

# CONFUCIUS

## The ANALECTS (selections)

Trans. James Legge

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### BOOK I. HSIO R.

#### CHAPTER I.

The Master said, 'Is it not pleasant to learn with a constant perseverance and application? Is it not delightful to have friends coming from distant quarters? Is he not a man of complete virtue, who feels no discomposure though men may take no note of him?'

#### CHAPTER IV.

The philosopher Tsang said, 'I daily examine myself on three points:-- whether, in transacting business for others, I may have been not faithful;-- whether, in intercourse with friends, I may have been not sincere;-- whether I may have not mastered and practised the instructions of my teacher.'

#### CHAPTER XI.

The Master said, 'While a man's father is alive, look at the bent of his will; when his father is dead, look at his conduct. If for three years he does not alter from the way of his father, he may be called filial.'

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### BOOK II. WEI CHANG.

#### CHAP. I.

The Master said, 'He who exercises government by means of his virtue may be compared to the north polar star, which keeps its place and all the stars turn towards it.'

#### CHAP. II.

The Master said, 'In the *Book of Poetry* are three hundred pieces, but the design of them all may be embraced in one sentence-- "Having no depraved thoughts."'

#### CHAP. IV.

The Master said, 'At fifteen, I had my mind bent on learning. At thirty, I stood firm. At forty, I had no doubts. At fifty, I knew the decrees of Heaven. At sixty, my ear was an obedient organ for the reception of truth. At seventy, I could follow what my heart desired, without transgressing what was right.'

#### CHAP. VII.

Tsze-yu asked what filial piety was. The Master said, 'The filial piety of now-a-days means the support of one's parents. But dogs and horses likewise are able to do something in the way of support;-- without reverence, what is there to distinguish the one support given from the other?'

CHAP. XI.

The Master said, 'If a man keeps cherishing his old knowledge, so as continually to be acquiring new, he may be a teacher of others.'

CHAP. XIX.

The Duke Ai asked, saying, 'What should be done in order to secure the submission of the people?'

Confucius replied, 'Advance the upright and set aside the crooked, then the people will submit. Advance the crooked and set aside the upright, then the people will not submit.'

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## **BOOK III. PA YIH.**

CHAPTER V.

The Master said, 'The rude tribes of the east and north have their princes, and are not like the States of our great land which are without them.'

CHAPTER XXI.

The Duke Ai asked Tsai Wo about the altars of the spirits of the land. Tsai Wo replied, 'The Hsia sovereign planted the pine tree about them; the men of the Yin planted the cypress; and the men of the Chau planted the chestnut tree, meaning thereby to cause the people to be in awe.'

When the Master heard it, he said, 'Things that are done, it is needless to speak about; things that have had their course, it is needless to remonstrate about; things that are past, it is needless to blame.'

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## **BOOK IV. LE JIN.**

CHAP. VIII.

The Master said, 'If a man in the morning hear the right way, he may die in the evening without regret.'

CHAP. XV.

The Master said, 'Shan, my doctrine is that of an all-pervading unity.'

The disciple Tsang replied, 'Yes.'

The Master went out, and the other disciples asked, saying, 'What do his words mean?'

Tsang said, 'The doctrine of our master is to be true to the principles of our nature and the benevolent exercise of them to others,-- this and nothing more.'

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## **BOOK V. KUNG-YE CH'ANG.**

CHAP. VIII.

The Master said to Tsze-kung, 'Which do you consider superior, yourself or Hui?'

Tsze-kung replied, 'How dare I compare myself with Hui? Hui hears one point and knows all about a subject; I hear one point, and know a second.'

The Master said, 'You are not equal to him. I grant you, you are not equal to him.'

CHAP. IX.

Tsai Yu being asleep during the daytime, the Master said, 'Rotten wood cannot be carved; a wall of dirty earth will not receive the trowel. This Yu!-- what is the use of my reproving him?' The

Master said, 'At first, my way with men was to hear their words, and give them credit for their conduct. Now my way is to hear their words, and look at their conduct. It is from Yu that I have learned to make this change.'

