



14. Great Possession

In great possession are creation and development.

EXPLANATION

Great possession means greatness of possession. As for the qualities of the hexagram, above is *fire* ☲, luminous, and below is *heaven* ☰, strong. Acting strongly with lucidity, producing understanding in the midst of strength, growing increasingly illumined as strength increases, growing increasingly strong as illumination increases, it is therefore called *great possession*.

This hexagram represents wealth with daily renewal, governing the inward with strictness; it follows on the previous hexagram *obstruction*. In *obstruction*, yin energy acts while yang energy retires; one accepts the false and loses the real, obstructing the openness of consciousness, becoming darker and darker daily until the original celestial virtues are completely gone. If you want to restore celestial qualities, producing something where there is nothing, it cannot be done but for the path of strength and illumination.

What is strength? It is the moment of pure truth, adamantly strong and unbending. What is illumination? It is illumining myriad things, with open consciousness undimmed. If one can be strong, the mind is firm and the will far-reaching, cultivating every appropriate path and establishing every virtue, having such wealth in abundance. If one can be lucid, one can discern principles clearly and thoroughly, seeing surely with real knowledge, taking to whatever is good, reforming every fault, being daily renewed.

Once one is strong and lucid, one has inner autonomy and cannot be moved by anything. This is real true practice. It is like the sun being in the sky, its light shining on everything, covering everything; nothing can deceive it. Yellow sprouts cover the earth, golden flowers bloom throughout the world; wherever one may walk, everywhere is the Tao. With the greatness of possession and the far range of action, nothing started fails to develop.

- **First yang:** If there is no association with what is harmful, one is not blameworthy. If you struggle, there will be no fault.

EXPLANATION

In the beginning of great possession, what one has is not great; one should practice hidden inward cultivation, not injuring internal reality by outside things—therefore, not associating with what is harmful, one is not blameworthy. However, even if one doesn't get involved in external things, if there still are wrong thoughts arising within, these too are "things," and are harmful and blameworthy. One must struggle to deal with them,

cultivating oneself and mastering the mind, so that the false leaves and the real comes, and one can have what one had not; only then is it possible to be faultless start to finish. This is the beginning of possession, which requires quiet nurturing within.

- **2 yang:** Using a great car for transport, when there is a place to go there is no fault.

EXPLANATION

When firm strength is balanced and one already has inner abundance, this is like using a large car for transport, able thereby to bear the weight. One can thus avoid injury by external things. But when virtue is mastered within, it should be evidenced outwardly. Only if there is a place to go, passing lightly through events and situations unperturbed, is it really great possession, impeccable inwardly and outwardly. This is already possessing, requiring external effectiveness.

- **3 yang:** The work of barons serves the son of heaven. Petty people are incapable of this.

EXPLANATION

When firmness is in its proper place, with greatness of possession and greatness of action one can complete celestial virtue. This is likened to the work of the barons serving the "son of heaven," the emperor. The service of the work of the barons to the son of heaven is the active ability of firm rectitude; the service of the practice of Tao to heaven is the active virtue of firm rectitude. Serving heaven by virtue, one's own mission is not ordinary; only thus can one be a partner of heaven, without any barrier to heaven. As for petty people who are adamant but not upright, who think they have what they haven't, and glorify themselves as sages, they are opposing heaven and are unable to serve heaven. This is great possession requiring care that firmness be correct.

- **4 yang:** Repudiate self-aggrandizement and there is no fault.

EXPLANATION

When one is imbued with both strength and illumination, having strength but not presuming on it, having brilliance but not using it aggressively, this is repudiating self-aggrandizement. Strength and illumination repudiating self-aggrandizement outwardly appear to be insufficient, yet inwardly are always superabundant. What one has grows ever more, what is great grows ever greater; the fault of losing what has been gained naturally does not occur. This is great possession valuing most firmness with the ability to be flexible.

- **5 yin:** The trust is mutual. Power is auspicious.

EXPLANATION

Being flexible, receptive, open-minded, inwardly believing in the nonexistence of oneself as an individual alone and knowing the existence of other people, using flexibility to seek strength, using strength to balance flexibility—thereby trust is mutual and power auspicious. Originally having no power oneself, by ability to associate with the strong one will become enlightened even though originally ignorant, and will become strong even though originally weak; while lacking, one will be able to have, and while small one will be able to be great. This is possession in the sense of those who as yet have not, needing to seek other people.

- **Top yang:** Help from heaven is auspicious, unfailingly beneficial.

EXPLANATION

In the end of great possession, firmness and flexibility match each other, strength and lucidity are as one; integrated with celestial principle, the gold elixir crystallized, one's fate depends on oneself and not on heaven. Therefore help from heaven is auspicious, unfailingly beneficial. That by which heaven commands people is the quality of strength; that by which people obey heaven is the quality of illumination. When one preserves strength by illumination, the order of heaven is always present; when the order of heaven is present, then heaven helps one. This is great possession requiring the completion of the celestial.

So in the real study of great possession, unless strength is used to refine inner illumination, so as to respond outwardly, one cannot carry it out. Once strong and lucid, those who have not can have, and those who have can expand it. When strength and illumination are both used, and one fills the belly and empties the mind, the path of abundant possession and daily renewal is consummated.



14. Great Possession

fire above,
heaven below

Fire is in the sky; great possession. Thus does the superior person stop evil and promote good, obeying heaven and accepting its order.

Great possession means greatness of possession. Above is *fire* ☲, below is *heaven* ☰; this is fire in the sky—when the sun is in the sky, much is produced, the sun shines afar. Everything is under the sun in the sky. This is the image of *great possession*.

What superior people see in this is that the nature of celestial order is one integral principle, in which all that is good is ultimately assembled; this is basic great possession. But because of mixture with temporal conditioning, once cognitive consciousness comes into play the primordial is damaged. From this point on good and bad mix; those with great possession come to have little possession, and those with little possession come to have nothing. Therefore, as soon as a bad thought arises, superior people immediately stop it, and as soon as a good thought arises, they promote it, obeying heaven and finding happiness in its order.

If one cannot find happiness in the celestial order, it is because of not being able to obey heaven; not obeying heaven is due to not being able to stop evil and promote good. If one can stop evil and promote good, eventually one will reach ultimate good without evil; with true sanity always present, one returns to the pristine state of completeness, which is the order of heaven. Then one goes from destitution to possession, from possession to greatness.

Human life in the world has a mission, which alone is important; with this direction there is life, without it there is death. If one cannot find happiness in this mission, this direction, this order, everything else is empty and false. That to which heaven directs humanity is only good; if one can find happiness in that command, then this is obeying heaven. Obeying heaven is the way to obey the command; finding happiness in the celestial mandate is the way to find happiness in heaven.

Having the direction of heaven is the greatest of possessions; but having the direction of heaven lies entirely in stopping evil and promoting good. Stopping evil and promoting good is illumination; obeying heaven and finding happiness in its order is strength. Strength is the substance, illumination is the function; open awareness unobscured embraces myriad principles and responds to myriad things.

Through clarification of the quality of illumination, one eventually reaches ultimate good, wholly integrated with the celestial design, nature and life stabilized. No possession is more substantial than this, no greatness is greater than this. No external possessions in the world can compare with it.