

Hexagram 12 – Obstruction



To obstruction belongs immoral people.

Not fulfilling the sacred purpose to further life on Earth.

The great purpose going, the selfish coming.

Image Tradition

To obstruction belongs immoral people.

Not fulfilling the sacred purpose to further life on Earth.

The great purpose going, the selfish coming.

*By consequence of that heaven and earth not coming together
and beings not interbeing indeed.*

Above and below not coming together and without the sacred way indeed.

Inside weakness and outside force.

Inside yielding and outside unyielding.

Inside the selfish and outside the sage.

The ways of selfishness long-living.

The ways of the sage dissolving indeed.

Patterns of Wisdom

Heaven and earth not coming together. Obstruction.

Sages further life on Earth by carefully using the sacred ways to expel the obstructions.

Sages reject the honors and luxuries of the privileges available to them.

Structure:

- Sacred ☵ above Earth ☷, sacred rising and Earth sinking deeper.
- Darkness is within, light without. The above moves away from the below.

Image: The sacred and Earth move apart, numbing all things.

The hexagram represents the time of disintegration, marking the 7th month in the Chinese calendar (August to September), when the encroaching forces of darkness end the seasons of growth. The Book of Changes holds that the union of the sacred and Earth grows life, and their disunion brings an end to growth. Diminishing light and growth define autumn. Natural changes bring about an unstoppable withdrawal of the conditions for growth.

The self-centered culture increases its willingness to harm others for self-benefit and then ignores the suffering of those it harms. Those who benefit from dominating and exploiting others and the Earth resist and deny the sacred. Immorality overwhelms caring for others, all life, and the Earth. Divisiveness prevails. Ignorantly, people destroy for self-benefit the very conditions required for life to continue on

Earth. They turn away from the sacred ways and do not follow the sacred ways.¹ In such a disadvantaged time, the immoral, selfish, and indulgent oppress and harm all life and the Earth.

When surrounded by those who use force to get what they want and ignore what the community and Earth Interbeing need, the wise retreat rather than futilely throwing their lives into harm's way. They know in such times they cannot move others toward furthering the Earth Interbeing nor singlehandedly change the harmful culture.

The wise steadfastly hold to the sacred ways and reject exercising the privileges available to them. While waiting for the harmful culture to collapse from within, the wise deepen their sacred being and compassionately relieve the suffering of others. They carefully find small ways to live the sacred ways to overcome what harms. By not yielding to what harms, they succeed. When things come to an extreme, they inevitably reverse. When the time for growth comes again, the path again emerges to bring into the world the ways that further life on Earth.

We can only change ourselves and stop harming others and the Earth. We cannot expect others or miracles to change our ways. Only we can undo the harm we have inflicted and care for the suffering we have caused. Sages bring to life the sacred by living the sacred ways.

Line 1: The line pulls out by the roots its complicity with the harmful ways of the oppressive culture, separating itself from what harms. Its spiritual being grows by furthering life on Earth, the sacred purpose.

Line 2: Conditions obstruct wisdom. The line devotedly protects and preserves the sacred ways by safeguarding this wisdom within its life. In small ways, the line furthers life on Earth and maintains the integrity of the sacred ways.

Line 3: The line feels shame for the harm it does and allows.

Line 4: The time nears when the time of obstruction ends. Sacred inspiration moves the line to joyfully further life on Earth.

Line 5: Obstructions give way. The line furthers life on Earth by overcoming what has harmed life and the Earth. It rests within tranquility.

Line 6: According to natural law, when things come to an extreme, they inevitably reverse. Oppression weakens, and the sacred ways strengthen. The line turns from efforts to overcome what oppresses toward furthering life on Earth, which brings great joy to all.

¹ **The Ways of the Sacred Earth Interbeing:** We have the sacred purpose to further life on Earth in ways that benefit all. We know the equality of all life. We seek wisdom to know how to interbe and further life on Earth. We interbe with other beings harmoniously and compassionately. We give back to the Earth Interbeing for what we have taken to survive. We self-discipline ourselves to not harm others and live humbly. We respond compassionately to the suffering of others and remedy what harms. We assume accountability for how we have furthered life on Earth in these sacred ways. (7-4-25)