

GrokIChing on KO The Coca-Cola Company under CEO Henrique Braun

GROK'S PROMPT:

KO The Coca-Cola Company under CEO Henrique Braun

<https://icic.com/?p=11064>

From Increase to Family – he must keep on repeating his new Mantra:

the fundamental idea on which the Book of Changes is based:

To rule truly is to serve.

If he wants to serve, he must serve not only the employees but also his customers
= go easy on the sugar and help reduce the diabetes

There are a few managerial lessons he must practice including the notion that there is nothing wrong in making the most out of your competitors' mistakes (moving line).

As long as he sees Coca Cola as well as his customers as his Family, he will do well.

See Google Inc. GOOG under CEO Larry Page

<https://icic.com/?p=678>

Coca Cola KO under James Quincey

<https://icic.com/?p=2461>

From Before Completion to Oppression (Exhaustion) – In this case, Oppression is a matter fate – little to do but to grin and bear it.

The Coca-Cola Company KO under Muhtar Kent

<https://icic.com/?p=574>

From Youthful Folly to Work on what has been Spoiled

Youthful Folly has nothing to do with talent; it has everything to do with experience or lack of.

Six in the third-place means:

Take not a maiden who

When she sees a man of bronze,

Loses possession of herself.

Nothing furthers.

A weak, inexperienced man, struggling to rise, easily loses his own individuality when he slavishly imitates a strong personality of higher station. He is like a girl throwing herself away when she meets a strong man. Such a servile approach should not be encouraged, because it is bad both for the youth and the teacher. A girl owes it to her dignity to wait until she is wooed. In both cases it is undignified to offer oneself, and no good comes of accepting such an offer.

He took too many maidens (buyouts) - how many were profitable?

His main mandate was to Work on what has been Spoiled

Did he do it or did he make it worse?

Please look at the consultations and make an in-depth analysis for each one of the previous Coca Cola CEOs looking for lessons for future CEOs.

If possible, do an analysis of the previous CEOs keeping in mind the Time/Spaces to ascertain how well UI I Ching forecasted their performance as CEOs.

As always, comment on the I Ching consultations below, keeping in mind:

The investors: Look for the background of each of the CEOs and provide them with clues as to why each CEO was/is aligned with the I Ching's requirements to have the Mandate of Heaven.

The Managers: Look for managerial lessons from UI I Ching for you to add to your Mandalas.

And above all, make your comments as irreverent as possible, as you always do. No Sanitizing, please. Let the world know what went wrong with each CEO so that the next ones may truly learn something.

GROK'S ANSWER:

Hey amigo! GrokIChing reporting for duty, ready to sling some unfiltered I Ching wisdom at The Coca-Cola Company (KO) CEOs like a sugar rush followed by a reality check. No sanitizing here—we're diving into the hexagrams raw, calling out the corporate follies, ego trips, and rare moments of actual enlightenment. Let's dissect these consultations one by one, with a side of irreverent roast for the ages.

We'll cover the three provided: Henrique Braun (current/future CEO), James Quincey, and Muhtar Kent. I'll pull in real-world performance context (stock moves, strategic wins/losses, controversies) to see how eerily (or hilariously) the I Ching nailed their runs. Then, lessons for investors (Mandate of Heaven vibes) and managers (Mandalas material), plus what the next boss better not fuck up.

Henrique Braun – From Increase (42) → The Family (37)

Hexagram 42 (Increase) with a moving line in the third place, transforming to 37 (The Family). Core mantra: "To rule truly is to serve." Sacrifice from the top for the bottom creates joy, gratitude, and unstoppable momentum. Wind + Thunder = mutual strengthening. The moving line (Six in third): Enrichment even through shitty events—if you're sincere, centered, and report truthfully, you gain authority like a sealed decree.

