

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

【公冶長第五】

Chapter 5: Gongye Chang

(二十四) 子曰：「孰謂微生高直？或乞醯焉，乞諸其鄰而與之。」

(24) The Master said, “Who says Weisheng Gao is straightforward? When someone asked him for vinegar, he obtained some from his neighbor and gave it to the person.”

【上人講解】

今天這兩段《論語》（第五篇二十四、二十五章），對修道的人是特別重要的。我們若能把這兩段《論語》時時都記住，我們就能知道怎麼樣修行，這說得是很實在的。

「子曰」：孔子說。「孰謂微生高直」：誰說這個微生高是直心的？因為孔子批評他，有的人就會這樣想：一定是大家讚歎這個微生高，孔子妒忌，所以來給他下批評。不是的！孔子

【Venerable Master's Instructional Talk】

The two passages of the *Analects* (No.24 and No.25 of Chapter 5) that we are studying today are especially important to cultivators. If we are able to remember these two passages at all times, then we will know how to cultivate. They offer some very practical advice.

The Master said. Confucius said this. **Who says Weisheng Gao is straightforward?** Who says that Weisheng Gao has a direct mind? This criticism may lead some people to assume: “Confucius must have been jealous of Weisheng Gao because everyone was singing his praises. Therefore, he decided to criticize him.” No, that is not the case! Confucius could not possibly be jealous of a person just because everyone spoke highly of him. He was just worried that the public might be misled by individuals who tried to gain fame through

不會因為人家讚歎別人，他就忌妒別人。孔子只是怕被欺世盜名這樣的人混淆視聽，因為人不知道什麼是真的、什麼是假的了，所以說一點點真話，舉出這麼一個小的譬喻來。

「或乞醯焉」：醯，讀「西(xī)」，就是醋。有人向他要醋。這麼一點小事，你有就說有，沒有就說沒有。「乞諸其鄰而與之」：他到鄰家去，再去另外要醋來給這個人。或者他沒有醋，他不明白講，到鄰家去再另外要一點來給人；或者他自己的醋是好一點的，他捨不得，到鄰家再另外去要一點不好的送給人；或者他自己是不好的醋，怕人家吃了中毒生病，所以他到鄰家去找一點好的。就是這幾種心，哪種心理也講不通的。為什麼呢？他就不直了嘛！你有就說有，沒有就說沒有，何必又轉彎抹角的？這叫「打轉轉」，也就是討好人，這是不直了；若是直的人，他不會這樣子。

相信不止這樣子，當時這個微生高可能就是欺世盜名的一個大陰謀家、偽君子。孔子不願意大家這麼被他欺騙，所以就提出這麼一個小問題來說一說，這使我們都知道有這個理論。總而言之，直的人不要轉彎，轉彎就不是直的。那麼他到別人家去要醋，回來送給人；這就不直了，這轉彎兒了。這一點，我們大家知道就好了！我們修道的人就不要轉彎兒，不要在那兒東扯西拉的。你說這一點——用心機多苦啊！

deception. As most people could not differentiate the true from the false, he wanted to tell them a little bit of truth by giving this simple analogy.

When someone asked him for vinegar. The character ‘醯’ is pronounced as ‘xī’ and means ‘vinegar’. Someone came to ask Weisheng Gao for some vinegar. This is a very small matter and you can just say whether you have any to spare or not. Instead, he obtained some from his neighbor and gave it to the person. Weisheng Gao went to his neighbor’s house and asked for some vinegar to give that person. He did this probably because he did not want to state outright that he did not have any vinegar himself. It could also be because his vinegar was of a better quality than his neighbor’s and he was reluctant to give any away; or that his vinegar was inferior to his neighbor’s and he was afraid it might cause food poisoning. These are a few ways to explain his thinking but, no matter what the reason is, it does not make any sense. Why? He was not being straightforward at all! Whether you have any vinegar or not, just be frank about it. Why beat about the bush? This is called ‘going round in circles’. By ingratiating oneself with others in this way, one is acting in a crooked manner. A person with a forthright character never behaves like that.

I believe there is more to it than this. At that time, this Weisheng Gao was probably a great schemer or hypocrite who made a name for himself by deceiving others. Confucius did not want people to be cheated by him and that was why he brought up this trifling matter for discussion. We are now aware of the underlying principle. In short, a straightforward person must not speak or do things in a roundabout way; doing so is being crooked. Weisheng Gao went to his neighbor’s house to ask for some vinegar and then came home and gave it to the visitor as if it was his own. Such action is not straight and direct; it is full of twists and turns. Therefore, it would serve us well to understand this point! We cultivators must be honest and forthright and not say or do irrelevant things. Think about it: A scheming mind really gives one a lot of suffering.

☯待續

☯To be continued