

## HEXAGRAM 26

## TA CH'U THE GREAT NOURISHER



*Component trigrams:*

*Below: CH' IEN, heaven, male, active, etc.*

*Above: K'UN, a mountain, hard, obstinate, perverse.*

**TEXT** The Great Nourisher favours righteous persistence. Good fortune results from not eating at home. It is a favourable time for crossing the great river (sea).<sup>1</sup>

**COMMENTARY ON THE HEXAGRAM** This hexagram presages firmness, strength, magnanimity, truth, glory and brilliance, a daily renovation of our virtue. The firm ascends<sup>2</sup> and pays respect to the worthy. Ability to exercise restraint in the use of power is excellent indeed! Receiving good fortune as a result of not eating at home implies entertaining good people elsewhere.<sup>3</sup> The time is suitable for crossing the great river (or sea) because to do so now would be to accord with heaven's will.

**SYMBOL** This hexagram symbolizes the sky (visible) amidst the mountain (peaks).<sup>4</sup> The Superior Man, acting from his profound knowledge of the words and conduct of the wise men of old, nourishes his virtue.

### *The Lines*

**9 FOR THE BOTTOM PLACE** Trouble threatens—it would be wise to bring activities to a halt. **COMMENTARY** That is, no attempt should be made to avert the trouble.

**9 FOR THE SECOND PLACE** A broken axle. **COMMENTARY** This line, being central (to the lower trigram), indicates that we are not to blame.<sup>5</sup>

**9 FOR THE THIRD PLACE** A fine steed galloping. Persistence under

difficulties will win advantage. It is best to be occupied all day long with defensive measures. It is favourable to have a goal (or destination) in view. **COMMENTARY** For this line, which tops (the lower hexagram) presages the fulfilment of our will.

**6 FOR THE FOURTH PLACE** The headboard of a young ox<sup>6</sup>—sublime good fortune! **COMMENTARY** That is, good fortune in the form of happiness.

**6 FOR THE FIFTH PLACE** A gelded boar's tusk<sup>7</sup>—good fortune! **COMMENTARY** That is, good fortune in the form of blessings.<sup>8</sup>

**9 FOR THE TOP PLACE** Carrying (i.e. according with) heaven's way. **COMMENTARY** This implies great progress along the way of virtue.

**NOTES** (1) I.e. going on a long journey, perhaps abroad. (2) 'Ascends' may be taken to mean 'is in the ascent', for both of the component trigrams are topped by firm lines. (3) This is a time for going from home and giving concrete expression to our appreciation of what others have done for us or for the public good. (4) The arrangement of the component trigrams suggests glimpses of the sky among the peaks of the mountains. This points to something very far off and thereby indicates the advisability of setting out for some distant place. (5) A relatively serious hindrance threatens, but we are not to blame for it. (6) The symbol is a piece of wood, not unlike a cangue, used for the same purpose as a rope and nose-ring. The suggestion is that one who has not yet attained his full strength benefits from being restrained. (7) This is an emblem of opportunity. (8) I.e. good fortune apparently unconnected with our efforts or deserts.