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蹇



(jiǎn) Impeded

On foot [instead of having wheels]. Effective in the southwest. Not effective in the northeast. It is effective to consult a wise one. Persisting is fortunate.

- Six in the first place: Leaving on foot; coming by chariot.
- Six in the second place: The ruler's officials walk and walk again, but not by reason of themselves.
- Nine in the third place: Going on foot, and coming back.
- Six in the fourth place: Going on foot; coming with connections.
- Nine in the fifth place: When the great walk friends come. You lose.
- Six at the top: Going on foot; coming with a stone. Good fortune. Consulting a great person is effective.

Image

On the mountain, water, the image of impediment. You should turn toward the truth within you and cultivate your moral strengths.

As many thirsty hikers have discovered, it is rare indeed to find water at the top of a mountain. However, when the form of the mountain impedes the flow of water, it may be held in this unusual position. While we usually think of obstruction as being negative, such times of forced inactivity may permit self-nurturing that is impossible in better times, when myriad responsibilities make respites rare, and even the night hours are filled with worries. Such outwardly dreary times, when we lose our accustomed vehicles or powers, force us to slow down and walk. If we can accept such periods calmly, and as transitory, we can use them to advantage. When we are unable to influence others, we may see our own flaws and limits with unusual clarity. However painful this may be, it is useful information, which we do well to absorb and find inner resources to counterbalance, or at least learn to recognize, the flaws such periods bring to light. External obstructions and impediments may in fact provide us with the actual or cognitive leisure to work on ourselves with some of the energies we usually expend on trying to change others. This may be a good time to remember the old joke, "Take my advice, I'm not using it." Try to do some of the good things you recommend to others.

For this hexagram, the comment on the judgment is so helpful, that I have included some of it:

To be impeded is to be in difficulties. When dangers are before you, to see the danger and be able to stop is wisdom indeed.... Great is the usefulness of a time of impediments!

This statement and the image of pure water surprising a hot and tired climber who has reached the summit of a mountain are fine subjects for meditation during meetings when no one is willing to hear your concerns.

The imagery within the hexagram itself is that of someone who no longer has a vehicle. Instead, she must plod along as others' carts and chariots rush by her, raising dust or mud. It is not a favorable situation in itself, but it can have benefits. Those times when we are forced to slow down and walk force us to be more organized: we must consolidate tasks and cannot afford to forget and leave things behind. We see much more of our surroundings when we walk than when we ride, precisely because we are going more slowly, have less need to be alert for other vehicles, and can actually afford to stop and observe if we wish, without interrupting traffic on the road. While we can carry less, and cannot go so far, we may see and feel more on the way.

Shaughnessy, 76–77, 297.

Lynn, 375–380.

Wilhelm/Baynes, 151–154.