SAGESQUOTE

Confucius

孔子

49 QUOTES

The Analects (論語)

The teacher who made learning, character and ritual the whole of philosophy.

CONFUCIANISM

孔

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Inside this collection

Every entry below gives four things: the saying in English, the original Chinese as it stands in the text, the book or chapter it comes from, and who translated that line. Nothing here is copied from a modern edition.

- **49** sayings from The Analects (論語).
- Each line is labelled with its translator — either a named public-domain source or SagesQuote's own rendering from the Chinese.
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Confucius (孔子). Kong Qiu, known in the West as Confucius, taught that order begins with self-cultivation, not with force. This set gathers his sayings from the Analects — on learning, friendship, government, and the quiet discipline of becoming a person who can be trusted.

01 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?

學而時習之，不亦說乎？有朋自遠方來，不亦樂乎？人不知而不慍，不亦君子乎？

The Analects (論語), Book 1 "Xue Er" 學而, 1.1
Trans. James Legge, 1893

02 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.

吾日三省吾身：為人謀而不忠乎？與朋友交而不信乎？傳不習乎？

The Analects (論語), Book 1 "Xue Er" 學而, 1.4
Trans. James Legge, 1893

03 If the scholar be not grave, he will not call forth any veneration, and his learning will not be solid. Hold faithfulness and sincerity as first principles. Have no friends not equal to yourself. When you have faults, do not fear to abandon them.

君子不重則不威，學則不固。主忠信。無友不如己者。過則勿憚改。

The Analects (論語), Book 1 "Xue Er" 學而, 1.8
Trans. James Legge, 1893

04 He who aims to be a man of complete virtue, in his food does not seek to gratify his appetite, nor in his dwelling place does he seek the appliances of ease. He is earnest in what he is doing, and careful in his speech. He frequents the company of men of principle that he may be rectified. Such a person may be said indeed to love to learn.

君子食無求飽，居無求安，敏於事而慎於言，就有道而正焉，可謂好學也已。

The Analects (論語), Book 1 "Xue Er" 學而, 1.14
Trans. James Legge, 1893

05 I will not be afflicted at men's not knowing me; I will be afflicted that I do not know men.

不患人之不己知，患不知人也。

The Analects (論語), Book 1 "Xue Er" 學而, 1.16
Trans. James Legge, 1893

06 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.

吾十有五而志於學，三十而立，四十而不惑，五十而知天命，六十而耳順，七十而從心所欲，不踰矩。

The Analects (論語), Book 2 "Wei Zheng" 為政, 2.4
Trans. James Legge, 1893

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

溫故而知新，可以為師矣。

The Analects (論語), Book 2 "Wei Zheng" 為政, 2.11
Trans. James Legge, 1893

08 The accomplished scholar is not a utensil.

君子不器。

The Analects (論語), Book 2 "Wei Zheng" 為政, 2.12
Trans. James Legge, 1893

09 Learning without thought is labour lost; thought without learning is perilous.

學而不思則罔，思而不學則殆。

The Analects (論語), Book 2 "Wei Zheng" 為政, 2.15
Trans. James Legge, 1893

10 When you know a thing, to hold that you know it; and when you do not know a thing, to allow that you do not know it — this is knowledge.

知之為知之，不知為不知，是知也。

The Analects (論語), Book 2 "Wei Zheng" 為政, 2.17
Trans. James Legge, 1893

11 I do not know how a man without truthfulness is to get on.

人而無信，不知其可也。

The Analects (論語), Book 2 "Wei Zheng" 為政, 2.22
Trans. James Legge, 1893

12 To see what is right and not to do it is want of courage.

見義不為，無勇也。

The Analects (論語), Book 2 "Wei Zheng" 為政, 2.24
Trans. James Legge, 1893

13 It is virtuous manners which constitute the excellence of a neighbourhood. If a man in selecting a residence do not fix on one where such prevail, how can he be wise?

里仁為美。擇不處仁，焉得知?

The Analects (論語), Book 4 "Li Ren" 里仁, 4.1
Trans. James Legge, 1893

14 The superior man, in the world, does not set his mind either for anything, or against anything; what is right he will follow.

君子之於天下也，無適也，無莫也，義之與比。

The Analects (論語), Book 4 "Li Ren" 里仁, 4.10
Trans. James Legge, 1893

15 The mind of the superior man is conversant with righteousness; the mind of the mean man is conversant with gain.

君子喻於義，小人喻於利。

The Analects (論語), Book 4 "Li Ren" 里仁, 4.16
Trans. James Legge, 1893

16 When we see men of worth, we should think of equalling them; when we see men of a contrary character, we should turn inwards and examine ourselves.

