



Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

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MS-4787: Abba Hillel Silver Papers, 1902-1989.

Series IV: Sermons, 1914-1963, undated.

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What did Confucius say?, 1940.

the provinces in philosophy, ~~and~~ math. and the natural sciences. In Israel - Jeremiah - Ezekiel, the Second Isaiah. Everywhere, the planning the human spirit - new words, culture created - great new epochs in human history ushered in. It appears as if ^{winds} ~~winds~~ ^{of} destiny were scattering the pollen ^(seeds) of seminal ideas ^{on the face} ~~on the face~~ of the earth.

4/ ^{By} ~~In~~ the ^{time} ~~days~~ of C. - China had already lived a long history. As many centuries, Ch. history precede C. as follows here. ^{P 14} and his contemporaries - could look back to a Chinese antiquity - to a ^{long} ~~legendary~~ & ~~illuminated~~ ^{part} history of his race. Only one other people - the Egypt - and to a lesser degree the Jews. ^{P 14} Chinese civil. was already old in the days of C. and had begun to decline. Esp. in its pol. life was the Ch. empire rapidly declining. The Chow dynasty which had ruled China for 500 yrs. was in the days of C. a hollow shell. The hereditary kingdom was breaking up into numerous ^{+ rebellious} ~~separate~~ ^{constantly at war, superseding the land and weakening it} ~~separate~~ ^{feudal states}. There was no strong central authority to safeguard the empire against invasion from the barbarians ^(having many) ~~on the frontiers~~. "Agriculture languished for lack of manual labor, and plague, pestilence and famine wrought untold horrors upon the feudal kingdoms".

5/ C's chief mission in life was ~~to~~ ^{to} reconstruct the pol. life of his country - to stem its rapid decline to anarchy and ruin. ^P He was essentially a pol. reformer, whose pol. doctrines were founded in profound moral principles. He was not just a statesman - or a practical politician of shrewd experience - a Bismarck or a Machiavelli. He was, the Stands, Moses -

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It was interested in the smooth functioning of an org. society -
in that proper pol. procedure which would result in the greatest
harmony, & the greatest happiness for all.

Center of universal reformation
nation & state of the

His day comprised with the pop. rel. beliefs, theories, & his
He recommended efficiency in the name of efficiency & efficiency,
countrymen. I do wonder in his teachings, the nature

1. Confucius - main relation to West - of an idea of the East. Such concepts
2. Xun - atonement, repentance - piety, holiness - grace - are
not found with C. - Problem, Evil - why men suffer - Free will - are
deliberately avoided. C. was not a theologian, a mystic, or a holiness man - but a Pol. moralist. (What
Kuhn, ethics 1772)
(viii) His world is this world - and he sees a way - a path -
the things at hand - not left a distance
which men should follow to reach personal and collective peace
(Reverend is there! Preachment is there!)
and happiness. He found his inspiration in the classic liter.

3. China, which he lovingly collected, & edited & elucidated. The
ancient wisdom of his people & endeavored to revive, and then
numerous pupils and disciples, to bring it to bear upon
the pressing problems, the pol. & social regeneration, China.
"Transmitter, not creator," believing in & loving the ancients. (The 5 King, the 4 school, all)

4. What he taught - 3 books - which belong to the Ch. Classics, all
now written by himself.
"The Analects" - Counsel, C. - sayings attributed to him
by his immediate disciples - 20 short chapters -

"The Great Learning" - attributed to Tsang Si, a disciple of C.

"Doctrine of the Mean" " " grandson of C.

5. Best way to explain C. - is to present him. He is very
quotable - His ideas concise, & polished into clear, unforgettable
utterances.

From The Great Learning:

(5)

The ancients who wished to illustrate illustrious virtue throughout the empire, first ordered well their own States. Wishing to order well their States, they first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate their families, they first cultivated their persons. Wishing to cultivate their persons, they first rectified their hearts. Wishing to rectify their hearts, they first sought to be sincere in their thoughts. Wishing to be sincere in their thoughts, they first extended to the utmost their knowledge. Such extension of knowledge lay in the investigation of things. (221)

Things being investigated, knowledge became complete. Their knowledge being complete, their thoughts were sincere. Their thoughts being sincere, their hearts were then rectified. Their hearts being rectified, their persons were cultivated. Their persons being cultivated, their families were regulated. Their families being regulated, their States were rightly governed. Their States being rightly governed, the whole empire was made tranquil and happy. (223)

- ① Note - addressed to Ruler of State - how to fit himself for role of good ruler of State
- ② He must begin with successful management of his Family - smaller unit - and the more personal - To do that he must begin with smallest & most personal unit - Himself! To rule oneself is a pre-requisite for ruling other men! (= Primary)
- the beginning of all Reformation is with the Ego - One not only Emperor! each in his Degree should!
- C. never absolutes, Ind - bec. of Env moral tone & age - 13 & 15

(3) What is a properly regulated Family?

(a) Filial Piety - (loyalty); The Master said: "The filial piety of now-a-days means the support of one's parents. But dogs and horses are likewise able to do something in the way of support: - without Reverence (3.2) what is there to distinguish the support given, from the other". (Analogies).

The Master said: In serving his parents, a son may remonstrate 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.

