

# **The Influence of a Ruler Who Cultivates in the Temple Extends for Thousands of Miles**

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Lexi was the Prime Minister of the country of Song during the Spring and Autumn Period. He was also known as Zi, as in Zihan. He was a Sicheng official. He was kindhearted and magnanimous and focused on cultivating his own moral character.

When the country of Chu sent Shi Yinchu as the ambassador to Song, Zihan had a reception for him in his own home. Ambassador Shi Yinchu noticed that the south fence around Zihan's house was curved and that the water from his neighbors on the west side ran through Zihan's yard. When he asked why this was so, Zihan explained, "The neighbor on the south side of my house is a shoemaker. Three generations of their family have been shoemakers. If he were to get flooded out and have to move to another place, those in Song who want to buy shoes won't be able to find him and the shoemaker won't

be able to make a living. Therefore, we do not want him and his family to have to move. The location of my neighbor on the west was originally higher than my house. Their water flows through my yard conveniently, so I don't stop it."

When Shi Yinchu returned to Chu, the king was about to attack Song. Ambassador Shi said to the king, "We should not attack Song. Their king is wise, and their prime minister is kind. These wise rulers have won the love of their people, and the kind prime minister has the support of talented people. If we attack them, we will fail and the people of the world will laugh at us." Heeding his ambassador's advice, the king of Chu didn't attack Song but turned to attack the country of Zheng instead.

After Confucius heard this he said, "He cultivates himself in a temple. However, his authority extends thousands of miles. This is the name of Sicheng Zihan." At that time Song was surrounded by Chu to the south, Jin to the north, and Qi to the east. These neighboring countries were very big. None of their rulers, however, dared to attack Song.