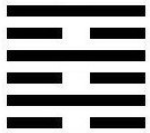


Hexagram 64 – Settling



Settling.

Blessings.

Carelessness with the small and ordinary

endangers the crossing.

Benefit from yielding to wisdom.

Structure: Fire ☲ above water ☵. Fire rises, and water falls.

Fire flames upward, and water seeps downward. These opposing forces when brought together remain in an unstable state of disorder, unrelated and unsettled. Nevertheless, the hexagram represents a transition from the old to the new era, like the change from the bleakness of winter to the new growth of spring. Disorder becomes order. This transition has not yet occurred, but the wise have prepared the conditions for it.

In the hexagram, strong lines appear in weak places, and yielding lines in strong positions. Even though outwardly none of the lines belong in their proper place, the hexagram does have the pattern of alternating strong and yielding line, which suggests an inner order. The strong and weak lines have the relationship such that if they simply exchanged positions, the hexagram would achieve a high level of stability. The wise achieve that kind of settlement within their lives and in the world. They separate opposing forces and put them in their proper places as carefully as if handling fire and water so that they do not destroy the other.

When self-cherishing and hostility for others entangle us in the willingness to harm for self-benefit, we lack inner clarity and awareness of the spirit: we follow our cultural conditioning rather than the spiritual path. To handle these forces properly, we must have the correct standpoint. In the midst of unsettlement, the wise choose to overcome an unsettled state of mind and stay present with the sacred whole and its purpose to care for the Earth Interbeing. Within this still point, the sage opens to spiritual wisdom and guidance to discern how to prepare for the new era by cultivating the conditions for it. The settlement of the world depends upon resting within the sacred rather than in ourselves or others.

In unsettled times, the willingness to harm for self-benefit dominates. People vie for honor, plunder for profit, contest for victory, and seek power, depriving others to benefit themselves. They use intellectual brightness outwardly, indulge their negative emotions, and give free rein to their desires. Deluded by objects of sense, they let the artificial take over affairs and deny the real. People yield to acting out all sorts of emotions and cravings, busying themselves with schemes. The ways of deluded beliefs lead to grief.

The wise who have inwardly settled further the ways of the spirit within the world. Without applying what we have learned to the world, our inner settlement has no meaning. The wise attend carefully to the important but overlooked details of ordinary life to successfully transform conditions. Rather than taking advantage of the moment to benefit themselves personally, sages discern how to benefit all within rising experience. The process produces the what we seek.

This work of settling within the world takes time and a hard penetrating effort, but it comes with the great joy of bringing to life the ways of the spirit. The wise remain steadfast and upright, using their strength to banish harmful tendencies by persistently choosing to act in ways that benefit all. Our task of leading the world out of confusion to the ways of the spirit promises success as we have a goal that can unite forces tending in different directions: learning how to live within and care for the Earth Interbeing.

Settlement both within ourselves and in the world proceeds naturally and does not depend on a forced effort. Yet the wise prepare the conditions for settlement to increase the potential for settlement. The new era suddenly appears on its own, sparked by the accumulated efforts of many.

Upon settlement, the light of sages shines forth anew, and they make their influence felt among those who have faith in the path and virtuous actions that benefit all. The new era appears all the more glorious by contrast with the misery of the old. Such times resemble spring when the stagnation of winter blossoms into a fruitful time.

Yet nothing comes to an end as all changes. This last hexagram of the Book of Changes points to what we can observe in nature: every end contains in it a new beginning. What settles becomes unsettled, making way for ongoing growth and creativity, and so the cycle begins again. The spiritual path never ends. The Book of Changes is a book of the future.

Line 1: The anxious weak line, at the bottom of a dangerous situation, feels compelled to act but does not clearly assess its abilities and powers nor perceives the consequences of its actions. It rashly tries to advance, which ends in its humiliation.

Line 2: As the time to act has not yet come, the line waits to settle inwardly before it acts to settle the world. While waiting, the line does not give up nor lose sight of the goal. It remains strong and steadfast without becoming impatient.

Line 3: The time has not yet settled. If the line used force to impose its will, it would create much harm. The line benefits from mastering its harmful conditioning to deepen its spiritual being.

Line 4: The line has freed itself from its harmful cultural conditioning, making itself so strong in resolve to fulfill its responsibilities to care for the Earth Interbeing that no misgivings arise in the great effort to renew its harmony and balance. Sages rise up and subjugate by their virtues the forces on all sides that would destroy life and the Earth for personal gain. At the same time, the sages create the condition for what benefits all.

Line 5: The line has overcome its cultural conditioning by its unshakeable steadfastness. It manages itself correctly and can settle all things in the same manner. The light of the sage shines forth anew and makes its influence felt among those who have faith in the ways of the spirit. The transformation has brought about a new era, which appears all the more glorious when compared with the misery of the old.

Line 6: At the end of unsettlement, settlement occurs. However, if the line drops its vigilance and gets carried away with victory, it spoils the settlement. Acting without limits or discipline in the time of settlement leads to unsettling. The devoted sage remains on guard for the inevitable reemergence of self-cherishing.