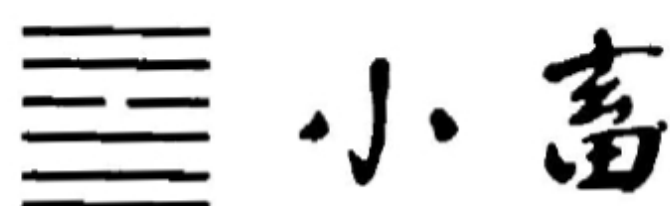


9



XIǎO XÙ

SMALL IS TAMED

Small is tamed.

Blessed.

Dense clouds but no rain
from our western lands.

Someone small is dangerously active but lets himself be tamed before he goes too far. He is like a storm cloud that rises in the west but evaporates before it turns to rain. Rain is a symbol of conflict. The west was the homeland of the Zhou people, upon whose story the *Changes* is based. They are being told that they are not yet strong enough to go east and fight their Shang rulers.^{1, 2}

Lines

first line/9 — He goes back on the road.
What harm could befall him?
Auspicious.

He wisely turns back before getting into difficulties. By taking the same road back that he came out on, he is assured of safety.

line two/9 — Dragged back.
Auspicious.

As long as he turns back, it makes no difference whether he does so voluntarily or under duress. Line two is the place of the subject, who is under his ruler's power.

line three/9 — Carriage and axle part.
Husband and wife glare at each other.

Going too far too fast causes the breakup of a relationship. Line three often shows a subject who goes too far, offending against the ruler.^{3, 4}

line four/6 — — Faithful allegiance
Sends sorrow far away
And averts harm.

In order to avoid conflict, he halts and surrenders, becoming an obedient vassal. Line four often gives the solution to a problem encountered in line three. This particular fourth line is passive (— —) and at the bottom of the trigram Xùn ䷶ Kneel in Submission. Passivity and submission prevent discord.

line five/9 ——— Good fortune comes to him from his neighbor,
To whom he is faithful as if bound.

Line five is the place of the ruler. His “neighbor” is his ruler.

top line/9 ——— It rains. The rain ends.
Now he can drive forward again.
It is dangerous to stay passive as a wife.
The moon comes full.
But marching forth like a lord to war would bring
misfortune.

He went too far, causing conflict between himself and his ruler. Now that the conflict is over, it is time for him to start his carriage forward again, as long as he avoids acting aggressively. The moon’s coming full may symbolize both the coming of a time for action and the subject’s rise to eminence. The top line of a hexagram almost always has to do with going too far. It often involves conflict and sometimes describes a movement beyond the situation portrayed in the rest of the hexagram.⁵

STRUCTURE ䷶ 巽 Xùn Kneel in Submission
䷀ 乾 Qián Strong Action

Someone small or in a low position is very active (lower trigram ䷀), but when he comes up against someone in a high position he kneels in submission (upper trigram ䷶).

SEQUENCE The events of this hexagram take place within the alliance formed in the previous hexagram Bǐ (8) ALLIANCE. The lesser partner unwisely tries to push ahead too quickly but restrains himself in time to avert a clash with his ally.

Notes

1. SMALL IS TAMED — See DÀ XÙ (26) BIG IS TAMED.

2. "Dense clouds . . . western land." (opening text) — See also XIǎO GUÒ (62) SMALL GETS BY, line five.

3. "axle" (line three) — The word 輶 *fú*, translated "axle," actually refers to the wooden fitting that held the axle to the carriage. Driving ahead too fast causes it to break loose. See also DÀ XÙ (26) BIG IS TAMED, line two.

4. "Husband and wife" (line three) — The husband appears to symbolize the ruler and the wife the subject. This is opposite to TÚN (3) GATHERING SUPPORT, line two, and MÈNG (4) THE YOUNG SHOOT, as well as DÀ GUÒ (28) BIG GETS BY, line five, and GÒU (44) SUBJUGATED. In all these cases, the woman represents the ruler. The difference seems to be that when the man is a suitor and the woman his potential bride, she is the ruler; when they are already married, he is the ruler.

5. "The moon comes full." (top line) — See also GUĪ MÈI (54) A MAIDEN MARRIES, line five, and ZHŌNG FÚ (61) WHOLEHEARTED ALLEGIANCE, line four.