



## (kūn) Earth, The Receptive

The receptive. Success which flows. A mare's persistence is effective.\* One worthy of power has a destination. First, you go astray, and then you attain it. You will benefit by having friends in the southwest, and by losing friends in the northeast. [If you are] peaceful and steadfast, good fortune.

- Six in the first place: You tread on frost and know that hard ice is near.
- Six in the second place: Whether going straight ahead or turning to the side, great. [Even] without practice nothing is ineffective.
- Six in the third place: If you efface your best qualities, you can persevere. When you serve the king's business, what does not succeed ends.

*Though your own projects may not succeed, you may bring important affairs to a successful end.*

- **Six in the fourth place:** The sack is tied shut. No blame; no glory.
- **Six in the fifth place:** Yellow skirt or trousers. Continuing good fortune.
- **Six at the top:** If dragons fight in the open fields [between city and countryside], their blood will be dark yellow.
- **All sixes:** It is always effective to persevere.

### Image

Earth's strength: the image of receptivity. Thus you should deepen your moral strengths and bear your burdens.

The earth holds and nurtures life with supreme constancy. It is always beneath us, always supporting us. Despite the vagaries of life, this mother of us all is constant. If the earth shifts, it breaks the roots bringing nourishment to the plants within it. Then growth is disrupted, crops die, and people starve. Fortunately, such occasions are very rare. This is a time to contemplate the solidity and stability of the earth, and the ways in which such firmness nurtures life. In human terms, this means remaining firm in our commitment to the completion of the current task. It is by bearing responsibilities that we discover our hidden strengths and ways of overcoming weaknesses. A mother learns new skills and discovers new strengths within her as she continues her care for her child throughout the years. Similarly, we need to learn to practice constancy and receptivity in order to nurture the growth of our souls and our moral strengths.

\* Or, *the mare divines effectively*. The word translated here as “persistence” also means “to consult by divining.” Since it is hard to imagine a horse engaged in prognostication, “persistence” seems the more likely meaning here and elsewhere. Within the context of *Yijing* usage, the meanings are actually not that far apart, since divining was often used to verify decisions that were nearly complete.

Shaughnessy, 102–103, 304–305.

Lynn, 142–151.

Wilhelm/Baynes, 10–15.