



【 水鏡回天錄白話解 】

孟子

REFLECTIONS IN THE WATER-MIRROR: TURNING THE TIDE OF DESTINY
Mencius

宣公上人講於一九八六年八月廿二日 LECTURED BY THE VENERABLE MASTER HUA ON AUGUST 22, 1986
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孟子名軻，字子輿。戰國鄒人。子思之弟子，以繼孔子之道為志，贊成王道，低貶霸權。主張「民為貴，君為輕」之民主政治，故不受諸侯之歡迎

。極力提倡性善之說，故曰：「惻隱之心，人皆有之。」又云：「人人皆可以為堯舜。」實行仁義之道，以「老吾老以及人之老；幼吾幼以及人之幼」為仁愛之思想。以「富貴不能淫，貧賤不能移，威武不能屈。」為正義之表現。當時天下言，不歸楊則歸墨。為維持儒家之正統，乃斥曰楊氏無君，墨子無父，「無君無父，是禽獸也」。晚年設教立說，有〈孟子〉七篇。享年八十有四，世人尊為「亞聖」。

中國出了一個孔子和一個孟子。一般人尊稱孔子為「至聖先師」，孟子為「亞聖」。這兩位聖人對中國人的功勞很大，比歷代皇帝的功勞都大

。他們能令人知道做人的基本條件，不犯分越禮、不作奸犯科；這對治國安邦、扶世利民的功勞是特別大的，無形中移風易俗，能令百姓各安生業 -- 各安各人的職業。當然中國也有一些不守規矩的人，這又另當別論了！

Text:

Mencius (Mengzi)'s name was Ke, and his style name was Ziyu. He was from the state of Zhou and lived during the Warring States Period. A disciple of Zi Si, he aspired to continue the teachings of Confucius (Kongzi). While he approved of humane government, he disparaged tyranny. He advocated a democratic government in which "the people are most important, while the leader is of lesser importance." Thus he was not well-received by the feudal lords. He actively promoted the doctrine that human nature is originally good, saying, "All people are capable of empathy." He also said, "Anyone can be like Yao and Shun." He practiced benevolence and righteousness, basing his idea of benevolence on the injunction to "treat all elders as you would your own; treat all children as you would your own." He felt that a person demonstrates righteousness when "riches and honors cannot make him dissipated, poverty and mean condition cannot make him swerve from principle, and power and force cannot make him bend." The two most influential philosophers of that time were Yangzi and Micius (Mizi). In order to preserve the Confucian orthodoxy, Mencius criticized, "Yangzi does not esteem his own ruler, and Micius does not recognize his own father. One who has no king and no father is but an animal." In his later years, Mencius taught and established teachings that were compiled into the seven chapters of the Book of Mencius. He lived to be 84 and is venerated as being "Second to the Sage."

Commentary:

China produced a Confucius and a Mencius. Confucius is referred to as the "Greatest Sage and Foremost Teacher," while Mencius is "Second to the Sage." These two sages have benefited the Chinese people tremendously. Their merit is even greater than that of the emperors throughout Chinese history. They let people know the basic requirements for being a human – not to overstep



孟子姓孟，名軻，字子輿，是戰國時鄒國人。他出生和一般的兒童是一樣的，但他之所以成爲亞聖，就因爲他有一個良好的母親。他的母親是個相夫教子的主婦，帶著他的兒子以織布來維持生活，日子非常艱難。最初在好幾個地方住，孟母都覺得不對

：最初在墳場旁住，孟子就學著埋墳，怎麼把死人埋到地裡頭。她又搬到市場旁邊住，孟子就學著做屠夫，殺豬、宰羊賣肉。孟母看到他兒子見到什麼就學什麼，認爲這不是好辦法；於是乎搬到學校旁邊去，他就學著學生讀書。學生上學、下學、鞠躬進退

，禮儀諷諷的，他也就學會了。孟母叫他去讀書。讀書時間久了，他覺得這也不是好玩，就想要輟學，要求母親讓他不讀書。孟母沒說什麼，就用刀割斷織布機的線。孟子問母親爲何把線割斷？孟母答說：「布要織成才能換錢，中途割斷了，就沒有用途。你如果不讀書，就像這匹布一樣，不能織成，將來沒有什麼出息。」孟子聽了之後，再繼續苦學，以後得到子思的栽培，而成爲聖人。

