。忠顺不失，以事其上，然后能保其禄位，而守其祭

祀。盖士之孝也。

“Take from how one serves his father to serve one’s mother and the love is the same. Take from how one serves his father to serve one’s Lord and the respect is the same. Thus the mother takes the love while the lord takes the respect; the one who takes both is the father. Thus when serving the lord in accordance with *xiao* one is loyal; when serving elders in accordance with respect one is compliant. Not losing loyalty and compliance when serving one’s superiors, one can preserve one’s position and maintain one’s sacrifices. That is the *xiao* of the Officers.

《诗》云：『夙兴夜寐，无忝尔所生。』

“The *Book of Poetry* says, ‘Rise early and sleep late; don’t bring shame to those who have given you birth.’

庶人章第六

CHAPTER SIX: THE COMMON PEOPLE

「用天之道，分地之利，谨身节用，以养父母，此庶人之孝也。

“Using Heaven’s Way, sharing in Earth’s bounties, being prudent with their persons and thrifty in their expenditure, in order to support their parents—this is the *xiao* of the common people.

「故自天子至于庶人，孝无终始而患不及者，未之有也。」

“So from the Son of Heaven to the common person, there is none who has been constant in his *xiao* yet has the problem of not doing what he should.”

三才章第七

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE THREE MATERIALS[3]

曾子曰：「甚哉，孝之大也！」

Zeng Zi said, "Extreme indeed is the greatness of *xiao*!"

子曰：「夫孝，天之经也，地之义也，民之行也。

The Teacher said, "Now, *xiao* is the principle of Heaven, the righteousness of Earth, and the (proper) conduct of the people.

「天地之经而民是则之。则天之明，因地之利，以顺天下，是以其教不肃而成，其政不严而治。

"The principle of Heaven and Earth—people's affairs should follow that principle. We should study Heaven's brilliance and take advantage of Earth's bounties in order to bring harmony to the world; that way the teaching is not stern and yet it is successful, the governing is not severe and yet good order reigns.

「先王见教之可以化民也，是故先之以博爱而民莫遗其亲，陈之以德义而民兴行，先之以敬让而民不争，导之以礼乐而民和睦，示之以好恶而民知禁。

"The Former Kings see that, if the people are taught thus, they can be converted. Therefore when the Kings set an example of universal love the people do not abandon their parents. When the Kings explain morals and righteousness, such conduct

[3] The Three Materials are: Heaven, Earth, and people. See *Ci Hai*, (辞海), 1989 ed., Shanghai, p. 15, under the entry " 三才". According to *Ci Hai*, the term is from the *Book of Change* (易经): "There is the Way of Heaven, the Way of Man, and the Way of the Earth—take the three materials and make them into two. (有天道焉，有人道焉，有地道焉，兼三材而兩之。)"

becomes popular among the people. When the Kings set an example of respect and letting others go first the people do not quarrel. When the Kings use courtesy and music to guide the people they become harmonious and cordial. When the Kings clarify good and evil the people know what is forbidden.

「《诗》云：『赫赫师尹，民具[4]尔瞻。』」

"The *Book of Poetry* says, 'Awe-inspiring high government official[5] teachers, the people all[6] look up to you.'"

孝治章第八

CHAPTER EIGHT: GOVERNING THROUGH *XIAO*

子曰：「昔者明王之以孝治天下也，不敢遗小国之

[4] The word "具" (pronounced *ju*) here is used as the word "俱" (also pronounced *ju*) meaning "all", as in 史記：項羽紀: "良（張良）乃入，具告沛公。" See *Ci Hai* (辭海), Shanghai, 1989, p.326, under the entry "具".

[5] Instead of "high government official teachers", the words 师尹 can also be taken to mean "Teacher Yin", as James Legge has done. See *The Hsiao King*, translated by James Legge, 2nd ed., Oxford, 1899, pp. 465-488, on the web at http://www.chinapage.com/confucius/xiaojing-be.html. Teacher Yin refers to Yi Yin (伊尹)， prime minister to the first emperor of the Shang (商) Dynasty (1600 B.C.E. to 1046 B.C.E.), Emperor Tang (汤). After Tang died his son ascended the throne but was licentious, so Yi Yin exiled the young emperor. Three years later, when the young emperor had learned his lesson, he was brought back to the capital and resumed his rule. Therefore Yi Yin had been considered a great teacher, because he had taught a licentious emperor how to be virtuous. I think, however, that the words 师尹 should instead be taken to mean high government officials who are teachers, taking the word "yin" (尹) to mean "high government official", because this interpretation correlates with the preceding passage where Confucius describes how the people follow the Kings' teachings, and not how the Kings (emperors) are taught by some outstanding teacher. When the Kings teach the people, the high government officials would be the intermediaries transmitting the teachings to the people.

