



6		H	H	T		3	3	2		8
5		H	T	T		3	2	2		7
4		H	H	T		3	3	2		8
3		H	H	T		3	3	2		8
2		H	H	H		3	3	3		9
1		H	H	T		3	3	2		8

### HEXAGRAM 29 - K'an - The Abysmal (Water)

Above K'AN THE ABYSMAL, WATER

Below K'AN THE ABYSMAL, WATER

This hexagram **consists of** a doubling of the trigram K'an. It is one of the eight hexagrams in which **doubling** occurs. The trigram K'an **means** a plunging in.

A yang line

- has **plunged** in between two yin lines and
- is **closed in** by them like water in a ravine.

The trigram K'an is **also** the middle son.

The Receptive

- **has obtained** the middle line of the Creative, and thus
- K'an **develops**.

As an image it represents water,  
the water that

- comes from above
- and
- is in motion on earth in streams and rivers,  
giving rise to all life on earth.

In man's world K'an represents

- the heart,
- the soul locked up within the body,
- the principle of light inclosed in the dark - that is, reason.

The name of the hexagram, because the trigram is doubled,  
has the additional meaning,  
"repetition of danger."

Thus the hexagram is intended to designate

- an objective situation to which one must become accustomed,
- not a subjective attitude.

For danger due to a subjective attitude means  
either

- foolhardiness

or

- guile.

Hence too a ravine is used to symbolize danger;

it is a situation in which

a man is in the same pass as

the water in a ravine,

and,

like the water,

- he can escape

if

- he behaves correctly.

## THE JUDGMENT

The Abysmal repeated.

If you are sincere,

- you have success in your heart,

And

- whatever you do succeeds.

Through repetition of danger

we grow accustomed to it.

Water sets the example for the right conduct under such circumstances.

- It

- flows on and on,

- and

- merely fills up all the places through which it flows;

- it

- does not shrink from any dangerous spot nor from any plunge,  
and
  - nothing can make it lose its own essential nature.
  - It
    - remains true to itself under all conditions.
- Thus likewise,
- if one is sincere when confronted with difficulties,
    - the heart can penetrate the meaning of the situation.
- And
- once we have gained inner mastery of a problem,
    - it will come about naturally that the action we take will succeed.
- In danger all that counts is really
- carrying out all that has to be done – thoroughness –  
and
  - going forward, in order not to perish through tarrying in the danger.

Properly used,  
danger can have an important meaning as a protective measure.

- Thus
- heaven has its perilous height protecting it
    - against every attempt at invasion, and
  - earth has its mountains and bodies of water,
    - separating countries by their dangers.

- Thus also  
rulers make use of danger to protect themselves
- against attacks from without  
and
  - against turmoil within.

## THE IMAGE

- Water
- flows on uninterruptedly  
and
  - reaches its goal:
- The image of the Abysmal repeated.  
Thus the superior man
- walks in lasting virtue
- And
- carries on the business of teaching.

- Water reaches its goal by flowing continually.  
It fills up every depression before it flows on.  
The superior man follows its example;  
he is concerned that goodness should be
- an established attribute of character  
rather than
  - an accidental and isolated occurrence.

So likewise in teaching others everything depends on consistency,  
for  
it is only through repetition  
that  
the pupil makes the material his own.

## **THE LINES**

0 Nine in the second place means:  
The abyss is dangerous.  
One should strive to attain small things only.

When  
we are in danger  
we ought not to attempt to get out of it immediately,  
regardless of circumstances;  
at first  
we must content ourselves with not being overcome by it.  
We must

- calmly weigh the conditions of the time  
and
- be satisfied with small gains,  
because for the time being a great success cannot be attained.

A spring

- flows only sparingly at first,  
and
- tarries for some time before it makes its way into the open.

## **MOVING HEXAGRAM**

### **HEXAGRAM 08 – Pi - Holding Together [Union]**

Above K'AN THE ABYSMAL, WATER  
Below K'UN THE RECEPTIVE, EARTH

The waters on the surface of the earth flow together wherever they can,  
as for example in the ocean,  
where all the rivers come together.

Symbolically this connotes

- holding together and
- the laws that regulate it.

The same idea is suggested by the fact that

all the lines of the hexagram **except** the fifth, the place of the ruler, are **yielding**.  
The yielding lines hold together because they are influenced by

- a man of **strong will** in the leading position,
- a man who is their **center** of union.

Moreover, this strong and guiding personality in turn **holds together** with the others,

finding in them the **complement** of his own nature.

## THE JUDGMENT

HOLDING TOGETHER brings good fortune.

Inquire of the oracle once again

Whether you possess **sublimity, constancy, and perseverance**;

Then there is no blame.

Those who are uncertain gradually join.

Whoever comes too late

Meets with misfortune.

What is required is that **we unite with others**, in order that all may **complement and aid** one another through holding together.

But such holding together calls for a **central figure** around whom other persons may unite.

To become a center of influence holding people together is a

- **grave matter** and
- fraught with **great responsibility**.

It requires

- greatness of spirit,
- consistency, and
- strength.

Therefore let him who wishes to gather others about him **ask himself** whether he is equal to the undertaking,

for anyone attempting the task **without a real calling for it**

only makes confusion **worse than** if no union at all had taken place.

But when there is a **real rallying point**,

those who at first are hesitant or uncertain **gradually come in of their own accord**.

Late-comers must suffer the **consequences**, for in holding together the question of the right time is also important.

**Relationships are formed and firmly established according to definite inner laws.**

**Common experiences** strengthen these ties, and he who comes too late to share in these basic experiences must suffer for it if, as a straggler, he finds the door **locked**.

**If a man**

- **has recognized the necessity for union and**
  - **does not feel strong enough to function as the center,**
- it is his duty to become a member of some other organic fellowship.**

## THE IMAGE

On the earth is water: The image Of HOLDING TOGETHER.

Thus the kings of antiquity

- **Bestowed** the different states as fiefs And
- **cultivated** friendly relations With the feudal lords.

Water

- **fills** up all the empty places on the earth and
- **clings** fast to it.

The social organization of ancient China was based on this principle of the holding together of

- dependents and
- rulers.

**Water flows to unite with water, because all parts of it are subject to the same laws.**

So too should human society **hold together** through a community of interests that **allows** each individual to feel himself a member of a whole.

**The central power of a social organization must see to it that**

**every member finds that his true interest lies in holding together with it,**

as was the case in the paternal relationship between king and vassals in ancient China.