見賢思齊焉，見不賢而內自省也。

The Analects (論語), Book 4 "Li Ren" 里仁, 4.17
Trans. James Legge, 1893

17 The reason why the ancients did not readily give utterance to their words, was that they feared lest their actions should not come up to them.

古者言之不出，恥躬之不逮也。

The Analects (論語), Book 4 "Li Ren" 里仁, 4.22
Trans. James Legge, 1893

18 The superior man wishes to be slow in his speech and earnest in his conduct.

君子欲訥於言而敏於行。

The Analects (論語), Book 4 "Li Ren" 里仁, 4.24
Trans. James Legge, 1893

19 Virtue is not left to stand alone. He who practises it will have neighbours.

德不孤，必有鄰。

The Analects (論語), Book 4 "Li Ren" 里仁, 4.25
Trans. James Legge, 1893

20 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.

知之者不如好之者，好之者不如樂之者。

The Analects (論語), Book 6 "Yong Ye" 雍也, 6.20
Trans. James Legge, 1893

21 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.

知者樂水，仁者樂山。知者動，仁者靜。知者樂，仁者壽。

The Analects (論語), Book 6 "Yong Ye" 雍也, 6.23
Trans. James Legge, 1893

22 Now the man of perfect virtue, wishing to be established himself, seeks also to establish others; wishing to be enlarged himself, he seeks also to enlarge others.

夫仁者，己欲立而立人，己欲達而達人。

The Analects (論語), Book 6 "Yong Ye" 雍也, 6.30
Trans. James Legge, 1893

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

述而不作，信而好古。

The Analects (論語), Book 7 “Shu Er” 述而, 7.1
Trans. James Legge, 1893

24 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.

飯疏食飲水，曲肱而枕之，樂亦在其中矣。不義而富且貴，於我如浮雲。

The Analects (論語), Book 7 “Shu Er” 述而, 7.16
Trans. James Legge, 1893

25 When I walk along with two others, they may serve me as my teachers. I will select their good qualities and follow them, their bad qualities and avoid them.

三人行，必有我師焉。擇其善者而從之，其不善者而改之。

The Analects (論語), Book 7 “Shu Er” 述而, 7.22
Trans. James Legge, 1893

26 There were four things from which the Master was entirely free. He had no foregone conclusions, no arbitrary predeterminations, no obstinacy, and no egoism.

子絕四：毋意，毋必，毋固，毋我。

The Analects (論語), Book 9 “Zi Han” 子罕, 9.4
Trans. James Legge, 1893

27 The prosecution of learning may be compared to what may happen in raising a mound. If there want but one basket of earth to complete the work, and I stop, the stopping is my own work. It may be compared to throwing down the earth on the level ground. Though but one basketful is thrown at a time, the advancing with it is my own going forward.

譬如為山，未成一簣，止，吾止也。譬如平地，雖覆一簣，進，吾往也。

The Analects (論語), Book 9 “Zi Han” 子罕, 9.19
Trans. James Legge, 1893

28 When the year becomes cold, then we know how the pine and the cypress are the last to lose their leaves.

歲寒，然後知松柏之後彫也。

The Analects (論語), Book 9 “Zi Han” 子罕, 9.28
Trans. James Legge, 1893

29 The wise are free from perplexities; the virtuous from anxiety; and the bold from fear.

知者不惑，仁者不憂，勇者不懼。

The Analects (論語), Book 9 “Zi Han” 子罕, 9.29
Trans. James Legge, 1893

30 While you are not able to serve men, how can you serve their spirits?... While you do not know life, how can you know about death?

未能事人，焉能事鬼？……未知生，焉知死？

The Analects (論語), Book 11 "Xian Jin" 先進, 11.12
Trans. James Legge, 1893

31 To subdue one's self and return to propriety, is perfect virtue. If a man can for one day subdue himself and return to propriety, all under heaven will ascribe perfect virtue to him. Is the practice of perfect virtue from a man himself, or is it from others?

克己復禮為仁。一日克己復禮，天下歸仁焉。為仁由己，而由人乎哉？

The Analects (論語), Book 12 "Yan Yuan" 顏淵, 12.1
Trans. James Legge, 1893

32 Look not at what is contrary to propriety; listen not to what is contrary to propriety; speak not what is contrary to propriety; make no movement which is contrary to propriety.

非禮勿視，非禮勿聽，非禮勿言，非禮勿動。

The Analects (論語), Book 12 "Yan Yuan" 顏淵, 12.1
Trans. James Legge, 1893

33 What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others.

己所不欲，勿施於人。

The Analects (論語), Book 12 "Yan Yuan" 顏淵, 12.2
Trans. James Legge, 1893

34 The superior man seeks to perfect the admirable qualities of men, and does not seek to perfect their bad qualities. The mean man does the opposite of this.