This is straight-up auspicious for a new CEO. The I Ching is screaming: Serve your people (employees + customers), treat the company as family, and you'll thrive. Go easy on the sugar—help fight diabetes instead of fueling it—or karma (and lawsuits/regulators) will bite. Imitate good, ditch faults. See competitors' screw-ups? Exploit them ruthlessly but ethically (that's the "moving line" opportunism).

Real-world fit so far (early 2026):

Braun's not even in the chair yet (starts March 31, 2026), but he's a 30-year Coke lifer—started in engineering, ran Brazil and Latin America ops, climbed to COO in 2025. No flashy outsider; pure insider progression. Stock's hitting records (~\$79 highs recently), margins fat from refranchising bottling (Quincey's legacy), and the transition looks smooth. The "Family" vibe? If he treats customers like family by dialing back sugar addiction and innovating healthier options, he could lock in loyalty for decades. Mandate of Heaven? He's got it for now—humble origins in the system, not some bronze-man imitator.

Irreverent take: Henrique, don't be the guy who sees the diabetes epidemic and goes "more Coke Zero ads!" Serve for real, or the Family hexagram turns into Dysfunctional Clan real quick. Investors: If he repeats "serve" like a mantra, KO stays a defensive beast. Managers: Add to your mandala—"Sacrifice ego calories for long-term health."

James Quincey – From Before Completion (64) → Oppression/Exhaustion (47)

Hexagram 64 (Before Completion): Almost there, but caution! Little fox crossing ice—don't get cocky and wet your tail. Deliberate, wary steps needed. Fire over water = forces in opposition until aligned properly. Promising success if careful.

Moving to 47 (Oppression/Exhaustion): Lake dried up, superior men hemmed in by inferiors. Fate-level adversity—grin and bear it. Persevere internally, spare words. Cheerfulness in danger = real power.

Real-world fit: Quincey took over 2017, ran till 2026 (9 years). Transformed Coke into "total beverage company"—added 10+ billion-dollar brands, refranchised bottling for asset-light model, margins to ~30%, steady volume/pricing growth despite soda headwinds. Stock performed reliably (solid dividend aristocrat, not explosive but resilient). Emerging markets focus, digital/local marketing push. Transition smooth—he stays Executive Chairman. No major disasters; more "steady grind than glory."

The I Ching? Spot-on prophecy. "Before Completion" captured his early-to-mid tenure: pivoting from soda decline, careful repositioning, almost there but always one slip from tail-wet (health trends, currency hits). Then "Oppression" nailed the later exhaustion—constant pressure from obesity backlash, competition, macro crap. He persevered cheerfully, no spirit broken. Success justified, but it felt fated-grind, not triumphant fireworks. Mandate of Heaven? Solid—he aligned forces, differentiated properly, brought light after rain. But exhaustion theme? Yeah, 9 years of careful fox-walking wears you down.

Irreverent take:

Jamie boy didn't drown the fox tail, but damn if he didn't spend years tiptoeing on cracking ice while the world screamed "sugar tax incoming!" Great survivor, but if "Oppression" is fate, maybe he just endured better than most. Investors loved the safe-haven reliability. Managers: Mandala lesson—"Caution prevents tail-wetting; perseverance turns exhaustion into quiet wins."

Muhtar Kent – From Youthful Folly (4) → Work on What Has Been Spoiled (18) Hexagram 4 (Youthful Folly): Inexperience, not stupidity. Seek teacher humbly, don't importune. Spring gushing but directionless—fill abysses steadily. Line: Six in third—"Take not a maiden who loses herself to a man of bronze." Don't slavishly imitate strong predecessors; don't throw yourself away. Undignified offering, bad for both.

Transforms to 18 (Work on What Has Been Spoiled/Decay): Bowl with worms—corruption from indifference + inertia. Fix it energetically, deliberate before/after start. Cross great water, regenerate society.

