

Hexagram 29 – Skillful with Dangers

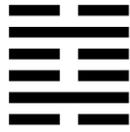
 *Skillful with dangers.
Life aligned with sacredness.
Centered on the sacred. Disciplined strength.
Moving with the sacred possesses honor.*

Image Tradition

*Skillful with dangers. Severe danger indeed.
Stream spreading out and not overflowing.
Sacred movement not letting go one's faith within danger.*

*Centered on the sacred. Disciplined strength
Thereupon using the solid in the center indeed.
Moving with the sacred possesses honor. Letting go what harms possesses achievement indeed.
Dangers of the sacred: not permitting rising above indeed.
Dangers of the Earth: mountains, rivers, and consecrated places.*

*The powerful guard what they have with danger.
The sacred time of facing severe danger benefits from furthering life on Earth.*

Ideogram: Earth and an abyss.

Action: venture and fall.

The trigram  images water flowing through a dangerous abyss. Many cultures see flowing water as a metaphor for our life journey. Our lives sometimes pass through times of severe difficulties and dangers, like a stream cascading through a dangerous rocky gorge. Water has ways to keep flowing past whatever dangers it encounters. In similar ways, the sacred path offers us ways to get through challenging dangers.

The word *yi* in the *Yi Ching's* title means unpredictable change. We experience *yi* when chaos irrupts and unmoors what we had taken for granted. Rapid change outstrips the capacities of life to adapt. Corrupt leadership and great suffering increase as the willingness to harm for self-benefit escalates. The chaos dissolves the very structure and organization of life on Earth and of human society and institutions. As the chaos increases, life threatening dangers deepen.

The *Yi Ching* steers us through the destructive chaos of overwhelming change. For millennia, people have consulted the sacred through the *Yi Ching* to learn how to overcome crises.

While we do not have the capacities to tame the chaos, we have complete responsibility for how we respond to it. The harmful culture that has caused the dangers has conditioned us to live its harmful ways and wrong views: self-centeredness and willingness to harm others for self-benefit. Our harmful conditioning obstructs knowing how to get out of the chaos. We cannot solve a problem with the same views and ways that caused the problem. Within rapidly changing times, we have the imperative to undo our conditioning by changing our harmful ways and views.

The sacred path of the *Yi Ching* cultivates the supports we need to respond well to the dangers of chaotic times. A strong discipline overcomes what keeps us in danger, our willingness to harm for self-benefit and self-centeredness. When we center on the sacred, we nurture our natural capacities of sharing what we have with all life through mutual aid. Our compassionate nature relieves the suffering of beings and takes on the responsibility to reduce the causes of suffering. This then circles back to strengthening our capacity to respond to danger in valued ways that further life on Earth. ¹

These capacities alone do not free us of our vulnerabilities to danger, but they do give us the skillful means to navigate the crises and move us to further life on Earth. If we do not respond in these sacred ways, negative energies will carry us into even deeper danger. By practicing what furthers life on Earth, we know how to skillfully respond to chaos. We live the changes we want to see in the world.

Line 1: Because the line knows only how to self-benefit, it has no support from others within dangerous times. Whatever it does will only endanger it more.

Line 2: The strong and balanced line faces severe dangers beyond its capacities to escape. However, it does not lose its sacred path. The line does not make its situation worse by ignorantly reacting to danger.

Line 3: Every step forward or backward leads to more danger. The line cannot escape. Action only moves it into deeper danger. Instead, the line calmly stops and allows the situation to unfold until it knows what to do.

Line 4: The line does not have the capacities to maneuver on its own the dangers it faces. In the darkest of nights, the sacred responds to our pleas for help through the *Yi Ching*.

Line 5: The strong line manages the danger and nears its deliverance from it. It does not allow its ambitions to impose a direction upon the situation, which would only reentangle it with the danger. Instead, the line continues to follow the path of least resistance by transforming its ambitiousness to surrendering to the sacred ways.

Line 6: Those who turn away from the sacred path of furthering life on Earth Interbeing lose themselves irremediably in their faults and have no prospect of escaping danger. They bind themselves to what harms and ruin themselves.

¹ **Ways and values of the sacred path to further life on Earth (work in progress):** awakening and maturing our loving sacred being, living humbly, joyful surrender to sacred wisdom to know what to do, compassionate action, harmonious interactions, equitable sharing and caring for the Earth, responding to change in ways that further life on Earth, and preserving our inner balance with the sacred, life, and Earth. By living these ways, we deepen our loving awareness of the sacred and reverence for the sacredness of life and Earth.