

Hexagram 56 – Stranger in a Strange Land



Stranger in a strange land.

Adapt to the circumstances.

Stranger in a strange land: furthering life on Earth propitious.

Image Tradition

Stranger in a strange land. Adapt to circumstances.

The flexible obtains the inner center and firmly persists within the world.

Stopping and also adhering to clear awareness.

That adapts to circumstances.

Stranger in a strange land: furthering life on Earth propitious indeed.

The time of being a stranger in a strange land belongs to benevolently furthering life on Earth.

Structure:

- Fire ☲ over mountain ☶. Knowing within stillness.
- The mountain does not move. Fire quickly moves and does not remain stationary. I

At some point on the path, we experience being a stranger in a strange land. It began with distancing ourselves from the ways of our harmful culture. We no longer felt we belong to the culture that promotes the willingness to harm others for self-benefit and then ignore the suffering we cause. A yearning for our true home grew within us that set us on the sacred path to return to the Earth Interbeing. Even with our inspiration to interbe with other beings, we yet have to learn relearn how to live within the the Earth Interbeing as we been away for too many years. We feel between worlds.

Knowing the meaning of life and our sacred purpose to further life on Earth guide us back home through the ever changing landscape. The wise remain aware, calm, and focused on the one important thing: fulfilling their life's sacred purpose responsibly.

As we now serve and center on the Earth Interbeing, we experience the challenges of a stranger when interacting with others who still identify with the harmful cultures. The others do not understand us and speak ill of us. Remaining reserved and humble avoids becoming entangled in the culture from which we feel increasingly estranged while keeping us aligned with the values of the Earth Interbeing. We strengthen our capacities to discern what benefits all life and the Earth and to act accordingly.

Those without the aspiration to further life on Earth within their lives and in the world waste their lives on the trivial. In their pursuit of pleasure, they become careless and neglect their duties. They play with life and accomplish nothing. Even injury does not deter their constant disregard for the life and the Earth. We endanger others and the Earth when we believe that we have a greater value than others, willingly harming others and the Earth for self-benefit and ignoring the suffering we cause.

The wise never forget that their true home lies within the sacred Earth Interbeing. They discipline themselves to resist the ways of the self-centered culture lest they become distracted and forget their destination. They go their way without fear of harm by remaining upright and steadfast, cautious and reserved, adapting to external conditions. Strangers endanger themselves when they behave arrogantly toward others they consider beneath them, or they try to prove their importance to those they want to impress. Beings avoid the overbearing or those who demand attention.

Strangers in a strange land use their spiritual path to learn how to live within the Earth Interbeing. Because of the difficulties in finding one's place within Earth Interbeing realm, the wise, before they act, first understand a challenging situation to discern the path through its uncertainties. Once they understand what to do, then they act in the ways that further life. Yet, even then, the wise keep to furthering life in small ways as a stranger they has forgotten the ways of the Earth Interbeing to do otherwise. They keep their will great but expectations about what they can do small. Through their self-discipline, they avoid conflict with others.

Danger arises from making ignorant or arrogant choices and indulging our whims without considering the consequences of our choices. The wise follow the guidance of the Great Sage through our transition to further life on Earth. We learn how to further life in whatever situation we find ourselves by removing our willingness to harm with as few entanglements as possible under the circumstances. We avoid causing more harm.

As long as we remain grounded in fulfilling our responsibility to care for the Earth Interbeing, we move on our path well and find companions to share the work of achieving the great purpose. When we stay with the sacred, we always will have a refuge.

The fluidity of our ever changing transition keeps us moving through the phases of becoming Earth interbeings. Whatever phase we inhabit becomes our temporary resting place, an interim situation on our path. We travel our path by the choices we make. To keep us moving toward Earth Interbeing, we choose the harder but right thing to do.

Line 1: The weak line at the bottom remains entangled with the harmful culture. Even when the harmful culture dangerously collapses from within, the line persists in its willingness to harm for self-benefit and ignore the suffering it causes. Ignorantly, the line moves toward calamity.

Line 2: The line has distanced itself from the harmful culture and has embarked on the path to further life on Earth. It pauses on the path to align its values with those of the Earth Interbeing by removing its faults. Knowing that it has much to learn, the line humbly practices living the values of the Earth Interbeing and learns from its mistakes.

Line 3: The stranger ignorantly believes that it has completed the path to further life on Earth. It arrogantly believes it knows best how to further life on Earth, causing much harm. The line has lost the

path and sacred support. It meddles in affairs and controversies that do not concern it, thus losing its path and sacred guidance. When a stranger in a strange land thus alienates others, it endangers itself.

Line 4: The line has disciplined itself well on the path and has achieved a growing inner stability and opportunities to further life on Earth within the world. However, the line, conscious of being a stranger in a strange land, does not feel it yet belongs to the Earth Interbeing and anxiously defends what it has learned. The line knows it has not yet reached its place.

Line 5: A stranger in a strange land knows how to meet the situation and others appropriately. The line relates well with those below and above and finds a sphere of activity to fulfill its responsibilities through the support it receives. By yielding to the sacred within all life, the virtuous line has learned how to live in the Earth Interbeing ways by persistently sacrificing its self-cherishing and centering on what benefits the sacred life and the Earth.

Line 6: The line forgets it is a stranger and loses its sacred guidance and path. The line harms others and itself by its pleasure-seeking, carelessness, and neglect of duty. Even injury does not make it seek wisdom. It achieves nothing.