君子成人之美，不成人之惡。小人反是。

The Analects (論語), Book 12 "Yan Yuan" 顏淵, 12.16
Trans. James Legge, 1893

35 When a prince's personal conduct is correct, his government is effective without the issuing of orders. If his personal conduct is not correct, he may issue orders, but they will not be followed.

其身正，不令而行；其身不正，雖令不從。

The Analects (論語), Book 13 "Zi Lu" 子路, 13.6
Trans. James Legge, 1893

36 The superior man is affable, but not adulatory; the mean man is adulatory, but not affable.

君子和而不同，小人同而不和。

The Analects (論語), Book 13 "Zi Lu" 子路, 13.23
Trans. James Legge, 1893

37 The superior man is modest in his speech, but exceeds in his actions.

君子恥其言而過其行。

The Analects (論語), Book 14 "Xian Wen" 憲問, 14.27
Trans. James Legge, 1893

38 The determined scholar and the man of virtue will not seek to live at the expense of injuring their virtue. They will even sacrifice their lives to preserve their virtue complete.

志士仁人，無求生以害仁，有殺身以成仁。

The Analects (論語), Book 15 "Wei Ling Gong" 衛靈公, 15.9
Trans. James Legge, 1893

39 The mechanic, who wishes to do his work well, must first sharpen his tools.

工欲善其事，必先利其器。

The Analects (論語), Book 15 "Wei Ling Gong" 衛靈公, 15.10
Trans. James Legge, 1893

40 He who requires much from himself and little from others, will keep himself from being the object of resentment.

躬自厚而薄責於人，則遠怨矣。

The Analects (論語), Book 15 "Wei Ling Gong" 衛靈公, 15.15
Trans. James Legge, 1893

41 What the superior man seeks, is in himself. What the mean man seeks, is in others.

君子求諸己，小人求諸人。

The Analects (論語), Book 15 "Wei Ling Gong" 衛靈公, 15.21
Trans. James Legge, 1893

42 A man can enlarge the principles which he follows; those principles do not enlarge the man.

人能弘道，非道弘人。

The Analects (論語), Book 15 "Wei Ling Gong" 衛靈公, 15.29
Trans. James Legge, 1893

43 To have faults and not to reform them,-- this, indeed, should be pronounced having faults.

過而不改，是謂過矣。

The Analects (論語), Book 15 "Wei Ling Gong" 衛靈公, 15.30
Trans. James Legge, 1893

44 In teaching there should be no distinction of classes.

有教無類。

The Analects (論語), Book 15 "Wei Ling Gong" 衛靈公, 15.39
Trans. James Legge, 1893

45 Those whose courses are different cannot lay plans for one another.

道不同，不相為謀。

The Analects (論語), Book 15 "Wei Ling Gong" 衛靈公, 15.40
Trans. James Legge, 1893

46 There are three friendships which are advantageous, and three which are injurious. Friendship with the upright; friendship with the sincere; and friendship with the man of much observation — these are advantageous. Friendship with the man of specious airs; friendship with the insinuatingly soft; and friendship with the glib-tongued — these are injurious.

益者三友，損者三友。友直，友諒，友多聞，益矣。友便辟，友善柔，友便佞，損矣。

The Analects (論語), Book 16 “Ji Shi” 季氏, 16.4
Trans. James Legge, 1893

47 By nature, men are nearly alike; by practice, they get to be wide apart.

性相近也，習相遠也。

The Analects (論語), Book 17 “Yang Huo” 陽貨, 17.2
Trans. James Legge, 1893

48 There are learning extensively, and having a firm and sincere aim; inquiring with earnestness, and reflecting with self-application:-- virtue is in such a course.

博學而篤志，切問而近思，仁在其中矣。

The Analects (論語), Book 19 “Zi Zhang” 子張, 19.6
Trans. James Legge, 1893

49 The faults of the superior man are like the eclipses of the sun and moon. He has his faults, and all men see them; he changes again, and all men look up to him.

君子之過也，如日月之食焉：過也，人皆見之；更也，人皆仰之。

The Analects (論語), Book 19 “Zi Zhang” 子張, 19.21
Trans. James Legge, 1893

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ONE TO KEEP

When you know a thing, to hold that you know it; and when you do not know a thing, to allow that you do not know it — this is knowledge.

知之為知之，不知為不知，是知也。

— The Analects (論語), Book 2 “Wei Zheng” 為政, 2.17

Trans. James Legge, 1893

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