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(yí) Jaws

Persistence; good fortune. Watching the jaws; seeking food for the mouth.

- Nine in the first place: Ignoring your sacred turtle [shell's omens]. Watching our shortened jaws. Misfortune.
- Six in the second place: Reversing the jaws. Gnashing at the warp at the north. Going on a campaign would bring misfortune.
- Six in the third place: Gnashing the jaws. Persisting brings misfortune. For ten years, don't do it, since no course of action will work out.
- Six in the fourth place: Jaws reversed: good fortune. The tiger gazes "dan-dan" (his eyes down), his face "didi" (flute-like). No blame.

- Six in the fifth place: Gnashing at the warp [or, knocking the neck]. Persisting where you dwell brings good fortune. You cannot ford the great river now.
- Nine at the top: From the jaws, dangers and good fortune. Fording the great river is effective.

Image

Below the mountain, thunder: the image of the jaws. You should use care in your speech and restraint in your eating and drinking.

Thunder here relates to the nourishment that rain brings to growing plants. It is also frightening, indicating a warning related to the ways in which we use our jaws and mouths: in speaking and in eating and drinking, we do well to be sparing and careful in the words and foods we choose to pass through our jaws.

The food and drink we place in our mouths become part of our bodies and affect our feelings and health. Instead of gulping down whatever is available, we need to be cautious and restrained, choosing what we bring between our jaws, and limiting our intake to modest amounts of those foods and drinks that will nourish us best. Similarly, the words and phrases we allow our jaws to form will become part of the social fabric of our lives, enhancing or harming our relationships. Once spoken or written, words cannot be recalled, so we need to choose them with the same care we give to selecting our foods, discarding what is foul or fetid, selecting what is ripe for the time and person, and holding back rash explosions of feeling, which could bring harm to our relationships.

Such restraint in the jaws, holding them still as a mountain at times, is not easy. Yet even tigers manage to keep their mouths

shut when they need to gaze down from their vantage point before beginning their hunt. This hexagram mentions times when making a major change is wise and times when it is not. Though one line recognizes a time for moving, most recommend waiting, and several suggest that starting something major in this situation would bring about misfortune. This may be a time for restrained nurturing rather than for decisive action.

Shaughnessy, 66–67, 294–295.

Lynn, 305–311.

Wilhelm/Baynes, 107–111.