

Hexagram 49 – Changing Ways



Changing ways.

At the point of changing, thereupon living sacredness.

Ways of sacredness.

Repenting extinguished.

Structure: Lake ☱ above fire ☲. Joyousness above wisdom. Joy comes from wisdom. Wisdom moves through joy.

Ideogram: The meaning of the Chinese ideogram refers to molting, the shedding of the old to make way for new growth.

The hexagram describes the point in our sacred path when our default way of living changes from the willingness to harm for self-benefit to living sacredness, the transition from viewing others as threats or as objects for us to manipulate to viewing others as our equals and necessary to further life on Earth. We no longer view others as less than us but perceive their sacredness. Instead of seeking to overpower others to have our way, we interact in mutually beneficial ways to further life on Earth.

We come to this point once we have an established practice in overcoming our harmful ways and views, a solitary path. The sacred blesses us with work for which we are uniquely qualified to further life on Earth within a harmful culture. We bring the ways and views of sacredness into life with the support and guidance of the sacred.

By diminishing our harmful ways and views, we uncovered our sacredness. With the support of sacred guidance and practicing the ways of sacredness, we learn how to do our holy work. Because we persevere in correcting ourselves and the practice of living sacredness, we further cultivate the competencies to live sacredness and to interbe with life on Earth. Through our interactions with others to do our holy work, we become aware of a deeper willingness to harm others and the Earth for self-benefit, which requires us to deepen our efforts in correcting ourselves.

If we feel confused about how to apply the ways of sacredness, we do not understand them. If we try to practice sacredness when we do not understand it, we practice ignorance. We do not practice sacredness within our interactions until clear about the meaning of the ways of sacredness by penetrating them with our understanding. When we know the necessity of the ways of sacredness within an interdependent reality, we know what to do.

How we respond to a difficult interaction elucidates the differences between the two ways of living. When something harmful or unhelpful happens, rather than become entangled in blaming the other for a problem, we drop that reaction and focus on the problem itself. We identify the conditions that diminish our capacities to respond to others in friendly ways and perceive the harmful views that have contributed to the disturbance in which we find ourselves entangled. We discern whether we have the power to change any of the causal conditions to disrupt the pattern of a problem. The causal condition over which we have the most power to change is ourselves. We turn from denial and blaming others to changing ourselves to more closely align with the ways of sacredness. If we lack the capacity to respond well to a difficult situation in the ways of sacredness, then we distance ourselves until we have learned how to do that.

However, we no longer turn a difference into a contest of right or wrong. For us, a problem becomes an opportunity to learn how to respond in ways that honor and respect the sacredness of the other and our own. We become virtuosos in sacredness by responding to the needs of others. practicing until we simply live our sacredness by responding to the needs of others in the ways of sacredness. Our willingness to harm for self-benefit may never disappear, but we learn how to dance sacredness around it whenever it surfaces. Rather than focusing on harming the other we blame for harming us, we immediately turn toward healing the wound and the conditions that caused it. Within an interdependent reality, we can have it no other way.

The only person we have any power to change is ourselves. By changing our ways, we change from causing harm to others, life, and the Earth to furthering life on Earth. We humbly practice the ways of sacredness in our holy work. Ultimately, our whole life manifest sacredness. Firmly repelling ways harmful to life and Earth in the ways of sacredness changes the trajectory of fate.

Upon living sacredness as our default culture, we perseveringly yield to the sacred will to know how to heed the call of suffering within our daily experience. We then apply that knowing as not acting upon what we know is ignorance. Through our yielding and responding to need within an interdependent reality, the sacred moves through our lives to further life on Earth. How we live illuminates sacredness.

Line 1: The line learns and practices sacredness, preparing itself for the sacred call to do its holy work in the world. While it patiently waits for the sacred calling and further deepens its preparations, the line keeps open and receptive for the approach of the sacred influence.

Line 2: The line becomes aware of its holy work that the sacred has given it to do to further life on Earth. Because it has prepared itself, the line has the requisite capacities and receives sacred guidance and support. Its actions manifest sacredness in the world.

Line 3: The line refrains from ambitiously advancing its holy work in the world until it feels certain that others will understand the necessity of its actions. However, not acting because it fears the disapproval of others weakens resolve. Thus, the line perseveres in taking small steps to further its work.

Line 4: Only when what we do in the world conforms with our understanding of sacredness will we have success in manifesting sacredness. The line corrects how it does its holy work in the ways of sacredness. It discards the old ways of interacting with others and brings to life the ways of sacredness. The line learns that it can only give to others what it already has.

Line 5: The line discards the harmful way of interacting with others and the Earth and brings to life the ways of sacredness with the courage and power of a tiger. Life itself becomes its holy work. All it does manifests the sacred will and furthers life on Earth.

Line 6: The sage transforms the ways of a harmful culture, manifesting the sacred will and bringing to life its sacredness. In a changing culture, those who have followed the ways of the harmful culture may mimic the ways of sacredness without understanding sacredness or transforming their harmful views.