CHAP. X.

The Master said, 'I have not seen a firm and unbending man.'

Someone replied, 'There is Shan Ch'ang.'

'Ch'ang,' said the Master, 'is under the influence of his passions; how can he be pronounced firm and unbending?'

CHAP. XIX.

Chi Wan thought thrice, and then acted. When the Master was informed of it, he said, 'Twice may do.'

CHAP. XXV.

Yen Yuan and Chi Lu being by his side, the Master said to them, 'Come, let each of you tell his wishes.'

Tsze-lu said, 'I should like, having chariots and horses, and light fur dresses, to share them with my friends, and though they should spoil them, I would not be displeased.'

Yen Yuan said, 'I should like not to boast of my excellence, nor to make a display of my meritorious deeds.'

Tsze-lu then said, 'I should like, sir, to hear your wishes.'

The Master said, 'They are, in regard to the aged, to give them rest; in regard to friends, to show them sincerity; in regard to the young, to treat them tenderly.'

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## **BOOK VI. YUNG YEY.**

CHAP. II.

The Duke Ai asked which of the disciples loved to learn. Confucius replied to him, 'There was Yen Hui; He loved to learn. He did not transfer his anger; he did not repeat a fault. Unfortunately, his appointed time was short and he died; and now there is not such another. I have not yet heard of anyone who loves to learn as he did.'

CHAP. X.

Yen Ch'iu said, 'It is not that I do not delight in your doctrines, but my strength is insufficient.'

The Master said, 'Those whose strength is insufficient give over in the middle of the way but now you limit yourself.'

CHAP. XI.

The Master said to Tsze-hsia, 'Do you be a scholar after the style of the superior man, and not after that of the mean man.'

CHAP. XVI.

The Master said, 'Where the solid qualities are in excess of accomplishments, we have rusticity; where the accomplishments are in excess of the solid qualities, we have the manners of a clerk. When the accomplishments and solid qualities are equally blended, we then have the man of virtue.'

CHAP. XVIII.

The Master said, 'They who know the truth are not equal to those who love it, and they who love it are not equal to those who delight in it.'

CHAP. XX.

Fan Ch'ih asked what constituted wisdom. The Master said, 'To give one's self earnestly to the duties due to men, and, while respecting spiritual beings, to keep aloof from them, may be called wisdom.'

He asked about perfect virtue. The Master said, 'The man of virtue makes the difficulty to be overcome his first business, and success only a subsequent consideration;-- this may be called perfect virtue.'

CHAP. XXI.

The Master said, 'The wise find pleasure in water; the virtuous find pleasure in hills. The wise are active; the virtuous are tranquil. The wise are joyful; the virtuous are long-lived.'

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**BOOK VII. SHU R.**

CHAPTER I.

The Master said, 'A transmitter and not a maker, believing in and loving the ancients, I venture to compare myself with our old P'ang.'

CHAPTER III.

The Master said, 'The leaving virtue without proper cultivation; the not thoroughly discussing what is learned; not being able to move towards righteousness of which a knowledge is gained; and not being able to change what is not good:— these are the things which occasion me solicitude.'

CHAPTER V.

The Master said, 'Extreme is my decay. For a long time, I have not dreamed, as I was wont to do, that I saw the duke of Chau.'

CHAPTER XV.

The Master said, 'With coarse rice to eat, with water to drink, and my bended arm for a pillow;— I have still joy in the midst of these things. Riches and honours acquired by unrighteousness, are to me as a floating cloud.'

CHAPTER XX.

The subjects on which the Master did not talk, were— extraordinary things, feats of strength, disorder, and spiritual beings.

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**BOOK VIII. T'AI-PO.**

CHAPTER V.

The philosopher Tsang said, 'Gifted with ability, and yet putting questions to those who were not so; possessed of much, and yet putting questions to those possessed of little; having, as though he had not; full, and yet counting himself as empty; offended against, and yet entering into no altercation; formerly I had a friend who pursued this style of conduct.'

