

HEXAGRAM 39

CHIEN TROUBLE



Component trigrams:

Below: K'EN, a mountain, hard, obstinate, perverse.

Above: K'AN, water, a pit.

TEXT Trouble. The west and the south are favourable, but not the east and the north.¹ It is advisable to see a great man.² Persistence in a righteous course brings good fortune.

COMMENTARY ON THE TEXT This hexagram implies difficulties. Danger lies ahead. To perceive danger and succeed in averting it—that is wisdom indeed! The west and south are favoured; for, proceeding in those directions, we shall be able to steer a middle course. The east and north are not favoured; the path leading to them peters out.¹ By going to see a great man, we shall achieve solid results. (The fifth line)

being in the proper place (for a Yang line in such a case as this) indicates that righteous persistence will bring good fortune of a sort whereby the empire can be put to rights.³ The timely application of this hexagram is of the greatest value.

SYMBOL This hexagram symbolizes water upon a mountain.⁴ The Superior Man cultivates virtue by bringing about a revolution within himself.

The Lines

6 FOR THE BOTTOM LINE Going involves trouble; coming wins praise. **COMMENTARY** This passage stresses the advantage of waiting (for some time).

6 FOR THE SECOND PLACE The King's minister⁵ meets with difficulty upon difficulty, but through no fault of his. **COMMENTARY** This indicates that we shall be free from blame to the very end (or in the end).

9 FOR THE THIRD PLACE To proceed would lead to trouble; therefore turn back! **COMMENTARY** This passage presages happiness for the women of the family (literally, happiness for those within).⁶

6 FOR THE FOURTH PLACE To proceed would lead to trouble, whereas those coming will forge useful connections. **COMMENTARY** Because this line is suitably placed and possesses solidity.

9 FOR THE FIFTH PLACE In the midst of severe trouble, friends (or a friend) arrive. **COMMENTARY** This is indicated by the line's central position (in the upper trigram).

6 FOR THE TOP PLACE To proceed would lead to trouble; coming will produce excellent results. It is advisable to see a great man.² **COMMENTARY** The first sentence points to directing the will inwards. The other sentence is an injunction to submit ourselves to someone truly noble.

NOTES (1) That is to say, if we try to forward our plans by proceeding in either of those directions, we shall get bogged down or lost. It could also mean that we should be driven to unvirtuous conduct. (2) We should seek advice from someone of lofty moral

stature and profound wisdom. (3) Good fortune that will enable us to be of immense service to our community, to our country or to the world. (4) A reference to the component trigrams. (5) This may be interpreted as someone engaged in public service or as the right-hand man of someone in high authority. (6) This could also be translated 'internal happiness', but I think the above rendering is what the author intended.