

# Heaven and Hell

*A tale from China*

A curious man once asked to visit heaven and hell. Expecting hell to be a terrible, frightening place, he was amazed to find people seated around a lovely banquet table. The table was piled high with every delicious thing one could possibly want. The man thought, *Perhaps hell is not so bad after all.*

Looking closely, however, he noticed that everyone at the table was miserable.



They were starving, because, although there was a mountain of food before them, they had been given three-foot-long chopsticks. There was no way to carry the food to their mouths with such long chopsticks, and so no one could eat a bite.

The man was then taken to heaven. To his surprise, he found the exact same situation as he had seen in hell. People were gathered around a banquet table piled with food. All the diners held a pair of three-foot-long chopsticks in their hands. But here in heaven, everyone was happily eating the delicious food, for the residents of heaven were using their extra-long chopsticks to feed one another.

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