[6] The word "具" here is used as the word "俱" meaning "all". See footnote 4.

臣，而况于公、侯、伯、子、男乎？故得万国之歡心，以事其先王。

The Teacher said, “Back when the Enlightened Kings use *xiao* to govern the world, they do not dare neglect even the subjects of small states; how much more so when it comes to the dukes and the nobles of various ranks? Thus the Kings obtain all the states’ affection, with which the Kings serve their ancestral kings.

「治国者不敢侮于鰥寡，而况于士民乎？故得百姓之歡心，以事其先君。

“The ruler of the state does not dare to bully the wifeless and the widowed, so how can he bully the officers and the people? Thus he gets the affection of all the families, with which he serves his ancestral lords.

「治家者不敢失于臣妾，而况于妻子乎？故得人之歡心，以事其亲。

“The ruler of the family does not dare to offend his servants and concubines, so how can he offend his wife and sons? Thus he gets people’s affection, with which he serves his parents.

「夫然，故生则亲安之，祭则鬼享之，是以天下和平，灾害不生，祸乱不作。故明王之以孝治天下也如此。

“This way, when alive one’s parents can relax; when deceased their spirits can enjoy the offerings. Thus the world comes to be at peace, natural disasters don’t happen, and rebellions and disorders don’t arise. That is how the Enlightened Kings use *xiao* to rule the world.

「《诗》云：『有觉德行，四国顺之。』」

"The *Book of Poetry* says, 'When there is great virtue[7], states from all four directions comply.'"

圣治章第九

CHAPTER NINE: SAGE GOVERNING

曾子曰：「敢问圣人之德，无以加于孝乎？」 "

Zeng Zi said, "May I ask whether, of the Sages' virtues, there is any greater than *xiao*?"

子曰：「天地之性，人为贵。人之行，莫大于孝。。

The Teacher said, "Of all the species in the world, humans are the most precious. Of all human conduct, nothing is greater than *xiao*.

「孝莫大于严父。

"In *xiao* nothing is greater than revering[8] the father.

「严父莫大于配天。

"In revering the father nothing is greater than associating him with Heaven.

「则周公其人也。

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[7] "觉" is used for the word "梏", meaning tall and big (高大) or upright (正直) in this quotation for the *Book of Poetry*. See *Ci Hai*, (辞海), 1989 ed., Shanghai, p. 1,627, under the entry "觉".

[8] The 严 in 严父 is a verb here.

"Let us study the Duke of Zhou.

「昔者周公郊祀后稷以配天，宗祀文王于明堂以配上帝，是以四海之内各以其职来助祭。夫圣人之德，又何以加于孝乎?

"Formerly the Duke of Zhou makes Countryside Sacrifices[9] to Hou Ji (*the Ancestor Of All Zhou People*[10]*—X.F.*) in order to associate him with Heaven, and makes Ancestral Sacrifices to King Wen (*the Son of Heaven's and the Duke's deceased father—X.F.*) in the Great Palace Hall in order to associate him with God on High. Therefore all (*nobles—X.F.*) within the country come, each in his post, to help with the sacrifices. So, of the Sages' virtues, what is greater than *xiao*?

「故亲生之，膝下以养，其父母日严[11]。圣人因严以教敬，因亲以教爱。

"Thus parents give birth to the child and raise him at their knees, then become stricter as the days pass[12]. The Sages follow this strictness to teach respect, and follow the

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[9] An ancient rite, making sacrifices in the countryside to Heaven or Earth. See *Ci Hai*, (辞海), 1989 ed., Shanghai, p. 512, under the entry "郊祀".

