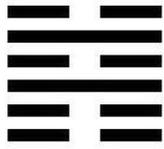


## Hexagram 39 – Obstructed



*Obstructed.*  
*Benefit from retreat.*  
*No benefit from advancing.*  
*Benefit from viewing the sacred in the person.*  
*Discernment, significant.*

### Image Tradition

*Obstructed. Difficulties indeed.*  
*Severe difficulties ahead, indeed.*  
*Viewing the difficulties also stopping.*  
*Truly knowing.*

*Limping. Benefit from inward retreat.*  
*Removing harms acquires the center balance indeed.*  
*No benefit from advancing in the world.*  
*One's path's comes to an end.*

*Benefit from viewing the sacredness in the person.*  
*Removing harms possesses achievement indeed.*  
*Appropriate position. Discernment, significant.*  
*Using correcting of oneself.*  
*The transformative time of obstruction benefits furthering life on Earth.*

**Structure:** Dangerous water ☵ above, and a mountain ☶ below. A dangerous abyss lies ahead, and a steep inaccessible mountain rises from behind.

The hexagram describes the situation when we do not know what to do because obstacles of our own making block our knowing. Dangers surround us. In such a time, the wise stop from advancing and retreat inward to learn what to do. The foolish do not want to retreat but rather to ambitiously advance despite their ignorance. They quickly find themselves surrounded by even more dangers and cut off from any supports.

Our wrong views and harmful ways obstruct our sacred nature, which causes confusion and emotional turmoil from not knowing what to do. Our confusion and anxious feelings warn us that we move into danger. At the first signs of danger, the wise pause and retreat inward to discern how to respond. By investigating the roots of our confusion and feelings, we discover the connections of our intentions to our self-centeredness and willingness to harm for self-benefit.

We renounce our dangerous intention that brought us to this impasse. However, we still must respond to the situation that elicited our unwise reaction, but we still do not know what to do. Asking the Yi Ching for its guidance at this point helps us understand the conditions of the situation. We learn how to further life on Earth through our actions or nonaction. The wise yield to this requested guidance to harmonize with the sacred ways and values.

On the sacred path we how to flexibly respond in ways that further life on Earth. We cultivate our abilities to face change and whatever we encounter flexibly and openly, with ease, lightness, and simplicity.

When we lack capacities to flow with an ever changing reality, we experience the heaviness of moving through what hinders our flowing with change. Our self-centeredness deludes us into believing that we never change, that we do not have to change. We focus on changing others and the world but not ourselves. Keeping ourselves from changing with the flow of life causes us difficulties, hardships, and distress. We limp through life.

By overcoming our self-centeredness, we center on the sacred. We know life constantly changes and diminishes our reluctance to change ourselves and open to flexibly responding to change. When we do not know what to do, we retreat inward to discern how to change through a difficult situation. It is always easier to change ourselves, the path of least resistance, than to try to change what we cannot change: others and the world. We freely change as life changes all the time.

By retreating inward, we investigate what elicited the warning of dangers. We then focus on transcending that self-centered aspect of ourselves along with its associated willingness to harms others for self-benefit. When we try to change others to improve our self-centered situation, we cannot avoid causing them harm.

We transcend our self-centeredness by knowing our sacredness and the sacredness of all life. Abiding in our sacredness furthers life on Earth as the sacred brings forth life on Earth. We no longer focus on preserving ourselves. Now we yield to the sacred knowing of how to further life on Earth, a knowing that transforms us into interbeings of the Earth Interbeing.

**Line 1:** The line recognizes that the wrong view of self-centeredness obstructs it from the sacred knowing of how to further life on Earth. Before acting in the world, it overcomes the obstruction and its associated willingness to harm for self-benefit. Once free of its harmful ways and views, the line will know how it can further life on Earth.

**Line 2:** The line struggles with its own obstructions in its work to further life on Earth. Its behavior does not always align with the sacred values.<sup>1</sup> The line does the best it can and corrects itself.

**Line 3:** Advancing directly against those who harm the Earth and life leads to danger and isolation. The line retreats from this dangerous position to overcome what separates it from the sacred. The line rejoices in coming to know its sacredness and the ways of the sacred.

**Line 4:** As the line overcomes its self-centeredness, it comes to know its sacredness. While waiting for when it has freed itself harmful conditioning, it deepens its connections with the sacred.

**Line 5:** The line overcomes its self-centeredness and comes to know its sacredness. In so doing, the line has the sacred knowing of how it can further life on Earth.

**Line 6:** The line overcomes its self-centeredness and knows its sacredness, which has matured its sacred being. It perceives the sacredness of all and brings to life the valued ways. The line freely serves to further life on Earth.

---

<sup>1</sup> **Ways and values of the sacred path to further life on Earth (work in progress):** Grateful yielding to the sacred, knowing sacredness, compassion, joyful interbeing, love, furthering life on Earth, self-discipline and flexibly responding to change, and centered inner stillness.