

Confucius on Evil

prepared by
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All references to “**evil**” (in **bold** font) from **The Analects of Confucius**, translation by James Legge. This version is available for free download from Project Gutenberg.

BOOK XII

CHAP. XXI.

1. Fan Ch'ih rambling with the Master under the trees about the rain altars, said, 'I venture to ask how to exalt virtue, to correct cherished **evil**, and to discover delusions.'
2. The Master said, 'Truly a good question!
3. 'If doing what is to be done be made the first business, and success a secondary consideration;-- is not this the way to exalt virtue? To assail one's own wickedness and not assail that of others;-- is not this the way to correct cherished **evil**? For a morning's anger to disregard one's own life, and involve that of his parents;-- is not this a case of delusion?'

BOOK XV

CHAP. XXIV.

1. The Master said, 'In my dealings with men, whose **evil** do I blame, whose goodness do I praise, beyond what is proper? If I do sometimes exceed in praise, there must be ground for it in my examination of the individual.
2. 'This people supplied the ground why the three dynasties pursued the path of straightforwardness.'

BOOK XVI

CHAP. XI.

1. Confucius said, 'Contemplating good, and pursuing it, as if they could not reach it; contemplating **evil**, and shrinking from it, as they would from thrusting the hand into boiling water:-- I have seen such men, as I have heard such words.
2. 'Living in retirement to study their aims, and practicing righteousness to carry out their principles:-- I have heard these words, but I have not seen such men.'

BOOK XVII

CHAP. VII.

1. Pi Hsi inviting him to visit him, the Master was inclined to go.
2. Tsze-lu said, 'Master, formerly I have heard you say, "When a man in his own person is guilty of doing **evil**, a superior man will not associate with him." Pi Hsi is in rebellion, holding possession of Chung-mau; if you go to him, what shall be said?'
3. The Master said, 'Yes, I did use these words. But is it not said, that, if a thing be really hard, it may be ground without being made thin? Is it not said, that, if a thing be really white, it may be steeped in a dark fluid without being made black?'
4. 'Am I a bitter gourd! How can I be hung up out of the way of being eaten?'

BOOK XVII
CHAP. XXIV.

1. Tsze-kung said, 'Has the superior man his hatreds also?' The Master said, 'He has his hatreds. He hates those who proclaim the **evil** of others. He hates the man who, being in a low station, slanders his superiors. He hates those who have valor merely, and are unobservant of propriety. He hates those who are forward and determined, and, at the same time, of contracted understanding.'

2. The Master then inquired, 'Ts'ze, have you also your hatreds?' Tsze-kung replied, 'I hate those who pry out matters, and ascribe the knowledge to their wisdom. I hate those who are only not modest, and think that they are valorous. I hate those who make known secrets, and think that they are straightforward.'

BOOK XIX
CHAP. XX.

Tsze-kung said, 'Chau's wickedness was not so great as that name implies. Therefore, the superior man hates to dwell in a low-lying situation, where all the **evil** of the world will flow in upon him.'