



6		T	T	T		2	2	2		6
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	T	T		3	2	2		7
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

Six at the top means:

- Bound with cords and ropes,
- Shut in between thorn-hedged prison walls:
For three years one does not find the way.
Misfortune.

A man who in the extremity of danger

- has lost the right way
and
- is irremediably entangled in his sins
has no prospect of escape.

He is like a criminal who sits shackled behind thorn-hedged prison walls.

MOVING HEXAGRAM

HEXAGRAM 59 – Huan - Dispersion (Dissolution)

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

Wind blowing over water
disperses it,
dissolving it into

- foam and
- mist.

This suggests that when a man's vital energy is dammed up within him
(indicated as a danger by the attribute of the lower trigram),
gentleness serves to

- break up and
- dissolve
the blockage.

THE JUDGMENT

Dispersion,
Success.
The king approaches his temple.
It furthers one to cross the great water.
Perseverance furthers.

The text of this hexagram resembles that of Ts'ui, GATHERING TOGETHER (45).
In the latter,
the subject is the bringing together of elements that have been separated,
as water collects in lakes upon the earth.

Here

the subject is the dispersing and dissolving of divisive egotism.

DISPERSION shows the way, so to speak, that leads to gathering together. This explains the similarity of the two texts.

Religious forces are needed to overcome the egotism that divides men.

1. The common celebration of the great

- sacrificial feasts and
 - sacred rites,
- which gave expression simultaneously to the
- interrelation and
 - social articulation of
 - family and
 - state,

was the means employed by the great rulers to unite men.

- The sacred music and
 - the splendor of the ceremonies
- aroused a strong tide of emotion
- that was shared by all hearts in unison, and
 - that awakened a consciousness of the common origin of all creatures.

In this way

- disunity was overcome and
- rigidity dissolved.

A further means to the same end is

2. cooperation in great general undertakings that

set a high goal for the will of the people;
in the common concentration on this goal,
all barriers dissolve,
just as,

- when a boat is crossing a great stream,
- all hands must unite in a joint task.

But only a man

- who is himself free of all selfish ulterior considerations, and
 - who perseveres in justice and steadfastness,
- is capable of so dissolving the hardness of egotism.

THE IMAGE

The wind drives over the water: The image of DISPERSION.

Thus

the kings of old

- sacrificed to the Lord And
- built temples.

In the autumn and winter,

water begins to freeze into ice.

When

the warm breezes of spring come,

- the rigidity is dissolved, and
- the elements that have been dispersed in ice floes are reunited.

It is the same with the minds of the people.

Through

- hardness and
- selfishness

the heart grows rigid, and

this rigidity leads to separation from all others.

- Egotism and
- Cupidity

isolate men.

Therefore

the hearts of men

- must be seized by a devout emotion.

They

- must be shaken by a religious awe in face of eternity –
- stirred with an intuition of the One Creator of all living beings, and
- united through the strong feeling of fellowship experienced in the ritual of divine worship.