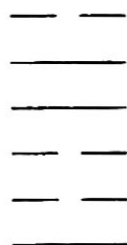


17 *sui/pursuit*

*Supreme offering.
Favourable augury.*
NO MISFORTUNE.

Base (9): A building collapses.

*Augury AUSPICIOUS.
Being crossed on leaving home: there will be success.*

(6) 2: Binding little ones, losing grown men.

(6) 3: Binding grown men, losing little ones.

*Pursuit ends in catching the quarry.
Augury for a dwelling: favourable.*

(9) 4: Pursuit ends in finding.

*Augury: DISASTROUS.
Sacrificing captives on the way;
in a covenant, could there be misfortune?*

(9) 5: Captives at a triumph.

AUSPICIOUS.

Top (6): Brought in bonds, let them be guarded.

The king offers them at the West Mountain.

(17) **pursuit**

There may be a theme of runaway slaves, servants or followers here, but the more important concern seems to be with warfare.

(Hexagram statement) For the 'four qualities' see page 126.

(Base) The building is either a government establishment or a guesthouse. The crosswise passing is probably a reference to omens in birds' flight, for which see the note to 14:base.

(4) The covenant may have been a sacrificial matter, involving the captives referred to in lines 5 and top. Not much is known about the early history of pacts between states. They are frequent in the Zuo Commentary and are mentioned, for instance, in Ode 198.3:

The prince often makes covenants
and disorder increases.

They were instruments of diplomacy and war, essentially what we should now call pacts. The character in the received text here is *ming* 'bright', which was possibly the same word as the modern *meng* 'oath' or 'covenant', both being pronounced **mjiang* in Old Chinese (D411, 423). See also Notes 11:top and 48:3.

The word 'finding' implies capture in war or a quarry in hunting.

(5) The word for triumph *jia* means a celebration and was originally a graph meaning drums.

(Top) Gao Heng (G213) connects this oracle with the return of King Wen, founder of the Zhou dynasty, while he was still Earl of the West (Xibo), to his home in the western mountains, after getting away from imprisonment by the last Shang king.