孟子的志願是繼承孔子的學說，所以到處提倡儒家的道理。孔子的學說也是講「仁義忠恕」，孟子想繼志述事；繼續孔子的志願，敘述孔子的事跡。所以提倡王道治國，不用霸權

。他到處僕僕風塵，想要發展他的抱負，可是當時的諸侯都是自私自利，沒有廣大的心量，不認識治國的棟樑之材，所以孟子懷才未授，道就不能行。

孟子曰：「惻隱之心，人皆有之；羞惡之心，人皆有之；辭讓之心，人皆有之；是非之心，人皆有之。」所謂「仁義禮智」，即是「惻隱之心，仁之端也；羞惡之心，義之端也；辭

one's position or neglect the rules of propriety, not to commit evil and create offenses. Their merit towards creating peaceful and well-governed states and benefiting the world and its people is especially great. Imperceptibly they have influenced the customs, allowing people to be happy in their livelihoods and occupations. Of course, China also has its share of unruly people, but that is another story.

Mencius' surname was Meng, his name was Ke, and his style name was Ziyu. He was from the state of Zhou and lived during the Warring States Period. He was born in an ordinary manner, but was able to become "Second to the Sage" because he had a worthy mother. His mother helped her [deceased] husband raise and educate their son. She wove cloth to support herself and her son, and their life was extremely hard. At first they lived in several places, but Mencius' mother found them to be inappropriate. Their first home was next to a cemetery, so Mencius learned how to dig graves and bury people in the ground. She then moved next door to a meat market, and Mencius learned how to be a butcher – killing pigs and sheep and selling their meat. Mencius' mother observed the way her son learned everything he saw, and decided this was not a good situation. Thereupon she moved next to a school, and Mencius learned from the students how to study. Students went in and out of the school, bowing and showing their manners and etiquette, and Mencius learned it all. Mencius' mother sent him to study. After he had studied for a while, he decided it was not that much fun and wanted to quit school. When he asked his mother if he could stop studying, his mother did not say anything, but took her knife and cut the threads on her weaving loom. When Mencius asked his mother why she cut the threads, she replied, "One must finish weaving the cloth before it can be exchanged for money. If it is cut halfway through, it will be useless. If you don't study, you'll be just like this piece of cloth which has not been completely woven – you cannot achieve much in the future." After Mencius heard her words, he continued his studies with diligence. Later, under the training and guidance of Zi Si, he became a sage.

Mencius vowed to carry on Confucius' teaching, so he went everywhere promoting the principles of Confucianism, which include benevolence, righteousness, loyalty, and forgiveness. Mencius wanted to continue Confucius' resolve and narrate the deeds of his life. Thus he advocated a humane government and did not support tyranny. He endured the hardships of extensive travel in order to realize his ambition, but the feudal lords of the time selfishly sought personal advantages and were narrow-minded. They did not recognize his talent and usefulness as a political advisor. Thus Mencius was not able to share his talents; he preached but could not practice.

Mencius said, "All people are capable of empathy. All people possess a sense of shame. All people are capable of deference and humility. All people have the ability to distinguish right from wrong." As for benevolence, righteousness, propriety, and knowledge, he said, "An attitude of empathy is the beginning of benevolence. A sense of shame is the beginning of righteous-



讓之心，禮之端也；是非之心，智之端也。」他又提倡人要做大丈夫，什麼叫「大丈夫」？大丈夫的行爲是：「富貴不能淫」，在富貴時不淫亂，還是守規矩；「貧賤不能移」，在貧賤時也不會轉移他自己的目的和志願，不會沒有氣節。「移」，就是投機取巧、拍馬、販毒、走私，不擇手段去奪取金錢。在貧賤時，也守分安命，順時聽天。孔子說：「富而可求也，雖執鞭之士，吾亦爲之。若不可求，從吾所好。」又說：「富貴於我如浮雲」。富貴對我來說，就好像浮雲一樣，不拿它當一回事。孟子的「貧賤不能移」，就是和「富貴於我如浮雲」同樣理論。「威武不能屈」：在任何強權逼迫之下，也不屈服。