[10] The ancestor of the Zhou people, born from the daughter of You Tai-shi (有邰氏) who became pregnant with Hou Ji (后稷) when she stepped into the footprint left by a giant. Hou Ji became an expert at agriculture and taught people how to plant. The Zhou people considered him the originator of agriculture. See *Ci Hai*, (辞海), 1989 ed., Shanghai, p. 304, under the entry "后稷 (*Hou Ji*)".

[11] In the version of Xiao Jing as annotated by the Tang Dynasty Xing Bing 邢昺, this passage is punctuated differently: 「故亲生之膝下，以养其父母日严。」 See *Xiao Jing* 孝经, "*The Thirteen Classics* 十三经", Beijing, 1980, p. 2,553. That way of punctuating would change the meaning to this: "Thus the parents give birth to him at their knees, in order to support his parents more strictly day by day." I, however, don't think that makes much sense, nor do I think that is consistent in meaning with the subsequent sentence, "The sages follow the strictness to teach respect, and follow the closeness to teach love." It is obvious to me that the strictness following which the sages teach respect refers to the strictness of the parents toward their offspring, and not the strictness of the offspring in supporting the parents.

[12] See footnote 7.

closeness[13] to teach love.

「圣人之教，不肃而成，其政不严而治，其所因者本也。

"The teachings of the Sages succeed without being stern; their governing brings good order without being severe. That's because they follow what is natural.

「父子之道，天性也，君臣之义也。

"The Way between the father and the son is Providence-given (*i.e. God-given – F.X.*) nature and is the relationship between the Lord and his Ministers.

「父母生之，续莫大焉；君亲临之，厚莫重焉。

"One's parents give birth to one—there is no continuity greater than this. One's Lord personally[14] assumes the role of being the superior over one[15]—there is no generosity greater than this.

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[13] I've translated the word *qin* 亲 in the phrase 因亲以教爱 to mean "closeness" instead of "parents." This way of using the word *qin* 亲 does exist more or less contemporaneously as in the chapter "Loving Ministers" in *Han Fei Zi* (韩非子。爱臣) *circa* 280 B.C.E.: "Loving one's ministers too closely always endangers one's person (爱臣太亲，必危其身)." See 《古汉语常用字字典》(*Dictionary of Commonly Used Words in Ancient Chinese*), Shangwu Publishing (商务印书馆), Beijing, 2007, p. 311.

[14] Xing Bing 邢昺 interprets this passage differently from me: "The father, who is the Lord, assumes lordship over one." See *Xiao Jing* 孝经, "*The Thirteen Classics* 十三经", Beijing, 1980, p. 2,554. Xing Bing and I differ in translating the word *Qin* 亲：while Xing Bing considers it to mean "parents", I consider it to mean "personally" as in the poem "*Han Yi*" in the "Great Refined Odes" in *The Book of Poetry* (《诗经。大雅。韩奕》): "The King personally ordered it (王亲命之)." See *Dictionary of Commonly Used Words in Ancient Chinese* (《古汉语常用字字典》), Shangwu Publishing (商务印书馆), Beijing, 2007, p. 311.

[15] The word "临 (*lin*)" I translate as "to assume the role of being the superior over"—see *Ci Hai*, (辞海), 1989 ed., Shanghai, p. 68, under the entry "临": "It's extended to mean the superior dealing with the inferior: 'Assume being the superior with dignity, then people will be respectful.'" ("引申为上对下之称。「论语・曲礼上」:' 临之以庄则敬。'")

「故不爱其亲而爱他人者，谓之悖德。不敬其亲而敬他人者，谓之悖礼。

“Thus for he who does not love his parents but loves others, we call that perverse virtue. For he who does not respect his parents but respects others, we call that perverse courtesy.

「以顺则逆，民无则焉。不在于善而皆在于凶德。虽得之，君子不贵也。

“If one makes right follow wrong, then the people will have no principle to follow. They will not come to good but will come to a vile virtue. Even if a Noble Person gets it, he will not value it.

「君子则不然。言思可道，行思可乐；德义可尊，作事可法，容止可观，进退可度，以临其民。是以其民畏而爱之，则而象之。故能成其德教，而行其政令。

“The Noble Person is not like that. When speaking he thinks whether the words can be spoken; when acting he thinks whether the action brings happiness. His virtue and righteousness can be revered; his handling of matters can be emulated; his manner can impress; his interactions with people can be held up to what is right. With that he assumes the role of being the superior over[16,17] his people. Thus his people fear and love him, study and emulate him. Therefore he can succeed in his teaching of morals and execution of governance.

