

# 論語淺釋 (續)

## The Analects of Confucius (continued)

宣化上人講

楊維光、劉年聰 英譯

Lectures by the Venerable Master Hua  
English translation by Yong Wei Kwong  
and Liew Yen Chong



### 【公冶長第五】

### Chapter 5: Gongye Chang

(十五) 子貢問曰：「孔文子何以謂之『文』也？」子曰：「敏而好學，不恥下問，是以謂之『文』也。」

(15) Zigong inquired, "Why was Kong Wenzi accorded the posthumous title of 'Wen'?" The Master replied, "He had a keen mind and was fond of learning. Furthermore, he was not ashamed of seeking advice from his inferiors. For these reasons, he was accorded the posthumous title of 'Wen'."

#### 【上人講解】

「子貢問曰」：子貢這個人，是沒啥事幹的人，很八卦的，什麼事情他都要問。「子貢方人」嘛！他總要問「這個怎麼樣，那個怎麼樣啊？我怎麼樣，你怎麼樣，他怎麼樣？」你看，他有這麼多的閒時間，來搞這些個沒有價值的事情！他現在就問這個孔文子了。

「孔文子何以謂之文也」：孔文子他憑什麼叫一個「文」呢？這個「文」是諡號。諡號，就是人在死了之後，國君給他的這麼一個名

#### 【Venerable Master's Commentary】

Zigong inquired. Zigong was a person who did not have anything to do other than being a busy body and asking about everything under the sun. Zigong was known for criticizing other people. He was always asking, "What is this? And, what is that? What do people think of me? What about you? What about him?" You see, he had so much time on his hands that he got involved in worthless pursuits! In this case, he asked about Kong Wenzi.

Why was Kong Wenzi accorded the posthumous title of 'Wen'? On what basis did Kong Wenzi deserve the title of 'Wen'? Here, the character '文' (wén), meaning 'cultured', is used as a posthumous title. In ancient times, posthumous titles were bestowed by the state ruler to honor deceased persons. It was meant as an award, not unlike a medal or a certificate of merit. In this case, the certificate of merit had the character '文' written on it, hence the name 'Kong Wenzi'. '文' describes a person of impressive literary talent who produces outstanding literary works, and has connotations

字，就是尊重他的貽封之號；也就是獎勵這個人，就好像用一個獎牌、獎狀似的，獎狀上寫上這一個字，說他叫「孔文子」。這個「文」，是文章俊秀，文才可觀，是很文雅的，是很清高的意思。那麼這樣子，子貢就問，他有什麼資格叫這個「文」呢？他怎麼能得到這種謚號呢？

「子曰」：孔子又說了，「敏而好學，不恥下問」：他思想敏捷又好求學問，而且不以向下請教為羞恥。就這一句，我們就問問自己：能不能比得了？我們都是自己就不知道，也不問人。

好像有做教授的，往那兒擺出一個教授架子，對學生說：「你去做實驗，試驗出來寫說明、寫文章！」寫文章怎麼樣？他就拿到雜誌上發表說是他自己的文章，啊！這樣欺世盜名。他自己根本就不會，不會他也不「下問」；他要「下考」，叫人家給他當槍手。他自己不好意思說清楚了，就說：「我來考驗你，我來試驗你！」本來他自己也沒有什麼材料，也沒有什麼資格，根本連學生的程度還不夠呢！他就因為他當這個教授的地位，所以就頤指氣使地這麼來叫學生給他當槍手，然後他去領獎去。

所以這叫「不敏」。這個「敏」，在這兒可以當「聰明」講，又可以當一個「快」，當一個「敏捷」講，「敏捷」就是很快的。他也就是很注意旁人有沒有學問，也很注意自己的學問；因為這個，他要集思廣益，他要擴充他自己的智慧，他要發掘他自己智能的根源，所以他就不恥下問。他好學，有不明白了，他見著一個小孩子：「噯！你懂不懂這句是怎麼個意思？」比他低的人，他也去問去。

有一個人就問另一個人，說是：「我因為敏而好學，不恥下問，所以問你，你說這句話是怎麼講？」啊！把這個被問的人弄得就想：「你意思就是比你低了嘛！」哈哈！「娑婆訶！」念這麼一個咒。你就是問，也不必說「我是敏而好學，不恥下問」啦！

of elegance and loftiness. With this in mind, Zigong asked, "In what sense is he qualified to be honored as 'Wen'? How could he possibly be bestowed with such a posthumous title?"

The Master replied. Confucius explained, "He had a keen mind and was fond of learning. Furthermore, he was not ashamed of seeking advice from his inferiors. He was agile in his thinking and very eager to seek knowledge. Moreover, he did not consider it shameful to ask for advice from individuals who were of a lower status than him. Reading this line, we should ask ourselves: Are we able to compare with Kong Wenzhi? Our attitude is that when we do not know something, we are not willing to consult others.

For example, there is a professor who likes to put on airs, telling his students: "Go and do the experiments, then analyze the results and write a paper on your findings!" What happens after it has been written? He promptly submits it to a journal for publication, claiming to be the author of the research article. Ah, this is gaining fame by deception! In fact, he does not know the subject matter at all and yet he does not bother to seek advice from his inferiors. Instead, he wants to 'test' his students by making use of them as ghost writers. He is too embarrassed to admit his own ignorance and so he says, "Let me give you a test. I want to see how good you are!" Actually, he himself lacks the ability and qualifications and is not even of the same standard as his students! By taking advantage of his position as professor, he arrogantly orders his students to write the papers on his behalf and then claims all the credit for himself.

Therefore, this is an example of a person who lacks a keen mind. In this context, the character '敏' (mǐn) can be interpreted as '聰明' (cōng míng), which means 'clever' or 'bright', or '敏捷' (mǐn jié), which means 'quick' or 'agile'. Kong Wenzhi was very interested to know how erudite the people around him were, and he also paid great attention to his own learning. By drawing on ideas from a wide range of people, he could augment his own wisdom and discover the source of his intellectual ability. For this reason, he was not ashamed of seeking advice from his inferiors. He was very fond of learning; if there was something he did not understand, he would even approach a child and ask, "Hey! Do you know what this line means?" He was modest enough to seek advice from anybody, even if they were of a lower status.

Once, there was an individual who posed this question to another person, "As I have a keen mind and am fond of learning, I am not ashamed of seeking advice from my inferiors. Therefore, I wish to consult you: "In your opinion, what does this saying mean?" Well, the person who was asked this question thought about it and realized, "What you mean to say is that I am inferior to you!" Ha! He then responded by reciting the mantra "Svaha!" Even if you want to ask somebody a question, you need not preface it with such condescending words.