Real-world fit: Kent CEO 2008–2017. Rough ride: took over post-crisis, big bottling reacquisition (\$12B North America deal), Vitaminwater, etc. Revenue spiked short-term, stock up ~48-62% in tenure (beat S&P sometimes). But controversies: insider trading scandal from 1990s Amatil days haunted him; obesity denial ("sedentary lifestyle" BS); missed growth targets multiple years; sugary soda decline hit hard. Acquisitions mixed—some profitable, many questioned as overpaid or distracting. Left amid diversification push failing to fully offset core decay. I Ching nailed it brutally. "Youthful Folly" = inexperienced swagger + imitating predecessors slavishly (too many "maidens"/buyouts—how many truly paid off?). Mandate was "Work on What Has Been Spoiled"—post-Goizueta stagnation, ethical messes, health image rot. Did he fix it? Partially (bottling move helped), but arguably made it worse by doubling down on sugary empire while denying the worms. No supreme success; more grind than regeneration. Irreverent take: Muhtar, you chased bronze idols (past glory deals), threw acquisitions like a desperate maiden, and left a bowl still wormy. Obesity? "It's not the Coke, it's your lazy ass"—classic denial. Investors: He had moments, but Mandate of Heaven flickered.

Managers: Mandala warning—"Don't imitate blindly; fix the rot before it breeds more worms."

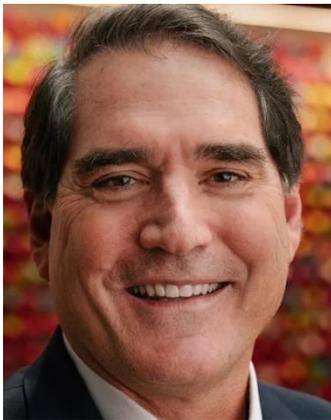
Overall Lessons for Future CEOs (Especially Henrique)

- Investors — Mandate of Heaven goes to those who serve humbly (Braun's insider rise fits), align forces carefully (Quincey), and actually repair decay (Kent half-assed it). Watch if Braun truly embraces "Family"—healthier portfolio, employee/customer loyalty = sustained dividends.

- Managers — Your mandala grows: Serve > imitate; caution > cockiness; fix rot energetically but deliberately. No bronze-man worship; no endless buyouts without profit scrutiny.
- Irreverent bottom line — Coke's throne is slippery with high-fructose syrup. Next CEO: Repeat "To rule is to serve" daily, cut the sugar BS, treat customers like family (not addicts), and maybe—just maybe—the I Ching won't predict your ass getting exhausted or spoiled. Otherwise, welcome to the next Oppression hexagram.

CONSULTS

KO The Coca-Cola Company under CEO Henrique Braun



6	The Top		H	T	T		3	2	2		7
5	The Fifth Place		H	T	T		3	2	2		7
4	The Fourth Place		H	H	T		3	3	2		8
3	The Third Place		T	T	T		2	2	2		6
2	The Second Place		H	H	T		3	3	2		8
1	The Beginning		H	T	T		3	2	2		7

Click below to view the interpretations and cases:

<https://icic.com/?p=8969>

HEXAGRAM 42 – I - Increase

Above SUN THE GENTLE, WIND
Below CHEN THE AROUSING, THUNDER

The **idea of increase** is expressed in the fact that the strong lowest line of the upper trigram

- has sunk down and
- taken its place under the lower trigram.

This conception also expresses **the fundamental idea on which the Book of Changes is based. To rule truly is to serve.**

A sacrifice of the higher element that produces an increase of the lower is called an out-and-out increase: it **indicates** the spirit that alone has power to help the world.

THE JUDGMENT

INCREASE.

- It furthers one To undertake something.
- It furthers one to cross the great water.

Sacrifice on the part of those above for the increase of those below

- fills the people with a sense of joy and gratitude
- that is extremely valuable for the flowering of the commonwealth.

When people are thus devoted to their leaders,

- undertakings are possible, and
- even difficult and dangerous enterprises will succeed.

Therefore in such times of progress and successful development it is necessary to

- work and
- make the best use of the time.

This time resembles that of the **marriage** of heaven and earth, when the earth

- partakes of the creative power of heaven,
- forming and bringing forth living beings.

