【中英文對照賞析】

Good and Evil Never Escape Their Due Consequences

善惡有報 絲毫不爽

公有領域



Ji Xiaolan, a famous writer in the Qing Dynasty, recorded many, stories in one of his books to illustrate that a person is responsible for his/her words and conduct, because gods know everyone's thoughts and behavior. The following are two stories from his collection.

Hypocrisy in a Past Life Leads to Poverty in the Next

There were once a man named Feng Shunan from Hejian. He was somewhat versed in literature and was also intelligent. However, he had not had much good fortune in his life. He lived in poverty and was depressed.

One day he went to a temple and prayed to the gods, asking why his life was so miserable. He had a dream that night. In his dream, someone said to him, "You should not complain about society or your misfortune. Your life is what it is because of you.

"In your past life, you used insincere words to gain a reputation as an honest and kindhearted man; you encouraged others to attempt things that you knew would be impossible so that people would thank you for your affirmation; you repeatedly found excuses for a bad person so that he would be grateful to you, although you knew his crime was unforgivable; You tried to make yourself look like the good person while directing others' resentment toward someone else. you were crafty and wicked!

"You avoided at all cost anything that might have affected your personal interests. When you could have saved people's lives with little effort, you watched from the sidelines and avoided any trouble. You appeared to be friendly, but, in fact, you were distant; you appeared to care for others, while, in fact, you were indifferent.

"When a person makes a mistake, he can make up for it by doing good deeds. But if a person's heart is wicked, that is out of line with the law of heaven. Think about it. Isn't it fitting that you suffer in this lifetime?"

Feng deeply regretted his past conduct after hearing this, but he fell ill and died not long afterward.

A Teacher Must Instill Morality and Good Character

There once was a person who was a very talented writer, but he kept failing the exam to apply for a government job.

One day he was sick and had a dream that he was in the underworld. He saw someone he knew and asked if he was going to die from his illness. The person said, "Your life will not end, but you are about to lose your livelihood. I am afraid you will end up here very soon."

The person said, "I made a living as a teacher. I have not done anything against the law of heaven or rules of society. Why am I going to lose my livelihood?"

"It is precisely because you made a living by teaching. You are a teacher, yet you failed to teach children good morals or build their character. You made money, but didn't do the work. That is the same as stealing or being wasteful, so you have less good fortune.

"As a teacher, you are entrusted with teaching children virtue and guiding them to be kind and upright. The parents paid you, but you didn't teach their children what you should have. People like you are punished severely: those who were supposed to be high-ranking officials will lose their positions; those who were not officials will lose their livelihood.

"You see many learned scholars in the world, but some are destitute and some die young. When this happens, people complain that the law of heaven is not fair, while, in fact, it was due to their own wrongdoing."

幾千年來，中國人都相信因果報應之說，相信冥冥之中有天理，善惡有報終有時。

清代大學士紀曉嵐在他的〈閱微草堂筆記〉一書中，記錄了其平時所見所聞的很多奇異之事，詳述因果輪迴的一些事例警示後人，以證實因果報應，絲毫不差。其實人的所作所為、所思所想都在神明的監察之中，每個人都要為他自己的言行負責。我們今天就來看看其中的幾個小故事。

河間府有個叫馮樹柟的人，粗通文墨，人也很聰明，但他流落在京城十幾年，一直不得志。每次遇到機緣，最後總是落空。生活窮困潦倒，心理壓抑苦悶。

一天，他到廟裡祈求神明告知自己為甚麼是這樣的命運。當天夜裡，夢見有人對他說：「你不要怨恨世道的艱難、個人的際遇。其實，你這一生的命運全是你自己造成的，怨恨又有甚麼用？你上輩子喜歡以虛偽的言詞博得忠厚長者的好名聲。遇有難為之事，你明知事情辦不成，卻極力慫恿他人去做，以使人感謝你的肯定。遇有惡人犯法，你明知他罪不可恕，卻再三為其辯解，以獲得對你的感激。你的作為是為了充好人，而把怨恨歸結到別人身上。你的機巧奸詐也太過分了！何況做這些事，你都使自己置身事外，無論功過，都由他人去承當。凡是稍觸及你的利益，就躲閃唯恐不及。只需舉手之勞便能救人於水火之事，你卻怕麻煩而袖手旁觀。由此看來，別人對你看似親近，實為疏遠；形似關切，實為冷漠，就是理所當然了。一個人如果偶然做錯了事，可以用其他的善行來補償。如果一個人的心術壞了，那便是為天理、律例所不容。你自己想想，今世這樣的命運應該不應該？」馮樹柟聽後非常後悔，不久就病死了。

