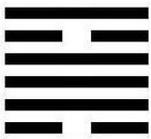


Hexagram 50 Vessel



The vessel.

Knowing the origin, meaningful.

Sacred influence pervading and nourishing all.

Image Tradition

The vessel. Connecting the visible and invisible, truly.

Using nourishing and the sacred knowing what to do.

Sacred influence pervading and nourishing all: completely transforming, truly.

The sage offers to the sacred its efforts to nourish the sacred within all.

And also nourishes the wise and worthy.

The foundational principles and experience: discriminating awareness radiant.

The yielding to the sacred advances and moves above.

By yielding to the sacred and harmoniously nourishing all,

The sage's inner being conforms with the sacred.

The sage acquires the center in which its knows how to face inner and outer changes.

Structure:

- Wood below ☵, and fire above ☲. Nourishing and penetration below, clarity and wisdom above.
- Flame kindled by wood and wind. Wood nourishes the flame.

The ancients used a ceremonial vessel to make a food offering to their ancestors and then to share the food with the gathered. The Well (Hexagram 48) represents the nourishment of all. This hexagram describes an offering to the sacred and the nourishment of those on the sacred path.

Cooking changes food into what can nourish us. Our awareness of the sacred and our sacred nature serve as the vessel in which we transform ourselves into sages, those who offer their lives to furthering the wellbeing of life on Earth. We penetrate our difficulties and obstacles with awareness to know our sacred nature and to learn the path to removing the ways we harm life and the Earth, harms that obscure our sacred nature. Knowing what to do gives us a path.

A fire depends upon a constant supply of wood below. Awareness of the sacred provides the fire, and our faults give us the fuel for the transformation. We come to the sacred through our faults. They give us means to deepen our spiritual being. The energy released from overcoming faults renews and brightens awareness of the sacred and our sacred being.

Sages know how to further life on Earth, a knowing that flows from their awareness of the sacred equality and unity of all, and they act upon that knowing. Their every action expresses their sacred nature.

Sages offer their wisdom to those on the sacred path. With compassionate understanding and use of their own lives as an example, the wise teach and create opportunities for others to practice the sacred ways.

The truly sacred does not manifest itself apart from life. Sages bring forth the ways of the spirit through how they live. We worship the sacred by caring for the Earth Interbeing. This brings liberation from what harms, true understanding, and great benefits for all and the Earth.

The sage transforms its life, and the sacred illumines it. Sages balance themselves between the sacred and their beingness, the ocean and the wave. From this centering place, the sage receives the sacred knowing and compassionately practice that knowing within the world. The sage roots itself within the sacred and bears its fruit within the world. The sacred knowing of what to do and compassion serve as the two wings of a sage, connecting the visible to the invisible, being to interbeing.

Within a sacred awareness, we cook our self-centeredness and willingness to harm to become a sacred offering.

Line 1: Before using the vessel, the cook turns it over to empty it of unwanted remains. At the beginning of the sacred path, we empty ourselves of our self-centeredness and willingness to harm others, life, and the Earth. Thus, we overcome what has kept us apart from the sacred and the Earth Interbeing.

Line 2: When the selfless line limits itself to what benefits all, self-centered others will discourage and disapprove of the line's behavior. However, the line remains firm in its path, going its own way and freeing itself of entanglements. It protects its path from doubt and ambition. As it has aligned itself with valued ways, it has freed itself of wanting the approval of others.¹

Line 3: The line does not yet know how to further life on Earth as it has not received the sacred call. It remains vulnerable to temptations to harm others for self-benefit. The ways of its self-centeredness do not apply to the sacred Earth Interbeing. Once it has overcome its self-centeredness and learns how to live with other beings on the Earth, the line will have the sacred blessing of knowing its way to further life on Earth.

Line 4: The line represents those responsible for important affairs, but the line does not have the competence nor wisdom to do the work. Its efforts fail, like a sacred vessel overturning and spoiling the prepared offering.

Line 5: The line balances firm self-discipline with yielding to the sacred knowing, allowing it to serve others without compromising its path. The line, without ambitions of its own, seeks the guidance and support of sacred for its actions.

Line 6: The sage has transformed its life into spiritual nourishment for others, fulfilling the purpose of the spiritual path. A firm self-discipline and yielding to the sacred knowing of what to do become one.

¹ **Common values of furthering life on Earth (work in progress):** loving awareness of the sacred and the sacredness of all life and the Earth, reverent contentment and wonder for arising experience, humbly surrendering to the sacred knowing of how to further life on Earth, compassion, harmoniously interacting with others by knowing the sacred equality, unity, and interdependence of life on Earth, of life, equitable sharing of the Earth commons, acting in valued ways that further life on Earth, restoring and renewing our balance with Earth and life to preserve our mutual wellbeing. By living in these ways, we deepen our loving awareness of the sacred and sacredness of all life and the Earth.