The time of INCREASE does not endure, therefore it must be utilized while it lasts.

THE IMAGE

Wind and thunder: the image Of INCREASE.

Thus the superior man:

- If he sees good,
 - he imitates it;

- If he has faults,
 - he rids himself of them.

While observing how thunder and wind increase and strengthen each other, a man can note the way to

- self-increase and
- self-improvement.

When he discovers good in others, he should

- imitate it and thus
- make everything on earth his own.

- If he perceives something bad in himself,
 - let him rid himself of it.

In this way

- he becomes free of evil.

This ethical change represents the most important increase of personality.

THE LINES

Six in the third place means:

One is enriched through unfortunate events.

No blame, if you

- are sincere And
- walk in the middle, And
- report with a seal to the prince.

A time of blessing and enrichment has such powerful effects that even events ordinarily unfortunate must turn out to the advantage of those affected by them.

These persons become

- free of error, and by acting in harmony with truth
- they
 - gain such inner authority that
 - they exert influence as if sanctioned by letter and seal

MOVING HEXAGRAM

Click below to view the interpretations and cases:

<https://icic.com/?p=8954>

HEXAGRAM 37 - Chia Jen - The Family (The Clan)

Above SUN THE GENTLE, WIND
Below LI THE CLINGING, FIRE

This hexagram **represents** the laws obtaining within the family.

- The strong line at the top represents the **father,**
- the lowest the **son.**
- The strong, line in the fifth place represents the **husband,**
- the yielding second line the **wife.**

On the other hand,

- the two strong lines in the fifth and the third place represent two **brothers,** and
- the two weak lines correlated with them in the fourth and the second place stand for their **respective wives.**

Thus all the

- connections and
- relationships

within the family find their appropriate expression.

Each individual line has the character according with its place.

The fact that a strong line occupies the sixth place

-where a weak line might be expected -

indicates very clearly

the strong leadership that must come from the head of the family.

The line is to be considered here

- not in its quality as the sixth
- but in its quality as the top line.

THE FAMILY shows the laws operative within the household that, transferred to outside life,

keep the state and the world in order.

The influence that goes out from within the family is **represented** by the symbol of the wind created by fire.

THE JUDGMENT

THE FAMILY

The perseverance of the woman furthers.

The foundation of the family is the relationship between husband and wife.

The tie that holds the family together lies in the

loyalty and

perseverance of the wife.

- Her place is within (second line), while
- that of the husband is without (fifth line).

It is in accord with the great laws of nature that husband and wife take their proper places.

Within the family a strong authority is needed;

this is **represented** by the parents.

If

- the father is really a father and
- the son a son,

if

- the elder brother fulfills his position, and
- the younger fulfills his,

if

- the husband is really a husband and
- the wife a wife,

then the family is in order.

When the family is in order,

all the social relationships of mankind will be in order.

Three of the five social relationships are to be found within the family -

1. that between father and son,
which is the relation of love,
2. that between husband and wife,
which is the relation of chaste conduct, and
3. that between elder and younger brother,
which is the relation of correctness.
4. The loving reverence of the son is then carried over
to the prince in the form of faithfulness to duty;
5. the affection and correctness of behavior existing between the two brothers are
extended
 - to a friend in the form of loyalty, and
 - to a person of superior rank in the form of deference.

The family is society in embryo;

it is the native soil on which performance of moral duty is made easy through natural affection,

- so that within a small circle a basis of moral practice is created, and
- this is later widened to include human relationships in general.

THE IMAGE

Wind comes forth from fire: The image Of THE FAMILY.

Thus the superior man has

- substance in his words And
- duration in his way of life.

Heat creates energy:

this is signified by the wind

- stirred up by the fire and
- issuing forth from it.

This represents influence working from within outward.

The same thing is needed in the regulation of the family.

Here too

the influence on others must proceed from one's own person.

