



大哉孔子 (-)

THE GREAT CONFUCIUS (PART 1)

宣公上人開示 LECTURED BY THE VENERABLE MASTER HUA

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孔子的一生，是僕僕風塵，想把他的抱負，來挽回世界的頹風，令世界平安。這位古今中外一個出乎其類、拔乎其萃的聖人，姓孔，我們一般人尊稱他「子」；孔子，就是「孔老夫子」。因為他是父母在尼丘祈禱而生的，所以他名字就叫「丘」；「丘」字，現讀成「某」音。又因為在家中的男孩子裏邊，他排行第二，所以他的字叫「仲尼」；字，就是人的一個別號。他父親叫「叔梁紇」，他哥哥叫「孟皮」，是個殘廢；孔老夫子是庶出，所以有的人就叫他「孔老二」。

他生在魯國，魯國是周朝封諸侯的一個國家；諸侯，也就好像現在的省長似的。那時候，一省一省的，也叫國；有魯國，又有齊國。他生在山東魯國，魯國在現在山東曲阜縣的地方。孔老夫子一生來，就有一種祥瑞，「麟吐玉書」——有麒麟來，牠從口裏吐出玉書來；當時他的母親就用一條紅絨線，繫在麒麟的脖子上。又有九龍給他來吐水沐浴，洗他的身體，所以他一生來，就是與眾不同。

孔老夫子真可以說是「敏而好學」、
「不恥下問」，所以「學無常師」，他跟誰學，都看一般人是他的老師一樣。他可以說是「眾人是我的師，我是眾人師；時常師自己，自己時常師。」，他好學不厭，

Throughout his life, Confucius endured the hardships of travel with the hope of redeeming the social ills of his time so that peace might prevail in the country. He was an outstanding sage of all time, whether in China or abroad. His family name was Kong and we commonly address him by the respectful title of 'zi'. The name 'Kongzi' is an abbreviation for 'Kong Lao Fuzi' or 'Elder Master Kong'. Confucius' personal name was Qiu ['hill'], because he was born after his parents had prayed on Mount Ni and he was styled Zhongni (second), a form of alias, because he was the second son in the family. His father's name was Shuliang He and he had an elder brother called Mengpi who was a cripple. As Confucius was born of a concubine, some people referred to him as Second Brother Kong.

Confucius was a native of the State of Lu, which was one of the fiefdoms governed by various feudal lords appointed by the King of the Zhou Dynasty. A feudal lord is similar to today's provincial governor. At that time, each province was called a state, such as the State of Lu and the State of Qi. Confucius was born in the State of Lu, which was located in Qufu County in present-day Shandong Province. The birth of Elder Master Kong was associated with certain auspicious signs. After he was born, a *qilin* [unicorn-like creature] came and spit out a jade book from its mouth, symbolizing auspiciousness. Thereupon, his mother tied a red floss thread around the *qilin's* neck. Furthermore, nine dragons spouted water to bathe him. In this respect, he was exceptional from the moment he was born.

Confucius could truly be considered to be fond of studying for he would not hesitate to learn from those of lower status. He looked upon everyone as his teacher and learned from them. This was in accordance with the saying: "Everyone is my teacher; I am a teacher to everyone. I often teach myself; I am my own constant teacher." He was extremely studious for there was never a time when he was not eager to learn any subject or

無論學什麼、聽什麼道理，他沒有厭倦的時候，沒有不願意聽的時候。我們聽這個人講得好，我們就願意聽；聽人講得不好，我們就不願意聽。他沒有這個，你無論講得好不好，他都是來學習。學習了之後，他又教人。怎麼樣教人呢？他「誨人不倦」，誨就是教誨。教誨人，他也不疲倦；你無論是聰明的、不聰明的，他都循循善誘，諄諄教導。

他做過魯國的大司寇，司丞相的事；雖然時間不久——他只做了三個月的大司寇，可是魯國就大治。治到怎麼樣程度呢？就是「路不拾遺」，路上人家丟了東西，也沒有人撿。這是為什麼呢？人沒有貪心。「夜不閉戶」，晚上也不需要關著門，把門鎖上來睡覺。「槍刀入庫，馬放南山」，槍刀也都收起來，戰馬也都趕到山上去餵草，這是一個太平的景象。

在他做了三個月的魯國的大司寇，發政施仁，鄰近的齊國就受不了，說：「孔仲尼現在在魯國當大司寇，把魯國治得這麼好，我們趕快想法子破壞；不然魯國強了，會先把我們齊國給佔領。」因為這樣子，齊國就想出一個破壞魯國政治的一個方法，什麼方法呢？就訓練一班歌舞的女人。這歌舞女人雖然不至於有裸體舞，但是也都很妖冶的、很會唱歌、很迷人的；就獻給魯國，意思就是：魯公看見這個女樂，他就再不會治理國家，魯國就不會強了。所以「齊人饋女樂」，送給魯國一班唱歌、跳舞的女人；「季桓子受之」，魯國有一個大夫叫季桓子，他就接受女樂，獻給魯公。魯公一得到女樂，看得什麼都不顧了，甚至於一天到晚，就看女樂，在那兒跳舞，在那裏喝酒、聽唱歌，「三日不朝」，三天也不管朝廷的政治。「孔子行」：孔子一看這種情形，就辭官不做了，周遊列國去；從這個國家，到那個國家。

周遊列國想幹什麼呢？無非想要發展他這一生的這個抱負；他的抱負是非常偉大的，想要發展他救世的思想。他三個月就把魯國治得那麼平安無事，如果時間久了，那一定能把世界都治理得太平；所以他到各國周遊列國去，

unwilling to listen to any principle. Ordinary people like us would only listen when the topic is agreeable to us, otherwise we would turn a deaf ear. In contrast, Confucius learnt from everyone regardless of whether the words spoken were agreeable to him or not, and thereafter, he would impart his knowledge to others. How did he carry out his teaching? He was tireless in this respect. The character 'hui' means 'to teach' and the characters 'bu juan' mean 'without tiring'. Whether his students were intelligent or dull, he would patiently guide and instruct them without any distinction.

