

Mozi: Book 8 “Promoting The Worthy 1”^{*}

tr. Frank Saunders Jr.

November 28, 2016

8.1

Master Mozi said, “Currently, all those who rule their states and clans desire for their states and clans to be wealthy, for their people to be numerous, and the punishments and administration to be orderly.” However, they do not get wealth, but instead they get poverty. They do not get a large population, but a sparse one. They do not get order, but chaos. So on this basis, they lose what they desire, and [instead] get what they hate. What is the cause of this?

8.2

Master Mozi said, “This lies in all those who rule their states and clans being unable to promote the worthy and employ¹ the able in their administration. Therefore, when the state has an abundance of worthy and good scholars, it will have substantial order. When the worthy and good scholars are scant, the state’s order will be flimsy. Thus an official’s aim lies in making the worthy numerous.”

8.3

Someone says, “In this way, the art of making the worthy numerous, what is it?”

8.4

Master Mozi said, “Take the example of desiring to make numerous your state’s good archers and charioteers. Surely you would make them wealthy, value them, honor them, and praise them, and then the state’s good archers and charioteers will be gotten in great numbers. How much more is this the case with having virtuous and good scholars, substantial in their virtuous conduct, discriminating in statements and teachings, broad in the art of the Way—these

^{*}Corresponding Chinese text can be found at The Chinese Text Project: *Mozi*.

¹Reading 使 for 事 (吳毓江, 2006, p. 65).

are surely precious to a state, and the assistants of the holy altars. They must also be wealthy, valued, honored, and praised, and only then will the state's good scholars be gotten and made numerous.

8.5

Therefore, in ancient times when the sage kings were administering government, they stated that, "Those who are not righteous (義 yì) will not be wealthy. Those who are not righteous will not be valued. Those who are not righteous will not be preferred. Those who are not righteous will not be kept close." Therefore, when those with wealth and honor in the state heard of it, they started planning, saying, "At first, what I relied upon was my wealth and honor. Now those above extol the righteous without regard for their poverty. In this way, I cannot fail to be righteous." When those close to royalty heard of it, they started planning. At first, what I depended upon was my closeness to royalty. Now those above extol the righteous without regard for favor or neglect. In this way, I cannot fail to be righteous." When those nearby heard of it, they started planning. At first, what I depended upon was my nearness [to the king]. Now those above extol the righteous without regard for their distance. In this way, I cannot fail to be righteous." When those far away heard of it, they started planning. At first, I took my distance to have left me with nothing to depend on. Now those above extol the righteous without regard for their distance. In this way, I cannot fail to be righteous."

All the way to the far-away district and suburban ministers, to the various courtyard youths, to the masses within the state, and the countryfolk on its four corners—they heard it, and they all competed for righteousness. What is the cause? I say, "As for that by which those above employ those below, it is a single thing. And as for that by which those below serve those above, it is a single skill. Consider a wealthy person who, with high walls encircling his compound, thought only to make a single gate. There was a thief who came in, and so the wealthy man shut the gate and sought him out. The robber had no means of getting himself out—what is its cause? Because the wealthy man had understood what is important.

8.6

And so in ancient times, the sage kings administered government by organizing the virtuous and promoting the worthy. Even farmers and artisan people, if they had the ability, they would also be praised, being given a high rank, heavy rewards, responsibilities to serve, and the authority to give orders. I say, "If his rank and title are not high, then the people will not respect him. If his granaries were not substantial, then the people will not trust him. If his orders are not strict, then the people will not revere him." As for these three exaltations, giving them to the worthy is not merely to give the worthy gifts. [It's because we] desire that they carry out their tasks. And so at this time, use their virtue to line them up and categorize them. Use their office to give

them tasks. Use their labor to determine their rewards. Measure out people's achievements and divide the spoils. And so officials will be without constant reward, and the people will be without endless poverty. If one is capable, extol him. If one is incapable, then demote him. Extol impartial righteousness, and hold back private resentments. This is what my statement means.

And so in ancient times, Yao extolled Shun from Fuzi, gave him the government, and the world was at peace. Yu extolled Yi from Yin Fang, gave him the government, and the nine counties were complete. Tang extolled Yi Yin from his place in the kitchen, gave him the government, and his plans succeeded. King Wen extolled Hung Yao and Tai Tian from their place among the rabbit nets, gave them the government, and the western land submitted. And so at that time, although the ministers were substantially rewarded for their posts, none failed to be respectful, fearful, and cautious. And even the farmers and artisans, none did not take part in competing and promoting these ideas. In this way, scholars can truly become officials and governors. So if the ruler got scholars, his plans would not be obstructed, his body would not toil, his reputation would be established, his accomplishments would be complete, his beauty was dispersed, his ill doings would not grow. This is from following "getting scholars."

8.7

Therefore, Master Mozi said, "The successful worthy scholars cannot fail to be exalted, and the unsuccessful worthy scholars cannot fail to be exalted. If those above desire to follow the Way of Yao, Shun, Yu, and Tang, they cannot fail to promote the worthy. As for promoting the worthy, it is the root of government."

References

吴毓江 (2006). 墨子校注. 北京: 中华书局.