《诗》云：『淑人君子，其仪不忒。』」

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[16] *Op. cit.* 9.

[17] The way the term *jun zi* or “Noble Person” is used here assumes that he is of noble birth: he rules his subjects. Of course, as pointed out in the preceding translator’s comment, later in Chinese history the Noble Person can be a person of no matter how lowly a birth, as long as he has high morals.

"The *Book of Poetry* says, 'The virtuous Noble Person, his demeanor has no faults.'"

纪孝行章第十

CHAPTER TEN: CONDUCT THAT CONSTITUTES *XIAO*

子曰：「孝子之事亲也，居则致其敬，养则致其乐，病则致其忧，丧则致其哀，祭则致其严。五者备矣，然后能事亲。

The Teacher said, "This is how the *xiao* son serves his parents: during daily living he presents respect, when providing for them he presents happiness, during their illnesses he presents worry, during mourning he presents grief, when making offerings (*to his deceased parents and ancestors—F.X.*) he presents reverence. When he is prepared in these five things, then he is able to serve his parents.

「事亲者，居上不骄，为下不乱，在丑不争。居上而骄则亡，为下而乱则刑，在丑而争则兵。

"He who serves his parents is not arrogant when above, not rebellious when a subordinate, and not quarrelsome when with peers. Being arrogant when above leads to perishment; being rebellious as a subordinate leads to being sentenced; being quarrelsome when with peers leads to dueling.

「三者不除，虽日用三牲之养，犹为不孝也。」

"If these three things are not rejected, then even though one provides for one's parents so sumptuously as to serve the Three Animals (*beef, pork, mutton—F.X.*) daily, one is still un-*xiao*."

五刑章第十一

CHAPTER ELEVEN: THE FIVE PUNISHMENTS

子曰：「五刑之属三千，而罪莫大于不孝。」

The Teacher said, "The Five Punishments[18] are applied to three thousand offenses[19], but none of them is greater than that of being un-*xiao*[20].

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[18] In Confucius' day, the Five Punishments, extant since the Xia Dynasty or from 2,070 B.C.E. onward, consists of: tattooing the face (*mo*`墨), cutting off the nose (*yi*`劓), castration (*gong*- 宫), cutting off the feet (*yue*`刖), and death (*sha*- 杀). Later, from the Sui Dynasty or 581 C.E. onward, the Five Punishments are changed to: beating with a whip or a bamboo strip (*chi*- 笞), beating with a rod (*zhang*`杖), imprisonment (*tu'* 徒), exile (*liu'* 流), and death (*si*^ 死).

[19] According to Xing Bing's annotations of *Xiao Jing* 孝经, "*The Thirteen Classics* 十三经", Beijing, 1980, p. 2,556, originally, early in the Zhou Dynasty (1,122 B.C.E. – 256 B.C.E.) there has been only five hundred offenses for each of the Five Punishments, making a total of only 2,500 offenses. Later in the Zhou Dynasty, however, the list of offenses is expanded to six hundred for each of the Five Punishment, making a total of 3,000.

[20] In *Xiao Jing* 孝经, "*The Thirteen Classics* 十三经", Beijing, 1980, p. 2,556, Xing Bing describes two different interpretations of this passage. The first interpretation, advanced by the old annotators prior to Xing Bing's time, is that being un-*xiao* is not included as one of the three thousand offenses punishable by the Five Punishments and that Confucius is just saying rhetorically that being un-*xiao* is morally even more serious than any of those offenses. The second interpretation is that being un-*xiao* is indeed included among the three thousand ancient offenses punishable by the Five Punishments and that Confucius is calling it the worst offense, deserving of the most severe punishment. Xing Bing dismisses the first interpretation and advocates the second one.

I, however, consider the first interpretation much more reasonable and present it as my translation. First, Xing Bing in his commentary seem to have had no access to the list of the three thousand ancient offenses, it probably having been long lost, whereas the old annotators before Xing Bing probably still had access to the list. More important, to legislate being un-*xiao* as the greatest of all crimes, i.e. instituting the death penalty for the offense, would not only fail to remedy the injury done to the parents by their offspring being un-*xiao* but would also, perversely, add greatly to the injury. Depriving the parents forever of their offspring is a much greater injury and loss than any possible injury or loss caused by their offspring being un-*xiao*. Is it not cruel and perverse for the state to inflict, in the name of justice, a much greater injury upon the very victims of a much smaller injury? Why is the state choosing to punish the very victims themselves? And so severely?

