

Sun, Moon, and Stars

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The Sun, Moon, and Stars are the celestial bodies that we all are familiar with. From the movements of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, we will be able to understand many truths of the universe. Take the Sun as an example; it rises and falls every day, even on cloudy days when we can not see it. However, as soon as the Sun rises to the top of the sky it is also the moment for it to descend. As soon as midnight passes and the Sun reaches the bottom of its declination, it starts to rise again in the morning. This phenomenon illustrates the principle of the transformation of Ying and Yang: a Ying to the extreme will transform into Yang, and a Yang to the extreme will transform into Ying.

Astronomy tells us that the rise and fall of the Sun is due to the revolution of the Earth. The Earth revolves once per day demonstrating the spirit stated in I-Ching: "Heaven does not stop progressing. Inspired by it, a noble man will never stop advancing." It is the everlasting movement that brings vitality to the Earth. If the Earth stopped revolving, then nothing could survive because one half side of the Earth would always be under the Sun and thus over heated, and the other half in the dark would be frozen to death. To sustain life on the Earth, a good balance of warmth and cold is required, that is a good balance of Ying and Yang. The balance is essential for metabolic processes in plants and animals. The continuous process brings out new elements day after day. Therefore, Ying creates Yang and Yang is born out of Ying, which arrangement sets an excellent example for us to experience life and cultivate our virtues.

Moreover, this phenomenon also gives us the following principle: whether in the competition of business or in the pursuance of material life, it is important not to go extremes. The material in this world is limited and people's desire is unlimited. Unlimited pursuit of the limited will never lead to satisfaction. Therefore, a wealthy or powerful person will invite complaints and jealousy if he or she does not share his or her success with others. The concentration of great wealth and power in one person violates the principle of balance in the Universe; therefore, the person will need to pay the price through other losses (in health, reputation, * etc) to maintain the balance.

On the other hand, a person in adversity, such as being sick, having a broken family, or losing his business, should also learn from the principle that nothing can continue forever and the adversity will soon be over. How should one get out of a miserable state as soon as possible? The key is to keep a virtuous mind, conduct virtuous acts, not complain, and be considerate to others.

Using the Sun, Moon, and Earth as a metaphor, the Sun represents our True Self or Nature. It is a symbol of unselfishness, compassion, and brightness. It is what we call the nature at the origin of human beings. The Moon represents others and it is a mirror to understand one's own self. The Earth represents karma and it is the False Self relative to the True Self. We all know that the Moon does not radiate and it simply reflects the light coming from the Sun. We can see a beautiful full Moon at night when the Sun is not blocked by the Earth. This tells us that when our True Self is not covered by our unhealthy desires we can observe good intention in others just as bright and beautiful as the full Moon in the sky. On the other hand, when the False Self takes control, as when the Earth blocks the light of the Sun, we will see flaws in others just as we see the imperfect shapes of a new Moon.

This phenomenon tells us that what we have seen in others is actually caused by our own attitude (sometimes the attitudes were inherited from previous lives). Therefore, it is our own responsibility to improve the situation. If we understand this, then we will know how to deal with various situations in this world.

From another perspective, when one side of the Earth is not in sunlight, it implies that the other side of the Earth is under the Sun. Therefore, when we face adversity or are in pain, we should not forget that our back is facing the opposite. That is why there is a saying: "A loss is a gain; a gain is also a loss." If we fully understand this and do not focus too much on gain and loss since they are two-sides of a single entity, then we will feel ease everywhere. If we can always be ready to sacrifice ourselves to benefit others, contribute to society, bring light and warmth to others, then we will be able to uncover the True Self and become the Sun that is always bright and warm. That is, we will be able to create happiness and bring it to others.

If you disagree with the principle illustrated by this analogy, please spend more time observing the movement of the Sun, Moon, and Stars. The Sun, Moon, and Stars are always there to teach us. At the same time, one might also reflect on the attitude that one can be as bright and unselfish as the Sun. Finally, one can contemplate what Lao Tze said in Tao Te Ching: "Humans emulate the Earth; The Earth emulates Heaven; Heaven emulates the Tao; the Tao emulates Nature"; by doing so, one will be able to experience more about what is described here.