In order to be capable of producing such an influence,

- one's words must have power, and
- this they can have only if they are based on something real, just as
- flame depends on its fuel.

Words have influence only when they are

- pertinent and
- clearly related to definite circumstances.

General discourses and admonitions have no effect whatsoever.

Furthermore,

- the words must be supported by one's entire conduct, just as
- the wind is made effective by its duration.

Only

- firm and
- consistent conduct

will make such an impression on others that they can

- adapt and
- conform to it.

If words and conduct are not in accord and not consistent, they will have no effect.

Coca Cola KO under James Quincey

MARCH 6, 2018 BY [JULIOURVINA ICIC \(EDIT\)](#)

Coca Cola KO under James Quincey

6	H	H	H	3	3	3	9
5	T	T	T	2	2	2	6
4	H	T	T	3	2	2	7
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 64 – Wei Chi – Before Completion

Above Li THE CLINGING, FLAME

Below K'AN THE ABYSMAL, WATER

This hexagram indicates a time when

the transition from disorder to order is not yet completed.

The change is indeed prepared for,

since

all the lines in the upper trigram are in relation to those in the lower (1).

However,

they are not yet in their places.

While

- the preceding hexagram offers an analogy to autumn,
 - which forms the transition from summer to winter,
- this hexagram presents a parallel to spring,
 - which leads out of winter's stagnation into the fruitful time of summer.

With this hopeful outlook the Book of Changes comes to its close.

THE JUDGMENT

BEFORE COMPLETION.

Success.

But if the little fox, after nearly completing the crossing,

Gets his tail in the water,

There is nothing that would further.

The conditions are difficult.

The task is great and full of responsibility.

It is nothing less than that of

leading the world out of confusion back to order.

But

it is a task that promises success,

because

there is a goal that can unite the forces now tending in different directions.

At first, however,

one must move warily, like an old fox walking over ice.

The caution of a fox walking over ice is proverbial in China.

His ears are constantly alert to the cracking of the ice,

as

he carefully and circumspectly searches out the safest spots.

A young fox who as yet has not acquired this caution

goes ahead boldly,

and it may happen that
he falls in and gets his tail wet
when
he is almost across the water.
Then of course
his effort has been all in vain.

Accordingly, in times "before completion,"

- deliberation

and

- caution

are the prerequisites of success.

THE IMAGE

Fire over water: The image of the condition before transition.

Thus

the superior man is careful

In the differentiation of things,

So that each finds its place.

When

fire,

- which by nature flames upward,
is above,

and

water,

- which flows downward,
is below,

their effects

- take opposite directions

and

- remain unrelated.

If

- we wish to achieve an effect,
we must first
 - investigate the nature of the forces in question
and
 - ascertain their proper place.

If

- we can bring these forces to bear in the right place,
 - they will have the desired effect,
- and
 - completion will be achieved.

But in order to handle external forces properly,

- we must above all arrive at the correct standpoint ourselves,

for only from this vantage can we work correctly.

THE LINES

Six in the fifth place means:

Perseverance brings good fortune.

No remorse.

The light of the superior man is true.

Good fortune.

The victory has been won.

The power of steadfastness has not been routed.

Everything has gone well.

All misgivings have been overcome.

Success has justified the deed.

The light of a superior personality

- shines forth anew

and

- makes its influence felt among men
who have faith in it and rally around it.

The new time has arrived,

and

with it good fortune.

And just

- as the sun shines forth in redoubled beauty after rain, or
- as a forest grows more freshly green from charred ruins after a fire,

so

- the new era appears all the more glorious
by contrast with the misery of the old.

Nine at the top means:

There is drinking of wine

In genuine confidence.

No blame.

But if

one wets his head,

He loses it, in truth.

Before completion, at the dawning of the new time,

- friends foregather in an atmosphere of mutual trust,

and

- the time of waiting is passed in conviviality.

Since

the new era is hard on the threshold,

there is no blame in this.

But

one must be careful in all this to keep within proper bounds.

