



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

## HEXAGRAM 48 – Ching - The Well

Above K'AN THE ABYSMAL, WATER  
Below SUN THE GENTLE, WIND, WOOD

- Wood is below,
- water above.

The wood goes down into the earth to **bring up** water.

The image **derives** from the pole-and-bucket well of ancient China.

1. The wood **represents**
  - not the **buckets**, which in ancient times were made of clay,
  - but rather the **wooden poles** by which the water is hauled up from the well.
2. The image also **refers** to the world of plants,
  - which **lift** water out of the earth by means of their fibers.
3. The well from which water is drawn conveys the further idea of
  - an **inexhaustible dispensing of nourishment**.

## THE JUDGMENT

THE WELL.

- The **town** may be changed,
- But the **well** cannot be changed.

It

- neither decreases
- nor increases.

They come and go and draw from the well.

If

- one gets down almost to the water And
  - the rope does not go all the way, Or
  - the jug breaks,
- it brings misfortune.

In ancient China the capital cities were sometimes moved,

- partly for the sake of more favorable location,
  - partly because of a change in dynasties.
- 
- The style of architecture changed in the course of centuries,
  - but the shape of the well has remained the same from ancient times to this day.
- Thus the well is the **symbol** of that social structure which,
- **evolved by mankind in meeting its most primitive needs,**
  - **is independent of all political forms.**

Political structures change, as do nations,  
but

- **the life of man with its needs remains eternally the same – this cannot be changed.**
  - **Life is also inexhaustible.**
    - It grows neither less nor more;
    - it exists for one and for all.
- 
- The generations come and go, and
  - all enjoy life in its inexhaustible abundance.

However, there are

two prerequisites for a satisfactory political or social organization of mankind.

- **We must go down to the very foundations of life.**  
For any merely superficial ordering of life that leaves its deepest needs unsatisfied  
is as ineffectual as if no attempt at order had ever been made.
- **Carelessness - by which the jug is broken - is also disastrous.**  
If for instance  
the military defense of a state is carried to such excess that  
it provokes wars by which the power of the state is annihilated,  
this is a breaking of the jug.

This hexagram applies also to the **individual.**

**However men may differ in disposition and in education,**

- **the foundations of human nature are the same in everyone. And**
- **every human being can draw in the course of his education from the inexhaustible wellspring of the divine in man's nature.**

But here likewise two dangers threaten:

a man

- may fail in his education to penetrate to the real roots of humanity and
  - remain fixed in conventions partial education of this sort is as bad as none or
- he
- may suddenly collapse and neglect his self-development.

## THE IMAGE

Water over wood: the image of THE WELL.

Thus the superior man

- encourages the people at their work, And
- exhorts them to help one another.

• The trigram Sun, wood, is below, and

• the trigram K'an, water, is above it.

Wood sucks water upward.

Just as

- wood as an organism imitates the action of the well, which benefits all parts of the plant,
- the superior man organizes human society, so that, as in a plant organism, its parts cooperate for the benefit of the whole.

## THE LINES

Nine in the second place means:

At the well hole one shoots fishes.

The jug is broken and leaks.

The water itself is clear, but it is not being used.

Thus

the well is a place where only fish will stay, and

whoever comes to it, comes only to catch fish.

But the jug is broken, so that

the fish cannot be kept in it.

This describes the situation of a person who

- possesses good qualities
- but neglects them.

No one bothers about him.

A result he deteriorates in mind.

He

- associates with inferior men and
- can no longer accomplish anything worthwhile.

Nine in the fifth place means:

In the well there is a clear, cold spring

From which one can drink.

A well that is fed by a spring of living water is a good well.

A man who has virtues like a well of this sort is born to be

- a leader and
- savior of men,

for he has the water of life.

Nevertheless, the character for "good fortune" is left out here.

The all-important thing about a well is that its water be drawn.

The best water is only a potentiality for refreshment as long as it is not brought up.

So too with leaders of mankind:

it is all-important that one should

- drink from the spring of their words and
- translate them into life.

## **MOVING HEXAGRAM**

### **HEXAGRAM 15 - Ch'ien - Modesty**

Above K'UN THE RECEPTIVE, EARTH

Below KEN KEEPING STILL, MOUNTAIN

This hexagram is made up of the trigrams

- Ken, Keeping Still, mountain, and
- K'un.

The mountain is the youngest son of the Creative, the representative of heaven on earth.

It

- dispenses the blessings of heaven, the clouds and rain that gather round its summit, and thereafter
- shines forth radiant with heavenly light.

This shows

- what modesty is and
- how it functions in great and strong men.

K'un, the earth, stands above.

Lowliness is a quality of the earth:

this is the very reason why it appears in this hexagram as exalted, by being placed above the mountain.

This shows how modesty functions in lowly, simple people: they are lifted up by it.

### **THE JUDGEMENT**

MODESTY creates success.

The superior man carries things through.

It is the law of heaven

- to make fullness empty and
- to make full what is modest;
- when the sun is at its zenith,
  - it must, according to the law of heaven, **turn toward** its setting, and
- at its nadir
  - it **rises toward** a new dawn.

In obedience to the same law,  
the moon

- when it is **full** begins to **wane**, and
- when **empty** of light it **waxes** again.

This heavenly law works itself out in the fates of men also.

It is the law of earth

- to alter the full and
- to contribute to the modest.
- High mountains are **worn down** by the waters, and
- the valleys are **filled up**.

It is the law of fate

- to undermine what is full and
- to prosper the modest.

And men also

- hate fullness and
- love the modest.

The destinies of men are subject to immutable laws that must fulfill themselves.

But

man has it in his power to shape his fate,

according as his behavior exposes him to the influence of **benevolent** or of **destructive** forces.

When

- a man holds a high position and is **nevertheless modest**,
- he shines with the light of wisdom;

if

- he is in a lowly position and is **modest**,
- he cannot be passed by.

Thus the superior man

- can **carry out** his work to the end
- **without** boasting of what he has achieved.

## THE IMAGE

Within the earth, a mountain: The image Of MODESTY.

Thus the superior man

- reduces that which is too much, And
- augments that which is too little.

He

- weighs things and
- makes them equal.

The wealth of the earth in which a mountain is hidden is not visible to the eye, because the depths are offset by the height of the mountain.

Thus

high and low complement each other, and the result is the plain.

Here an effect that it took a long time to achieve, but that in the end seems easy of accomplishment and self-evident, is used as the image of modesty.

The superior man does the same thing when he establishes order in the world; he

- equalizes the extremes that are the source of social discontent and thereby
- creates just and equable conditions. 1