「要君者无上；非圣人者无法；非孝者无亲，此大乱之道也。」

"Those who coerce their lords have no regard for superiors; those who reject the Sages have no regard for law; those who reject *xiao* have no regard for parents. That is the road to great chaos."

广要道章第十二

CHAPTER TWELVE: BROAD AND CRUCIAL DOCTRINE

子曰：「教民亲爱，莫善于孝；教民礼顺，莫善于悌；移风易俗，莫善于乐；安上治民，莫善于礼。

The Teacher said, "For teaching the people to love one another there is nothing better than *xiao*; for teaching the people to be courteous and harmonious there is nothing better than *ti* (*being respectful to elders—F.X.*); for changing the customs and traditions there is nothing better than music; for making the rulers at ease and the people orderly there is nothing better than etiquette.

「礼者，敬而已矣。故敬其父则子悦，敬其兄则弟悦，敬其君则臣悦。敬一人而千万人悦。所敬者寡

I hold that it is definitely against Confucius' nature to advocate such a cruel and perverse "justice"—remember, he considers looking after one's body part of being *xiao*, part of being good to one's parents. Confucius totally understands the great love and cherishment by parents for their offspring. Reading the classics, Confucius clearly comes across as a kind, reasonable and insightful man. I firmly believe that, by saying that being un-*xiao* is worse than any of the criminal offenses, even those punishable by death, Confucius is merely emphasizing that being un-*xiao* is the road to great chaos and anarchy for the entire society. He is only pointing out the importance of *xiao* and the moral repugnancy of being un-*xiao*; he is not calling for the most severe judicial punishment of the death penalty.

而悦者众，此之谓要道也。」

"Etiquette is nothing more than respect. Therefore respect the father and the sons are happy; respect the older brother and the younger brothers are happy; respect the lord and the subjects are happy. Respect one person and thousands of people are happy. Respect the few and the many are happy—that is why it is called a crucial doctrine."

广至德章第十三

CHAPTER THIRTEEN: BROAD AND HIGHEST VIRTUE

子曰：「君子之教以孝也，非家至而日见之也。教以孝，所以敬天下之为人父者也。

The Teacher said, "The teaching of *xiao* by Noble Persons is not (*just – F.X.*) for what one sees daily on arriving home[21]. *Xiao* is taught so that all who are fathers will be respected.

「教以悌，所以敬天下之为人兄者也；教以臣，所以敬天下之为人君者也。

"*Ti* or being respectful to elders is taught so that all who are elder brothers will be respected. Being a good subject is taught so that all who are lords will be respected.

「《诗》云：『恺悌君子，民之父母。』非至德，其孰能顺民如此其大者乎？」

[21] *Xiao Jing* 孝经, "*The Thirteen Classics* 十三经", Beijing, 1980, p. 2,557: in the Tang Dynasty (618—907 A.D.) annotations by Xing Bing 邢昺, this passage is taken to mean differently, as follows: "The teaching of *xiao* by Noble Persons is not necessarily taught by going to every family, every house, and speaking every day." I present a different interpretation because I think Xing Bing's interpretation does not lead logically to the sentences that follow about extending the respect universally.

The *Book of Poetry* says, 'The happy and kind[22] Noble Person is the parent of the people.' If it is not the highest virtue, how can it make the people compliant in such a big way?"

广扬名章第十四

CHAPTER FOURTEEN: WIDELY SPREADING ONE'S NAME

子曰：「君子之事亲孝，故忠可移于君；事兄悌，故顺可移于长；居家理，故治可移于官。

The Teacher said, "The Noble Person is *xiao* in serving his parents, and so his loyalty can be transferred to his lord. He is *ti* (*respectful to elders—X.F.*) in serving his big brothers, and so his compliance can be transferred to his superiors. He effects order when at home, and so his governing ability can be transferred to his position as an official.

「是以行成于内，而名立于后世矣。」

"Yes, that is why, one's conduct succeeds inside the home and one's name comes to be established among posterity."

