



# 大哉孔子 (五)

## THE GREAT CONFUCIUS (Part V)

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問題：佛教以及儒教的道德觀念，是不是相同的？這是第一個問題；第二個問題：以儒教及道教的觀念，講到「道德」，是不是一樣的？

上人：一個是小學的道德課程，一個是中學的道德課程，一個是大學的道德課程。大學的道德課程，就是叫你皈依佛、法、僧三寶，不要把這三寶忘了；中學的，就叫你皈依你自己的精、氣、神，不要把精、氣、神耗散了；初學的，就叫你入人道好好盡圓滿了。如果你想詳細明白這課程的內容，先要申請入學；入小學、或者中學、或者大學，然後才能瞭解。

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我以前說過：儒教像小學似的，在小學，不知道中學的課程；道教像中學似的，在中學，也不知道大學的課程，小學連大學的課程也不知道。所以孔子讚歎老子的道「猶龍」，像一條龍似的，是隱顯莫測、變化無窮的。由這句話就知道，他不太懂老子道。他是真不懂嗎？不是的！他也懂，可是他不說。為什麼他不說呢？因為當時他的學生還都不夠程度，不能領會到中學的課程，所以他不能講這個法門。老子他對佛學懂是懂一點，可是他也是不講，他只講道教的道理；為什麼呢？也因為當時的人不夠程度，不能接受佛

*Question:* First, are the moral concepts of Buddhism and Confucianism similar? Second, do the Confucian and Taoist concepts explain morality in the same way?

*Ven. Master:* These three teachings are the moral curricula for elementary school, secondary school and university respectively. The university moral curriculum teaches one to take refuge with the Triple Jewel of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha and not to forget about them. At the secondary school level, one is taught to take refuge with one's own essence, energy and spirit and not to dissipate them. As for the elementary school level, one learns the art of humanity and the way to perfect it. If you want to understand the contents of these three curricula in detail, you first have to apply for admission to elementary school, secondary school or university.

I have mentioned this previously: Confucianism is similar to elementary school and at this stage, one knows nothing about the secondary school or college syllabus. Taoism is akin to secondary school and at this level, one has no knowledge of the university curriculum. This is why Confucius praised Laozi's concept of the Way as being analogous to a dragon for it is unfathomable and undergoes endless transformations. From this, we gather that Confucius did not fully understand the Way of Laozi. But was it really the case? Of course not! He understood but did not want to divulge it. He could not reveal this Dharma-door because at that time, his students were still not prepared to understand the secondary school syllabus. Laozi understood a little bit about Buddhism but refrained from talking about it. He only expounded the principles of Taoism because the people of his time were not ready to accept Buddhist doctrines. Both Confucius and Laozi were forerunners who paved the way for Buddhism. By the same token, externalists pave the way for the Proper Path while deviant sects pave the way for the orthodox teachings. They arrive at the place first to do some preparatory

教。孔子和老子，都是給佛教鋪路的；所以外道是給正道鋪路的，邪教也是給正教鋪路的，先給他們去把那地方收拾乾淨了。邪教是把人心來一個波浪，衝擊一下，令他們智慧的鎖先開一開；智慧之門打開一點了，然後才能接受佛教這無上的醍醐甘露。

所以你用佛教的道理來講儒教，不太恰當！為什麼說「朝聞道，夕死可矣」？這「夕死可矣」，並不是死，你們不要以為就是死了；這只是以道和死來衡量輕重，做人之道比死還重要。你若能知道怎麼樣做人了，就是死也瞑目了、死也可以了；可以是可以，但不是就死了。你們各位要注意這一點，並不是：「早晨我聞著道了，晚上我自殺。」你自殺，還是一樣下地獄的，不是那樣子。他這是比較輕重的問題，就說道比死更重要。人把「生、死」看得很重要，生了就大喜，死了就悲傷了、就煩惱了；可是這個「道」，比生死的問題更重要！所以你要明白做人之道。

做人之道是什麼呢？它的含義，就是「大公無私」。大公無私怎麼樣呢？這就包括著沒有情慾、沒有自私、沒有自利。不爭、不貪、不求、不自私、不自利，我們這「六大宗旨」，用佛教的道理講也可以，用道教的道理講也可以，用儒教道理講也可以，這是很實用的、很合乎邏輯學的。為什麼人不早這麼講呢？我告訴你們，這是我發表的：「科學時代的佛教是什麼？就是六大宗旨。」這是科學的佛教，很科學的、很邏輯學的，很合乎一般人所用的。若不信，你們往儒教、道教、佛教合一合，都可以合得上的；三而一、一而三，這是很合用的一個方法。佛教的戒律，說來說去，就是說的這「六大宗旨」。

孔子提倡道。我們單講這個「道」字：道是個「首」字，又加一個「走」字兒；首者，「頭」也，就是「第一件事」；走，就要你「行」。第一件事要什麼呢？就是要你

work. Deviant sects are like waves that give the human mind a good pounding so as to unveil people's wisdom. Once the door of wisdom is slightly ajar, people are then able to accept the unsurpassed flavor of Buddhism.

