

## [Musonius Rufus - suite]

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### Présentation de la fiche

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### Références éditoriales

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wrongs done to the family are not hidden, and surely one who sins against the gods is impious. And that raising many children is an honorable and profitable thing one may gather from the fact that a man who has many children is honored in the city, that he has the respect of his neighbors, that he has more influence than his equals if they are not equally blest with children. I need not argue that a man with many friends is more powerful than one who has no friends, and so a man who has many children is more powerful than one without any or with only a few children, or rather much more so, since a son is closer than a friend. One may remark what a fine sight it is to see a man or woman surrounded by their children. Surely one could not witness a procession arrayed in honor of the gods so beautiful nor a choral dance performed in order at a religious celebration so well worth seeing as a chorus of children forming a guard of honor for their father or mother in the city of their birth, leading their parents by the hand or dutifully caring for them in some other way. What is more beautiful than this sight? What is more enviable than these parents, especially if they are good people? For whom would one more gladly join in praying for blessings from the gods, or whom would one be more willing to assist in need? Very true, you say, but I am a poor man and quite without means, and if I have many children, from what source should I find food for them all? But pray, whence do the little birds, which are much poorer than you, feed their young, the swallows and nightingales and larks and blackbirds? Homer speaks of them in these words:

“Even as a bird carries to her unfledged young whatever morsels she happens to come upon, though she fares badly herself—”

Do these creatures surpass man in intelligence? You certainly would not say that. In strength and endurance, then? No, still less in that respect. Well, then, do they put away food and store it up? <Not at all, and yet they rear their young and find sustenance for all that are born to them. The plea of poverty, therefore, is unjustified.>

But what seems to me most monstrous of all, some who do not even have poverty as an excuse, and in spite of prosperity and even riches are so inhuman as not to rear later-born offspring

27 A transitional sentence between the end of the new text and the beginning of the second part (XVB) of the traditional text seems to be missing.

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