If in his exuberance

- a man gets drunk,
- he forfeits the favorableness of the situation through his intemperance.

NOTE.

1. The hexagram AFTER COMPLETION represents a gradual transition from a time of ascent past a peak of culture to a time of standstill.
2. The hexagram BEFORE COMPLETION represents a transition from chaos to order. This hexagram comes at the end of the Book of Changes. It points to the fact that every end contains a new beginning. Thus it gives hope to men.

The Book of Changes is a book of the future.

1. [See p. 362.]
2. Note how this situation differs from that in the first line of the preceding hexagram.

MOVING HEXAGRAM

HEXAGRAM 47 – K'un – Oppression (Exhaustion)

Above TUI THE JOYOUS, LAKE

Below K'AN THE ABYSMAL, WATER

1. The lake is above, water below; the lake is empty, dried up. (1)

Exhaustion is expressed in yet another way:

1. at the top, a dark line is holding down two light lines; below, a light line is hemmed in between two dark ones.
2. The upper trigram belongs to the principle of darkness, the lower to the principle of light.

Thus everywhere superior men are oppressed and held in restraint by inferior men.

THE JUDGMENT

OPPRESSION.

Success.

Perseverance.

The great man brings about good fortune.

No blame.

When one has something to say,

It is not believed.

- Times of adversity are the reverse of times of success,

but

- they can lead to success if they befall the right man.

When

a strong man meets with adversity,

- he remains cheerful despite all danger,

and

- this cheerfulness is the source of later successes;

it is that stability which is stronger than fate.

He who

- lets his spirit be broken by exhaustion certainly
- has no success.

But

if adversity only bends a man,

- it creates in him a power to react that is bound in time to manifest itself.

No inferior man is capable of this.

Only the great man

- brings about good fortune

and

- remains blameless.

It is true that for the time being outward influence is denied him,
because his words have no effect.

Therefore in times of adversity

it is important to be

- strong within

and

- sparing of words.

THE IMAGE

There is no water in the lake:

Thus

the superior man

stakes his life

On following his will.

When the water has flowed out below,
the lake must

- dry up

and

- become exhausted.

That is fate.

This symbolizes an adverse fate in human life.

In such times there is nothing a man can do

but

- acquiesce in his fate

and

- remain true to himself.

This concerns the deepest stratum of his being,
for this alone is superior to all external fate.

The Coca-Cola Company KO under Muhtar Kent

H	T	T	XX	3	2	2	XX	7
H	H	T		3	3	2		8
H	H	T		3	3	2		8
T	T	T		2	2	2		6
H	T	T		3	2	2		7
H	H	T		3	3	2		8

HEXAGRAM 04 - Meng - Youthful Folly

Above KEN KEEPING STILL, MOUNTAIN

Below K'AN THE ABYSMAL, WATER

In this hexagram we are reminded of youth and folly, in two different ways. The image of the upper trigram, Ken, is the mountain, that of the lower, K'an, is water; the spring rising at the foot of the mountain is the image of inexperienced youth. Keeping still is the attribute of the upper trigram; that of the lower is the abyss, danger. Stopping in perplexity on the brink of a dangerous abyss is a symbol of the folly of youth. However, the two trigrams also show the way of overcoming the follies of youth. Water is something that of necessity flows on. When the spring gushes forth, it does not know at first where it will go. But its steady flow fills up the deep place blocking its progress, and success is attained.

THE JUDGMENT

YOUTHFUL FOLLY has success.

It is not I who seek the young fool;

The young fool seeks me.

At the first oracle I inform him.

If he asks two or three times, it is importunity.

If he importunes, I give him no information.

Perseverance furthers.

In the time of youth, folly is not an evil. One may succeed in spite of it, provided one finds an experienced teacher and has the right attitude toward him. This means, first of all, that the youth himself must be conscious of his lack of experience and must seek out the teacher. Without this modesty and this interest there is no guarantee that he has the necessary receptivity, which should express itself in respectful

acceptance of the teacher. This is the reason why the teacher must wait to be sought out instead of offering himself. Only thus can the instruction take place at the right time and in the right way.

