

論語淺釋 (續)

The Analects of Confucius

(continued)



子曰君子無所事也射乎揖讓而升
下而飲乎年也君子八佾舞于庭
子思

清江逸子

宣化上人講

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【里仁第四】

可是我母親死的時候，我沒有哭。為什麼呢？我覺得我已經盡到我自己能盡的責任了。因為我母親癱了有半年多，在這半年多，我是一個男孩子，她拉屎拉尿，都是我來照顧的；有的時候翻身，也都是我照顧。人老了有病，那身上總有一股臭的味道；那麼那個時候我是不是很勉強的呢？不是！我很盡心竭力來照顧我母親。等我母親死了之後，我那時候是一個 Penny(一文錢)也沒有；以後向人借錢發殯出去了，到墳上，我就在那兒不回去了。

那麼在我沒到墳上之前，我和旁人透露過我要守孝這個意思沒有？沒有！我和誰也不宣傳，除自己而外，沒有任何人知道我有這個意思；就是親戚、朋友、自己兄弟姊妹，沒有一個人知道的。為什麼呢？我做事要往真了做，我不需要滿街打鑼打鼓去宣傳的。

Chapter 4: Living in a Benevolent Neighborhood

When my mother passed away, however, I did not cry. What was the reason? I felt that I had already fulfilled my responsibilities as best as I could. My mother was paralyzed for more than half a year and it fell to me, as a son, to look after her needs such as when she relieved herself or whenever her body had to be turned over. As the body of a sick, elderly person is bound to give off an unpleasant odor, did I perform my caregiver duties very reluctantly? Not at all! I cared for my mother with all my heart and all my might. After she passed away, I did not have a single penny. Subsequently, I borrowed some money to arrange for the funeral and then stayed on beside her grave without returning home.

Now, did I disclose to anybody beforehand my intention to keep vigil by my mother's graveside? No! I did not inform anyone about it. Apart from me, no one knew my intention. My relatives, friends and even my own brothers and sisters – not a single soul was aware. Why? Everything that I do is with a genuine heart. There is no necessity for me to beat gongs and drums and announce to the whole world.

(十八) 子曰：「事父母幾諫。見志不從，又敬不違，勞而不怨。」

【上人講解】

「子曰」，「事父母幾諫」：事，就是侍奉。這個「幾」，就是委曲婉轉地，很細心地，很謹慎地。不是冒冒失失：「哎！你這樣不行的！」不是這麼粗言暴語的，是很那麼柔和地來諫勸父母。這個「諫」，就是父母有了什麼不合禮，不合法，不合乎人情道理；好像他對人對不住，或者不講道理，或者想占人的便宜，你可以委曲婉轉說。

譬如他願意占小便宜，你就說：「我們家庭不是很困難，就是困難，我們也不要貪這個小便宜，我們要自己有志氣。你放心！等我長大了，我來用我的全副能力賺錢養你們。你不要現在弄得大家看不起啊！」這麼好好地諫勸。幾，就是很小心的；他不會傷害父母的自尊心，這個事情還說得能感動他，這叫「幾諫」。

「見志不從」：志，就是心志。那麼雖然你盡到心了，你見到他的心裡頭不為你的言語或者方法所感動。「又敬不違」：可是這個時候，你不能發脾氣說：「喔！我對你是好意，你怎麼這個也不聽我的？」就像又怪罪父母了。所以說還是一樣恭敬父母——不是慈悲父母，你要注意這一點。還要恭恭敬敬的，那麼畢恭畢敬，克誠克懇的樣子，能用一種誠懇；所謂「孝感動天」，古人孝感動天，要用一種感化力，而不是就違背了：「哎！好了！你這個老傢伙真是不近人情，我不理你了！我逃之夭夭！」不是這樣的。

「勞而不怨」：勞，就是辛苦。就是怎麼樣辛苦，也不怨恨父母。其實我那麼講，我看道理看得是和你們有多少不同的；父母是不是對自己真有好處呢？沒有什麼好處。說：「這不是矛盾嗎？」是矛盾的，這個世界就是一個「矛盾論」，要互相矛盾的，那麼這叫要「以德報怨」。

☞待續

(18) The Master said, “When serving your parents, try to remonstrate with them in a tactful manner. If it is obvious that they are unwilling to follow your advice, you should still maintain a respectful attitude instead of being defiant. Make every effort to accord with their wishes and avoid harboring any resentment.”

【Venerable Master's Commentary】

The Master said, “When serving your parents, try to remonstrate with them in a tactful manner.” The character ‘事’ (shì) means ‘to wait upon’ or ‘serve’. ‘幾’ (jǐ) means ‘tactful’, ‘attentive’ and ‘cautious’. Do not criticize your parents rashly by saying: “Hey! What you are doing is wrong!” Instead of being so rough and crude, you should use a soft and gentle approach to remonstrate with them. The character ‘諫’ (jiàn) applies to situations where one’s parents have behaved discourteously, committed something unlawful or acted unreasonably. Let’s say they have done a disservice to someone, have been unreasonable, or have tried to take advantage of others, you may point it out to them in an indirect and tactful way.

For example, if your parents are fond of going after petty gains, you can tell them: “Our family is not in difficult circumstances. Even if we are, we should not be greedy for these petty advantages. We should cherish high aspirations. Don’t worry! When I grow up, I will make full use of my ability to earn money to support you. Don’t do anything to make people look down on us now!” This is the proper way to remonstrate with them. ‘幾’ means ‘carefully’ or ‘subtly’. If you can convince your parents of a certain course of action without hurting their self-esteem, that is called ‘幾諫’.

If it is obvious that they are unwilling to follow your advice. ‘志’ (zhì) refers to a person’s will. Now, you may have tried your best but you then realize that your parents’ minds are not moved by your words or methods. **You should still maintain a respectful attitude instead of being defiant.** At this moment, however, you should not lose your temper and say: “Oh! I’m treating you with all good intention. Why won’t you listen to me?” You appear to be putting the blame on your parents. No matter what, you should remain respectful towards them. If your parents are not the kind and compassionate type, all the more you have to take note of this point. You still have to be extremely respectful towards them and treat them with utmost sincerity. As the saying goes, “Filiality moves the heavens!” The filial respect shown by people in ancient times can move the heavens. You have to use your persuasive powers to convince them instead of turning your back on them by saying: “Hey, that’s it! You are a most unreasonable old fellow. I’m not going to bother about you anymore! I’m getting out of here!” That is not the way.

Make every effort to accord with their wishes and avoid harboring any resentment. ‘勞’ (láo) means ‘to do something hard or laborious’. Regardless of how hard or troublesome it is, you should not have a grudge against your parents. Now, having said that, the way I regard these principles is quite different from all of you. Do our parents really benefit us? Not at all! You may ask, “Isn’t that a contradiction?” Indeed, it is a contradiction. As this world is a “Theory of Contradictions” in itself, things have to contradict each other. In this case, it is called “requiting ingratitude with kindness”.

☞To be continued