

Confucius, the man

1. Un homme sensible, lui

Confucius was mourning Zilu's death at the courtyard of the house. A person arrived to show respect to the dead. Confucius greeted him. After the mourning (ceremonial wailing) was finished, Confucius asked what happened. The person answered, "They pickled his body." Having heard this, Confucius ordered the servant to throw away pickles. (Liji, Tan Gong I, 7)

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Yan Yuan died. The Master said, 'O! Heaven is forsaking me! Heaven is forsaking me!' (Lunyu, 11.9)

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Yan Yuan died. The Master wailed in great grief. The attendants said, 'Sir, you grieve greatly.' 'Do I?' said the Master. 'If his loss does not cause grief, what will?' (Lunyu 11.10)

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[...] After circling around, the birds came down and gathered together. The Master said, "Nice pheasants! Right time! Right time!" Zilu served him the bird. Three times he sniffed the dish, then he rose.

~~~~~(Lunyu 10.18)

[In preparing ceremonial offerings] The dishes are not fully cooked, the elaborately piled meat is not to be tasted. They are to be sniffed three times and not eaten. (Xun Zi, Li Lun 11)

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Then one day accompanied by some worthy sons of his father's ministers, friends full of varied converse, – with a desire to see the glades of the forest and longing for peace, he went out with the king's permission. Having mounted his good horse

Kamthaka, decked with bells and bridle-bit of new gold, with beautiful golden harness and the chowrie waving, he went forth like the moon mounted on a comet. Lured by love of the wood and longing for the beauties of the ground, he went to a spot near at hand on the forest-outskirts; and there he saw a piece of land being ploughed, with the path of the plough broken like waves on the water. Having beheld the ground in this condition, with its young grass scattered and torn by the plough, and covered with the eggs and young of little insects which were killed, he was filled with deep sorrow as for the slaughter of his own kindred. And beholding the men as they were ploughing, their complexions spoiled by the dust, the sun's rays, and the wind, and their cattle bewildered with the burden of drawing, the most noble one felt extreme compassion. Having alighted from the back of his horse, he went over the ground slowly, overcome with sorrow, – pondering the birth and destruction of the world, he, grieved, exclaimed, 'this is indeed pitiable.' (Ashvaghosha, Buddhacarita, 5.2 – 5.7)

Zi Gong wanted to discontinue the killing of a lamb for the monthly sacrifice. The Master said, "Si, you cherish the lamb. I cherish the Li." 子貢欲去告朔餼羊。子曰：「賜，爾愛其羊，吾愛其禮。」 (論語, 3.17)

## 2. Under-privileged, progressive

Confucius lost his father when he was young. Confucius did not know where his father's grave is located. [When Confucius's mother died] he placed (his mother's) coffin in the street of Wu-fu. Those who saw it all thought that it was to be interred there. It was prepared very carefully but it was (only) a coffin. By inquiring of the mother of Man-fu of Chu, Confucius managed to bury his mother in the same grave (with his father) at Fang. (Liji, Tan Gong I, 10)

子貢欲去告朔餼羊。子曰：「賜，爾愛其羊，吾愛其禮。」 (論語, 3.17) (子貢=Confucius)

A high ranking official asked Zi Gong, 'Is it true that your teacher is a Saint? How come he is good at so many things?' Zi

Gong said, 'The Heaven originally ordained him as a Great Saint. He has many talents as well.' The Master heard this and said, 'The high ranking official surely knows me. When I was young, I was lowly. That's why I am good at many mundane jobs. Is a noble man good at many things? No, he is not.' (Lunyu, 9.6)

公曰：「天將降大任於斯人也，必先苦其心志，勞其筋骨，餓其體膚，空乏其身，行拂亂其所為，所以動心忍性，曾益其所不能。」（論語 9.6）

The Master said, 'The progressive ones in matters of Li and music are those from the countryside. The less progressive ones in matters of L<sup>y</sup> and music are from the nobility. In using Li and music, I am in the train of the progressive ones.' (Lunyu, 11.1)

子曰：「先進於禮樂，而後從之，次於鄉黨。後進於禮樂，而後從之，次於鄉黨。」（論語 11.1）

The Master wanted to live among the nine barbarian tribes. Someone said, 'Squalid out there, wouldn't it?' The Master said, 'Where a noble man dwells, how can there be anything squalid?' (Lunyu, 9.14)

子曰：「欲居九夷，則居之。」（論語 9.14）

### 3. 'Wide' circle of friends

A friend of Confucius died. But the deceased had no one who would give a funeral. Confucius said, 'We will have the coffin in my house.' (Lunyu, 10.15)