Therefore, it is not very appropriate to discuss Confucianism in terms of Buddhist principles. Why did Confucius say: "*If I could hear the Way [truth] in the morning, I would be willing to die in the evening*"? Do not interpret the word 'die' literally as it is only used as a basis of comparison to highlight the importance of the Way. It means that learning about the Way of being a person is far more important than the issue of death. If you know how to be a proper person, then you can die without regret. All of you should take note: It does not imply that you hear about the Way in the morning and then commit suicide at night. If you took your own life, you would fall into the hells. It's not like that. On assessing the relative importance between the two, he asserted that the Way was of a much higher priority than death. Human beings attach great importance to birth and death for birth results in great joy whereas death brings misery and anguish. However, the Way is far more important than the matter of birth and death! This is why you should understand the Way of being a person.

What is the Way of being a person? Its meaning can be expressed by the Chinese idiom '*putting others before the self*', which includes attributes such as being devoid of desire, selfishness and self-benefit. The Six Guiding Principles of not contending, not being greedy, not seeking, not being selfish, not pursuing personal advantages and not lying are practical and logical and can be explained in terms of Buddhist, Taoist or Confucian principles. Why did people not express it in this way previously? Let me tell you this: I was the one who stated that Buddhism in the scientific age is just the Six Guiding Principles. This is scientific Buddhism; it has a scientific basis, accords with logic and has practical applications for everyone. If you don't believe me, just try to combine Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism together and you will find that they complement each other perfectly. The three are one and one is just the three: This method serves the purpose very well. Essentially, the Buddhist Vinaya is all about the Six Guiding Principles.

Confucius advocated the Tao [way or path]. Let us discuss this character. It consists of the character 首(*shou*) combined with the radical 走(*zou*). The former means 'head' and refers to the first and foremost matter, while the latter means 'walk' or 'practice'. So the first thing is that you have to go and walk the path. If you do not put things into practice, then whatever you say is just deceptive talk. Hence, the saying: "*Ten feet of talk is not as good as one inch of practice*." There is a hundred-fold difference between the two. When we talk about '*hearing the Way*', this refers to the 'Way of being a person' and not to any other

去做去；你若不做，你說多少都是假的，都是在騙人。所以說：「說的一丈，不如行的一寸。」相差就十百之差——相差十倍、百倍那麼的遠。我們說「聞道」，這個「道」，就是「做人之道」；不是旁的道，不一定說是「了生脫死」那個道。人之道你若懂了，那就比你生死還重要。所以古人說：「人固有一死」，誰都會死的；可是「死有重於泰山，有輕於鴻毛」。有死的價值，有比那個泰山都有價值、比它分量都重的；也有像一片雀毛那麼輕的——那雀毛是最輕的，死了沒價值的。所以說：「朝聞道」，朝，言其「早」，「朝、夕」是短的距離；說你若聞到道了，雖然時間很短，你就是死了也有價值的，也比你不懂做人、不懂得「大公無私」這個道理好得多。這個「聞」，也就是「明白了」；你知道怎麼樣做人，這都包括在內了。

這個「道」字，我以前講過；它的根本就是什麼呢？是「真理」，真理誰也推不翻、誰也搖動不了的。真理只是一個，沒有兩個；是絕對的，不是對待的。它沒有對待，那就是真理！不錯，在儒教也可以講這個道、在道教也可以講這個道、在佛教也可以講這個道；不過我們不要籠統，不要說：「孔子說佛教怎麼樣子……。」你那樣一說，好像孔子也是信佛的；孔子當時是為佛教開路的，他並沒有敢公開提倡說有佛教。沒有的！那時候，連佛教的名詞恐怕都沒有的；你們研究學問的人，要懂得這種的步驟；如果你不懂的話，你對人說：「孔子說佛法。」令人把牙都笑掉了！

當時，讀書的人都是志於「道」——就是做人之道；這個「道」，不是成佛之道，也不是成神之道，就是「成人之道」。為什麼呢？因為儒教就想把人做好了，道教就講你要成一個神仙、修到長生不老，佛教是成佛；這都叫「道」，卻道與道不同。讀書

‘ways’ such as the way of ending birth and death. If you understood the Way of being a person, it would far surpass your own birth and death in importance. The ancients said, “*It is for sure that a person has to die eventually.*” This applies to everyone but then, “*Death can be as heavy as Mount Tai, or it can be as light as a goose feather.*” Some people, death exceeds the value and magnitude of Mount Tai whereas for some others, death is as insignificant as a sparrow’s feather. With regards to the saying: “*If I could hear the Way in the morning, I would be willing to die in the evening*”, morning and evening are separated by a very short interval. What this means is that if one could hear about the Way, albeit for only a very short time, one could die a worthy death. It would be far better than to die without knowing how to be a person and being ignorant of the principle of ‘*putting others before self*’. The character *wen* [hear] also means ‘understand’, as in understanding how to be a person.

