



55. *Richness*

Richness is developmental. Freedom from worry when the king is great is suited to midday.

EXPLANATION

Richness is fullness and greatness; illumination and action balance each other, illumination is great and action is great—therefore it is called richness.

This hexagram represents operating the fire and preventing danger; it follows on the previous hexagram *gradual progress*. *Gradual progress* means stabilization and carrying out practice according to an initiatory process, whereby one gradually advances in an orderly manner, not letting the firing process go awry. “Fire” is a symbol of illumination; operating the fire means employing illumination. Illumination is the quality of awareness and perceptivity. If one can be aware, then one has the mind of Tao, and the spirit is knowing. If one can be perceptive, then there is no human mentality, and the mind is clear. With the spirit knowing and the mind clear, inwardly cultivating and subtly refining, clear about action and acting with clarity, one’s illumination will grow day by day, and one’s action will become greater day by day. When illumination and action are applied in concert, practice of the Tao is very easy. This is why *richness* is developmental.

However, though richness of illumination and action is developmental, it is necessary to know when to go forward and when to withdraw, to be able to be great or small, to forestall danger and foresee peril—only then can richness be enduring richness, can development be enduring development. This is like there being no “worry when the king is great.” The king represents the ease of making works lofty and great when the accomplishment of the Tao is rich and full. When one is great and knows how to preserve it, there is no worry about greatness.

What path is the path of no worry? It is the path “suited to midday.” Day represents illumination, the middle means freedom from partiality and bias. When development of illumination is rich and full, the firing process has been completed, and the medicine has been made, the kindling should be quickly removed from under the stove and the fire should be stopped. Stopping when it is appropriate to stop, illumination is not overused. When illumination is not overused, proceeding and withdrawing according to the time, firmness and flexibility balancing each other without partiality or bias, then that which is not yet rich can become so, while that which is already rich can be preserved. There is no further worry that richness may be lost.

- **First yang:** Meeting your director, even as equals there is no blame. If you go on, there will be exaltation.

EXPLANATION

In the beginning of richness, when your illumination is not great, and it is appropriate that you should foster richness, if there is communication with a sage having the same virtues, this is meeting your director. Meeting your director, you benefit each other, thus increasing understanding; even though you are at the beginning of equality, it is possible to be blameless. It is a logical certainty that if you go on using this strength there will be exaltation. This is being strong and producing richness in the beginning.

- **2 yin:** Increasing the shade, seeing stars at midday, if you go on this way you will have doubt and affliction. But if there is sincerity and it is acted on, it will bring good fortune.

EXPLANATION

If you associate with the wrong people, you will not only be unable to increase illumination, you will on the contrary block illumination. This is like "increasing the shade, seeing stars at midday." Seeing stars at midday means the light of the sun does not prevail over the light of the stars; illumination is blocked and does not get through. If one goes on this way to operate the fire and carry out the convergence, right and wrong will be indistinct, the practice will run into difficulty, and one will surely have doubt and affliction. It is lucky if there is a true teacher in sight; if you know you are not enlightened and sincerely seek enlightenment from another, borrowing strength to remedy weakness, arousing your spirit and proceeding with vigor, not only will there be no doubt, but it will also bring good fortune. This is borrowing strength when weak, to produce richness.

- **3 yang:** Increasing shade, seeing glimmering stardust at midday, one breaks one's right arm. No one is to blame.

EXPLANATION

Using illumination too much, in desiring to enrich the illumination, instead one obscures the illumination. This is like seeing shimmering stardust at midday. When stardust is seen at midday, that means the light of the sun does not prevail over the light of the moon; the damage to illumination is extreme. The reason for this is that one knows only how to use strength and does not know how to use flexibility; one knows only how to employ illumination and does not know how to nurture illumination. When one advances too speedily, one will also regress rapidly; this is like breaking one's right arm. This is bringing failure on oneself, and is not the fault of anyone else. This is the richness of strength incapable of yielding.

- **4 yang:** Increasing shade, seeing stars at midday. Meeting the hidden master is auspicious.

