



六國封榮——

蘇秦 (續)

Receiving High Glory in Leading the Six States— Su Qin

(continued)

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這個人可能是走極端的人，想什麼法子呢？他用錐子往自己的大腿上扎下去，比拉頭髮更痛，這樣就睡不著覺啦，可以繼續讀書。就這樣「頭懸樑、錐刺股」發憤地來讀書，經過三年，父母照樣不理他，妻子對他也不禮貌，嫂嫂也看不起他，鍛煉他的忍耐心。

蘇秦的師父鬼谷子是當時一個隱士，和水鏡先生司馬徽差不多，想要教出幾個徒弟治理國家，所以教出了蘇秦、張儀、孫臏、龐涓、這幾個傑出人才。蘇秦三年苦苦用功，用得智慧大約也開了，也不像以前那麼驕傲，自以為是了不起的人物。秦國既然不用他，他就到趙國遊說趙王以合縱的方法，聯盟六國對付強秦。大家聯合起來，無論哪一國被攻打，其他五國都去援助；如果哪一國不遵照這個條約，違背這個條約，其餘五國就去征伐它。

因為合起來對付秦國，十五年中間秦國也不敢進攻六國。所以

He took it to extremes that he would pierce his thigh with a sharp pick when he was about to fall asleep. This method caused sharper pain than the previous one, and since he could not fall asleep, he only focused on studying. Through this method, he developed patience and forbearance. This is the story of Su Qin's "hanging his hair and piercing his thigh." However, after three years of study, his parents still didn't care about him, his wife still showed no courtesy towards him, and his sister-in-law still looked down on him.

Su Qin's teacher, Gui Guzi (Master Ghost-Valley), was a reputed recluse at that time, comparable to Master Water Mirror (a title that a student gave to Sima Hui) of the Three Kingdoms period. Gui Guzi wished to educate his disciples so that some of them could well govern a country. The most outstanding among his students were Su Qin, Zhang Yi, Sun Bin, and Pang Juan. After Su Qin studied hard for three years, he became more intelligent and less arrogant than before, when he regarded himself as a big-shot. Since the king of Qin had no use for him, he went to the state of Zhao to sell his expertise in forging political alliances. He proposed that the six states should help each other by uniting against the mighty Qin. If any state came under attack by Qin, the rest would go and support it. And if one state broke their allegiance, the other five could attack and conquer the betrayer.

For fifteen years, this strategy successfully deterred Qin from attacking the six states. In the *Essay of E'fang Palace*, it is written: "What destroyed the six states were the six states themselves, not Qin. What caused Qin to perish was Qin, not the six states." Who eliminated the six states? It was not Qin, but the six states themselves because of their lack of unity and harmony; as a result Qin eventually overcame all of them. When Qin perished, it was not by the hands of others, but by Qin itself — it did not do well in governing the empire. As a result, Qin eliminated itself, not by the six states. From these few lines, we should learn that we should always persevere to better and improve ourselves. If we do not respect ourselves, we won't win respect from others.

By that time, Su Qin's philosophy of forging a political alliance was realized — he was

《阿房宮賦》上說：「滅六國者，六國也，非秦也。族秦者，秦也，非天下也。」滅六國的是誰呢？不是秦國，是六國自己不團結，所以被秦國給滅了。那麼秦國以後也被消滅了，是誰消滅它的呢？是秦國自己不好好做，自己消滅自己。由這幾句文來看，我們人一定要自強不息；自己若不尊重自己，旁人不能尊重你。

蘇秦以合縱對付秦國的這種學說實行了，所以六國都封他為丞相，都聽他的，權力比六國的國君還大。這時他從趙國要到楚國巡察，路上經過洛陽，就順便回家省親，也是顯一顯他的威風。

他一定早就通知家鄉，所以鄉城父老聽說他衣錦榮歸，就張燈結綵像過年似的，他的父母恐怕旁人做不完，也親自清掃道路等他回來。他的太太側目而視，側耳而聽，無論什麼動靜，都不敢抬頭看，只敢偷偷看，用耳朵特別注意聽。他的嫂嫂更是露出溜鬚拍馬、諂媚的樣子，像蛇趴在地上那樣匍匐而行，在地上又爬又叩頭，不知怎麼樣恭敬才好。

蘇秦一看：「喔，這些人現在都這個樣了！」父母親也做工，太太也怕得不得了，嫂子在那兒跪著往前走，於是就問：「你們為什麼前倨而後恭呢？」說我以前回來，你們那麼傲慢不客氣，為什麼現在回來，你們這麼恭敬我呢？他嫂子也說老實話：「因為季子位尊而多金哪！」說你地位高了，錢也多了，所以我要這樣子來待你。

由這些來看，人情冷暖，世態炎涼，連家裡的六親眷屬都這麼樣「綢緞眼」——眼睛都是嫌貧貪富的表現。雖然如此，我們若真正明白道理，就不要被這些境界給誘惑轉動。把人格做好，心地好才是真正的富貴，真正的光榮；心地不好，外面怎麼樣尊貴，怎麼樣財多，那都是假的。所以學佛的人，要學裡邊真正的高貴、真正有智慧。

蘇秦的家人以前對他那麼傲慢，後來又對他那麼恭敬，這是給他說法呢！這時候他應該功成身退，不再管世界的問題，那麼他也不會被人刺死。可惜他沒有明白，還是各處向人家說自己榮華富貴的樣子，於是到齊國就被人刺死。

appointed the prime minister by all six states, and now he possessed greater power than any individual king. Su Qin went to the state of Chu on an inspection tour when he passed by Luoyang; he took the opportunity to visit his family to show off his power and glory.

He must have told his family long in advance. Upon hearing the news that he was homebound, now glorious, his parents decorated the house and hung red lanterns high up as if celebrating the New Year. They went in person to clean and sweep the road to await his return. His wife didn't dare to look at him straight but only secretly glanced at him from aside, and no matter what sound caught her attention, she listened attentively. His sister-in-law had a more obsequious look on her face. She prostrated and crawled on the ground, and sometimes stood up and bowed down again as if she did not know where to place her limbs when she tried to show her deep reverence.

Su Qin noticed that his parents had cleaned the road, his wife was terrified, and his sister-in-law was kneeling and inching forward. He asked, "Why were you so arrogant before and now so reverent towards me?" Before achieving any fame, when he returned home he was greeted with a cold shoulder; but now, they have become so respectful. Why were they like that? His sister-in-law spoke frankly: "You, Jizi, have both riches and glory." That's why they treated him differently.

From this, we can see that is just the way of the world—treated warmly when having power and fame; treated coldly and indifferently when lacking it. Usually, families, relatives, and retainers have this kind of behavior—becoming greedy for wealth and position and despising those who are poor and lowly. Nevertheless, we should truly understand the principles and not be moved or carried away by the temptations of the world. We should develop a wholesome character. A heart of kindness and empathy brings about true wealth and a truly bright future; whereas with an unkind heart, one may strike fortune and fame; but no matter how glorious and wealthy one may look externally, they are false. We who study the Buddhadharma should learn to possess intrinsic wisdom and a truly noble character.

Su Qin's family members were arrogant and cold towards him before he achieved riches and fame; but after he did, they became so respectful — his family's actions were a lesson in Dharma for him. If he had understood the teachings, he would have retired right after he reached the pinnacle of fame and stopped paying attention to the problems of the world. Then, he would not have been assassinated. Unfortunately he did not understand the lesson and still went about showing off his riches and glory. When he reached the state of Qi, he was assassinated.

待續

To be continued