谏诤章第十五

CHAPTER FIFTEEN: DISSUADING AND DISPUTING

曾子曰：「若夫慈爱、恭敬、安亲、扬名，则闻命矣。敢问：子从父之令，可谓孝乎？」

[22] See *Ci Hai*, (辞海), 1989 ed., Shanghai, p. 304, under the entry "*Kai Ti* (愷悌)".

Zeng Zi said, “if it’s about being kind and loving, being respectful, bringing peace to the minds of parents, and spreading one’s name—those instructions have already been heard. May I ask: if the son obeys[23] the orders of the father, can that be called *xiao*?”

子曰：「是何言与？ 是何言与？

The Teacher said, “What kind of talk is that? What kind of talk is that?

昔者天子有争臣七人，虽无道不失天下。诸侯有争臣五人，虽无道不失其国。大夫有争臣三人，虽无道不失其家。士有争友则身不离于令名。

“Formerly when a Son of Heaven has seven subordinates who will dispute him, even though he has no virtue he will not lose All Under Heaven (the Empire). When a Duke has five subordinates who will dispute him, even though he has no virtue he will not lose his state. When a Minister has three subordinates who will dispute him, even though he has no virtue he will not lose his clan. With a friend who will dispute him, an Officer will not lose his good name.

父有争子则身不陷于不义。故当不义，则子不可以不争于父，臣不可以不争于君。

“With a son who will dispute him, a father will not fall into unrighteousness. So when there is unrighteousness, then the son must not refrain from disputing his father and the subordinate must not refrain from disputing his lord.

故当不义则争之。从父之令，又焉得为孝乎？」

“So when there is unrighteousness one must dispute it. How can obeying[24] the father’s orders be considered *xiao*?”

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[23] I think the implied meaning is “blindly obeying”.

[24] See the previous footnote.

感应章第十六

CHAPTER SIXTEEN: FEELING AND RESPONDING (BY THE SPIRITS)

子曰：「昔者明王事父孝，故事天明；事母孝，故事地察。

The Teacher said, "Formerly the Enlightened Kings serve their fathers with *xiao*, and therefore serve Heaven with clarity. The Kings serve their mothers with *xiao*, and therefore serve Earth with perceptiveness[25].

「长幼顺，故上下治。

"The elders and the juniors are harmonious with each other, and therefore both people above and people below are orderly and well governed.

「天地明察，神明彰矣。

"When the Kings are clear and perceptive with regard to Heaven and Earth, the gods[26] will make evident their blessings.

「故虽天子，必有尊也，言有父也。必有先也，言有兄也。

"Thus even the Son of Heaven must revere someone, that is to say there is a father; and must defer to someone, that is to say there are older brothers.

「宗庙致敬，不忘亲也。修身慎行，恐辱先也。

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[25] I take this passage to mean that the Enlightened Kings learn enlightenment from their fathers and perceptiveness from their mothers.

[26] The Chinese text is ambiguous as to whether this is the plural case or the singular case, but in view of the fact that both Heaven and Earth are mentioned as being worshipped, it should be inferred that the plural case is meant.

“One pays respects in the Ancestral Temple because one does not forget one’s parents. One cultivates one’s character and is careful in one’s conduct because one fears bringing shame to one’s ancestors.

「宗庙致敬，鬼神著矣。孝悌之至，通于神明，光于四海，无所不通。

“Paying respects in the Ancestral Temple causes the spirits and gods to manifest themselves. When *xiao* and *ti* (being respectful to elders) arrives, one connects with the divine. This leads to illumination of the whole world, with no place not opening up.

Explanatory Comment: *So the worship of ancestors and the personal practice of virtue (*xiao *and* ti*) by the Son of Heaven cause the gods to bestow their blessings. Indeed, according to Confucius, this personal practice of virtue by the Son of Heaven brings light to the whole world.*

「《诗》云：『自西自东，自南自北，无思不服。』」

“The *Book of Poetry* says, ‘From west to east, from south to north, no one thinks of insubordination.’”

事君章第十七

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN: SERVING ONE’S LORD

子曰：「君子之事上也，进思尽忠，退思补过，将顺其美，匡救其恶。故上下能相亲也。

The Teacher said, “When a Noble Person serves his superiors, in advancing he thinks of fulfilling duty to the utmost, in retreating he thinks of remedying errors. He supports and helps along the good, and corrects and lessens the consequences of the bad. Therefore the superior and the inferior can be close with each other.

