

## [Musonius Rufus - suite]

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## MUSONIUS RUFUS

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children and contributes to the growth of his city, which is exactly what a married man does? It is clear, therefore, that it is fitting for a philosopher to concern himself with marriage and having children. And if this is fitting, how, my young friend, could that argument of yours that marriage is a handicap for a philosopher ever be sound? For manifestly the study of philosophy is nothing else than to search out by reason what is right and proper and by deeds to put it into practice. Such, then, were the words he spoke at that time.

## XV

## SHOULD EVERY CHILD THAT IS BORN BE RAISED?

Is it not true that the lawgivers, whose special function it was by careful search to discern what is good for the state and what is bad, what promotes and what is detrimental to the common good, all considered the increase of the homes of the citizens the most fortunate thing for the cities and the decrease of them the most shameful thing? And when the citizens had few or no children did they not regard it as a loss, but when they had children, yes, plenty of them, did they not regard it as a gain? So it was for this reason that they forbade women to suffer abortions and imposed a penalty upon those who disobeyed; for this reason they discouraged them from choosing childlessness and avoiding parenthood, and for this reason they gave to both husband and wife a reward for large families, and set a penalty upon childlessness. How, then, can we avoid doing wrong and breaking the law if we do the opposite of the wish of the lawgivers, godlike men and dear to the gods, whom it is considered good and advantageous to follow? And certainly we do the opposite if we avoid having many children. How can we help committing a sin against the gods of our fathers and against Zeus, guardian of the race, if we do this? For just as the man who is unjust to strangers sins against Zeus, god of hospitality, and one who is unjust to friends sins against Zeus, god of friendship, so whoever is unjust to his own family sins against the gods of his fathers and against Zeus, guardian of the family, from whom

was passed in 18 B.C. and the *Lex Papia Poppaea* passed in 9 A.D.  
Cf. Suetonius, *Aug.* XXXIV.