As for the character 道[Tao], I mentioned before that it is fundamentally the ‘true principle’. Absolutely no one can shake or overturn the true principle. There is only one true principle, not two. It is absolute, nondual. Whatever is nondual is the true principle. It is quite right to say that the Tao can be explained in terms of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. However, we should not make sweeping comments like: “Confucius described Buddhism as such and such...” If you were to say this, it would appear that Confucius was also a Buddhist. He paved the way for Buddhism but did not dare to publicly advocate any Buddhist doctrines. During his time, even the word ‘Buddhism’ did not exist [in China]. You people who investigate knowledge should be aware of the sequence of events. If you did not know any better and went around telling others that Confucius lectured on the Buddhadharma, people would certainly laugh their heads off!

During that period, scholars set their hearts on the Tao, meaning the Way of being a person. In this context, the Tao does not refer to the way of becoming a Buddha or an immortal but refers to the way of becoming a person. Why is that so? It is because a Confucian scholar studies to become a proper person, a Taoist practitioner wants to attain immortality and eternal youth, while a Buddhist cultivator strives to realize Buddhahood. All these various methods are called ‘ways’ but they differ from one another. Among the scholars, some set their hearts on learning how to be proper people while some want to learn how to be ‘ghosts’. Ghostly people are those who look for gains and benefits in whatever they do. A proper person benefits others while a ghost benefits himself. They are complete opposites.

Confucianism advocates loyalty and forbearance, while



的人，有的志在學著做人，有的就學著要做鬼；做鬼，就是每一件事情都想得到利益、得到好處。做人，就要利益他人；做鬼，就要利益自己，這正是一個相反。

其實，儒教是講「忠恕」的；天主教、耶穌教是講愛，他們講「博愛」。這個「博」字，是個「豎心」旁；「愛」字，也有個「心」字在愛的中間，在心裏頭；道教是講感應的，它雖然說清淨無為，它要修自然之道——「人法地，地法天，天法道，道法自然」，這是〈道德經〉上說的；實際上，它的教義是「感應」二個字。佛教是講「慈悲」。儒、釋、道這三教，都是沒離開「心」；若離開這個心呢？就沒有教了。

儒教是講「忠恕」。忠，是「忠以持己」；恕，是「恕以待人」。忠以持己，是我做什麼事情，要盡我的忠心，對人也要有忠心；這是培植自己品德的一個基本條件。恕以待人，其他人有什麼錯處，你要有原諒、寬恕其他人的這種思想。你能忠於持己，人格就清高了；你能恕以待人，你的人就有利人的思想，對誰也不苛求。儒教它沒有離開「心」，你看「忠、恕」二字，底下都是「心」字。

道教是講「感應」，做什麼事情，都憑感應。感，是「感而遂通」；應，是「無求不應」，誰有求他，他都答應。「有感斯通，無求不應」，這是感應道交。什麼叫「感應」呢？譬如電，那個地方通上電，它就放光了，這就是「有感斯通，無求不應」；也就是你心裏想什麼，它也知道了，這是互相心裏的電有所感應。如是感應、感應如是，這是「由感斯通，無求不應」；你求什麼能得什麼，你真誠心了，就有感、就能通——通達到神明了。

☞待續

Catholicism and Protestantism preach universal love. The character '博' [universal] has a 'vertical mind' radical on the left. The character '愛' [love] also has a 'mind' radical but it is sandwiched in the middle. Taoism emphasizes 'influence and response'. Although it talks about clarity, purity and non-action, its method of cultivation is according to the natural Tao. As the *Classic of the Way and Virtue* says, "Man is conditioned by earth; earth is conditioned by heaven; heaven is conditioned by the Tao; and the Tao is conditioned by nature." In fact, its religious doctrine is summed up by the two characters 'gan ying' [influence and response]. Buddhism preaches kindness and compassion. The three teachings of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism are not apart from the mind for if there is any deviation from the mind, it is no longer a teaching.

Confucianism talks about loyalty and forbearance. The character 忠[zhong] means to conduct oneself with loyalty. We must exercise good faith in whatever we do and in our dealings with others. This is a basic requirement in the cultivation of one's morality. The character 恕[shu] means to treat others with forbearance. If other people have any shortcomings, you should adopt a forgiving attitude towards them. If you can conduct yourself with loyalty, you will have a lofty character. If you can treat others with forbearance, you will generate thoughts of benefiting others instead of being critical and judgmental. Confucianism is not apart from the mind. You see, the characters 'zhong' and 'shu' both have the mind radical at the bottom.

According to Taoism, everything is based on 'gan ying' [influence and response]. The character 感[gan] means 'where there is influence, there is penetration', while 應[ying] means 'absolutely all requests will receive responses'. Therefore, the term 'gan ying' refers to achieving a response in the Way. Take electricity for example: A room lights up if it is supplied with electricity. In other words, the other party is aware of whatever you think due to the mutual interaction of the 'electricity' in your minds. Thus is the response; the response is thus. Where there is influence, there is penetration and absolutely all requests will receive responses. In this way, you will obtain whatever you seek. As long as you are truly sincere, you will be able to exert an influence and penetrate to the realm of the deities.

☞To be continued