



Chinese New Year

Owen Orange had a friend Ty who invited Owen to visit and celebrate Chinese New Year with him. Owen was excited. He had been very busy lately with his Healthy Hero Missions and he thought a vacation would be perfect especially to visit his good friend Ty. Owen didn't know much about the Chinese New Year. He knew there were parades at night and it was celebrated in January or February. He looked forward to having fun and learning more about it from Ty.

When Owen arrived at Ty's house he saw that there were beautiful red scrolls or ribbons on the door. Ty greeted Owen and yelled, "Gung Hey Fat Chow!" Owen wasn't quite sure what Ty had said. Ty laughed, "I just wished you prosperity, happiness and wealth." "Thanks," said Owen. He asked, "What are these red ribbons for?" Ty explained, "They are wishing everyone who comes by happiness in the New Year." Owen was learning a lot already. The two boys went into the kitchen where Owen noticed that the rest of the family was busily cleaning and preparing food. Ty explained, "Before the new year we clean our house to get rid of things from the old year. On New Year's Day we will open every door and window in our home at midnight to let go of the old year. My family is also preparing foods for the celebration. Each food represents something good for the new year." Ty and Owen went to Ty's room. There Owen saw a bunch of beautiful red clothing. Owen asked, "Are they for the celebration too?" Ty replied, "Yes, all the boys and girls get new clothes for the new year. The color red means happiness. I have some new red clothes for you too."

Ty continued, "There are parades at night where people dress in beautiful dragon costumes. The dragon is also a symbol of good luck. Children will be given lots of red envelopes. The envelopes are filled with money. This represents the passing of good luck. How we act during the New Year's celebration will determine if the new year will be good or bad. Boys and girls must always be very good. But the part I thought you would like the best is in the dining room. Let's go." Ty lead Owen into the dining room. Owen noticed two large bowls on the table. One bowl was filled with bright red apples and the other with oranges. Owen was very excited to see the fruit. Ty explained, "The bowls of fruit are there to represent the two colors of the Chinese New Year, red means happiness and orange means wealth and happiness. On New Year's Day we eat the oranges to give us long life and good health. Owen knew how healthy oranges were and this tradition made him very happy.

That night Owen and Ty got all dressed up in their new clothing. They went out into the street where they enjoyed a parade with brightly colored dragons and sparkling fireworks. Crowds of people were wishing each other a happy new year, "Gung Hey Fat Choy". Adults were handing children lots of red envelopes. When the parade was finished they had a wonderful healthy meal of fish, chicken, noodles, and of course oranges. Owen had a great time. Owen learned so much about Chinese New Year and he knew that this year was going to be a good and healthy one. "Gung Hey Fat Choy!"