CHAPTER VIII.

The Master said, 'It is by the Odes that the mind is aroused. It is by the Rules of Propriety that the character is established. It is from Music that the finish is received.'

CHAPTER XIII.

The Master said, 'With sincere faith he unites the love of learning; holding firm to death, he is perfecting the excellence of his course. Such an one will not enter a tottering State, nor dwell in a disorganized one. When right principles of government prevail in the kingdom, he will show himself; when they are prostrated, he will keep concealed. When a country is well-governed, poverty and a mean condition are things to be ashamed of. When a country is ill-governed, riches and honour are things to be ashamed of.'

#### CHAPTER XVII.

The Master said, 'Learn as if you could not reach your object, and were always fearing also lest you should lose it.'

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### **BOOK IX. TSZE HAN.**

#### CHAPTER V.

The Master was put in fear in K'wang. He said, 'After the death of King Wan, was not the cause of truth lodged here in me? If Heaven had wished to let this cause of truth perish, then I, a future mortal, should not have got such a relation to that cause. While Heaven does not let the cause of truth perish, what can the people of K'wang do to me?'

#### CHAPTER VI.

A high officer asked Tsze-kung, saying, 'May we not say that your Master is a sage? How various is his ability!'

Tsze-kung said, 'Certainly Heaven has endowed him unlimitedly. He is about a sage. And, moreover, his ability is various.'

The Master heard of the conversation and said, 'Does the high officer know me? When I was young, my condition was low, and therefore I acquired my ability in many things, but they were mean matters. Must the superior man have such variety of ability? He does not need variety of ability.'

Lao said, 'The Master said, "Having no official employment, I acquired many arts."''

#### CHAPTER XI.

The Master being very ill, Tsze-lu wished the disciples to act as ministers to him.

During a remission of his illness, he said, 'Long has the conduct of Yu been deceitful! By pretending to have ministers when I have them not, whom should I impose upon? Should I impose upon Heaven? Moreover, than that I should die in the hands of ministers, is it not better that I should die in the hands of you, my disciples? And though I may not get a great burial, shall I die upon the road?'

#### CHAPTER XIII.

The Master was wishing to go and live among the nine wild tribes of the east. Someone said, 'They are rude. How can you do such a thing?'

The Master said, 'If a superior man dwelt among them, what rudeness would there be?'

#### CHAPTER XIV.

The Master said, 'I returned from Wei to Lu, and then the music was reformed, and the pieces in the Royal songs and Praise songs all found their proper places.'

#### CHAPTER XVI.

The Master standing by a stream, said, 'It passes on just like this, not ceasing day or night!'

#### CHAPTER XXII.

The Master said, 'A youth is to be regarded with respect. How do we know that his future will not be equal to our present? If he reach the age of forty or fifty, and has not made himself heard of, then indeed he will not be worth being regarded with respect.'

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## **BOOK X. HEANG TANG.**

### CHAP II.

When he was waiting at court, in speaking with the great officers of the lower grade, he spoke freely, but in a straightforward manner; in speaking with those of the higher grade, he did so blandly, but precisely. When the ruler was present, his manner displayed respectful uneasiness; it was grave, but self-possessed.

### CHAP. IV.

When he entered the palace gate, he seemed to bend his body, as if it were not sufficient to admit him. When he was standing, he did not occupy the middle of the gate-way; when he passed in or out, he did not tread upon the threshold. When he was passing the vacant place of the prince, his countenance appeared to change, and his legs to bend under him, and his words came as if he hardly had breath to utter them. He ascended the reception hall, holding up his robe with both his hands, and his body bent; holding in his breath also, as if he dared not breathe. When he came out from the audience, as soon as he had descended one step, he began to relax his countenance, and had a satisfied look. When he had got to the bottom of the steps, he advanced rapidly to his place, with his arms like wings, and on occupying it, his manner still showed respectful uneasiness.

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## **BOOK XI. HSIEN TSIN.**

### CHAPTER IX.

When Yen Yuan died, the Master bewailed him exceedingly, and the disciples who were with him said, 'Master, your grief is excessive?'