子曰：「朋友死，無所歸，於棺。」（論語 10.15）

### 4. Fine taste

Over a dark costume, he would wear a black lamb skin coat; over a white costume, he would wear a deer skin coat; over a brown costume, he would wear a fox skin coat. (Lunyu, 10.6)

子（黑）曰（白=鹿）曰（黑=黑）曰（黑=黑）曰（黑=黑）（論語 10.6）

He didn't hate finely milled rice and thinly sliced meat. ... When the color was bad, he would not eat. When the smell was bad, he would not eat. When the dish is over-cooked, he would

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Yan Yuan died. Yan Lu inquired whether the Master could sell his carriage to pay for the outer coffin. The Master said, 'This is not about money. It is about one's son. When Li died, he was buried in a coffin without an outer coffin. I did not go on foot in order to have the outer coffin. As I am in the train of dignitaries, I could not go on foot.' (Lunyu, 11.8)

(11.8)

The Master had an audience with Nan Zi (南子). Zi Lu was not pleased. Confucius solemnly swore and said, "If I did something inappropriate, Heaven will loathe it. Heaven will loathe it!"

[illegible]

The stable was burnt down. He came home from the court. He said, 'Was anybody hurt?' He did not ask about the horse.

(Lunyu, 10.12)

子曰：「賜也，女欲富，黃金覆。」(論語 10.12)

Compare it with 11.8

## 7. Reformist

The Master said, ‘Sayings of the proper law – can you ignore them? Reforming them, however, is more precious. Sayings offered by way of a praise – can you not feel happy? Sift through them, however, is more precious. To be happy without sifting through the praise, to conform without reforming – I don’t know how one can do that.’ (Lunyu, 9.24)

子曰：「賜也，女欲富，黃金覆。」(論語 9.24)

Also see 11.1

## 8. Icon of rebellion

The Master spoke of Gong Ye Chang (公冶長): “He is marriageable. Although he was imprisoned, it was not his fault.” The Master gave his daughter to him in marriage.

子曰：「公冶長，字子長，齊人也。其父嘗囚，公冶長自請罪，故公冶長有罪。」(論語 5.1)

Kong Qiu plans thoroughly to conspire and to support rebels. He works diligently and has a great deal of knowledge. But he use it to carry out evil deeds and to incite the subordinates to topple the superiors. He instigates the ministers to assassinate their ruler. This is not a wise man’s conduct. When he visits a dukedom, he sides with the rebels. This is not an upright man’s conduct. When he senses that people no longer have loyalty to the ruler, he encourages a rebellion. This is neither good nor right. Even after he flees, he still plans, schemes and spread bad words behind the back of a ruler. He may think that he is doing the right thing. But in the eyes of the people, what he does is confusing. Rulers and ministers may not adopt what he plans and prepares to carry out. (Mozi 墨子, 卷下, 8)

Similar accounts are found at 史記, 卷10 and 史記, 卷10.

Now that Your Highness has unified the whole world, you have the exclusive authority to determine right and wrong. There are still groups of people who purport to learn and criticise the law and the orders of the government. They purport to interpret the commandment according to their own learning (學). At home, they are full of discontent about the government. Outside, they are busying themselves here and there discussing their strategies. They obtain fame by showing off to a ruler. They embellish their status with sophistry. If this is not banned, Your Highness' authority will be weakened and factions will emerge. They should be banned.

Let the Records Officer burn all records other than the official records of Qin. Collected Poems, Documents and various other texts except the texts in the possession of Propaganda Officers must all be burned. Afterwards, those who gather together to discuss the Poems and the Documents should be executed in the marketplace. Those who criticise the current affairs referring to old histories (史記) should be killed together with their family members. Those who do not burn such books within 30 days should be tattooed and sent to the frontiers to forced labour. The books which are exempt from destruction are those on medicine, pharmacy, divination, seeds and trees. Those wishing to learn the law should learn it from officials. 史記, 卷10, 38 (213 BCE) 史記34(史記213): 史記(史記)

## 9. Supreme being

The Master was freed from the following four: prejudice, imperative, inflexibility and self-importance. (Lunyu, 9.4)

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What we conjecture in our mind, we call it 心. What remains of the 心, we call it 心 (史記, 史記, 史記, 2 史記史記史記史記史記).