



8. Accord

Accord is auspicious. Investigating and ascertaining, if the basis is always right, there is no error: Then the uneasy will come; but the dilatory are unfortunate.

EXPLANATION

Accord has the meaning of association with one another and learning from one another. In the body of the hexagram, one yang dwells in the place of honor, while the five yins above and below all follow it accordingly. Also, the quality of the hexagram is obedience by which to get through danger; therefore it is called *accord*.

This hexagram, representing yin following yang, follows on the previous hexagram *contention*. In *contention*, yin does not obey yang, but instead overthrows yang; yin and yang are at odds, the five elements injure each other, harming their reality, therefore ending in calamity. If you know this is wrong and cultivate the reverse, yin does not overthrow yang but submits to yang; yin and yang harmonize, the five elements are one energy, essence is stable and life is solid. This is the path of making the wrong accord with the right, making the artificial accord with the real.

What is auspicious about accord is that it is good to accord with what is right and what is real, and nothing is more important than to accord with the basis of true reality. The basis here is the primordial positive energy, trapped in the palace of *water* ☵. This energy is produced by heaven, and so is called the vitality of the true one, the water of the true one, and the energy of the true one. This is the basic energy that produces things.

In human beings, this energy is basic humanity, which is the reality in which yin and yang are united. But this basic energy, falling into yin, is covered up by acquired conditioning. It is easy to lose and hard to find; if you are not utterly empty and calmly attentive, with your mind steadfast and your will firm, you cannot recover it. That is why one can only be free from error if one investigates and ascertains the basis that is always right.

If one is always correct, under that correctness rises the basic energy, and once the basic energy is restored, yin energy submits to it; then this is the original flawless undamaged integral pattern of nature, which is impeccable, the complete original basis. The classic *The Way and Its Power* says, "Effecting utter emptiness, maintaining calm attention, as myriad things act in concert, I thereby watch the return." The *Spring Suffusing the Garden* says, "The seven-times restored elixir is in people—first you should refine the mind and await the time."

The way to be always correct is to become empty and keep quiet, to refine the mind. If you do not refine the mind thoroughly, the true yin within yourself will not become manifest; if you do not become thoroughly empty and quiet, the external true yang will not come.

If you want to conquer feeling, first conquer essence; "then the uneasy will come." This is whereby to refine the mind and wait for the time,

to seek restoration. In the word *uneasy* are various processes, like adjustment according to the time, and warding off danger. This explains the meaning of "always right."

If I am uneasy and the other then comes, this is what is referred to by the saying "If you want to get, first you must give." First giving means following the other's wish, making oneself accord with the other, thereby to get the other's pleasure. Afterward getting means that sincerity can move people; others come and accord with oneself, whereby one can take their living energy.

When before and after are clear, and other people and oneself are all taken care of, then the restored elixir can be crystallized. Otherwise, if one cannot first give, and idly imagines others will come, what should be first is put after, and what should be after is put first, reversing the accord. This is called acquired conditioning. As it is said, if ordinary people want to seek heaven, when they seek it they need worldly goods; if they give little and withhold much, the spirits and immortals will not come, and they are sure to have bad luck. How can they effect good fortune and realize the Tao?

- **First yin:** When there is truthfulness, accord is impeccable. When there is truthfulness filling a plain vessel, ultimately there will come to be other blessings.

EXPLANATION

Being humble, using flexibility to accord with the firm, is accord in which there is sincerity and truthfulness, so one can be without error. This is because when there is sincere truthfulness in accord, one can empty the mind, and if one can empty the mind one can fill the belly. Then not only is there truthfulness without error, but also there is truthfulness filling an unadorned vessel, ultimately bringing on other blessings; one will surely thereby accord with the ultimate good. This represents sincere and truthful accord turning out well.

- **2 yin:** Accord coming from within is correct and bodes well.

EXPLANATION

Here flexible receptivity is central; before according outwardly, one first accords inwardly. This is accord coming from within. Accord from within is refining oneself and mastering the mind, gathering medicine (vital energy) according to the time, desiring to receive from the other, not losing oneself. This is internal accord being correct.

- **3 yin:** Accord with the wrong people.

EXPLANATION

When one is oneself ignorant and foolish and also associates with ignorant and foolish people, this is accord with the wrong people. Accord with

the wrong people has no benefit and is harmful. What is the value of accord then? This represents incorrectness of outer accord.

