

## Hexagram 34 – Great Power



*Great power*

*Benefit from perseverance.*

**Structure:** Below ☵, the power of the sacred. Above ☰, action, thunder. Action above power.

The hexagram marks the second month (March-April) of the Chinese calendar and spring equinox, the time when plants vigorously grow.

Power is great only when applied to advance the sacred purpose of furthering life on Earth . We condemn the use of power to harm others, life, and the Earth. Power founded on self-centeredness does not have greatness.

Great power gives us the strength to overcome what harms both within ourselves and in the world. Once we have surrendered our will to the sacred, we come to know our sacred direction. We then act firmly with great power upon what we know to do and attain the holy within our lives and in the world.

Great power rests upon the foundation of furthering life on Earth. The sage has no other purpose than to abundantly fulfill the sacred purpose with strength and power. The power of life embodies the power of the Earth, which receptively submits itself to the sacred will. Within the Earth Interbeing, an inner power in harmony with the ways of the sacred Earth Interbeing brings forth the ways of the sacred into the world.<sup>1</sup>

Strength that passes beyond an appropriate measure brings the danger of an overreliance on one's own power. Many use force to harm others for self-benefit and ignore the suffering they cause. Angry people ignorantly use their power to harm those they blame for what getting in their way. On the path, we overcome the temptation to exert power over others through self-righteous anger. If others harm us, we discipline our anger to avoid harming them.

To fulfill the sacred command to further life on Earth, we use great power to overcome our willingness to harm others for self-benefit, anger, and ignoring the suffering of others. The wise self-discipline themselves to stop harming the Earth Interbeing and to learn how to interbe. They turn away from the ways of the harmful culture but respond to the suffering of others. These ways transform us and our experience of the world.

Great power makes it possible to do what needs to be done. However, the less we use our power outwardly, the greater its effect. Such inner power does not show externally but can move heavy burdens.

The sage treads only upon ways that benefit all and avoids doing anything which would separate it from the sacred. Outwardly, sages appear lacking, but inwardly they have more than enough. Unmoved by

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<sup>1</sup> **Ways to further the sacred Earth Interbeing (work in progress):** devotion to the sacred, receptivity and humbly yielding to the sacred will, knowing the sacred will, wisely responding to experience to further life on Earth, firm discipline to avoid harming the Earth Interbeing, harmonious interactions, equitable sharing, and balance with the Earth Interbeing.

worldly concerns, they only act when they have the sacred knowing of how to further life on Earth. Once they know what to do, sages act decisively and powerfully to care for the sacred Earth and all life.

**Line 1:** The line urgently wants to forcefully advance without having prepared the groundwork or developed its capacities to do so. Yielding to compulsions that push us to harmfully act out our ignorance ends in failure to achieve what we wanted, leading to distress and despair. The wise refrain from acting when confused or in emotional turmoil.

**Line 2:** The line perseveres in furthering life on Earth in ways that align with the sacred Earth Interbeing and achieves its purpose. It acts upon the sacred knowing of what to do.

**Line 3:** The line forcefully imposes its will upon others and situations to have its way. Those who use their power inappropriately lack the capacity to harmonize and cause danger for themselves and others. The wise powerfully resist imposing their will upon others and events. The less we use our power outwardly, the greater its effect.

**Line 4:** Success comes to the line who has overcome its harmful ways and views and who now opens to the sacred will and the knowing of its sacredness and that of all life. With its accumulated power, it can move through all difficulties and dangers without using force to further life on Earth in the ways of the Earth Interbeing.

**Line 5:** The line uses its strength to give up its obstinate attitudes and compulsions to act. It changes its ways to align them with the ways of the sacred Earth Interbeing. The line concerns itself with how to wisely control and direct its power.

**Line 6:** The line imposes its willful power upon a situation too far and comes to the point where it cannot move forward or retreat. Whatever it does complicates the situation further. If the line does not further stiffen its obstinacy and recognizes its wrong views and ways as the cause of its impasse, the line will avoid deepening its danger.