'Is it excessive?' said he.

'If I am not to mourn bitterly for this man, for whom should I mourn?'

### CHAPTER X.

When Yen Yuan died, the disciples wished to give him a great funeral, and the Master said, 'You may not do so.'

The disciples did bury him in great style.

The Master said, 'Hui behaved towards me as his father. I have not been able to treat him as my son. The fault is not mine; it belongs to you, O disciples.'

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## **BOOK XII. YEN YUAN.**

### CHAPTER II.

Chung-kung asked about perfect virtue. The Master said, 'It is, when you go abroad, to behave to every one as if you were receiving a great guest; to employ the people as if you were assisting at a great sacrifice; not to do to others as you would not wish done to yourself; to have no murmuring against you in the country, and none in the family.' Chung-kung said, 'Though I am deficient in intelligence and vigour, I will make it my business to practise this lesson.'

### CHAPTER V.

Sze-ma Niu, full of anxiety, said, 'Other men all have their brothers, I only have not.'  
Tsze-hsia said to him, 'There is the following saying which I have heard:—"Death and life have their determined appointment; riches and honours depend upon Heaven."  
'Let the superior man never fail reverentially to order his own conduct, and let him be respectful to others and observant of propriety:— then all within the four seas will be his brothers. What has the superior man to do with being distressed because he has no brothers?'

#### CHAPTER VII.

Tsze-kung asked about government. The Master said, 'The requisites of government are that there be sufficiency of food, sufficiency of military equipment, and the confidence of the people in their ruler.'

Tsze-kung said, 'If it cannot be helped, and one of these must be dispensed with, which of the three should be foregone first?' 'The military equipment,' said the Master.

Tsze-kung again asked, 'If it cannot be helped, and one of the remaining two must be dispensed with, which of them should be foregone?'

The Master answered, 'Part with the food. From of old, death has been the lot of all men; but if the people have no faith in their rulers, there is no standing for the state.'

#### CHAPTER XI.

The Duke Ching, of Ch'i, asked Confucius about government.

Confucius replied, 'There is government, when the prince is prince, and the minister is minister; when the father is father, and the son is son.'

'Good!' said the duke; 'if, indeed; the prince be not prince, the minister not minister, the father not father, and the son not son, although I have my revenue, can I enjoy it?'

#### CHAPTER XVIII.

Chi K'ang, distressed about the number of thieves in the state, inquired of Confucius how to do away with them. Confucius said, 'If you, sir, were not covetous, although you should reward them to do it, they would not steal.'

#### CHAPTER XIX.

Chi K'ang asked Confucius about government, saying, 'What do you say to killing the unprincipled for the good of the principled?' Confucius replied, 'Sir, in carrying on your government, why should you use killing at all? Let your evinced desires be for what is good, and the people will be good. The relation between superiors and inferiors, is like that between the wind and the grass. The grass must bend, when the wind blows across it.'

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### **BOOK XIV. HSIEN WAN.**

#### CHAPTER XXV.

The Master said, 'In ancient times, men learned with a view to their own improvement. Now-a-days, men learn with a view to the approbation of others.'

#### CHAPTER XXXVII.

The Master said, 'Alas! there is no one that knows me.'

Tsze-kung said, 'What do you mean by thus saying— that no one knows you?'

The Master replied, 'I do not murmur against Heaven. I do not grumble against men. My studies lie low, and my penetration rises high. But there is Heaven;— that knows me!'

#### CHAPTER XLI.

Tsze-lu happening to pass the night in Shih-man, the gatekeeper said to him, 'Whom do you come from?'

Tsze-lu said, 'From Mr. K'ung [Confucius].'

'It is he,— is it not?'— said the other, 'who knows the impracticable nature of the times and yet will be doing in them.'

#### CHAPTER XLVI.

Yuan Zang was squatting on his heels, and so waited the approach of the Master, who said to him, 'In youth not humble as befits a junior; in manhood, doing nothing worthy of being handed down; and living on to old age:— this is to be a pest.' With this he hit him on the shank with his staff.