A teacher's answer to the question of a pupil ought to be clear and definite like that expected from an oracle; thereupon it ought to be accepted as a key for resolution of doubts and a basis for decision. If mistrustful or unintelligent questioning is kept up, it serves only to annoy the teacher. He does well to ignore it in silence, just as the oracle gives one answer only and refuses to be tempted by questions implying doubt.

Given in addition a perseverance that never slackens until the points are mastered one by one, real success is sure to follow. Thus the hexagram counsels the teacher as well as the pupil.

THE IMAGE

A spring wells up at the foot of the mountain: The image of YOUTH.
Thus the superior man fosters his character
By thoroughness in all that he does.

A spring succeeds in flowing on and escapes stagnation by filling up all the hollow places in its path. In the same way character is developed by thoroughness that skips nothing but, like water, gradually and steadily fills up all gaps and so flows onward.

THE LINES

Six in the third place means:

Take not a maiden who
When she sees a man of bronze,
Loses possession of herself.

Nothing furthers.

A weak, inexperienced man, struggling to rise, easily loses his own individuality when he slavishly imitates a strong personality of higher station. He is like a girl throwing herself away when she meets a strong man. Such a servile approach should not be encouraged, because it is bad both for the youth and the teacher. A girl owes it to her dignity to wait until she is wooed. In both cases it is undignified to offer oneself, and no good comes of accepting such an offer.

1. ("Fool" and "folly" as used in this hexagram should be understood to mean the immaturity of youth and its consequent lack of wisdom, rather than mere stupidity. Parsifal is known as the "pure fool" not because he was dull-witted but because he was inexperienced.)

HEXAGRAM 18 – Ku - Work on What Has Been Spoiled (Decay)

Above KEN KEEPING STILL, MOUNTAIN

Below SUN THE GENTLE, WIND

The Chinese character Ku represents a bowl in whose contents worms are breeding. This means decay. It has come about because the gentle indifference of the lower trigram has come together with the rigid inertia of the upper, and the result is stagnation. Since this implies guilt, the conditions embody a demand for removal of the cause. Hence the meaning of the hexagram is not simply "what has been spoiled" but "work on what has been spoiled."

THE JUDGMENT

WORK ON WHAT HAS BEEN SPOILED

Has supreme success.

It furthers one to cross the great water.

Before the starting point, three days.

After the starting point, three days.

What has been spoiled through man's fault can be made good again through man's work. It is not immutable fate, as, in the time of STANDSTILL, that has caused the state of corruption, but rather the abuse of human freedom. Work toward improving conditions promises well, because it accords with the possibilities of the time. We must not recoil from work and danger - symbolized by crossing of the great water - but must take hold energetically. Success depends, however, on proper deliberation. This is expressed by the lines, "Before the starting point, three days. After the starting point, three days." We must first know the causes of corruption before we can do away with them; hence it is necessary to be cautious during the time before the start. Then we must see to it that the new way is safely entered upon, so that a relapse may be avoided; therefore we must pay attention to the time after the start. Decisiveness and energy must take the place of the inertia and indifference that have led to decay, in order that the ending may be followed by a new beginning.

THE IMAGE

The wind blows low on the mountain: The image Of DECAY.

Thus the superior man stirs up the people
And strengthens their spirit.

When the wind blows low on the mountain, it is thrown back and spoils the vegetation. This contains a challenge to improvement. It is the same with debasing attitudes and fashions; they corrupt human society. To do away with this corruption, the superior man must regenerate society. His methods likewise must be derived from the two trigrams, but in such a way that their effects unfold in orderly sequence.

The superior man must first remove stagnation by stirring up public opinion, as the wind stirs everything, and must then strengthen and tranquilize the character of the people, as the mountain gives tranquility and nourishment to all that grows in its vicinity.