

Hexagram 34 – Great Power



Great power

From living the ways of wholeness.¹

Structure:

- Below ☳, the Creative and strength. Above ☳, action, thunder. Thunder above heaven.
- Inner strength of the Creative united with strong directed outer movement. A strong inner resolve makes actions firm, actions complete a strong resolve.

Images:

- A ram butts forcefully against a hedge that obstructs its way and entangles its horns in the brambles.
- A wagon cannot move if the axle breaks. Stronger axles allow wagons to carry heavier loads.

The hexagram marks the second month (March-April) of the Chinese calendar and the spring equinox, the time when a firm resolve mounts with great strength and comes to power. Strength that passes beyond an appropriate measure brings the danger of an overreliance on one's own strength.

The less we use our power outwardly, the greater its effect. We need great resolve to overcome what divides us: our fears, our harmful conditioned beliefs, our complicity with what harms. We need great resolve to live the ways of wholeness. Such inner power that can both restrain our harmful beliefs and behaviors while bringing wholeness to life within our relationships does not show externally but can move heavy burdens. Resolve makes it possible to do what needs to be done. In this way, the sacred path of wholeness transforms us and our experience of the world.

Many use their strength to self-righteously get what they want and take advantage of the moment and others. Whenever they feel blocked or frustrated, people who esteem their strength act obstinately. While people who rely on their own strength might consider themselves brave, they act rashly and cause harm because they lack justice and the capacity to harmonize with others. Doing whatever comes to mind, the selfish indulge themselves. Danger lies in becoming entangled in what we cannot change and not considering the consequences of acting. Those who cannot change themselves have no capacity to change the world.

If self-cherishing and hostility for others obscure the perception and understanding of a difficult situation, the wise retreat to avoid making things worse through imprudent actions. Instead of stiffening obstinacy, the wise yield. By focusing on overcoming our fears and complicity with what harms, we can discern how to move with a kind heart through difficulties in ways that benefit all.

¹ **Ways of Wholeness:** We interbe with all our sacred Earth Interbeing relations with love, respect, and care. We know the sacred within all our interactions and open to the loving path through problems and dangers. We live within Earth limits and moral bounds to sustain the sacred balance and harmony of the Earth Interbeing. We reciprocate what we have taken and share the gifts we receive. We lovingly fulfill our own responsibilities to the Earth Interbeing as whole beings, encouraging others to do the same. (Rev. 7-16-24)

When we quietly and persistently work at removing what keeps us complicit with what harm, the way will open. When we clearly understand the situation, then we can reshape the conditions surrounding the difficulties. The less we apply power outwardly, the greater its effect.

Once we have mastered our fears and overcome our selfishness and hostility, we can act to bring to life the ways of wholeness with great care. The sage treads only upon paths that benefits all and avoids doing anything which would disrupt its resting within the spirit. Outwardly, sages appear lacking, but inwardly they have more than enough. Unmoved by worldly concerns, their considered and decisive actions complete their resolve to care for the sacred Earth and all life.

Line 1: The first line, deluded by its understanding of the situation and hungry for accomplishment, imprudently acts at the beginning and experiences a dangerous setback.

Line 2: The line governs itself firmly and responds to the world carefully. Its great power does not show as an external force but as an influence. Actions in harmony with the ways of wholeness have great power.

Line 3: We have tendencies to forcefully impose our will upon others and situations to have our way. The ram butts the hedge because it blocks its way. Those who use excessive strength lack the capacity to harmonize and create danger for themselves. The wise resist the impulse and allow the situation to unfold on its own.

Line 4: Success comes to the wise who gradually and carefully remove what impedes fulfilling their duties of care to the Earth Interbeing. Resistance gives way without external force and no longer impedes effective action.

Line 5: The line gives up its stubborn attitude and yields to the advancing ways of wholeness without regret.

Line 6: The line advances too far and comes to the point it cannot move forward or retreat. Whatever it does complicates the situation further. Instead of stiffening its obstinacy, the line yields and allows the situation to unfold on its own. In this way, its mistakes do not last.