

論語淺釋 (續)

The Analects of Confucius

(continued)

宣化上人講

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DHARMA TALK DHARMA RAIN | 法語法雨

【里仁第四】

Chapter 4: Living in a Benevolent Neighborhood

也就是說：「我們老師說的什麼？我們教授說的什麼？」所以當時都稱「夫子」，「老夫子」。說夫子說的是什麼？老師頭前說的是什麼？古來的人專門尊師重道的，不是像現在你們這樣：「他講什麼？」虧我啊？呵呵！虧我啊？

「曾子曰：夫子之道，忠恕而已矣」：其實，說「忠恕」，這兩個字是有疑問的！這個「忠」，可能是沒有「心」字在底下；那個「恕」，可能就是那個「一豎」的「豎」，或者是「木」字加一個「區」的「樞」字。就是「中樞」，中間一個樞紐。

因為他們不懂，他說「一以貫之」，用這一個道理，貫穿一切的道理。那麼他們不懂，他就說「中豎而已」，就

To put it simply: "What is the meaning of our Teacher's or Professor's words?" In those days, teachers were addressed as '夫子' (Master) or '老夫子' (Old Master). People in ancient times were particularly respectful towards their teachers and held their teachings in high esteem, unlike you modern-day people who only know how to say: "What's he talking about?" Are you being fair to me? Am I taking a loss?

Zengzi explained, "All that our Master expounds in his teachings are faithfulness and forbearance!" Actually, there is some doubt about the two characters '忠恕' (faithfulness and forbearance)! '忠' should probably be replaced by the one without the '心' (heart) radical below it. As for '恕', it should probably be '豎' (vertical) or '樞' (pivot or center). Combining the two characters forms the term '中樞' which means 'central pivot' or 'main center'.

The other disciples did not understand what the Master meant by "**linked by one consistent principle**", which is to use one principle to connect all other principles. As they were clueless, Zengzi explained to them that it was "none other than the vertical stroke that runs down the center". This 'vertical stroke' symbolizes an entity that is able to hold up the heavens and support the earth. It is just the central pivot, a righteous energy with an indomitable spirit. If this concept is applied to human anatomy, it is our spine or backbone. A person whose spine is

是中間那一豎。這「一豎」，就是頂天立地了，就是一個中樞，也就是一個頂天立地的一個正氣；若是在我們人身上來講，就是我們那個脊椎骨。人身的脊椎骨要是壞了，那這個人就完了；那麼這個脊椎骨，這是人身的一個要緊的東西。

說：「這個法師，講來講去，講得太離譜了！」不過這有這的道理。這「中豎」，就是中間這一豎，這也就是一氣貫通。這一氣貫通了，在儒教是沒有講修身的功夫；要是道教，就講「任督二脈」。這個「中豎而已」，就是講的「任督二脈」，前邊這個任脈，後邊督脈；你若任督二脈通了，人就沒有病了。那麼孔子他本來想說，但是因為曾子他也不再詳細請問一下，就說「是」。他因為似懂非懂的，那麼下邊人也就不懂了；結果影響到現在，人家就都不懂。啊！都不懂！

他就說：「我這個道，忠恕而已！」這就是修身的功夫。修身先要什麼呢？先要格物。這格物然後才能知至；知至，然後誠意、正心；正心，然後才能修身。

怎麼叫「格物」呢？格物，就革除這個物欲，把你的一切的慾念都革除去了；人欲淨盡，天理就流行了。你若沒有人欲了，你那個真理現前了，你智慧就現前了。為什麼你沒有真正智慧呢？就因為你那個慾念太多了，把那兒都塞住了，把那個心、那個智慧門都生了鏽了，開不開了。你若能把這個慾念沒有了，這是革除物欲，這第一個功夫。

物革而後知至；然後你才能推而廣之，擴而充之，才能盡人性，盡己性，更兼盡物之性。你能盡性了，然後你又要誠意；你不是三天打魚，兩天曬網的，今天蓮花，明天就牡丹，那麼朝秦暮楚的。若「專一則靈，分馳則弊」。

誠意然後正心；正心，就是要合乎仁義道德了。要把心先正了，凡是不爭，不貪，不求，不自私，不自利，不打妄語；這都是正心的功夫，這也都是誠意的功夫，這在儒教裏講的。

damaged will become an invalid because it is an essential part of the human body.

Some of you may say: "This Dharma Master keeps beating about the bush and has strayed too far off from the subject!" But I have my reasons for explaining it this way. This 'vertical stroke' also refers to a single stream of energy that flows unimpeded. Confucianism makes no mention of the skills for cultivating the body but Taoism talks about two meridians in the human body: the Conception Vessel and the Governor Vessel. The saying "none other than the vertical stroke that runs down the center" refers to these two meridians. The Conception Vessel runs along the front of the body whereas the Governor Vessel runs along the back. If the energy flow along these two meridians is not obstructed, then the person will not fall ill. Confucius wanted to elaborate more at first but Zengzi did not request a detailed explanation and merely said, "Yes!" As he had only a hazy notion about it. The rest of the disciples were just as baffled. This confusion has continued right up to the present day and, as a result, the meaning has eluded everyone. Alas! Nobody understands it at all!

Zengzi interpreted Confucius' comment in this way: "My teachings are nothing more than about being faithful in one's conduct and practicing forbearance towards others!" This refers to the skill of self-cultivation. What must be done prior to this? First and foremost, a person must sever material attachments. Only then is he able to extend his knowledge, and thereafter make his intent sincere and rectify his mind. Once the mind is rectified, he is then able to engage in self-cultivation.

What does 'severing material attachments' mean? It just means getting rid of your material desires or eliminating all thoughts of desire. When human desires have been purified completely, the heavenly principles will flow forth. If you have no more desires, then the true principles will appear and your wisdom will manifest. Why is it that you lack genuine wisdom? It is because your mind is clogged with too many thoughts of desire and, as a result, your door of wisdom has turned rusty and cannot be opened. If you are able to cut off your thoughts of desire, you have accomplished the first skill of getting rid of your material attachments.

Severing material attachments leads to extension of knowledge. Only then are you able to expand your scope of knowledge and give full play to your humanity. Making the best possible use of one's inherent nature also includes optimizing the nature of material things. Once you are able to do this, you should then make your intent sincere. Do not work by fits and starts like the person who "spends three days fishing and two days drying the nets" or be fickle-minded, being "fond of lotuses one day and peonies the next". As the saying goes: If you are single-minded, things will turn out efficacious; if your thoughts are scattered, you will be at a disadvantage.

After making your intent sincere, you have to rectify your mind. Rectifying the mind is to be in accord with the qualities of benevolence, righteousness and moral virtue. First, you have to set your mind straight.