

Traditional Chinese Culture: Be Modest and Altruistic

December 11, 2005

(minghui.org)

Feng Yi, also known as Feng Gongsun, was from Fucheng County of Henan Province (Today's Baofeng County, Henan Province.) He was the trusted advisor of Emperor Liu Xiu and one of the key people responsible for the founding of the Eastern Han Dynasty. He held the rank of General of Conquering the West, and was given the title of Duke of Yangxia. He was a very modest person and never boasted about his accomplishments.

If Feng Yi ran into other high-ranking military officers on the road, he would always move to the side of the road and let them pass. In the early days of the military campaign to establish the Eastern Han Dynasty, when the troops marched to a place and set up camp for the night, the high-ranking military officers always got together and boasted about their military achievements to the others. Feng Yi always sat against a big tree and kept silent. Therefore, everyone in the army called him the "Big Tree General." After conquering Han Dan, a key city, when Liu Xiu was reorganizing the army, many officers and soldiers wanted to join Feng Yi's troops and follow the "Big Tree General." From that point on, Emperor Liu Xiu

treasured Feng Yi even more.

In the second year of Jianwu, Feng Yi was dispatched to the Sanfu area on an expedition to fight against the Chimei Army and Yan Cen. In the process of marching to the West, Feng Yi and his troops bestowed favors on the local people and earned the trust of the people along the way. In the Hongnong area, there were originally more than ten self-proclaimed generals. Because of Feng Yi's reputation, they all led their troops to surrender to Feng Yi.

In the summer of the sixth year of Jianwu, Kuixiao rebelled. The emperor sent several generals to put down the rebellion, but they were all defeated by the rebel forces. The emperor then sent out an imperial decree to dispatch Feng Yi and his army to fight Kuixiao. In the end, Feng Yi defeated Kuixiao's army handily. The village heads, including those in the Geng Ding area, surrendered to the Han Dynasty one after another. When Feng Yi was preparing a written statement to the Emperor about the battles, he was very modest and low-key, and did not try to show off his accomplishments at all. The Emperor rewarded him by dispatching him to Yi Qu and appointing him the prefect of Beidi.

A cultivator knows that virtue is a physical substance, and all the blessings and good fortune in one's life come from

the virtue accumulated throughout one's lives over a long period of time. There is an ancient Chinese saying, "Honor others and put down yourself. Put others before yourself." Being modest and courteous is a manifestation of preserving virtue and conducting oneself with dignity. Exactly because of that, Feng Yi was able to win the emperor's trust and was given major responsibilities. Also because of his virtue, Feng Yi was able to earn the soldiers' respect and the popular support. That is also why in traditional Chinese culture, people are taught to be modest and courteous. In today's society where the human morality is deteriorating daily, those who treasure modesty and courtesy are, in fact, even more commendable.