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論語淺釋 (續)

The Analects of Confucius

(continued)

宣化上人講

楊維光、劉年聰 英譯

Lectures by the Venerable Master Hua

English translation by Yong Wei Kwong and Liew Yen Chong



DHARMA TALK DHARMA RAIN | 法語法雨

【里仁第四】

第一，就是「利己利人」，這是個「仁」，是行菩薩道；第二，就是「不利己利人」，也不損害自己，而去利人，是行辟支佛道；第三，是「損己利人」，應該做什麼事情，對自己有損害一點不要緊，要利人，這就是羅漢道。

這個「仁」字，在儒教講「仁」，在佛教裏頭，就可以說是「戒」的一個意思；你若能仁，就不傷害其它的生命。好像不殺生就是個仁，不偷盜就是個義，不邪淫就是個禮，不妄語就是個信，不飲酒就是個智慧。這樣子，本來「仁，義，禮，智，信」，這在儒教講得很圓滿了；在佛教又把它變了個名詞，說是「五戒」。這變來變去，根本的問題，就是儒教所講的這個「仁、義、禮、智、信」；無非也就教人守禮，教人守規矩，守法律。

Chapter 4: Living in a Benevolent Neighborhood

The first kind is 'benefitting oneself as well as others'. This is an act of '仁' (benevolence), which is to practice the Bodhisattva path. The second kind is 'not benefitting oneself but benefitting others'. He does not harm himself but brings benefits to other people instead. This is to practice the Pratyekabuddha path. The third kind is 'harming oneself to benefit others'. In whatever you do, it does not matter if you suffer a bit of disadvantage as long as you benefit others. This is practicing the Arhat path.

The character '仁' is explained as 'benevolence' in Confucianism whereas in Buddhism, it can be interpreted as '戒' (precepts). If you are able to practice benevolence, then you will not harm other living beings. For example, 'not killing' is 'benevolence'; 'not stealing' is 'righteousness'; 'not engaging in sexual misconduct' is 'propriety'; 'not lying' is 'faithfulness'; and 'not consuming intoxicants' is 'wisdom'. In this way, the fundamental qualities of benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and faithfulness, which are explained very satisfactorily in Confucianism, are now converted to the Buddhist term of 'five precepts'. The fundamental issue underlying this inter-conversion of terms is that the qualities of benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and faithfulness promoted in Confucianism are simply to teach people to observe

那麼戒也是這個樣子，不過就是變變名詞而已；因為我們人聽這個名詞聽慣了，就習以為常而不注意了，覺得它很平常。也就好像我現在講這個「六大宗旨」，你們一班人天天聽：「哦！這六大宗旨我知道了，我知道了！」其實你做到了沒有？這也就像是「仁、義、禮、智、信」，我們做到了沒有？我們要做到才算呢！「殺、盜、淫、妄、酒」這五戒，我們做到了沒有？我們做到才算呢！就用口頭禪講來講去，你講得天花亂墜，地湧金蓮，你不實在去做去，還是沒有用的！

所以這是換湯不換藥，換名不換義；這個名字換了，那個義理還是一樣的。所以我們大家學佛，不要盡好高騫遠，盡淌那兒搞名搞利去。一跑到名利上去，那這個人就完了，這個人就已經一點意思都沒有了，這可以說是就是這樣了，沒有前途了；所以我們人——方才不說過，要把這個「立場、觀點、態度」要認清了，我們在一個什麼位置上？我們是一個什麼身份的？

我們不能把自己弄得也不知道自己是個做什麼的了。做弟子的，就應該像個弟子；做師父的，應該像個師父；做同學的，應該大家互相勉勵。我們這才能互相有進步呢！如果你自己不顧及其他的人，就知道有自己；那就好像這個全世界就一個天主，那他就主去了！我常說，這光棍的天主沒有什麼大意思的！你看佛成佛了，是要有他所度的這些個緣；他若沒有這些個緣，他成佛做什麼？成佛也沒有什麼意思！所以我們人，要和任何人都要六和同住，要和氣；不能標異現奇，不能我做一個特別樣子。我作一個特別樣子，那一定立不住的！

那麼仁者就是要利益人，利人就是個仁。惡，就是個害人，害人就是惡。那麼這個「惡」和這個「仁」正是相反的。

☞待續

真妄交徹，即凡心而見佛心；
事理雙修，依本智而求佛智。
——《華嚴經疏序》

the code of propriety, abide by the rules and standards, and obey the laws and regulations.

Now, it is the same with the precepts. The only difference is that the term has been changed. Since we have been accustomed to hearing a particular term, we use it habitually without much thought and feel that it is very common. It is just like how I am explaining the Six Guidelines now. The whole lot of you listen every day and say, "Oh! I know these Six Guidelines. I know them all!" But did you really put them into practice? Similarly, when it comes to benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and faithfulness, have we fulfilled these qualities? It counts only when we put them into practice! As for the five precepts of 'not killing, not stealing, not engaging in sexual misconduct, not lying and not consuming intoxicants', have we upheld them? It is only when we put them into practice that it counts! Just by paying lip-service and talking to-and-fro, even if you were to talk until heavenly blossoms rain down on you or golden lotuses well forth from the ground, it is still no use at all if you do not actually put them into practice!

Therefore, this is just a case of 'changing the broth but not the medicine' or 'changing the name but not the meaning'. Although the term has been changed, the meaning and principle are still the same. That is why when we study Buddhism, we must not be fixated on aiming for the lofty and craving after what is beyond reach, or spend all our time drooling over fame and gain. Once a person pursues fame and gain, then he is finished. Such a person is utterly meaningless and it can be said that he does not have much of a future. Wasn't it mentioned just now that we have to recognize clearly our position, perspective and attitude? What position are we occupying? What is our status?

We must not fool around until we have no idea what we are supposed to be doing. As a disciple, you should act like a disciple; as a master, you should behave like a master; as fellow students, you should encourage one another. It is only in this way that we are able to make mutual improvements! If you are self-centered and do not give any consideration to others, then it is similar to having only one heavenly lord in the whole world and he is the only master around! I have often said that there isn't much meaning in being the solitary heavenly lord! Look at the Buddha. He attained Buddhahood because he has affinities with those whom he has to cross over. If such affinities are absent, what is the purpose of attaining Buddhahood? It would have no meaning at all! That is why we people must practice the Six Harmonies, one of which is to co-exist harmoniously with everybody. Don't do unconventional and unorthodox things, behaving like you are someone special. Once you put on such an act, you will definitely not be able to gain any acceptance!

Now, a benevolent person benefits others; to do so is to be benevolent. An evil person harms others; causing harm to people is an evil act. In this sense, 'evil' and 'benevolence' are direct opposites.

☞To be continued

*Truth and falseness interlink and mingle:
Within the ordinary mind one sees the Buddha mind.
Specifics and principle are together cultivated:
One relies on basic wisdom to seek the Buddha's wisdom.
— from the "The Flower Adornment Sutra - Preface"*