

9. The Master rarely spoke about

1. The Master rarely spoke about profit, fate or ethical integrity.

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2. A villager of Da Xiang (大乡) said, "Great, isn't he? Confucius. With his vast learning, he did not manage to make a name of himself." The Master heard this and told his students, "What shall I try? Shall I try carriage driving? Or shall I try shooting? I think I will try carriage driving."

[illegible]

3. The Master said, "To follow the Li, ceremonial caps should be made of Hemp. Nowadays people use silk strips, which is economical. I follow the general trend. To follow the Li, bowing should be done before climbing up the steps. Nowadays people bow after climbing up the steps, which is rude. Although it is against the general trend, I follow the practice of bowing beforehand."

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4. The Master has severed himself from these four: sensibles did not grip him, imperatives did not bind him, permanence did not trap him and he had no notion of self.

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5. The Master was menaced in Quang (□). He said, "King Wen being long dead, do I not embody civilisation (wen) now? If Heaven is going to forsake that civilisation, my death will result in a world without the civilisation. If Heaven is not going to forsake the civilisation, what can the people of Quang do to me?'

[illegible]

6. The Chief Counsellor asked Zi Gong, "Is your Master a

Saint? How come he has so many talents?" Zi Gong said, "The Heaven originally sent him as a Great Saint. He has many talents as well." The Master heard this and said, "The Chief Counsellor 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."

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7. Lao said, "The Master told once, 'I do not have an employment. That's why I am good at many things.' "

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8. The Master said, "Do I have knowledge? No, I don't. Once a red-neck asked me a question. I just had no bloody clue. I kept beating around the bush and then I gave up."

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9. The Master said, "The phoenix does not come. The dragon does not rise from the river. I am finished."

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10. When the Master saw a man who is in mourning or in funeral attire, or when he saw a blind man, even if he could see that the man was young, he would always stand up. If he had to pass by the man, he would [out of respect] hasten his pace on his toe.

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11. Yan Yuan heaved a deep sigh and said, "The more I look up, the higher it gets. The more I delve in, the harder it gets. I just saw it in front of my eyes; at a blink, it is already behind me. Our Master effortlessly, magically inveigle people into the good path. He broadens me with learning and he tightens me with Li. Although I seek to strive, I cannot attain it. I have already spent all my ability but you still seem to stand high up there. Although I seek to follow you, I am still far from you."

12. The Master was seriously ill. Zi Lu had one of his fellow pupils serve as the Master's secretary. When his illness relented a little, the Master said, "It has been long, isn't it, that You has been cheating. He had no secretary but he acted as if he had had one. If you think you can trick me, you might as well trick the Heaven. Instead of having my funeral taken care of by a secretary, I would rather have it done by you guys. Even if I am not meant to get a big funeral, do you think I will die on the street?"

13. Zi Gong said, "Suppose you have a beautiful jade like this. Will you put it in a safe and keep it? Or will you seek a buyer offering a good price and sell it?" The Master said, "I will sell it! I will sell it! I am just waiting for the buyer."

14. 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?"

15. The Master said, "After I returned from Wei back to Lu, the music became right. Ya and song each found its right place."

16. The Master said, "Serving dukes and lords when I am out, serving parents and elders when I am in, not disdaining to be diligent in sorting out the funeral, not drinking myself to sloth – would I have any problem with these?"

[illegible]

17. The Master was on a bridge over a stream. He said, "Moving on, moving on like this. Without a rest, day and night."

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18. The Master said, "I have not yet seen a man who cherishes virtue as he would cherish a woman."

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19. The Master said, "Suppose I am making a mound. It is all but finished except for one last basketful of earth. If I stop there, I get nowhere. Suppose I am levelling a ground. Even though I have only covered the first basketful of earth, if I continue, I am getting there."

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20. The Master said, "Once explained, he would not languish. That is Hui.

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21. The Master spoke about Hui and said, "How sad! I saw him advancing. I did not see him stopping."

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22. The Master said, "A burgeoning plant may end up with no blossom. A blossoming plant may end up with no fruit."

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23. The Master said, "The younger generation is redoubtable. You won't know whether the ones that are coming are not as good as the ones that are already here. But at the same time, those who are forty or fifty and still have understood nothing – they need not be feared.

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24. 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."

[illegible]

25. The Master said, "The most important thing is to be loyal and to be trustworthy. Do not befriend a man who is not as good as you. When you find a fault, do not hesitate to mend it."

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26. The Master said, "Even a great army may be stripped of its commander. But no one can strip an ordinary chap of his determination."

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27. The Master said, "In a shabby padded coat, he would not be ashamed of standing next to a man in a fox or mink coat. That is You (子).” [Upon hearing this] Zi Lu was reciting all the time: ‘Don’t harm, do not desire // What use, if it’s not good?’ The Master said, “Well said. Is it good enough to be of any use?”

[illegible]

28. The Master said, "When the weather gets cold, then you realise that pine and cedar are the last to wither."

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29. The Master said, "A man of knowledge is not distracted by doubts, a man of ethical integrity is not plagued by worries, a man of courage is not shriveled by fear."

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30. The Master said, "You may all learn together but you may not all practise the Way together. Some of you may practise the Way together but even those of you may not all stand on your feet together. Some of you may even stand on your feet together, but you cannot judge together."

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31. 'Cherry blossoms // Floating and wafting // How not to

think of you // Dwelling so far from me.' The Master said, "She is not thinking of you enough. Otherwise, how could she feel the distance?"

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