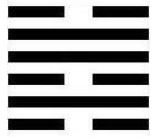


Hexagram 47 Oppressed



Oppressed.

Harmonizing.

What furthers: seeing the sacredness within and in others, wisdom.

Without fault.

What said not trusted or heard.

Structure: Joyful (upper trigram) in the face of danger (lower trigram).

Ideogram: A tree growing in a narrow space. The tree does not have room to grow.

Meanings of ideogram: oppress, confine, enclose, restrict; impoverish, distress, afflict, dishearten.

The ideogram of the hexagram depicts a tree growing in a narrow space, which severely restricts its growth. When circumstances or a harmful culture afflict us with oppressive conditions, we despair and feel distressed. Whatever we try to plant into oppressive conditions to further life on Earth struggles to survive. We feel cutoff from sustenance and support.

Oppressors and oppressive cultures condition us to live in ways that benefit them. The longer we have lived within oppressive circumstances, the stronger the harmful conditioning. Thus, we need to face and overcome our conditioned wrong views and harmful ways of living. The stronger we live the ways of sacredness, the more we can overpower our conditioning. We see through and dispel our wrong views and stop ourselves from harming others and the Earth. We expel the oppressor from colonizing our being.

Many can follow the sacred path when it goes our way but waver in our resolve to live sacredness when in difficult situations. Exhaustion and despair hinder our willingness to overcome what obstructs us from doing the harder but right thing to do.

Yet we need not let oppression dishearten and weary us. By living our sacredness, we persevere even within such unfortunate conditions. We can face and overcome what obstructs our furthering life on Earth by moving toward our sacredness and responding harmoniously to experience as it arises. Overthinking a difficult problem often ignores what we can always do – change ourselves. With the strength and support of sacredness, we persevere in caring for all.

Joy gives us the power we need to break free of exhaustion and despair, a joy that comes from gratitude for the blessings we have and receive, for the kindnesses and good works of others, for the miracle and mystery of the sacred. We cultivate within us a stable still point from which we can face inner and outer changes. Within this inner temple, we know our sacredness and the sacredness of all we experience. We deepen our wordless awareness of the sacred and simply rest within that joyful awareness of the sacred.

Discovering ways to approach oppressive conditions with a lighter heart and good feelings for life and Earth opens to finding the meaning of the difficulties we experience. and for then we understand the meaning and purpose of suffering, it becomes more manageable. Experience may not move in the ways we want to see it go, but we can sacrifice our expectations of how things should be and accept what we cannot change.

We can stop harming others, the Earth, and ourselves. We ask the sacred and the Earth for the strength and courage needed to live sacredness. At some point, but perhaps not today, our relationship with

oppression shifts. We perceive the sacredness within the crisis and its sacred lesson for us to master. We receive the sacred blessing of knowing how to respond to oppression in ways that further life on Earth.

Within oppressive circumstances, words and speech become a means to harm others and the Earth. As they no longer reflect the truth, people no longer trust what they hear. Thus, in times of oppression, we cannot rely on words alone to influence others. Instead, we communicate through our behavior and actions. Actions speak louder than words.

Even when extreme difficulties threaten us, we have the joy that comes from living the sacred ways, facing hardships with a light heart. Whenever it seems as if we have no options, we turn inward to deepen our sacred understanding of the situation. Instead of feeling oppressed, we ask ourselves what we can learn from the experience and what capacities do we need to cultivate to meet its challenges. We can always change ourselves. The cosmos moves from within.

Line 1: Despair and hopelessness overwhelm the line, who falls ever more deeply into its abyss. This distress blocks the line's knowing what to do to get out of danger, but it ignorantly does not seek sacred guidance. It does not get out of this self-made adversity for a long time.

Line 2: The line knows its sacred responsibility to reduce the suffering of others, but its privileged circumstances hold it back. The line benefits from sacrificing its privileges as a sacred offering and correcting its behaviors and views. In these ways, it cultivates devotion for the sacred ways.

Line 3: The line abandons sacred wisdom and acts impetuously against those whom it blames for its suffering. Consequently, the line has now caused an actual danger and rests on thorns of worry. The line sees only obstacles of its own making surrounding it and has no support. Cutoff from the flow of life and blocked from the sacred by its own doing, the line faces great danger.

Line 4: The privileged line wants to work for the oppressed, but proceeds in a measured, hesitant way to alleviate the suffering of others. It feels shame for the divergence between its values and behavior. However, because of its sincere intentions, these difficulties do not endure as the line eventually frees itself with sacred support from what harms and lives to further life on Earth.

Line 5: Conditions frustrate the line's efforts to further life on Earth. It does not have sufficient insight into the situation or alignment with the sacred ways and values.¹ The line turns inward to correct itself through self-discipline and sacrifices what has kept it from caring for others and the Earth. It gets through self-oppression with a joyful heart.

Line 6: The line fears of change block it from changing its harmful ways. However, the line conquers its resistance to change by deeply understanding how much suffering it causes others through its willingness to harm others for self-benefit and ignoring their suffering. It resolves to change its ways and does the harder but right thing do.

¹ **Sacred Ways** (work in progress): Sacredness of earth and life, all changes, conditional causation, actions have consequences, life on earth subject to limits, birth and death of life on Earth, immortality through children, all life feels pain and suffers, interdependence, interbeing, reciprocity, limits of knowing, mystery of unknown. The sacred command for life to further life on Earth.