鄞縣有位書生很有文才，但在仕途上卻屢遭挫折，沒考上功名。後來這位書生得了一場大病，病中恍惚間，夢見自己來到一處官衙。根據情形，他感覺這可能是冥司。這時對面走來一位官服打扮的人，書生一看，卻是一位老相識，便急忙向他打聽，自己的這場病，是不是很快就會死？這位冥官說：「你的壽數未盡，但是祿數盡了，恐怕不久就要到這兒來了。」書生說：「我這輩子，全靠設館教書餬口，沒幹過傷天害理的事，怎麼祿數倒先盡了？」冥官嘆息道：「正因你是吃教書這碗飯的，卻對孩子們的品德性格放任不管。冥司認為，無功受祿就等於偷盜或浪費糧食，必須扣除應得的俸祿來補償。所以你壽命未盡而祿數先盡。為人師長者，位居君、親、師之中，享有崇高的榮譽，要傳授品德、學業，導人以善。你收取人家學費，卻誤人子弟，理應受到最嚴厲的譴責。有官祿的，就要削減官祿。沒有官祿的，就得消減食祿。一絲一毫都計較的很分明。世人往往看到一些飽學之士或通儒大家，有的生活窮困，有的年少夭折，便抱怨天道不公平。可哪裡知道，這些人都是自誤生平，才落得這地步啊。」

從這兩個故事來看，一個人的內心深處哪怕是很微小的不正之念，神明都能窺見的一清二楚。正如古語所說：「舉頭三尺有神明。」看古代的因果故事，再拿現代發生的事來對比，甚至是自己身邊的事，就會發現，因果報應的規律是不管你相不相信它，它都是客觀存在的，都是會對你起作用的。因此，正視因果法則，遵循天理而多行善舉，才是做人最重要的，才會有好的際遇和未來。

（轉自明慧網）

Rewarded for Honesty and Willingness to Change

晏嬰薦人

Yan Ying, prime minister of the State of Qi, valued honesty and constantly sought to improve his own character.

The coachman's wife watched through a crack in the door and saw that her husband commanded the carriage drawn by four horses with an air of complacency and pretentiousness.

After the coachman return-ed home, his wife asked for a divorce. The coachman asked why.

She told him, "Sir Yan is quite a bit shorter than you are. As the prime minister of the Qi State, he is well known among leaders of all the states. This morning I noticed how thoughtful and visionary he was, yet he always appeared modest and humble. You, his coachman are much taller, just serving as a coachman. Yet, you have carried yourself with such smug self-importance.That's why I want to leave you."

The coachman took her words seriously and became more humble. Yan noticed this and asked him how come he had changed. The coachman told him what his wife had said.

For his honesty and willingness to change his behavior, Yan recommended him for appointment as a dafu, a senior official of the State of Qi.

Source: The Records of the Grand Historian

晏嬰是齊國（約西元前1046年成立）的丞相。他崇尚誠實且不斷提升自身品格。

一天早晨，晏嬰出門的時候，他的馬車伕之妻從門縫裡看她的丈夫。她的丈夫作為相國的馬車伕，擁著大蓋，趕著駟馬，意氣揚揚，一副趾高氣揚、自命不凡的樣子，很是自得。

馬車伕回來以後，他的妻子請求離去。馬車伕問其中的緣故。妻子說：「晏子身高不滿六尺，而身為齊國的相國，名聲顯於諸侯。今天我看到他出門的時候，顯得志向遠大，深謀遠慮，卻總是很謙虛。你身高八尺，是為別人趕車的，然而你卻志得意滿，我是因為這個想離去。」

馬車伕聽了妻子的話，從此以後，馬車伕也變得很謙遜。晏子注意到這一點，感到奇怪，於是問他為何變化如此之大，馬車伕以實相對。晏子就推薦馬車伕為大夫。

因為他誠實正直，並且願意改過自新，晏子便推薦他為朝廷官員。

（《史記》）（轉自明慧網）

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