The basic unit of the Chinese language is the zi (字), i.e. a Chinese word. Each zi has a written form (called a character, made up of strokes), a sound (made up of consonant and vowel) and a meaning (or multiple meanings). When we speak or write Chinese, we string zi together to form terms, phrases and sentences.

This week: Words about banquets

慶 = feeling 幸 (qing xing = rejoice~fortune/fortunate) = feeling thankful about something (e.g. passing an exam, narrowly missing a plane crash). 慶, an action, = 慶祝 (qing zhu = rejoice~congratulate) = celebrate. Peasants 慶豐收 (qing feng shou = celebrate~abundant~gather = celebrate the harvest). Armies 慶捷 (qing jie = celebrate victory). 慶典 (qing dian = rejoice~ceremony) means celebration ceremony, e.g. 畢業慶典 (bi ye qing dian = end~studies~celebration~ceremony) = graduation ceremony. 普天同慶 (pu tian tong qing = all~heavens~together~rejoice) describes something universally celebrated, e.g. New Year’s Day.

積善之家，必有餘慶 (ji shan zhi jia, bi you yu qing = accumulate~goodness~’s~family, definitely~has~extra~celebrations) means a philanthropic family will overflow with blessings.

by Diana Yue