

Chang and Ching quarrelled about money. 縲Chang said that he had lent Ching twenty pieces of gold and that Ching had not given them back to him, but Ching said that he had given them back.

At last Chang and Ching agreed to go to a judge and let him decide. The judge had a short stick, and in those days people believed that, if you lied while you were holding it, God would punish you.

The judge gave Chang his stick, and Chang held it while he told the judge that he had lent Ching the money and complained that Ching had not given it back. Then, when it was Ching's turn to speak, he gave the long stick while he was carrying to Chang before he took the judge's short one, and then said that he admitted that Chang had lent him the gold, but that he had given it back to him. When he had finished speaking, he took his stick back from Chang.

The judge said to Ching, 'Please lend me your stick.' Ching obeyed. The judge examined it carefully and then said to Chang, 'Come and take this stick.' Chang did so, and the judge said, 'You have now got what belongs to you.'

Chang was very surprised and said, 'Is this stick worth twenty pieces of gold?'

'Yes,' answered the judge. 'Break it and you will see.'

Chang broke it, and his twenty pieces of gold fell out.

Chang asked the judge how he knew that the gold was there, and the judge answered, 'I was sure that what both of you said was true; and I saw Ching give you his stick before he took mine, and then take his back after he had finished speaking.'