

# 論語淺釋

## The Analects of Confucius

宣化上人講 Lectures by the Venerable Master Hua

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### 【八佾第三】

(九)子曰：「夏禮，吾能言之，杞不足徵也。殷禮，吾能言之，宋不足徵也。文獻不足故也，足，則吾能徵之矣！」

「子曰」：這個「子」，就是孔子；曰，就是說話。「夏禮」：這個「夏」字，在這兒不當「夏天」來講，是朝代的名字，就是夏朝。夏朝就是夏禹王開創的，殷朝就是商湯王開創的。禮，就是禮節。夏禮，就是夏朝的禮節，那個時候一切的儀式。

所以禮是很重要的，我們現在美國的學校，學生根本就不講禮貌；學生對老師也提名道姓的，老師叫學生也是提名道姓的，都是這麼呼名，一點也不客氣的，這樣子，就互相沒有一個「尊重」的禮在裡頭。所以我們這兒的學生和其他學校的學生絕對不同。什麼不同呢？

我們的學生都要懂禮。你們到了學校，早晨要向老師問早，問老師早安，你們是懂英文的，就要講中文，懂中文的，就應該講英文，我們互相要把這個語言交通了。所以你們懂英文的學生要講中文，說：「各位老師早安！」懂中文的就要講英文了，說：「Every teacher, good morning!」就要這麼講，這就是個禮。我們這兒是講禮的。我們這是禮儀的學校，

### Chapter 3: Eight Rows of Eight Dancers

(9) The Master said, “With regard to the Xia rites, I am able to describe only in general, for the State of Qi lacks sufficient evidence for verification. As for the Yin rites, I am able to discuss only in broad terms, for the State of Song lacks sufficient evidence for verification. The reason is because the extant historical manuscripts are few and far between. If sufficient documentation was available, then I would be able to substantiate my accounts.”

**The Master said.** ‘子’ (zǐ) refers to Confucius and ‘曰’ (yuē) means ‘say.’ **With regard to the Xia rites.** Here, the character ‘夏’ (xià) does not refer to the summer season, but is the name of a dynasty—the Xia Dynasty. The Xia Dynasty was established by King Yu, while the Yin Dynasty was founded by King Shang Tang. ‘禮’ (lǐ) means ‘etiquette’ or ‘protocol.’ The Xia rites refer to the entire set of rituals and protocols laid down by the Xia rulers at that time.

The rites serve a very important function. In present-day American schools, the students do not have any manners. Both the students and the teachers address each other by their personal names, with little courtesy. The etiquette of mutual respect is lacking. That’s why our students here are poles apart from those of other schools. In what way are they different?

Our students have to know their manners. When they arrive at school in the morning, they have to greet their teachers “Good morning.” Those who have better facility with English will greet in Chinese, while those who have better facility with Chinese will greet in English. This is to facilitate mutual communication in both languages. Therefore, those who are from an English-speaking background will say “各位老師早安!” Conversely, the Chinese-speaking students will say “Every teacher, good morning!” This, in itself, is the practice of etiquette (rites)! Courtesy is a way of life here. Ours is a school of etiquette and protocol. If a person does not have any manners, then he is no different from an animal. I am not scolding anyone! The reason that human beings are the wisest of all creatures is because they observe basic courtesy and do not infringe upon the liberties of other people. We have to respect others and not obstruct them.

All the protocols, codes of etiquette, and courtesies of the Xia Dynasty are collectively termed as ‘rites.’ **I am able to describe only in general.** ‘吾’ (wú) means

講禮儀的；人若不懂得禮，就和畜生是一樣的。我不是罵人！因為人所以為萬物之靈，就因為懂禮，不侵犯他人的自由；我們要尊重旁人，不要妨礙旁人。

夏朝的禮節、禮序、禮貌，都是這個「禮」。「吾能言之」：這個「吾」，是孔子自己說的；說我可以講得出來，言，就是可以說一說。可是「杞不足徵也」：但是這個杞國它不足給我證明；徵，就是證明。它證明不出來我所說的是對不對。這個「杞」國，就是夏朝的後人所建立的，到孔子那時，只剩一個很小的國家了。

在中國就有句成語「杞人憂天」。有個杞人常常憂天，怎麼憂呢？他就說：「唉呀！這天上的太陽什麼時候掉下來啊？」這叫「杞人憂天」。好像《書經》上說的：「時日曷喪，予及汝皆亡。」你這個太陽什麼時候掉下來？我和你就該一起死了！所以他也是常常這麼憂愁。杞人憂天的「杞」，就是這個「杞國」的「杞」了；這個杞國人，就憂愁天什麼時候掉下來。你看他奇怪不奇怪？他想得這麼多，怕太陽掉到地下來。

「殷禮，吾能言之」：殷那個朝代的禮節，那種禮數的記載，我也能說一說。可是「宋不足徵也」：這個宋國，也是殷商後代的人所建立的，它那國家很小，它的文獻也都不可考了，所以宋也不夠來證明我說的話是正確的。為什麼呢？「文獻不足故也」：是因為記載文獻不夠的緣故。所有的書籍、史冊、記錄，這都叫「文獻」。這是前面這一段的意思，你們各位要好好學一學這個。

「足」：文獻若夠的話，「則吾能徵之矣」：那麼禮儀的情況，就可以顯示清楚一點，我就可以用來證明我所說的了。

'I' and '言' (yán) means 'say' or 'talk.' Confucius says he can talk a little about it, but then **the State of Qi lacks sufficient evidence for verification.** The State of Qi lacks the material evidence to back up my claims. The character '徵' (zhēng) means 'prove' or 'verify.' There is no way to prove whether what I say is correct or not. The State of Qi was established by the descendants of the Xia Dynasty. However, by the time of Confucius, it had become a very tiny state.

In China, there is an idiom: The man of Qi worries that the sky might fall. There was a person living in the State of Qi who was perpetually worried about the sky. To what extent was he worried? He would cry out: "Good grief! When is the sun going to fall from the sky?" This is what the idiom describes. Similarly, there are two lines in the *Book of History* that say: When will the sun meet its extinction? At that time, you and I will perish together. When is the sun going to fall down? If it happens, both of us will meet our doom! This person is also constantly worried about the same thing. The character '杞' (qǐ) in the idiom refers to the State of Qi. The man of Qi was paranoid about when the sky would come crashing down on him. You see what a weird fellow he was. His imagination had run wild, making him terrified that the sun would fall onto the earth.

**As for the Yin rites, I am able to discuss only in broad terms.** As for records of the rites and rituals of the Yin Dynasty, I can also talk a bit about them. However, **the State of Song lacks sufficient evidence for verification.** The State of Song was established by the descendants of the Yin-Shang rulers. Being such a tiny state, it has nothing much to offer in the way of historical documents. Therefore, the State of Song is similarly unable to prove whether my words are accurate or not. Why is this so? **The reason is because the extant historical manuscripts are few and far between.** Historical manuscripts refer to the books, historical manuals, and records collectively. Such works are not available in sufficient quantities. This is the gist of the first part of this passage, which all of you should learn thoroughly.

**If sufficient documentation was available.** Should copious quantities of historical manuscripts exist, **then I would be able to substantiate my accounts!** I would be able to shed more light on this topic of rituals and protocols, and whatever I say could then be proven and verified.