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### **BOOK XVII. YANG HO.**

#### CHAP. IV.

The Master, having come to Wu-ch'ang, heard there the sound of stringed instruments and singing. Well pleased and smiling, he said, 'Why use an ox knife to kill a fowl?'

Tsze-yu replied, 'Formerly, Master, I heard you say,— "When the man of high station is well instructed, he loves men; when the man of low station is well instructed, he is easily ruled."'

The Master said, 'My disciples, Yen's words are right. What I said was only in sport.'

#### CHAP. IX.

The Master said, 'My children, why do you not study the Book of Poetry? The Odes serve to stimulate the mind. They may be used for purposes of self-contemplation. They teach the art of sociability. They show how to regulate feelings of resentment. From them you learn the more immediate duty of serving one's father, and the remoter one of serving one's prince. From them we become largely acquainted with the names of birds, beasts, and plants.'

#### CHAP. XIX.

The Master said, 'I would prefer not speaking.'

Tsze-kung said, 'If you, Master, do not speak, what shall we, your disciples, have to record?'

The Master said, 'Does Heaven speak? The four seasons pursue their courses, and all things are continually being produced, but does Heaven say anything?'

#### CHAP. XXI.

Tsai Wo asked about the three years' mourning for parents, saying that one year was long enough. 'If the superior man,' said he, 'abstains for three years from the observances of propriety, those observances will be quite lost. If for three years he abstains from music, music will be ruined. Within a year the old grain is exhausted, and the new grain has sprung up, and, in procuring fire by friction, we go through all the changes of wood for that purpose. After a complete year, the mourning may stop.'



The Master said, 'If you were, after a year, to eat good rice, and wear embroidered clothes, would you feel at ease?'

'I should,' replied Wo.

The Master said, 'If you can feel at ease, do it. But a superior man, during the whole period of mourning, does not enjoy pleasant food which he may eat, nor derive pleasure from music which he may hear. He also does not feel at ease, if he is comfortably lodged. Therefore he does not do what you propose. But now you feel at ease and may do it.'

Tsai Wo then went out, and the Master said, 'This shows Yu's want of virtue. It is not till a child is three years old that it is allowed to leave the arms of its parents. And the three years' mourning is universally observed throughout the empire. Did Yu enjoy the three years' love of his parents?'

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## **BOOK XVIII. WEI TSZE.**

### CHAP. V.

The madman of Ch'u, Chieh-yu, passed by Confucius, singing and saying, 'O FANG! O FANG! How is your virtue degenerated! As to the past, reproof is useless; but the future may still be provided against. Give up your vain pursuit. Give up your vain pursuit. Peril awaits those who now engage in affairs of government.' Confucius alighted and wished to converse with him, but Chieh-yu hastened away, so that he could not talk with him.

### CHAP. VI.

Ch'ang-tsu and Chieh-ni were at work in the field together, when Confucius passed by them, and sent Tsze-lu to inquire for the ford.

Ch'ang-tsu said, 'Who is he that holds the reins in the carriage there?'

Tsze-lu told him, 'It is Confucius.'

'Is it not Confucius of Lu?' asked [Ch'ang-tsu].

'Yes.'

'He knows the ford [already].'

Tsze-lu then inquired of Chieh-ni, who said to him, 'Who are you, sir?'

He answered, 'I am Chung Yu.'

'Are you not the disciple of Confucius of Lu?' asked the other.

'I am.'

'Disorder, like a swelling flood, spreads over the whole empire, and who is he that will change its state for you? Than follow one who merely withdraws from this one and that one, had you not better follow those who have withdrawn from the world altogether?' With this he fell to covering up the seed, and proceeded with his work, without stopping.

Tsze-lu went and reported their remarks, when the Master observed with a sigh, 'It is impossible to associate with birds and beasts, as if they were the same with us. If I associate not with these people,-- with mankind,-- with whom shall I associate? If right principles prevailed through the empire, there would be no use for me to change its state.'