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## 孔子的故事 The Story of Confucius

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孔子的祖先是宋国的贵族，后来宋国发生内乱，孔家逃到鲁国避难，家世就逐渐没落了。孔子的父亲叫叔梁纥，是鲁国的一名普通武官，他力大无比，立下过很多战功。

Confucius' ancestors were members of the nobility in the State of Song. When the state fell into turmoil, his ancestors fled to the State of Lu, and the fortunes of the family gradually declined. Shu-liang He, father of Confucius, was only an ordinary military officer. He was known for his mighty strength which earned him merit for deeds of valour in battles.



叔梁纥有九个女儿和一个残疾的儿子，他最大的心愿就是有一个健康的儿子，于是续娶了名叫颜征在的姑娘。他们常常去尼丘山祷告，终于如愿生下一个男孩，取名叫孔丘，字仲尼，这就是孔子。

Shu-liang He had 9 daughters and a disabled son. His biggest wish was to have a healthy son. So he took another wife, a young girl called Yan Zhengzai. They often went to the Niqiu Hill to pray. Finally Yan gave birth to a baby boy. They named him Kong Qiu with a courtesy name Zhongni. This boy was later known as Confucius.

不幸的是，孔子三岁的时候，父亲就去世了。小孔子跟随母亲，从邹邑搬到了鲁国的国都曲阜。他没有别的玩具，最喜欢的游戏就是摆上小碗小盆，学着大人的样子祭祀行礼。



Unfortunately, when Confucius was three, his father died. Little Confucius and his mother moved from Zouyi to Qufu, the capital of the State of Lu. He didn't have any other toys but some small bowls and dishes. His favorite game was to arrange these bowls and dishes, mimicking the adults performing ritual ceremonies.



由于家里穷，孔子从小就要干各种活儿，正因为这样，他学会了很多本领。孔子很有志气，十五岁的时候就立下了要学好各种知识的大志向。

Because of poverty, Confucius had to do all kinds of laboring work, which in turn taught him a great many skills. Confucius was very ambitious. At the age of 15, he set himself the lofty goal of becoming a man of wisdom.



孔子十七岁的时候，母亲也去世了。为了维持生计，他做过一些低微的官儿，像看管牛羊的“乘田”，还有管理仓库的“委吏”。孔子工作起来认真负责，同时一直保持着读书学习的习惯。

When Confucius was 17, his mother died. To make a living, Confucius worked as a petty official in positions such as caretaker for sheep and horses, and the supervisor of granaries and storage houses. Confucius worked hard and was very responsible. In the meantime, he maintained the good habit of reading and studying.



鲁国有浓厚的文化氛围，聚集着许多有学问的人，谦虚好学的孔子常常向他们请教问题。孔子没有固定的老师，别人有长处，他就愿意学习；别人有不足，他就改掉自己身上同样的缺点。

The State of Lu was a rich cultural center, where brilliant masterminds gathered. Confucius was modest and very fond of learning. He often sought advice from these people. Confucius did not have a fixed teacher. He was ready to learn from anyone who had expertise in a particular field; and if he observed a weakness in someone, he would overcome that weakness in himself if he had it.

有一次，孔子得到机会进入太庙——鲁国祭祀祖先周公的地方，这里保存着纯正规范的周代礼节仪式。孔子每件事都问得清清楚楚，别人说他不懂礼节，他说：“不懂就问，这正是礼啊！”



Whenever Confucius got an opportunity to enter the Imperial Ancestral Temple — where the people of Lu worshipped their ancestor — the Duke of Zhou, and where the most original and standard rites and rituals were preserved, Confucius would ask about everything in great detail. Some people commented that Confucius did not understand good manners, but he said, “If one doesn’t know something, one asks; and that is good manners.”



在当时，全才的人必须具备六种本领：礼节、音乐、射箭、驾车、识字、计算。孔子刻苦学习，努力实践，掌握了这六种本领，成了远近闻名的博学君子。

At that time, one needed to master the "six arts" in order to be considered an all-round man, namely, rites and manners, music, archery, carriage-riding, language, and math. Confucius worked hard and kept on practicing until he mastered all of them. Soon, he became a well-known *junzi* — a knowledgeable and virtuous gentleman.



