



22. *Pi / Grace*

	<i>above</i>	KÊN	KEEPING STILL, MOUNTAIN
	<i>below</i>	LI	THE CLINGING, FIRE

This hexagram shows a fire that breaks out of the secret depths of the earth and, blazing up, illuminates and beautifies the mountain, the heavenly heights. Grace—beauty of form—is necessary in any union if it is to be well ordered and pleasing rather than disordered and chaotic.

THE JUDGMENT

GRACE has success.

In small matters

It is favorable to undertake something.

Grace brings success. However, it is not the essential or fundamental thing; it is only the ornament and must therefore be used sparingly and only in little things. In the lower trigram of fire a yielding line comes between two strong lines and makes them beautiful, but the strong lines are the essential content and the weak line is the beautifying form. In the upper trigram

he is not intimidated he does not improve himself, but if he is made to behave correctly in small matters he is careful in large ones. This is fortunate for the inferior man.”

On the subject of the nine at the top Confucius says: “If good does not accumulate, it is not enough to make a name for a man. If evil does not accumulate, it is not strong enough to destroy a man. Therefore the inferior man thinks to himself, ‘Goodness in small things has no value,’ and so neglects it. He thinks, ‘Small sins do no harm,’ and so does not give them up. Thus his sins accumulate until they can no longer be covered up, and his guilt becomes so great that it can no longer be wiped out.”

of the mountain, the strong line takes the lead, so that here again the strong element must be regarded as the decisive factor. In nature we see in the sky the strong light of the sun; the life of the world depends on it. But this strong, essential thing is changed and given pleasing variety by the moon and the stars. In human affairs, aesthetic form comes into being when traditions exist that, strong and abiding like mountains, are made pleasing by a lucid beauty. By contemplating the forms existing in the heavens we come to understand time and its changing demands. Through contemplation of the forms existing in human society it becomes possible to shape the world.¹

THE IMAGE

Fire at the foot of the mountain:

The image of GRACE.

Thus does the superior man proceed

When clearing up current affairs.

But he dare not decide controversial issues in
this way.

The fire, whose light illuminates the mountain and makes it pleasing, does not shine far; in the same way, beautiful form suffices to brighten and to throw light upon matters of lesser moment, but important questions cannot be decided in this way. They require greater earnestness.

THE LINES

Nine at the beginning means:

He lends grace to his toes, leaves the carriage,
and walks.

1. This hexagram shows tranquil beauty—clarity within, quiet without. This is the tranquillity of pure contemplation. When desire is silenced and the will comes to rest, the world-as-idea becomes manifest. In this aspect the world is beautiful and removed from the struggle for existence. This is the world of art. However, contemplation alone will not put the will to rest absolutely. It will awaken again, and then all the beauty of form will appear to have been only a brief moment of exaltation. Hence this is still not the true way of redemption. For this reason Confucius felt very uncomfortable when once, on consulting the oracle, he obtained the hexagram of GRACE.

A beginner in a subordinate place must take upon himself the labor of advancing. There might be an opportunity of surreptitiously easing the way—symbolized by the carriage—but a self-contained man scorns help gained in a dubious fashion. He thinks it more graceful to go on foot than to drive in a carriage under false pretenses.

○ Six in the second place means:

Lends grace to the beard on his chin.

The beard is not an independent thing; it moves only with the chin. The image therefore means that form is to be considered only as a result and attribute of content. The beard is a superfluous ornament. To devote care to it for its own sake, without regard for the inner content of which it is an ornament, would bespeak a certain vanity.

Nine in the third place means:

Graceful and moist.

Constant perseverance brings good fortune.

This represents a very charming life situation. One is under the spell of grace and the mellow mood induced by wine. This grace can adorn, but it can also swamp us. Hence the warning not to sink into convivial indolence but to remain constant in perseverance. Good fortune depends on this.

Six in the fourth place means:

Grace or simplicity?

A white horse comes as if on wings.

He is not a robber,

He will woo at the right time.

An individual is in a situation in which doubts arise as to which is better—to pursue the grace of external brilliance, or to return to simplicity. The doubt itself implies the answer. Confirmation comes from the outside; it comes like a white winged horse. The white color indicates simplicity. At first it may be disappointing to renounce comforts that might have been obtained, yet one finds peace of mind in a true relationship

with the friend who courts him. The winged horse is the symbol of the thoughts that transcend all limits of space and time.

Six in the fifth place means:

Grace in hills and gardens.

The roll of silk is meager and small.

Humiliation, but in the end good fortune.

A man withdraws from contact with people of the lowlands, who seek nothing but magnificence and luxury, into the solitude of the heights. There he finds an individual to look up to, whom he would like to have as a friend. But the gifts he has to offer are poor and few, so that he feels ashamed. However, it is not the material gifts that count, but sincerity of feeling, and so all goes well in the end.

○ Nine at the top means:

Simple grace. No blame.

Here at the highest stage of development all ornament is discarded. Form no longer conceals content but brings out its value to the full. Perfect grace consists not in exterior ornamentation of the substance, but in the simple fitness of its form.