

HEXAGRAM 41

SUN LOSS, REDUCTION¹



Component trigrams:

Below: TUI, a body of water, pool, marsh, joy.

Above: QIAN, a mountain, hard, obstinate, perverse.

TEXT Loss accompanied by confidence—sublime good fortune and no error! It is favourable to have in view some goal (or destination). If there is doubt as to what to use for the sacrifice, two small bowls will suffice.²

COMMENTARY ON THE TEXT Loss is below, but gain is above³ and the way leads upwards. What is said in the Text, including making use of two small bowls for the sacrifice, implies utilizing whatever lies to hand. There are times when it is meet to decrease the strong and augment the weak. Loss and gain, filling and emptying—each occurs at the proper time.

SYMBOL This hexagram symbolizes a marshy lake at the foot of a mountain.³ The Superior Man keeps his anger under control and is moderate in his desires.

The Lines

9 FOR THE BOTTOM PAGE To hurry away when work is done is not wrong, but first consider whether such a hasty departure will harm the work. **COMMENTARY** Moreover, the approval of our superiors must first be obtained.

9 FOR THE SECOND PLACE Persistence in a righteous course brings reward, but to advance (or go anywhere) now would bring misfortune. (This is) not (a time for) decreasing but (for) augmenting. **COMMENTARY** The central position of this line (in the lower trigram) indicates that persistence will be rewarded by the fulfilment of what is willed.

6 FOR THE THIRD PLACE If three set forth together now, one will be lost on the way; whereas one man going forth alone will find company. **COMMENTARY** It is well to travel alone now, as three would give rise to suspicion.

6 FOR THE FOURTH PLACE He reduced the number of ills besetting him and thus hastened the arrival of happiness—no error! **COMMENTARY** A reduction of troubles is in itself a cause for happiness.

6 FOR THE FIFTH PLACE There was one who enriched him to the extent of ten PÊNG of tortoise shells⁴ (2,100 of them) and who would accept no refusal—sublime good fortune! **COMMENTARY** Good fortune coming from those above.

9 FOR THE TOP PLACE Gain which causes no loss to others involves no error. Persistence in a righteous course brings good fortune. It is favourable to have in view some goal (or destination). He obtains followers but not a family (or home).⁵ **COMMENTARY** The first sentence presages the complete fulfilment of what is willed.

NOTES (1) This is, on the whole, a favourable hexagram, in that loss now is timely—see the last sentence of the Commentary on the Text. (2) See Commentary on the Text. (3) A reference to the component trigrams. Tui, mountain, as something both solid and lofty, stands for gain, augmentation and so on. (4) Tortoise shells were used for divination and must have been quite valuable, so 2,100 of them must have been equal to a small fortune. (5) From the point of view of divination, this suggests that it is not a good time for marrying, founding a home, etc., but a very good one for hiring servants or employees, etc.