孟子又說：「老吾老，以及人之老；幼吾幼，以及人之幼」：我孝順自己的父母，也推廣到孝順世界上其他人的父母；我慈愛自己的子女，我以這種仁愛之心，推廣到所有其他人的子女身上去。所以孟子盡量教誨其他人的子弟做一個好人，就是有此精神。

當時孟子闢楊墨，楊是楊子，叫楊朱；墨是墨子，叫墨翟。傳說墨翟是很巧妙的人。楊子很保守，墨子很開明。可是保守的過於保守，開明的又過於開明。「楊子爲我，拔一毛以利天下，不爲也。」楊子是個人主義，祇是保護自己，上無領導，下無群眾。墨子「兼愛」，如耶穌教中所說的「平等之愛」--「博愛」。兼，是「兼全」；博，是「廣博」。兩者意思差不多。兼愛就是「摩頂放踵，利天下而爲之」，就算被人用刀從頭頂割到腳底，一分爲兩，只要對天下有利益，他也去做，忘掉自己。這是墨子的學說，兩個學說，一個太開明，一個太保守；所以孟子批評楊子說：「楊子爲

ness. An attitude of deference and modesty is the beginning of propriety. The ability to distinguish right from wrong is the beginning of knowledge.” He also promoted the idea that a person should aspire to be a great hero. What is a great hero? A great hero conducts himself such that “riches and honors cannot make him dissipated.” When he is wealthy and honored, he still abides by the rules and does not become dissipated. “Poverty and mean condition cannot make him swerve from principle.” When he becomes poor and lowly, he does not deviate from his resolve; he is not a loser. That is, he will not try to be clever or obsequious to gain advantages, or get involved in dealing drugs or smuggling goods, using any means he can to get money. Even in times of poverty, he lives an honest life and accepts his fate. Confucius said, “If riches could be obtained, then even if I had to become a carriage driver to obtain it, I would do it. If riches cannot be obtained, then I will do what I like to do.” He also said, “Riches and honor are like drifting clouds to me.” To me, riches and honor are nothing but clouds; I don’t take them seriously. Mencius’ statement, “Poverty and mean condition cannot make him swerve from principle” is expressing the same point as, “Riches and honor are like drifting clouds to me.” “Power and force cannot make him bend.” No matter what kind of force or authority he is oppressed by, he will not submit.

Mencius also said, “Treat all elders as you would your own; treat all children as you would your own.” That is, “Just as I am filial to my own parents, I expand that filial piety towards the parents of other people in the world. Just as I show love and affection towards my own children, I expand that love to include everyone else’s children.” It was in this spirit that Mencius exerted his utmost efforts to teach other people’s children to be good.

At the time Mencius criticized Yangzhu, also known as Yangzi. Then there was Mizi (Micius), also called Midi, who was said to be very clever. Yangzi was conservative, while Mizi was liberal. But their conservatism and liberalism went to an extreme. Yangzi said, “If I could benefit the world by pulling out a single body hair, I would not do it.” Yangzi advocated an individualism that is only concerned about protecting the self, and does not recognize a leader above or the masses below. Mizi propounded “loving all,” which is like the impartial and universal love taught by Jesus. “All” means “total,” and “universal” means “extensive.” The two mean pretty much the same thing. “Loving all” means “If I could benefit the world by slicing my body in half from the top of my head to the soles of my feet, I would do it.” As long as it is of benefit to the world, he would have his body cut in half from head to feet. He forgot about himself. This was Mizi’s philosophy. Of the two philosophies, one was ultra liberal while the other was ultra conservative. Thus Mencius criticized Yangzi, saying, “Yangzi’s self-centered philosophy has no king.” Yangzi only cared about protecting himself. He didn’t care about whether the king or national leader was in danger. In his eyes, there was no leader. So Mencius criticized him, saying, “Mizi’s ‘loving all’ can be regarded as ‘not favoring one’s own father.’” Mizi loved himself and everyone else, so he did favor his own father, since