Basis of whole Patriarchal System, China

(4) Fraternel Submission - The young to the old - (obedience to elders and superiors). ~~the~~ Harmony in the home maintained then Filial Piety and Fraternel Submission - and ^(c) Kindness of one to another. ^(kindness to people) For every authority - obligation - For every right a duty!

Thus: "From the loving example of one family, a whole state becomes loving, and from its courtesies, the whole state becomes courteous."
loyalty - obedience - kindness

(9) First cultivate their Person. How? - C = Human Nature reg. good. ^{- no orig. sin}
= Regulate Cultivation in Right Direction
= Avoid Defects - Faith in Man
Mind under control

(1) Rectifying the Heart - avoid passions.
A man's conduct will be incorrect if he is under the influence of passion - harm - ruin - distress - good regard.

(2) Sincerity in That - ^{no deception} no self-deception

"What truly is within will be manifested without"

The Master said: Fine words, an insinuating appearance, and excessive respect - I am ashamed, then.. To conceal resentment against a person and appear friendly with him - I am ashamed of it."

2.

Tsze-loo then said, "I should like, sir, to hear your wishes."
The Master said, "They are, in regard to the aged, to give them rest; in regard to friends, to show them sincerity; in regard to the young, to treat them tenderly." (46)

(3) Extension of Knowledge - Investigation, things - Nature of Things
Great Value on Learning - like Jews. To know Nature - Conduct
Scholar in High Repute Learning tempers all virtues
Learning the Hard Way - Discipline - Sacrifice - For its own sake

Derives from Heaven a Virtuous Nature
May be perverted (1) outward Seductions
(2) inward lusts

~~But~~ Business, life - to bring Nature back to its orig. Purity.
- he is accordance with Nature.

Method = Path

WRHS



(7)

The Master said, "The silent treasuring up of knowledge, learning without satiety; and instructing others without being wearied: - what one of these things belongs to me?" (59)

The Master said, "I do not open up the truth to one who is not eager to get knowledge, nor help out any one who is not anxious to explain himself. When I have presented one corner of a subject to any one, and he cannot from it learn the other three, I do not repeat my lesson." (61)

The Master said, "The Scholar who cherishes the love of comfort, is not fit to be deemed a scholar." (140)

The Master said, "In ancient times, men learned with a view to their own improvement. Now-a-days, men learn with a view to the approbation of others." (149)



5/ To sum up: one becomes virtuous - by cultivating himself -
then learning - civility - and self-control, and by proper
apprenticeship in one's family - one learns how to govern a State
well.
What is good & right? Within a State? Within the family?
When every one performs ^{to his station} his duties properly, without defect or
excess, in proper substance ^{as well as} proper manner, all performed
in a spirit of reciprocity.

Some Wise & Profound Things to Say abt. Government:

"When a country is well governed, poverty and a mean condition are things to be ashamed of. When a country is ill governed, riches and honour are things to be ashamed of." (76)

4.

G Tsze-kung asked about government. The Master said, "The requisites of government are that there be sufficiency of food, sufficiency of military equipment, and the confidence of the people in their ruler." (118)

Tsze-kung said, "If it cannot be helped, and one of these must be dispensed with, which of the three should be foregone first?" "The military equipment," said the Master. (118)

Tsze-kung again asked, "If it cannot be helped, and one of the remaining two must be dispensed with, which of them should be foregone?" The Master answered, "Part with the food. From of old, death has been the lot of all men; but if the people have no faith in their rulers, there is no standing for the state." (118)

WRHS
"Yew Jo answered, "If the people have plenty, their prince will not be left to want alone. If the people are in want, their prince cannot enjoy plenty alone." (119)

AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES
KeK'ang distressed about the number of thieves in the state, inquired of Confucius about how to do away with them. Confucius said, "If you, sir, were not covetous, although you should reward them to do it, they would not steal." (122)

Ke K'ang asked Confucius about government, saying, "What do you say to killing the unprincipled for the good of the principled?" Confucius replied, "Sir, in carrying on your government why should you use killing at all? Let your evinced desires be for what is good, and the people will be good. The relation between superiors and inferiors, is like that between the wind and the grass. The grass must bend, when the wind blows across it." (123)

The Master said, "If good men were to govern a country in succession for a hundred years, they would be able to transform the violently bad, and dispense with capital punishments." True indeed is this saying!" (131)

71. C. himself - a humble, ardent man.

asked little of him:

The Master said, "With coarse rice to eat, with water to drink, and my bended arm for a pillow; - I have still joy in the midst of these things. Riches and honours acquired by unrighteousness are to me as a floating cloud." (64)

The Master said, "What the superior man seeks, is in himself. What the mean man seeks, is in others." (164)

His disciples said of him:

There were four things from which the Master was entirely free. He had no foregone conclusions, no arbitrary predeterminations, no obstinacy, and no egoism. (81)

The Master was mild, and yet dignified; majestic, and yet not fierce; respectful, and yet easy. (71)

He never took advantage

The Master angled, - but did not use a net. He shot, - but not at birds perching." (67)

He sought no popular acclaim

The Master said, "I will not be afflicted at men's not knowing me; I will be afflicted that I do not know men." (9)

In Dark Moments:

Tsze-kung said, "What do you mean by thus saying - that no one knows you?" The Master replied, "I do not murmur against Heaven. I do not grumble against men. My studies lie low, and my penetration rises high. But there is Heaven; - that knows me!" (153)