中英文對照賞析

Ancient Times: Tales of Karmic Retribution

神秘人說因果

Corrupt Official Loses All His Wealth

In ancient times, an official named Wang lived in what is today's Hebei Province. He misused the law to line his own pockets instead of upholding justice. Each time he amassed ill-gotten gains, circumstances arose to wipe them out.

One night, a servant boy who practiced Taoism was in the local temple, and he overheard a discussion between two officials in the netherworld. "He had a sizable income this year," one said. "How will we take away his earnings?"

"Cuiyun is more than enough. No big deal," replied the other.

The servant boy often saw or heard ghosts in the temple, and he was not afraid. However, he wondered whose income was to be taken away, and who was Cuiyun?

A prostitute named Cuiyun soon arrived in their local area. Wang could not control his lust and spent much of his savings indulging himself with the prostitute. He also developed skin lesions, which cost him what money had left.

When he died, there was not enough left to pay for a coffin.

We Do Not Always See the Connection

During the reign of Yongzheng (1722 – 1735 AD) in the Qing Dynasty, a gentleman named Su Dounan ran into a friend at a pub by the Baigou River. The friend kept drinking and whining, "Heavenly principles no longer exist," he said. "No one gets rewarded for good deeds, nor does anyone suffer retribution for evil-doing."

A man on a horse suddenly rode up and walked into the pub . He went straight to Su's friend and said, "Are you complaining that retribution doesn't happen? Think about it: One who indulges in lust ends up with sexually transmitted diseases. A gambler loses his shirt, and doesn't a robber end up being caught? And doesn't a murderer have to pay for his crime with his own life? These are examples of karmic retribution.

"When it comes to lust, some have more desires, while others have less," he added. "Also, some gamblers cheat. Among gangs of robbers, there are bosses and accomplices. And when it comes to murder, there are premeditated acts and accidental killings.

"Retribution is meted out to varying degrees, depending on the offense. Even when one incurs retribution, some people have merits to offset their faults, and sometimes cause and effect is not apparent.

"Some people won't meet with retribution until the good fortune they earned in other situations runs out. All this is quite mysterious, intricate, and precise.

"You're complaining about the uncertainty of heavenly principles based on your own narrow perspective, which puts you in a precarious position. Now let us talk about you.

"You were predestined to rise to a higher rank in the imperial government. Yet, because you schemed to gain favor with whoever was in power, you never reached that position. You sabotaged your own predestined status because you did not meet the requirements of that level in the eyes of the divine."

The mysterious person walked closer to Su's friend and talked into his ear for quite a while. Then the stranger asked so that all could hear, "These things that you did, you've forgotten them all?"

Beads of sweat trickled down the friend's face. He murmured, "How do you know all about me?"

The mysterious person smiled, "Whatever one does is known to all divine beings."

With that, he walked out, mounted his horse, and disappeared as swiftly as he had appeared.

Peace of Mind after a Dream

A man named Cui lost his lawsuit against a rich and powerful family. He lost even though he had sufficient evidence showing that he had been wronged. He was discouraged.

That night, his deceased father appeared in a dream and told him, "One can cheat man, but not the divine. The more unfairly one is treated during one's lifetime, the more he is repaid on the other side. Those who gloat over the misfortunes of their victims later tremble when they are tried by divine law. There is a mirror that reflects all their past crimes. I'm the one who serves tea in the underworld. The judge has already recorded the wrongs done to you in this case."

Cui's anger dissipated, and he never spoke another word about the injustices he suffered.

巧取得惡報

獻縣官吏王某，善於寫刑訟，很會巧取別人的錢。然而每次有金錢積累，必然有一意外事耗去。城隍廟裡一個道童晚上聽到兩個鬼吏拿著官簿對算。一個說：「他今年得的錢很多，應當用甚麼法銷掉這些錢？」正沉思的時候，另一個說：「一個翠雲足矣，不用更麻煩了。」這個廟常常遇鬼，道童習以為常，也不害怕，只是不知翠雲是誰，也不知這兩個鬼吏在為誰銷算。過了不久，有一個妓女翠雲來到獻縣，王某非常寵愛她，在翠雲那兒花費了有八、九成積蓄，又染上了惡瘡，求醫問藥，等到痊癒，所積蓄的已經蕩然無存。有人計算他平生巧取的，能算出來的就有三、四萬金。後王某突然發狂暴死，竟然沒有買棺材的錢。（《閱微草堂筆記》）

神秘人說因果

清朝雍正年間，蘇斗南先生在白溝河邊的酒店裡，見到一個朋友。這個朋友一邊喝酒，一邊發牢騷，講甚麼「天理無存，善惡無報」的話。

忽然，有一個騎馬而過的神秘人物進來，對他說：「你埋怨世間因果不兌現？請想：好色之徒，必然得病；嗜賭之徒，必然輸貧；搶劫之徒，必然被抓；殺人凶手，必然抵命；這些都是因果報應。當然，同是好色，稟性有強弱之分；同是好賭，手段有高下之別；同是搶劫，有首惡與脅從之差；同是殺人，有故意與誤殺之分。那他們的報應，自然應該各有區別。即使報應，有的是功過互抵，有的是以明顯的方式得報，有的是以隱晦的方式得報。有的人，福報未盡，須待他日再

