

四. 《論語》選 (中)

(乙) 先進

課文 (Text)

子路問：「聞斯行諸？」¹子曰：「有父兄在，如之何其聞斯行之？」²冉有問：「聞斯行諸？」子曰：「聞斯行之。」公西華曰：「由也問：『聞斯行諸？』；子曰：『有父兄在。』求也問：『聞斯行諸？』；子曰：『聞斯行之。』赤也惑，⁶敢問。⁷子曰：「求也退，⁸故進之。⁹由也兼人，¹⁰故退之。¹¹」

〈先進〉¹²

註釋 (Annotations)

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| 1. 斯 | sī | then. (A conjunction.) (Used in this sense, it is equivalent to 則.) |
| 行 | xíng | to practice. |
| 諸 | zhū | phonetic fusion of the pronoun 之 and the question particle 乎. |
2. 如之何 rú zhī hé how is it that ... ? (An idiomatic phrase.)

3. 冉有 Rǎn Yǒu a disciple of Confucius. 冉 is his family name.
4. 公西華 Gōngxī Huá another disciple of Confucius.
- 由 Yóu the formal name (名 míng) of 子路. (See 文法闡釋 III.)
- 也 yě used in the middle of a sentence to indicate a pause. (A particle.)
5. 求 Qiú the personal name of 冉有 (有 is his courtesy name). (See 文法闡釋 III.)
6. 赤 Chì the personal name of 公西華. (See 文法闡釋 III.)
- 惑 huò confused.
7. 敢問 gǎn wèn may I ask; allow me to ask? (An idiomatic expression of courtesy, used when questioning somebody.)
8. 退 tuì withdrawing; hesitant; indecisive.
9. 進 jìn to encourage; to push forward. (A causative verb derived from its ordinary meaning of "to advance".)
10. 兼人 jiān rén to outdo others.
11. 退 tuì to discourage; to pull back. (A causative verb derived from its ordinary meaning of "to withdraw".)
12. 先進 Xiān jìn chapter title.

文法闡釋 (Grammar Notes)

I. 聞斯行諸？

This sentence consists of two clauses, both with an implied subject "one" (or "I; you; we; anybody"). The first clause is represented by the single character 聞 "hear",

meaning "when one learns (a lesson)". 斯 is used as 則, the conjunction for conditional sentences. The second clause 行諸 is a question, because 諸 is the fused form of the pronoun 之 and the question particle 乎. So the whole sentence means: "Should one practice a lesson upon hearing it?"

II. 如之何其聞斯行之?

The phrase 如之何 is an idiomatic way of challenging something. Together with the modal particle 其 which suggests "uncertainty" (hence, "courtesy"), the phrase always comes before a clause representing the issue in question. So the sentence is a rhetorical question: "How is it, if I may ask, that one should practice it upon hearing it?"

III. (子) 路 versus 由

Both names refer to the same person. The second name 由 is the 名 "formal name", to be used by one's seniors, superiors, and officials, as well as by oneself as a pronoun when speaking to one's superiors (also by one's equals, but only when speaking to common superiors). Pronouns like 吾 "I" and 爾 "you" were used only when one spoke to one's equals or people of lower status. The first name 子路 is the 字 "courtesy name", adopted for the convenience of other people when they cared to show courtesy (子 was an honorific prefix added by the narrator of the conversation). Other examples are (冉) 有 versus 求, and (公西) 華 versus 赤. Note how these names were used in the present story. Note also that there is always some semantic connection between the courtesy name and the formal name, as can be seen from the examples above.