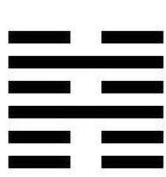


Hexagram 39 – Blocked from the Spirit



Blocked from the spirit.

Benefit from spiritual wisdom.

No benefit from ignorantly advancing on what harms on your own.

Benefit from viewing the spirit within.

Caring for the Earth and life of great value.

Structure: Dangerous water ☵ above, and a mountain ☶ below. A dangerous abyss lies ahead, and a steep inaccessible mountain rises from behind.

The stillness of the mountain points to the way to overcome what blocks us from living the ways of the spirit¹. Directly advancing on our own to resist what we oppose leads into the mountain, an impasse where we discover ourselves alone. If we retreat toward what supports us, we find refuge, spiritual guidance, and partners. By retreating, we find the ways to care for the Earth and all life.

The sacred has an innate influence upon all beings. When we hold ourselves apart from the Earth and life, denying their sacredness, we feel incomplete and out of place. If we cannot quickly recover from such harmful beliefs, we fall into the realm of parts: the self and other. We see ourselves as the center of existence, the point of creation, and all others and the Earth as subject to our will.

Many people who do not believe in the sacredness of the living Earth replace the sacred with themselves, believing in their superiority and entitlement to dominate the Earth, other people, and all life for their own benefit. When authorized violence enforces these beliefs, oppressors plunder the Earth, destroy life, dispossessing and exploiting others to have their way.

These dominants maintain their power through cultural conditioning that transmits their beliefs and values. By stimulating our wanting, hostility for others, and the willingness to harm, the dominants keeps us in their thrall and complicit in the harms they cause. People compete for the rewards of wealth and privileges stolen from the oppressed and plundered from the Earth. Persistent cultural conditioning entangles us further to the point that we identify with the dominant system. This way of living becomes easier over the years as it appears normal.

We have a deeply embedded willingness to harm others to get what we want or do not want. We stumble into these dangerous feelings every day: the sharp word, a negative judgment, anger, resentment, obsessive wanting, or over-consuming. But we should not allow such entanglements to persist as lasting conditions. When challenged with harmful feelings and thoughts, the wise do not ignore or struggle against them. Instead, through their flaws they cultivate their spiritual being and path.

A primary spiritual practice moves us through harmful conditioning and faults:

¹ **Ways of the Spirit:** A loving care for all, knowing the sacred within experience, living within Earth and moral limits, and acting in ways that resist in small ways what harms and that restores and renews the well-being of the Earth Interbeing, the Great Purpose.

Within presence, the awareness of the sacred wholeness, identify what you do not like about an interaction or situation that disturbs you. Clearly define your judgement of it. Rest in presence with your judgment of what disturbs you.

What makes you so sensitive to the experience that disturbs you? What unwanted fault or aspect of yourself do you project unto the other? Rest with that contemplation until you find the connection between the experience and yourself.

Change the perspective of the experience from your view to that of the other. How do they experience the situation? What are they feeling? How do you appear to them? Rest with that

Change the view of the experience to that of the sacred. What of the sacred do you see within the experience and its life lesson for you? Look for beauty, joy, meaning, and love within the experience. Rest with that.

See what transpires behind what appeared to you. See within the situation love coming through the aspect of what you do not like about yourself. Rest with that.

What inner qualities do I need to unfold and what wisdom do I need to free myself from projections and conditioning? Rest with that

When we experience sacred love coming through our harmful wants and aversions, our view of the situation changes, and we have found our way back to wholeness, a wholeness within ourselves and in the world, as well as the way forward through the dangers and difficulties we experience that reflect the ways of the spirit.

We free ourselves from our culturally conditioned complicity in harming the Earth Interbeing by practicing our love for all beings and the Earth in how we live. We can practice living the ways of the spirit within our close relations and with the Earth, daily reducing our faults and increasing our virtues of moral discipline, justice, wisdom, and love. If self-cherishing or hostility arise, we just stop whatever we are doing until we can regain our harmony with others and the Earth.

By gradually extending this way of living to ever more complex situations within our circle of influence, we find others practicing in similar ways, especially among those most oppressed. We can act with others who align with the ways of the spirit to transform what harms Earth and all life into a loving, caring wholeness.

Taking the time and making the effort to cultivate our wholeness with the sacred and Earth Interbeing may seem to lead away from the goal of overcoming the oppressor, but the wise understand they need to free themselves of their own deluded beliefs and conditioning before they can know the way forward. They recognize that stopping the harm of the oppressors requires us to first break our enchantment with its ways. We explore our harmful feelings of blaming or indifference and learn how conditioned beliefs weakens our resolve to love and benefit all. Instead of stiffening their willingness to harm others, the wise yield to wholeness.

When we quietly and perseveringly work at the removal of our resistance to the sacred way of living, the way opens without our having to use force. In the same way, we can then further the ways of the spirit within the world. The sage treads only upon paths that accord with the ways of the spirit. The less we apply power outwardly, the greater its effect.

We use the practice of dissolving what separates us from the spirit and Earth Interbeing to shape and test our spiritual practice both within ourselves and in the world. Our spiritual path deepens as we become whole.

Line 1: At the beginning, when difficulties first arise, the line recognizes its lack of capacity to move through them. It turns inward to deepen its spiritual being and discern its path through the difficulties.

Line 2: Without hesitation, the line puts itself in danger to fulfill its duty to care for the Earth Interbeing as it has complete faith in the transformative ways of the spirit.

Line 3: Advancing directly against those who harm the Earth and life leads to danger and isolation. Turning toward friendly support and deepening our spiritual path proves our wisdom.

Line 4: The wise line retreats from the dangers it does not have the capacities to overcome on its own and joins with the stronger and wiser to care for the Earth and all life.

Line 5: The sage struggles against what harms, the crisis which imperils the whole community, which attracts strong partners to come and support its efforts of caring for the sacred Earth Interbeing.

Line 6: The sage has overcome the obstructions in ways that has matured its spiritual being. It benefits to see the sacred within all and to follow the ways of the spirit.