十九岁那年，孔子娶亲了，第二年他的儿子出生。鲁国国君听说后，派人送给孔子一条鲤鱼作为贺礼。孔子十分感激，给儿子取名叫孔鲤，字伯鱼。

Confucius got married at the age of 19. His son was born the following year. When the Duke of Lu heard this news, he sent a carp as a gift to congratulate Confucius. In gratitude, Confucius named his son Kong Li (Li means carp in Chinese) with a courtesy name Boyu (yu means fish in Chinese).



孔子的名声越来越大，好多人愿意把孩子送来跟他学习。三十岁左右的时候，孔子收了第一批弟子。他们在一起讲解诗书，演习礼乐。相传，孔子教授学生的地方叫作“杏坛”。

Confucius' fame spread far and wide. More and more parents wanted to send their children to learn from him. When Confucius was 30, he started to take in his first batch of students. They studied classic literary works and practiced music and rites. It was said that the place where Confucius taught was called the Apricot Forum.



孔子有一个最有个性的弟子叫子路，只比孔子小九岁。他武艺高强，年轻的时候性子鲁莽，喜欢把公鸡毛插在帽子上，把公猪的皮装在宝剑上。听说孔子招收学生，子路就来捣乱。

Confucius had a very special student called Zi Lu, who was only nine years younger than Confucius. He was highly skilled in martial arts. When he was younger, Zi Lu was quite reckless. He liked to stick rooster tail-feathers on his hat and decorate his sword with the hide of a wild boar. When he heard that Confucius was recruiting students, Zi Lu came over to make trouble.

子路不服孔子的学问，他说：“我就像南山的竹子，生来就是笔直的，砍下来就能做锋利的箭，还要学习做什么?!”



Zi Lu didn't believe that Confucius' teaching could possibly do anyone any good. He said, "I am just like the bamboo in the South Mountain: they were born straight and sturdy, and can be made into sharp arrows once cut down. What do I need learning for?"



孔子并没有生气，  
反而教诲他：“人学  
习知识，就像给箭装  
上了箭头和羽毛，这  
样的箭不是能射得更  
远、扎得更深吗？”  
子路听了，心里十分  
敬佩。

Instead of getting angry, Confucius said patiently, "Knowledge and learning for people are just like the arrowheads for arrows; when equipped with arrowheads, arrows are able to travel longer distances and strike deeper into the targets." On hearing this, Zi Lu felt great admiration for Confucius.

孔子讲学的时候，子路就在一旁悄悄地听。听到那些修养道德和治理国家的道理，子路深深地崇拜起孔子的品德和学问来，于是拜孔子为师，一生追随老师学习。



From then on, Zi Lu would come and listen to Confucius' teaching quietly. After he learned Confucius' ideas on how to cultivate virtues and morality and how to govern a nation, Zi Lu felt deep admiration for Confucius' moral character and knowledge. He decided to become a student of Confucius and learn from him for the rest of his life.

孔子打破了只有贵族才能受教育的规矩，他的学生里有不少是出身寒门的平民子弟。来向孔子拜师求教的人越来越多，他只收十条干肉作为象征性的学费，这在当时是大多数人都拿得出来的。



By setting up his own private school, Confucius broke the convention that only the nobility and the ruling class were granted the opportunity of schooling. Quite a number of his students were from poor and ordinary families. Confucius only asked for ten pieces of dried meat as symbolic tuition, which was affordable for most families at that time. His students soon grew to large numbers.

有一天，孔子和学生公西华坐在树下乘凉。子路兴冲冲地赶来，问孔子道：“我听到一个好的主张，是不是要立即去实行它呢？”



One day, Confucius and his student Gongxi Hua were sitting in the shade under a tree. Zi Lu came in excitement and asked Confucius, "Master, I have just had a great idea. Should I put it into practice right away?"