



5. *Waiting*

**In waiting there is sincerity and great development.
It is good to be correct. It is beneficial to cross a
great river.**

EXPLANATION

Waiting means there is awaiting. As to the qualities of the hexagram, above is *water* ☵, a pitfall, below is *heaven* ☰, which is sound and strong. Being sound and strong and able to manage in the midst of danger, it is therefore called *waiting*.

This hexagram represents nurturing strength, awaiting the proper time; it follows on the previous hexagram *difficulty*. *Difficulty* is movement

and action in danger, restoring the primordial while in the midst of the temporal. Therefore one travels the path of strength and firmness and takes the true yang fallen in *water* ☵ out.* However, when the yang has been trapped in *water* for a long time, it is not possible to get out of danger immediately; one must lead it on gradually, waiting for the proper time to gather it. One cannot presume upon one's strength and set about the task impetuously—that would bring on danger.

People give rise to yin from the culmination of yang. The yang in the center of *heaven* ☰ runs into the palace of *earth* ☷, so that *earth* is filled in and becomes *water* ☵. The yin in the center of *earth* enters the palace of *heaven*, so that *heaven* is hollowed and becomes *fire* ☲. At this point, working with false yin and false yang, the strong becomes weak and the submissive becomes stubborn; the intent is not sincere, and the mind is not right. Being aggressive, one is not aware of danger, and is not receptive enough to notice obstacles; one acts dangerously, hoping for the remote chance of luck, knowing no limits.

Now if you want to get out of danger, it is necessary to know danger. Being able to recognize danger is being able to believe it is dangerous. Once you believe in the danger, you have inner control; being careful and wary, you refine yourself and wait for the proper time. Every act is confined to its proper place, and one is not damaged by external influences. Therefore in the path of *waiting* "there is sincerity and great development," gaining good fortune by being correct.

Having sincerity and great development means believing in danger and being able to cope with it; that correctness is good means that by maintaining correctness you can be free from danger. Once you believe in the danger, and keep to what is right, you fend off danger by strength and firmness, and use danger to nurture strength and firmness, awaiting the time to move forward, and "enter the lair looking for the tiger." Not only are you able to avoid being injured by negative energy, you can also take the true yang fallen into *water* and return it to the palace of *heaven*. This is the reason that "it is beneficial to cross a great river."

A great river is most dangerous; this is the image of *water*, which is something that fells and traps yang. That danger is most great: Believing in the danger, you cross it correctly; when the time is not yet ripe, you nurture strength, and when the time comes you advance strength. Advancing it and nourishing it at the proper times is how you can be in danger yet cope with it, and how you can get out of danger. That strength is beneficial wherever it goes.

- **First yang:** Waiting on the outskirts, it is beneficial to employ constancy; then there is no fault.

EXPLANATION

Being strong and firm yet humble, having strength but not using it, being in the world yet able to leave the world, unaffected by fame and profit, is

*I.e., one takes the primordial out of the conditioned.

like waiting in the outskirts. However, strong people with a lot of talent and ability usually don't like to be below others; it may happen that there is the fault of not being steadfast in waiting, so here "it is beneficial to employ constancy," for only then can one bring to a conclusion what one has started, and there is not the fault of changing halfway along. This is firm and steadfast waiting.

- **2 yang:** Waiting on the sand, there is some criticism, but it turns out well.

EXPLANATION

As soon as you presume upon strength, there is danger. This is likened to waiting on the sand. The danger of waiting on the sand may not be very horrendous, but the going is apt to get bogged down, making it hard to avoid a bit of criticism and repentance. Once one is able to repent, the overbearing mind is transformed, and while firm one can be flexible. Then one does not go into danger, and danger does not come; it is possible to finish auspiciously. This is waiting which is firm and yet aware of danger.

- **3 yang:** Waiting in the mud, bringing on enemies.

EXPLANATION

When adamant strength rushes ahead, unable to wait for the proper time, eager for achievement, though one originally wanted to go ahead, one suffers a fall behind. This is likened to "waiting in the mud." The strength waiting in mud calls danger on itself where there is no danger, "bringing on enemies." It should be resolved. This is waiting that is firm but unaware of danger.

- **4 yin:** Waiting in blood. Leaving the cave.

EXPLANATION

Being weak and helpless, by nature in danger, is likened to waiting in blood. Also, when the quality of yielding is in a position of weakness, in a realm of darkness, and one is unable to get out on one's own, it is like being in a cave: lucky is the quality of yielding that keeps to what is right, following the virtuous because of having no virtue oneself, depending on others to save oneself; then it is possible to get out of the cave, and ultimately not be injured by negative energy. This is waiting that is yielding and follows firmness.

- **5 yang:** Waiting with food and wine, it is good to be correct.

EXPLANATION

Positive firmness correctly balanced, one has inner control, and uses the artificial to cultivate the real. Though there is danger, it is as if there were no danger. This is like "waiting with food and wine." Food and wine are

things that soothe the mind and fill the belly. Enjoying the path, one forgets about age. Sometimes there is danger, but the path is not dangerous. Outwardly there is danger, but inwardly it is not dangerous. By correctness everything turns out well. This is waiting that is firm and remains correct.

- **Top yin:** Entering a cave. Three people come, guests not in haste: Respect them, and it will turn out well.

EXPLANATION

At the end of waiting, one should get out of danger, yet one goes into danger; this is like entering a cave. One goes into a cave because of inability to refine oneself. If you can refine yourself, when you have refined yourself to the point of having no self, light appears in the emptiness, and spiritual illumination comes of itself. First going into a cave, after all you come out of the cave. Therefore "three people come, guests not in haste: Respect them, and it will turn out well." The guests who are not in haste are the three yangs of *heaven* ☰. They are the original immortals who run away to other houses after birth and become guests; awaiting the time to bring them back, from one yang you gradually arrive at the pure completeness of the three yangs—then as before they belong to your home. Let them be the hosts and yourself be the guest. They are to be respected and not defied. If you respect and obey them, yin and yang merge, the golden elixir crystallizes, life and health are preserved and completed—this is great fortune. This is the waiting of cultivating oneself and crystallizing the elixir.

So in the path of advancing the fire, sometimes you nurture strength, sometimes you use strength, sometimes you leave strength be, sometimes you balance strength; each has its time. If you wait for the proper time to act, always in the appropriate way, strong, cognizant of danger, even though you "cross a great river," it will be beneficial.



5. *Waiting*

water above,
heaven below

Clouds rise to heaven, waiting. The superior person makes merry with food and drink.

Waiting means there is something awaited. Above is *water* ☵, below is *heaven* ☰; water vapor rises from earth to sky, where it condenses into clouds. When clouds form in the sky, rain may be expected. This is the image of *waiting*.

What superior people see in this is that when people are unable to attain the universal Tao, it is because they are temperamental and unbalanced in action, because the earthly and the celestial are not in harmony. Therefore superior people eat and drink to nourish the earthly, causing the earthly to balance the celestial; they make merry to attune the celestial, causing the celestial to join the earthly. When the earthly and the celestial are in mutual harmony, living energy is stored within, producing being from within nonbeing, spontaneously, without forced effort.

This happens because the sweet rain of life falls naturally through the coalescing of the energies of heaven and earth; the sprouts of living potential grow when the energies of yin and yang commune. Here, food and drink refers to nurturing the body, so that the body is sound; making merry refers to nurturing the mind, so that the mind is unburdened. When body and mind are nurtured, the restorative elixir is easy to crystallize. Herein lies what is known as refining the self and awaiting the proper time.