

論語淺釋 (續)

The Analects of Confucius

(continued)



宣化上人講

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Lectures by the Venerable Master Hua

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【公冶長第五】

Chapter 5: Gongye Chang

他就問這雀鳥說：「牠什麼時候死的？」說：「剛剛死的。」「臭了沒臭？」說：「沒有，還很新鮮的，你可以拿回來吃！」那麼這公冶長什麼都不顧了，書也不讀了，慌慌張張就跑去，要吃這個肉。為什麼？他本來是隻小鳥轉世的，所以他歡喜吃肉，到那地方就把肉拿回來了。

大約他也很窮的，平日裏也沒有肉吃；所以把這死羊拿回就吃，越吃越什麼都不顧了，什麼都忘了，腸子、肝子、肚子都一起吃了，也沒有留給小鳥。這樣子，外邊這小鳥說：「你這公冶長真是不公道，真是不公道！那好，我再叫你到監獄去試一試！」

偏偏路上就有一個人，在那兒被打劫、被殺了——當時這種事情是很少

He then asked the sparrow, "When did it die?" The sparrow replied, "Just recently." "Has it decomposed?" "Not yet. It's still quite fresh. You can take it home to try!" At this suggestion, Gongye Chang threw everything aside, including his studies, and ran helter-skelter to that location just for the goat's meat. Why? He was originally a little bird who had been reincarnated as a human being, hence his fondness for eating meat. He rushed all the way there and brought the carcass back.

As he was probably very poor and could not ordinarily afford to eat meat, he made a meal of the goat carcass as soon as he brought it back home. The more he stuffed himself, the less he cared about anything else. He devoured everything, including the intestines, liver and stomach, and totally forgot to leave any for the little bird. Meanwhile, the little bird outside was fuming: "How unfair of you, Gongye Chang! How very unfair! Very well, I shall let you have a taste of prison life next time!"

It so happened that a person had just been robbed and murdered on the road. In those days, such incidents were very rare, so it was perhaps the manifestation of a Bodhisattva. The little bird promptly came to report to him again: "Gongye Chang! Gongye Chang! A very plump goat has died on the

的，這或者都是菩薩示現。這小鳥就又來對他報告說：「公冶長，公冶長！路上死了一隻最肥的羊。」他就：「喔！這個最肥，更好吃了！」於是乎就跑去；跑去，正好人家「警察」在那兒找兇手呢！他一去就說：「這是我的！這是我的！」人家說：「好！那是你的。」不由分說抓去，就放到監獄裏了。那麼他有罪沒罪？沒罪！所以說，「非其罪也」：不是他的罪過。

「以其子妻（qì）之」：孔子大約前生也歡喜聽小鳥那個叫聲——就像那隻鸚鵡，牠也會說“Hello”，人聽了也就很高興的。孔子大約和小鳥也有這個緣，那麼孔子因為愛鳥，所以一隻小鳥就給他做女孩子（女兒）；孔子也懂得前因後果，一看：「哦！這個女孩子應該和這隻小鳥兩個做夫婦。」大約是這樣的，我也不確實知道！

（編按：公冶長，姓公冶，名長，字子長，春秋時期魯國人。為孔門七十二賢之一，也是孔子的女婿。自幼家貧，但通鳥語，不擅言詞，為人能忍恥，老實有德，終生治學不仕祿，是德才兼備者。）

（二）子謂南容：「邦有道，不廢；邦無道，免於刑戮。」以其兄之子妻（qì）之。

【上人講解】

「子謂南容」：孔子評論南容這個人。南容是一個政治家，雖然是政治家，可是他會明哲保身，做什麼事都很謹慎的。「邦有道，不廢」：因為他謹慎，人緣也好，所以在太平盛世的時候，他能受重用，為政府效忠努力。「邦無道，免於刑戮」：可是邦無道的時候——就是這國家混亂了，或者爭權奪利，或者互相殘殺，互相傾軋，那麼勾心鬥角的；南容他能以避嫌遠疑，能以明哲保身，謹慎處事，所以就免於刑戮，他不會犯法，也不會受到這種無辜冤枉的殺戮。

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road.” At this, Gongye Chang exclaimed, “Wow! This plump one ought to taste even better!” Straightaway, he dashed out and ran to the spot. As luck would have it, the constables were also there looking for the murderer! The moment he arrived, Gongye Chang shouted, “This is mine! This is mine!” The constables said, “Alright, if you insist!” Without giving him a chance to explain, they arrested him and put him in jail. Now, was he guilty or not? Definitely not! Therefore, Confucius said, “**He was actually not guilty of any crime.**” It was not his fault at all.

The Master then arranged for his daughter to be married to him. In his previous life, Confucius was probably quite fond of listening to birds chirping. For example, parrots know how to say “Hello,” which makes people very happy. Confucius most likely had an affinity with birds and because he was fond of them, a little bird was reborn as his daughter. He was also aware of the principle of cause and effect and with one look, he realized: “Ah, that little bird and this daughter of mine should be husband and wife.” This was probably the case but I am not too certain about it!

[Editor's Note: Gongye Chang—His surname was Gongye, his given name, Chang, and he was styled Zichang. A native of the State of Lu during the Spring and Autumn Period, he was one of the Seventy-two Worthies of the Confucian School and was also Confucius' son-in-law. Since young, his family was poor. Despite lacking in eloquence, he could communicate with birds. He conducted himself with honesty and integrity while enduring humiliation. Throughout his life, he pursued his studies and never sought an official career. He was a man of virtue and ability.]

(2) **The Master said of Nan Rong, “When the state is governed in accordance with the Way, his talents will not go to waste. When the state is not governed in accordance with the Way, he will be able to avoid punishment or penalty.” The Master then arranged for his elder brother's daughter to be married to him.**

【Venerable Master's Commentary】

The Master said of Nan Rong. Confucius commented on this person called Nan Rong. Although the latter was a statesman, he was worldly-wise and knew how to protect himself. Whatever it was, he played it safe. **When the state is governed in accordance with the Way, his talents will not go to waste.** As he was cautious and had good affinities with other people, he would be able to assume important positions and devote himself to serving the government during times of peace and prosperity. **When the state is not governed in accordance with the Way, he will be able to avoid punishment or penalty.** However, the state might experience chaotic situations such as power struggles, mutual slaughter, internal strife and other political intrigues. At such times, Nan Rong would be able to avoid arousing suspicion, stay out of trouble and exercise caution in all matters. As a result, he would not be punished or penalized. In other words, he would not break the law and neither would he be killed unjustly.

To be continued