我，是無君也。」楊子祇是保護他自己，不管君上有沒有危險，眼裡沒有一個君主。所以孟子批評他：「墨子兼愛，是無父也。」墨子愛自己也愛大家，他沒有父親了，因他父親和旁人的父親是一樣。「無父無君，是禽獸也。」沒有父親，也沒有君主，就是禽獸，不同於「中」了。一個是唯我，一個是兼愛；唯我的只有我，兼愛的沒有自己。現在美國也有類似楊子學說，亦有墨子學說。

墨子很聰明，當時就會造飛機--當時叫作「飛雁」。但是沒有後人繼承，再繼續發明，以後就失傳了。當時中國人膽子很小，想這個東西一飛上天去，回不來怎麼辦？所以不敢繼續發展它。若是當時繼續發展，怎麼會等到西方人去發明飛機？諸葛亮當時就會造木頭的牛馬，可以搬運東西，又不用吃草料，亦不用燒汽油，你說這個妙不妙？現在運貨的車還要燒汽油！

孟子到老年時，回鄉設教，著書立說，寫出〈孟子〉七篇。孟子見梁惠王，王曰：「叟，不遠千里而來，亦將有以利吾國乎？」孟子對曰：「王何必曰利，亦有仁義而已矣。王曰：『何以利吾國？』大夫：『何以利吾家？』士庶人曰：『何以利吾身？』上下交征利，而國危矣。……苟為後義而先利，不奪不饜。」他對梁惠王講仁義，梁惠王最後也跟著他說：「亦有仁義而已矣！何必曰利。」孟子一生僕僕風塵，來教化中國的國民，提倡仁義道德學說，享年八十四歲。中國人稱他為「亞聖」；「亞聖」在孔子以後，和孔子差不多了。

his own father was the same as everyone else's father. "One who disregards his own king and fails to favor his own father can be considered an animal." One who acts as if he has no father and no ruler is no better than a beast. One philosophy advocated selfishness, and the other, universal love; both diverged from the Middle Way. Selfishness focuses sheerly on the self, while universal love forgets about the self. Nowadays in the United States there are also philosophies similar to those of Yangzi and Mizi.

Mizi was very intelligent. He could build airplanes, called "flying geese" in those days. However, later generations did not pass on his inventions or continue developing them, so they were lost. Chinese people were not very adventurous then; they wondered, what will we do if it flies up into the sky and can't come back down? So they did not venture to continue to develop his inventions. If they had, they would not have had to wait for Westerners to invent the plane. Zhuge Liang knew how to make wooden oxen and horses that could transport objects. These wooden animals did not need to eat hay and grain, or to use gasoline. Wouldn't you say this is miraculous? Modern-day trucks have to burn fuel to work!

In his old age, Mencius returned to his hometown to teach, write, and lecture. He wrote the seven chapters of the Book of Mencius. Mencius went to see King Hui of Liang. The king said, "Venerable sir, since you have not counted it far to come here, a distance of a thousand li, may I presume that you are likewise provided with counsels to profit my kingdom?"

Mencius replied, "Why must Your Majesty use that word 'profit'? What I am 'likewise' provided with, are counsels to benevolence and righteousness, and these are my only topics.

"If Your Majesty says, 'What is to be done to profit my kingdom?' the great officers will say, 'What is to be done to profit our clans?' and the inferior officers and the common people will say, 'What is to be done to profit ourselves?' Superiors and inferiors will try to snatch this profit from each other, and the kingdom will be endangered. If righteousness be put last, and profit be put first, they will not be satisfied without snatching all." He spoke about benevolence and righteousness to King Hui of Liang. Finally the King said to him, "Benevolence and righteousness, and these shall be the only themes. Why must you use that word—'profit'?"

Throughout his life, Mencius endured the hardships of travel in order to teach and transform the citizens of China. He advocated a philosophy of benevolence, righteousness, and moral virtue. He lived to be 84. Chinese people refer to him as being "Second to the Sage," because he came after Confucius. He was pretty much on par with Confucius.

☞待續

☞To be continued