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Period _____

Date _____

CHAPTER 8 | LESSON 2 China's Ancient Philosophies

Primary Source

Teachings by Confucius

The *Doctrine of the Mean* is said to be a composition by Confucius' grandson Kong Ji, also called Zisi. The purpose of this book was to show how to gain perfect virtue. It focuses on the “way” that is prescribed by a heavenly mandate that applies not only to the ruler but to everyone. If this heavenly instruction by learning and teaching is followed, it will automatically result in a Confucian virtue.

King Wu received the Mandate of Heaven late in life. The Duke of Chou consummated [brought together] the virtue of Wen and Wu. Following in the ways of Kings T'ai and Chi, he sacrificed to the former princes with the ceremony proper to an emperor, and spread this ceremony to all the nobles, ministers, officers and the common people. If the father was a minister and the son an officer, then the funeral ceremony would be for a minister, and the sacrifices for an officer. If the father was an officer and the son was a minister, he would be buried as an officer and sacrificed as a minister. The one year's mourning applied up to the ministers, but the three-year mourning applied to the emperor. In the mourning for parents, there was no distinction according to class.

Confucius said: “How completely King Wu and the Duke of Chou actualized [lived out] their filial piety! Through filial piety, they correctly passed down the wills of their forefathers and correctly transmitted their works. In spring and autumn, they cleaned the ancestral temple, laid out the sacrificial vessels, dressed up in the ceremonial outfit and prepared the seasonal foods.”

—excerpt from the *Doctrine of the Mean* by Kong Ji

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTIONS

1. How did King Wu change the funeral ceremony?

2. What examples are given of actions that demonstrate filial piety?

3. **Comparing and Contrasting** How did the mourning periods differ between ministers and emperors?

4. **Making Inferences** What do you think is meant by filial piety?
