

## Hexagram 49 – Getting Rid of Injustice



*Getting rid of injustice.  
Before the peak of sun,  
Only then harmony between the spiritual path and the world.  
What is true for a part is true for the whole.  
All cause for regret are corrected.*

**Structure:** Lake ☱ above fire ☲. Joyousness above clarity. Joy comes from clarity. Clarity bounds joy.

**Image:** The Chinese character for this hexagram refers to molting, the shedding of the old to make way for new growth.

The times change along with their demands. Just as the year has seasons, life has seasons, each with different qualities and purposes. We understand the nature of change from observing the seasonal cycles of increase and decrease, light and dark, full and empty, seeming opposites transforming into each other.

We see similar patterns of change within our being and with within the world.<sup>1</sup> Once we overcome our willingness to harm others for self-benefit, we can deepen our understanding of interbeing and care for others. When we reduce the darkness of ignorance, we discern how things are.

The wise do not compromise with self-cherishing and hostility for others. They openly discredit these faults within themselves and in the world. Commonly, we find it easier to see the problems caused by others than our own faults, so the wise persist in the search and uproot their harmful beliefs before they imagine they can uproot these harms within the world.

The sage's inward and outward being align with the way of the spirit. What justice we can bring to the world depends upon true practice in overcoming our complicity with what causes harm in the world. The universe moves from within.

**Resolve to Uproot Injustice:** The choices we make in our daily lives reflect our path. If we want beneficial cooperation in the world, then we cooperate. If we want to get out of a dangerous situation, then we move toward what benefits all. When we want interbeing<sup>2</sup>, then compassion and care for especially those beings and Earth harmed unjustly by others naturally arise. We can move in this direction by doing even a small act that benefits all and reducing even a little harm to shape our actions. We recognize the difficulties of our path but know that we can succeed if we patiently and persistently choose to act to bring to life the ways of the spirit.

The root cause of suffering lies not in nature but in the abuse of human freedom, the choice between caring for all beings and the Earth or willingly harming others for self-benefit and then ignoring the suffering caused, the definition of injustice. In an unequal society, injustices abound.

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<sup>1</sup> **World** does not refer to nature but to how people live within nature. The world – civilization, culture, history, society, beliefs, worldly influences – is embedded as a subsystem within the natural system.

<sup>2</sup> **Interbeing** All life and the Earth are one within the spiritual whole: the sacred interbeing. Interbeing emerges out of the harmonious interactions of the parts, and the parts and the whole move in the ways of the spirit. We experience interbeing when we know the sacredness of all life and the Earth and rest within the spirit. The love for the spirit, Earth, and all life unites all and transforms the parts into a devoted community of interbeing that benefits all. Devotion to the spirit by serving the sacred interbeing is the greatest joy of life.

Knowing the root cause, the sage firmly resolves to remove the source of injustice in the world, a commitment based on the union of strength and friendliness. Rather than treat the symptoms of injustice, the wise go for its root in ways that benefit all.

**Develop Supports:** Before acting in the world, the wise seek the council and cooperation of trusted and worthy partners, people upon whom they can rely in determining how to best manifest what benefits all. Getting rid of unjust ways of living to renew the harmony and balance within a community requires the cooperation of many. A community of spiritual friends and fellow practitioners come together to test their understanding of what they have learned through supportive discussion and action.

We also can cooperate with allies in responsible positions who want to benefit the community. They can lend their position of authority and power to further the transformation. By supporting them, we magnify their efforts to influence others. The servant leader serves by following. The wise celebrate the good works of others.

**Act:** The sage transforms selfishness and hostility for others, the root causes of injustice and suffering, by manifesting the spirit within the world in a selfless and beneficial way. Sages do not act upon every demand for change, but they do not ignore repeated calls to address a great injustice. When reforms cannot solve a problem, the time requires a new beginning. Sages then act to transform the fundamental beliefs of the community through bringing into life the ways of the spirit. Once prepared to act, we must act. If we do not, then we demonstrate our ignorance.