- **4 yin:** Accord with one outside is right and bodes well.

EXPLANATION

Flexibly according with the firm, seeing the wise and wanting to be like them, even the ignorant will become illumined, even the weak will become strong. This is external accord being correct.

- **5 yang:** Manifesting accord. The king uses three chasers and loses the game ahead. The citizens are not admonished. Auspicious.

EXPLANATION

Firm strength in proper balance, positive energy is replete and negative energy spontaneously converts. This is manifest accord. It is not forced, but comes about naturally. It is like a king chasing game, leaving one of four sides open, using three chasers, losing the game ahead. Using three chasers means taking the real, taking in the receptive; losing the game ahead means abandoning the false, letting the rebellious go. Taking the real and abandoning the false, the real comes and the false vanishes. Taking in the receptive and letting the rebellious go, the receptive attain and the rebellious disappear. When the practice of Tao gets to where the real and false are both transmuted and opposition and submission both return to the basis, then the heart is profoundly calm, always tranquil, ultimately good with no evil. Confused thoughts do not arise; it is like the citizenry spontaneously being civilized without being admonished. This is the accord of inside and outside as one energy.

- **Top yin:** Accord without a leader bodes ill.

EXPLANATION

Being ignorant yet acting arbitrarily on one's own, one is incapable of inner accord and also incapable of outer accord. Relying on one's own yin alone, acting as one pleases, after all one will never get out. This is accord without leadership. Accord without leadership is a waste of one's life; one will grow old without accomplishment, bringing about one's own downfall. This is someone who from start to finish does not know how to accord with people.

The barriers of practice of reality involves accord with those imbued with the Tao on the part of those lacking in the Tao, accord with those imbued with virtue on the part of those lacking in virtue. It all requires the true aspiration of the real mind, applying effort with every step, so that the power of the Tao will eventually be correctly centered and balanced. When the power of Tao is correctly centered and balanced, the golden

elixir enters the mouth and transforms all negativities. It is like a cat catching a mouse.

When gathering medicine, it is necessary to use the bellows; when refining oneself, true lead is needed. If you carry out the path of accord without knowing the fundamental, without knowing the basis which is always right, acting arbitrarily, even if you don't fall into accord with the wrong people you will wind up in accord without leadership, causing error and suffering misfortune—this is the way it will inevitably turn out. So students should indeed approach true teachers.



8. Accord

water above,
earth below

There is water on the earth, in accord. Thus did the kings of yore establish myriad realms and associate with their representatives.

Accord means familiarity, association, closeness. Above is *water* ☵, below is *earth* ☷; water provides moisture without bound. This is the presence of water on the earth. Water is that which provides myriad things and beings with nutritive moisture; water travels on the earth, flowing without obstruction, the earth is boundless. This is the image of *accord*.

What the ancient kings saw in this was that the world is vast, and there is a limit to the exercise of government by one person, so that one person cannot associate familiarly with everyone. Therefore they established myriad realms and delegated representatives, instituting a system whereby the representatives came to court so that the king would be familiar with the representatives, and in turn had the representatives become familiar with the people of their realms. In this way government was able to reach where it otherwise could not, and be close to people who were far away and could not be otherwise approached. In other words, it was a matter of familiarity and association with the multitudes of people through familiarity and association with the representatives of government.

When practitioners of the Tao understand the principles of yin and yang, the earthly and the celestial, the five elements of vitality, spirit, nature, feeling, and energy, and the five virtues of benevolence, justice, courtesy, knowledge, and truthfulness, and cause them to dwell in their proper positions, this is like setting up realms and establishing government representatives. When yin and yang are harmonized, the five elements are a unified force and the five virtues are combined; this is like association with the representatives. When the five elements are united and the five virtues conjoined, all entanglements dissolve and all that is good reaches the same goal; this is like association with the people through association with the representatives.

In the body of the hexagram, the yang in the center of *water* ☵ is in the honored position of correct balance; this represents the mind of Tao,

consciousness of reality. When the mind of Tao is manifest, benevolence, justice, courtesy, and knowledge are rooted in the heart, the tangle of myriad principles is integrated fully into the celestial design; the sprouts of living potential grow and fill the world, the golden flowers of spiritual energy bloom—you may gather them freely, they are spiritual medicines. This is like water flowing on the earth, reaching everywhere. The kings of yore associated with their representatives, practitioners of the Tao associate with all that is good—the principle is the same.