公有領域



惡報。勢不能齊，理宜別論。非常玄奧精微！你依目前所見，而怨天道不明。說話太不謹慎了。再就你本人來講，你的命中，應做到七品官。因工於心計，趨炎附勢，上天削為八品。你從九品升為八品時，心中暗喜，自以為得計。殊不知：是你的心性不夠，神將你從七品給削降下來了。」

接著，那位神秘人物，又走近那個朋友的身旁，低聲耳語了好一會兒，再大聲地說：「你的這些事，全忘了嗎？」那個朋友聽後，嚇得滿身是汗，問道：「我這些隱私，你怎麼都知道啊？」那位神秘人物笑著說：「人之所為，神靈盡曉。豈獨我知！」說完話，出門上馬，轉眼就不見了。善惡到頭終有報，因果不虛！（《閱微草堂筆記》）

夢父心得平

鄉里有個人崔某，和豪強打官司，理在他一方卻輸了。悲憤不平，幾乎想死。晚上夢見他死去的父親告訴他：「騙得了人，騙不了神。人有同黨，神卻沒有。人間的冤屈越苦，在地下的伸冤越舒暢。今日那些縱橫得意的，都是十多年後，業鏡臺前恐懼得發抖受審的。我在陰間做茶吏，見到判司注籍了，你還生甚麼氣呢！」崔某從此怨恨悲憤都沒了，不再多說一句話。（摘錄自《閱微草堂筆記》）（轉自明慧網）

A Qing Dynasty Official's Sacrifice Earns Him Good Fortune

賣掉家產代替百姓交賦稅 福及子孫

A man named Liu Qi lived in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1912). When he was the governor of Ningqiang Region, Shaanxi Province, he sold his own property to pay taxes for his citizens, who were in debt due to a famine. His generous sacrifice earned the respect and trust of his citizens. As a result of his kindness, his family was rewarded with good fortune.

During a major famine in Shaanxi Province in 1699, Liu Qi's region was hit the worst. His people were starving, but there was no grain left in the government stores. Transportation to other regions was difficult, since they were located in a big mountain range. Liu Qi asked the emperor to allow him to borrow grain from neighboring regions, and he promised his citizens that anyone who brought one bucket of grain back would be rewarded with 30% of their haul. With that incentive, his people brought back over three thousand loads of grain in ten days.

Liu Qi was then sent to help Yang County, where he used the same method to encourage people to collect grain. He told the Yang County magistrate, "We borrowed the grain from the government stores, so if our citizens can't pay back their debts, we have to help them."

Liu Qi quit his post in 1722 to return to his hometown to mourn his mother's death. However, since he did not have enough money to pay for his citizens' debts as he had promised, he sold his property and later asked his brother to do the same, in order to collect enough money to help his citizens to pay the taxes they owed.

Liu Qi later was promoted to be the Jiangxi provincial judge and the governor of Sichuan Province.

Through his selfless actions, he was remembered as one of the most honest and trustworthy high-ranking government officials of the Qing Dynasty.

His actions also earned him and his family good fortune. His son Liu Tongxun, grandson Liu Yong, and great grandson Liu Huanzhi all became high-ranking government ministers.

劉棨，在康熙三十四年，擔任湖南長沙縣令，以廉明著稱。

康熙三十七年，劉棨升任陝西寧羌知州。關中發生大飢荒，漢南尤其厲害。州裡沒有儲糧，地處群山中，運輸十分艱難。劉棨請求朝廷允許向鄰邑的官倉借貸糧食，與百姓約定：能揹負一斗糧食達到本地的，給予三升糧食，不到十天，運輸了三千石糧食。封疆大吏按照他的辦法賑濟其他的縣邑，都稱讚方便。劉棨又奉命賑濟洋縣，他對洋縣的縣令說：「這些糧食是從官倉借貸來的，倘若百姓不能償還，我們兩人應當代百姓支付。」等到了秋天莊稼大豐收，洋縣的百姓互相勉勵，及時歸還借貸的糧食，不需勞煩催促、監督。

康熙四十一年，劉棨因為須為母親服喪而離任。因為要代替百姓交完賦稅，受到拖累不能成行，囑咐弟弟代替他賣掉他的家產。錢還是不夠，他的弟弟賣掉自己的財產來償還、支付。百姓聽說了，爭著交錢相助，劉棨推辭、不接受。劉棨後來當了江西按察使、四川布政使的大官。

康熙五十五年，康熙皇上詢問九卿大臣，本朝清廉耿介的，可與倫比的，有哪幾個？九卿推薦了四人，劉棨就是其中一個。

劉棨賣掉家產、代替百姓交賦稅，得了善報，子孫為官。劉棨的兒子劉統勳、孫子劉墉、曾孫劉鐶之，並稱為當時的名臣。

（轉自明慧網）

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