



富蘭克林 (續)

Benjamin Franklin (continued)

宣化上人講述於1988年2月13日
張煒 英譯

Lectured by Venerable Master Hsuan Hua on February 13, 1988
English Translation by Wei Zhang

贊曰

天降大任，勞其筋骨
飢寒交迫，貧苦攻讀
任勞任怨，艱辛匍匐
為國宣德，奠定基礎

「天降大任，勞其筋骨」：他雖然沒有在美國做總統，但對美國的政治很有一些個貢獻。這是《孟子》上說的：「天將降大任於斯人也，必先苦其心志，勞其筋骨……。」意思是叫他多受一點折磨。

「飢寒交迫，貧苦攻讀」：飢寒交迫就是又餓又冷。雖然那麼困難，他仍然專心讀書，研究文學。

「任勞任怨，艱辛匍匐」：他做事，對誰都任勞任怨。艱辛匍匐，很艱難困苦。他常常是很敏而好學，不恥下問的。

「為國宣德，奠定基礎」：又替國家簽字、起草，都是為了宣揚國家的威德，為美國奠定好基礎。

A verse in praise of him says:

**Before conferring a great task, Heaven makes him toil bitterly.
Suffering both hunger and cold, he perseveres in his studies.
Never complaining, never resentful,
steadily progressing despite the odds.
He proclaims the ideals of America,
laying the foundation of the country.**

Commentary:

Before conferring a great task, Heaven makes him toil bitterly. Although he did not serve as a president, he still made great contributions to the political sphere of the US. His achievements were just like what was said in *Mencius*, “Thus, when Heaven is about to confer a great office on any man, it first exercises his mind with suffering, and his sinews and bones with toil...” That means, Heaven put him through much suffering.

Suffering both hunger and cold, he perseveres in his studies. Although he was in such a difficult situation, he still kept reading and learning, and devoted himself to literary research.

Never complaining, never resentful, steadily progressing despite the odds. He never complained about hardship to anyone whatsoever. He was

又說偈曰

艱苦奮鬥奔前程
屢遭白眼受人評
頓悟陰陽明電力
發明科哲煤氣燈
創造眼鏡觀遐邇
開國功臣儀型世
建立國策照古今
平安低頭一聖人

「艱苦奮鬥奔前程」：他創事業。

「屢遭白眼受人評」：到什麼地方，令人看不起他、評論他，他也忍受，不會小不忍則亂大謀。

「頓悟陰陽明電力」：他把陰陽的道理領悟到了，明白陰電、陽電怎麼樣循環。

「發明科哲煤氣燈」：他發明利用煤氣點燈。

「創造眼鏡觀遐邇」：眼睛不好的人戴上眼鏡，藉著一點外緣，能看遠也能看近。近視眼戴上，可以看遠一點；遠視的可以看近一點，能互相把它調和起來。

「開國功臣儀型世」：他是美國開國的一個功臣。儀型世，他的榜樣可留到世界人都可以取法。

「建立國策照古今」：他對美英、美法簽字，美國的國家政策他奠定了，這種的光明到現在都是很光明磊落的。

「平安低頭一聖人」：就因為聽到一個長輩對他說：「你若想平安，需要低頭。」他悟得人生一切都應該對人謙讓和氣，沒有一點貢高我慢，所以他創造一番事業，成就他的功勳。❀

always quick in learning and never felt embarrassed to seek instruction from others, even from those below him (in terms of seniority, position, or status).

He proclaims the ideals of America, laying the foundation of the country. He was a signatory to some peace treaties, as well as one of the drafters of the *Declaration of Independence*. These were all done for the good of the country, and for establishing the country's prestige, thereby laying an excellent foundation for the US.

Another verse says:

Working industriously in pursuit of his goal.

He is repeatedly criticized and treated with disdain.

In a moment of insight he understands electricity.

Prior to that he had developed gas lighting.

His invention of bifocals enables viewing both near and far.

Through his efforts as a founding father,

he is a role-model for the world.

His strategies of diplomacy shines from the past up to the present.

With his characteristic humility, he is truly a sage.

Commentary:

Working industriously in pursuit of his goal. He started his own business.

He is repeatedly criticized and treated with disdain. Although people looked down upon him and gave him negative comments, he still endured that. He did not burst out for such minor things, because “a little impatience spoils great plans.”

In a moment of insight he understands electricity. He realized the two opposite principles of the nature as *Yin* and *Yang*. He understood the essence of how the negative and positive electrical charges circulated which he discovered in lightning.

Prior to that he had developed gas lighting. He improved the lighting using gas energy.

His invention of bifocals enables viewing both near and far. People with eyesight problems could benefit from bifocal glasses, as an external aid, to clearly see both afar and near. The near-sighted can see a bit farther with the glasses, and the far-sighted can see a bit closer. This kind of bifocal glasses well combines the two features together.

Through his efforts as a founding father, he is a role-model for the world. He was one of the great founding fathers of the US and he serves as a role-model for the entire world. His example is to be admired and learnt by people all over the world.

His strategies of diplomacy shines from the past up to the present. He signed the peace treaties for the US with Great Britain and France. He established sound national founding principles of the US, which is efficacious and inspiring up to now.

With his characteristic humility, he is truly a sage. He heard the words from the elder, “To avoid thumps, you have to keep your head down.” These words taught him to be always modest, polite, kind and humble to others. Therefore, he established a great business and succeeded with great achievements. ❀