EXPLANATION

Here strength is in the body of movement (☰), near to yin: Not only is it not possible to enrich illumination, there is also that which increases obscurity. Again, this is like seeing stars at midday. But if one is strong yet can be flexible and yielding, not using one's illumination actively, able to nurture one's illumination, one thereby meets the hidden master, which is auspicious. "Hidden" means unseen, concealed: Usually true practitioners of Tao adopt a plain appearance even though they carry a treasure; many of them conceal themselves in humble situations, and people cannot recognize them. When one is able to meet such a hidden adept, there is mutual inspiration; nurturing illumination and not employing it, illumination is naturally not damaged, strength naturally does not fail. This is the richness of strength able to be flexible and yielding.

- **5 yin:** Bringing beatification, there is glory; this is auspicious.

EXPLANATION

With flexible receptivity in balance, by emptying the mind one can fill the belly; therefore "bringing beatification, there is glory." "Bringing beatification" means that clarity arises in openness, so spiritual illumination comes of itself. "There is glory" means that one's striving at the outset is not seen by anyone, but then when one arrives at nonstriving, everyone knows. This fifth line represents the very moment of richness, when emptiness and fulfillment correspond, illumination and action are spontaneous, the gold elixir has crystallized, and it is appropriate to take the path of nonstriving, using the "cultural fire" for incubation. This is the richness of yielding and nonstriving.

- **Top yin:** Embellishing the room, shading the house; peeking in the door, it is quiet, with no one there, unseen for three years. Inauspicious.

EXPLANATION

When one is weak, without knowledge, not understanding the great Tao, remaining at rest in solitary quietude, self-satisfied, thinking this is enough, idly adorning the appearance of the house while going into a dark place without illumination, this is like having a house with no one in it. Not understanding in the beginning, one will see misfortune in the end; the culmination of richness is an inauspicious culmination. This has been referred to as a magnificent buddha-shrine with no Buddha in it. This is the richness of weak nihilism.

So in the path of richness, when not yet rich it is necessary to produce richness by first understanding and then practicing. Once rich, it is neces-

sary to stop pouring on effort and to preserve richness. Producing richness and preserving richness, each follow its own appropriate timing: Forestalling danger, aware of perils, using illumination and operating the fire without erring either by excess or insufficiency, it is good to attain the proper balance.



55. Abundance

thunder above,
fire below

**Thunder and lightning both arrive, abundant.
Thus do superior people pass judgment and execute
punishment.**

Abundance is fullness and vigor. Above is *thunder* ䷳, below is *fire* ䷲; this is the arrival of both thunder and lightning. Thunder shakes, lightning illumines; thunder and lightning complement each other, power and intelligence act together. This is the image of *abundance*.

What superior people see in this is that when people in the world accept the false and abandon the real, take misery for pleasure, crave possessions and sensual stimulation, ruin their character and conduct, misbehave in a hundred ways, and enter a state of benightedness, they are like criminals in prison awaiting the time when they will be executed. Looking into the source of this, it is because of not knowing how to distinguish the real from the false. Therefore superior people emulate the shining illumination of lightning, thoroughly investigating the recondite principles of nature and life, distinguishing right and wrong, like passing judgment in court.

Once they have discerned the real within the false, they also distinguish the false within the real; with genuine knowledge and certain insight, they do not mistake the seeming for the true. Emulating the power of thunder, they extirpate implanted aberrating influences and clean up their spirits, like executing punishment of criminals. Liberating the innocent, executing the guilty, acting decisively and directly, they do not grant respite to insidious ills.

Passing judgment means applying flexibility to minute discernment, effecting knowledge. Execution means applying firmness to decisive power, acting with strength. The sages' science of nature and life of body and mind is twofold, involving knowledge and action. If one knows but does not act, one cannot attain the Tao; if one acts without knowledge, one mistakes nature and life. Knowing and then acting, completing knowledge with practice, proving understanding in action, some day one will master oneself and return to what is right, and all the world will revert to goodness. If students are able to judge truth and act effectively, there is no doubt that they will reach the state of abundance of qualities of the Tao, where wealth is daily renewed.