



孝丐武訓

Filial Beggar Wu Xun

宣化上人講述於一九八七年一月九日

晨珪譯組 英譯

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武訓清末山東堂邑人，幼年喪父，家貧，無隔宿糧。乞食奉母，人稱孝丐。

年長，日乞食，夜績麻，少有積蓄。不娶妻，不煙酒。如有求者，慷慨幫助。因不識字，受人所騙。故立志興學，使失學兒童有讀書之機會。

節衣縮食，籌備興學基金，蒼天不負有志者，終於達成願望，成立義學。學生若有犯過者，代為悔過，跪而不起。以誠感動教師認真教導，學生因之而努力學習。

後發展四所義學，獲國人好評，但依然故我。捨己為人之精神，值得效法。乞丐興學一段佳話，傳流後世。

做人根本的道理，就是孝、悌、忠、信、禮、義、廉、恥。在中國，這種禮教維持幾千年的國家民族精神，沒有滅亡。如果你不懂得孝悌、忠信、禮義、廉恥，雖然是活著也等於行屍走肉一樣，也等於祇會吃飯、穿衣服、睡覺，和一個木偶一樣。古來讀書的人

Wu Xun was born in the county of Tangyi, Shandong province, at the end of the Qing Dynasty. His father passed away when he was young, so it was hard for his family to survive. They rarely had anything for the next day, and he had to beg for food to feed his mother, so he was called the Filial Beggar.

When he was older, he begged for food during the day, and weaved clothes made of hemp at night. As time went on, he managed to accumulate a small amount of savings, and decided that he would not marry, smoke, or drink; instead, he generously donated his savings to anyone in need who asked. However, because he was illiterate, some people swindled him out of his money. Therefore, he vowed to establish schools so that poor children would have a chance to receive an education.

He was very frugal so he could save money for building a school. "Heaven will reward those who persevere." After some time, he finally reached his goal of setting up a free school. Whenever a student violated a rule, Wu Xun would kneel for a long time to repent on the student's behalf, instead of punishing the student. His sincerity influenced the teachers to take their responsibilities seriously and students studied very hard.

Later, he expanded to a total of four free schools, receiving high praise from the common people. Even then, he remained frugal in his spending and was generous in his charity. His spirit of sacrifice is a great example from which everyone should learn. This highly praised story about a beggar building schools has been passed down for future generations.

Commentary:

The fundamental principles of being a human are (the Eight Virtues

要明白道理，就叫「明理」；明是明白，理是理論。現在讀書的人要「名利」；名譽的名，利益的利。所以古來的人和現在的人，讀書的宗旨是不同的。古人若不明理，就吃不下飯、睡不著覺，念茲在茲的要明白這個道理。現在的人沒有錢就睡不著覺，沒有好衣服穿也睡不著覺，沒有好房子住也睡不著覺。

在中國，人很多，份子不齊，現在我們提出一個要飯的中國人來講一講。在社會上一般人來看這個要飯的人，是最低賤，可是他所行所做是最高尚的，為什麼呢？他能知道教育之重要，所謂「得天下英才而教育之，三樂也」，這是君子的三樂。他因為沒有受過教育，而能注重教育，這是很難得的。這位沒有受過教育，一個字也不認識，而來辦教育的，是什麼地方人呢？他是山東堂邑人。堂邑有很多不讀書的人，山東雖然出聖人，可是「剩」下的人，剩下的人也不少——就是不為社會所重視的人，為什麼叫他「剩下」的人？因為他祇知道要飯，不為社會所重視。

武訓幼年喪父，他母親大約也老病龍鍾，不能做什麼事，於是武訓在小的時候，就去各處討飯養他的母親。中國有句俗話：「要了飯三年，皇帝也不要做了」，既然皇帝都不願意做，自然總統、主席也不願意做。那他要什麼呢？他存了一點錢想放高利貸，譬如他借給別人一千元，對方答應在秋天還給他一千五或二千元，人家給他寫的收據上是二十元，到要錢的時候，呀！不單沒有得到高利貸，連本都丟了。

☞待續

of) filiality, brotherhood, loyalty, trustworthiness, propriety, righteousness, incorruptibility, and moderation, which became the code of ethics and virtue that sustained and nourished the Chinese nation for thousands of years, preventing it from perishing. If you don't practice the Eight Virtues, then even though you are alive, you are just like a walking dead person who only knows how to eat, dress, and sleep, simply going through the motions of living. In ancient times, those who were educated sought to understand and act upon the principles of being a good person, i.e., 明理 "míng lǐ"—"míng" here means "understand", and "lǐ" means "principle." Nowadays, most educated people strive for fame and profit, i.e. 名利 "míng lì"—"míng" here means "fame", and "lì" means "profit." In comparison, ancient and modern people's purpose of education differs. In the old times, if people didn't understand the principles underpinning moral standards, they could neither eat nor sleep till they understood. Nowadays, people cannot sleep if they do not have enough money, fancy clothes, or luxurious homes.

In China, there is a large, economically diverse population. Now, let us talk about this story of a beggar for example. In the view as a whole, the beggar belongs to the lowest level. However, this beggar's actions are the most noble. Why is this? It is because he understood the importance of education for everyone. There is an ancient Chinese saying, "Receiving and educating young talent is the one of the three most joyful things in life," which is one of the three most delightful things that a 君子 "jūn zǐ" (a virtuous person) has in life. It is rare to see a situation in which a beggar receives no education, yet places such an emphasis on it. Who was this illiterate beggar without any education, who dedicated his life to educating others? Wu Xun was born in Tangyi county of Shandong province. Even though there was a sage born in this province, there were still many "left-over" people who were forsaken by society. Why? Take the example of Wu Xun, who was one of them. He was born poor, and all he could do to make a living was beg. Thus, he was neglected and not taken seriously.

Wu Xun lost his father when he was very young, and his mother was so sick that she appeared very old and had a hard time getting around on her own. So Wu Xun became a beggar to take care of his mother. There is an old saying, "Become a beggar for three years, and you wouldn't want to be an emperor anymore." If you don't want to become an emperor, then you wouldn't want to be a president or a chairman either. So what did he do? He saved money to lend it at high interest rates. For example, he would lend someone \$1000 in the spring and expected to be paid \$1500 or \$2000 back for the loan in the fall. However, one of his customers tricked him by writing that he owed only \$20 instead of \$2000. When Wu Xun went to collect his money, not only did he lose the interest, but he also lost all his principal.

☞To be continued