

Traditional Culture: Honesty, Revering Heaven and Taking Only That Which Is Yours

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(minghui.org) Gongsun Mu lived during the East Han Dynasty. When he was young, his family was very poor. He was ambitious, worked hard, and he meticulously studied *Han Poetry*, *Gongyang Spring and Autumn*, and especially the ways to foretell the future in *Hetu* and *Luoshu*. He was honest and upright in his conduct.

Gongsun Mu raised pigs. When one of his pigs was sick, Gongsun Mu asked a person to sell the pig at a fair. Gongsun Mu told the person, "If the pig can be sold, you must tell the buyer that this pig is sick, and you must sell it for a cheaper and fair price. Don't deceive people and ask for a high price."

At the market, the person did not tell the buyer that the pig was sick and the pig was sold for a very high price. After learning of the sale, Gongsun Mu hurried to the fair and looked for the buyer. He told the buyer, "This pig was actually sick, I intended to sell it for a lower price. I did not expect the person to sell you the pig at such a high price." Then he returned half of the money to the buyer.

Meanwhile, there was a rich man called Wang Zhong. He told Gongsun Mu, "You can great things if you had money. I would like to give you a million coins to start a business. What do you think?" Gongsun Mu studied *Hetu*, *Luoshu*, and other books on cultivation. He understood the laws of heaven and predestination. He said, "Your kindness is deeply appreciated! Being rich or poor is for heaven to decide. I can have it only if it is in my life. I cannot take it from you!"

Because Gongsun Mu had both virtue and wisdom, he was recommended for his "Xiao Lian"* and appointed as an officer after he passed an examination. When he was an officer, his achievement was pronounced and he was enormously popular. His five sons were all well-known for their merits. The story of "Gongsun Mu Selling a Pig" became a moral example for thousands of years and the story carries praise for the virtue of honesty and integrity.

Note:

* "Xiao Lian" was one of the criteria to select an official. Xiao means honoring and loving your parents; Lian means incorruptible. The rules of the Emperor's Court proclaimed that people who did not have the virtue of Xiao and Lian were not qualified for official positions.

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