Confucius was once the Minister of Justice and Acting Chief Minister in the State of Lu. Although he held the post for only a brief period of three months, the State of Lu achieved excellent governance to the point that "*people did not pick up lost articles on the streets, and the doors of houses were not locked at night*". What was the reason for this? It was because the people were not greedy. Furthermore, "*weapons were put back in the arsenal and war-horses were sent to graze on the hillsides.*" This was truly a peaceful scene.

During the three months that he served as Minister of Justice in the State of Lu, Confucius invigorated the state affairs and applied humaneness in its government. This caused the neighboring State of Qi to become wary for they reasoned: "Since Confucius took office as Minister of Justice, the State of Lu has been administered so well. We ought to quickly think of a plan to disrupt its government, otherwise it would surely seize our state if it were to grow any stronger." Therefore, the State of Qi devised a plan to disrupt the administration of the State of Lu. And what was the plan? It was to train a troupe of dancing girls. Although these maidens did not go to the extent of performing striptease acts, they were all very pretty and coquettish, could sing very well and were very bewitching. The intention was to offer them as a gift to the Duke of Lu so that he would neglect the affairs of state once he set sight on these maidens, thereby resulting in the decline of Lu. As the saying goes: "*The envoy of Qi brought a gift of dancing girls. Ji Huanzi accepted it.*" There was a senior official in the State of Lu by the name of Ji Huanzi who accepted the dancing girls and presented them to the Duke. When once the maidens were in his possession, the Duke of Lu was so smitten by them that he forgot everything else, even to the extent of "*failing to hold court and attend to state affairs for three days in succession*". All day long, he immersed himself in wine and song, enjoying the performances of the dancing girls. Faced with this situation, Confucius resigned from his post and embarked on a journey to visit the various states throughout the Zhou kingdom.

What was Confucius' aim in traveling from one state to another?

各處和人君見面，看哪個地方是他可以發展抱負的一個國家。可是當時各國的個元首，都是沒有什麼大志，沒有什麼遠大的眼光，都是眼光如豆的，所以也沒有用他。爲什麼沒有用他？都怕如果用了他，自己就不能那麼享樂了，不能那麼自私，要大公無私了；因爲自古以來，大多數都是自私的，你若叫他不自私，他很受不了的。因爲這樣子，孔子僕僕風塵這麼一生，也沒能發展他的志願；他在外邊看這條道路行不通，於是就回到魯國。

回到魯國就在杏壇設教，教化老百姓；「杏壇」，是他教學的地方。他所主張的，就是一種普通教育，不論貧富，大家都可以受教育。他這樣子教化出來的弟子，有三千多人；深通禮樂射御書數六藝的，有七十二個；其中最聰明的，就是顏回。

顏回，孔老夫子講什麼，他都心領神會。所以孔老夫子說是：「吾與回言終日，不違如愚。」說我和顏回講話，他也不說什麼，也不說什麼，也不知道他懂了沒懂？他就像一個很愚癡的人。「退而省其私，亦足以發，回也，不愚！」等顏回回去，我要看一看他私人的生活方式，是否照著我所說的道理去做？這叫「退而省其私」，他私人的生活還是照著我教他的是一樣的；而且，「亦足以發」，他很多地方，都有特別的發揮，所以「回也不愚！」，顏回其實不是愚癡的人！這是孔老夫子他讚歎顏回的話。

☞待續

It was solely to fulfill his aspiration in finding an avenue to apply his ideas on saving the world. Within a period of three months, he had brought peace and order to the State of Lu. If given time, he would definitely be able to bring everlasting peace to the world. That was why he journeyed to all the various states and sought audiences with the dukes so that he could have an opportunity to fulfill his aspiration. However, at that time, all the dukes whom he met did not possess such lofty ideas and were rather mediocre in their outlook. Lacking foresight, none of them engaged his services. What was the reason for this? It was because they feared that by engaging him, they would forfeit the enjoyment of life and could not indulge in their selfishness. Since time immemorial, human beings are mostly selfish. If you tell them not to be selfish, they will find it unbearable. As a result, Confucius did not fulfill his aspiration despite having endured the hardships of traveling throughout this life. Realizing that he could not make any further progress in the other states, he finally returned to the State of Lu.

Upon returning to his native state, Confucius formed a learning center at the Apricot Pavilion to teach and transform the common people. He advocated universal education whereby everyone, rich or poor, had a chance to study and learn. The disciples whom he taught by this method numbered over three thousand. There were seventy-two disciples who were well versed in all the Six Arts: rites, music, archery, chariot driving, writing and mathematics. Among them, the most outstanding student was Yan Hui.

Regardless of what Confucius expounded, Yan Hui understood him tacitly. Hence, the Master said, "*I may spend a whole day talking to Hui but he does not disagree with whatever I say. It is as if he is a fool.*" This means that when Confucius talked to Yan Hui, the latter did not respond at all. Without any indication of whether he understood the Master's words or not, he was akin to a stupid person. However, "*an observation of his personal life after he departed revealed his qualities in full. Hui is not foolish at all!*" Confucius waited until Yan Hui had left for home and then proceeded to check whether he applied the principles in his private life. It was discovered that Yan Hui lived his life according to the Master's teachings. Indeed, there were many areas in which he excelled, attesting to the fact that he was not a foolish person after all. Confucius expressed such words of praise for Yan Hui.

☞To be continued