Righteous anger motivates us to correct injustices done to us and others. However, such anger can turn into self-righteousness, causing us to indulge a willingness to harm those who get in our way of grasping what we want. When provoked, angry people become contentious and aggressive, acting willfully and without restraint. The means never justify the ends. Sages overcome and tame their dangerous anger by seeing through the emptiness of self-cherishing and ill-will so that they can respond to situations in an agreeable manner.

If they find they do not have the capacity and skill to respond well to a dangerous situation, the wise retreat before they lose themselves. Within this withdrawal, they regain a sense of inner stillness. When calm, we return to rest within the spirit's love and discern the way forward.

The sage does not try to change those who refuse to change, those who reject the path of caring for others and the Earth. If we brand those who cause suffering as evil, then they will think of weapons to defend themselves. Sages avoid excessive haste and ruthlessness when carrying out needed change. Instead, sages inwardly guard against their own self-cherishing and hostility for others. Without an opponent, the weapons of selfishness dull.

Although, we may not have the capacity to completely uproot injustices, the wise do what they can within the situation. Our capacities, position, and forces within the world limit what we can transform; thus, we aim for the doable. We build upon what others have accomplished and trust others to complete the ultimate task.

**Live the Transformation:** We change the world by changing the way we live in it. No transformation is possible in the world without a prior inward transformation of being. The wise use inner awareness to reach gently out into the world, always testing their understanding of the spiritual path by their virtuous

actions. They devote themselves to protecting and caring for the Earth and all life, knowing that love must prevail in the beginning and through the end.

When we go out into the world to recover the community's balance and harmony with other being, we serve as an example for others. We influence others through our actions so that they also can fulfill their responsibilities to do the same. We gain people's trust through restoring our collective sense of purpose and responsibility.

Throughout the whole process of transformation, the sage always has the support of a glad mind to be mindful of the spiritual ways and to have the confidence to act. This joy comes from living the spiritual path. A clear presence keeps the joy within bounds and frees us from delusion.

The Creative calls on people to fulfill their responsibility to care for Creation. Only by following this path can we answer the sacred command. We make the highest offering possible by getting rid of what harms within ourselves and recovering our balance and harmony with Creation.

**Line 1:** The line binds itself to complicity with ways that harm others and the Earth. It is not possible for it to act on its own.

**Line 2:** The wise in positions of influence are not in the vanguard of change. They wait for the trust of those above and below for the need to get rid of injustice and recover balance and harmony. When the need for change is widely shared, they come forward to assist in carrying out the determined course of action, which bodes well.

**Line 3:** We experience two common mistakes when the need for change arises: ruthless haste or excessive hesitation. Sages do not heed every demand for change of how things are but act only upon widely known injustices. When the need for change has wide agreement, people can believe in the need for a great transformation. For fire to act effectively against water, it must act with absolute firmness. All of the strong lines must form a single unit.

**Line 4:** The line no longer causes harm to itself and others as its inner spiritual being accords with its actions in the world. The line has successfully subdued its self-cherishing and hostility for others, thus transforming itself into a sage. The virtuous and trustworthy sage persists in the ways of the spirit.

**Line 5:** The line has no need for divination for all to know that a great transformation has taken place. Sages powerfully act to bring to life the spiritual path within the world, fiercely opposing the forces of selfishness and aversion and protecting those that have suffered harm. When sages bring about a transformation within the world, large clear guiding lines become visible and understandable to everyone, and all spontaneously support it.

**Line 6:** People willing to harm others for self-benefit change their behavior in response to the transforming time, but their hearts have not changed. They appear to change because they fear the authority of others and so minimize their harmful behavior. However once conditions stabilize, the wise keep steadfast watch over such influences so that they do not act up and endanger the recovered balance and harmony within the community.