「《诗》云：『心乎爱矣，遐不谓矣；中心藏之，何日忘之。』」

"The *Book of Poetry* says, 'The heart is engaged in love; why not say it?[27,28] Store it in the middle of the heart, and never forget it.'"

丧亲章第十八

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN: THE PASSING OF A PARENT

子曰：「孝子之丧亲也，哭不偯，礼无容，言不文，服美不安，闻乐不乐，食旨不甘，此哀戚之情也。

The Teacher said, "When a *xiao* son loses his parent, he cries without trying to stop himself[29], his politeness is without pleasantry, his words are without adornment, when he dresses in fine clothes he feels uncomfortable, when he hears music he does not feel joy, and when he eats delicious food it is not tasty. This is sadness and grief.

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[27] *Ci Hai*, (辞海), 1989 ed., Shanghai, p. 1,197, under the entry "遐 (*xia*)": here *Ci Hai* takes the word 遐 to mean "why", and quotes this passage from *Xiao Jing* as the example. On the other hand, in Xing Bing's Tang Dynasty annotations to *Xiao Jing* 孝经 ("*The Thirteen Classics* 十三经", Beijing, 1980, p. 2,560), he takes the same word to mean "far away" and generates this interpretation, completely different from that of *Ci Hai*: "Though far away, the Noble Person does not speak of (i.e. consider important) his distance from his lord…"

[29] 偯 (*yi*`) means "the type of whimpering that occurs as crying stops." Thus in a strict word-for-word translation, this passage would be rendered as: "…he cries without the type of whimpering that occurs as crying stops." Therefore I take the whole passage to mean: "…he cries without trying to stop himself."

「三日而食，教民无以死伤生，毁不灭性。此圣人之政也。丧不过三年，示民有终也。

"Eating after three days is to teach the people not to let dying injure the living, such that the damage (from the death) does not destroy people's nature. Such is the policy of the Sages. Mourning is not to exceed three years; this is to show the people that it has an end.

「为之棺椁衣衾而举之。陈其簠簋而哀戚之。「擗踊哭泣，哀以送之。卜其宅兆而安措之。

"Prepare for the deceased parent inner and outer coffins,[30] burial clothes and burial blankets, and raise the coffin. Set out the offering vessels[31] and mourn him. Beat the breast, jump up and down, and cry. With grief see him off to the burial ground. Divine a good gravesite and place him there to rest in peace.

「为之宗庙以鬼享之，春秋祭祀以时思之。

"Make a shrine temple to make offerings to his spirit. Conduct sacrificial ceremonies in the spring and autumn to regularly think of him.

「生事爱敬，死事哀戚，生民之本尽矣，死生之义备矣，孝子之事亲终矣。」

"When alive, serve him with love and respect; when dead, serve him with grief and

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[30] The two words in the text here, *guan guo* 棺槨, normally means today inner coffin (*guan*-棺) and outer coffin (*guo*^ 槨). According to the Tang Dynasty annotator Xing Bing, however, during Confucius' time the word *guan* 棺 means not coffin but body, and the word *guo* 槨 means not outer coffin but coffin in general. Thus the two words in the text here, *guan guo* 棺槨, according to Xing Bing, actually means body and coffin. See *Xiao Jing* 孝经, "The Thirteen Classics 十三经", Beijing, 1980, p. 2,561.

[31] The *fu*^ 簠 is the bronze rectangular offering vessel, and the *gui*` 簋 is the bronze round offering vessel. See *Ci Hai*, (辞海), 1989 ed., Shanghai, p. 2,128, under the entries "簠 (*fu*^)" and "簋 (*gui*`)".

sorrow. The people's[32] duty is fulfilled, the obligations both during life and after death are fulfilled, and the *xiao* son's service to his parents is at an end.

- END *XIAO JING* TEXT -

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[32] According to Ci Hai, the term *sheng min* 生民 simply means "the people" and not some construction like "live people" or "people, when alive". See *Ci Hai*, (辞海), 1989 ed., Shanghai, p. 1,944, under the entry "生民(*sheng min*)".