

19 Nearing/Releasing the Spirit LIN

Arrival of the new; approach of something powerful and meaningful; welcome, draw nearer and closer; funeral celebrations, ritual mourning.



NEARING

MYTHS FOR CHANGE: THE STORY OF THE TIME

Charge to the Oracle: *When you serve the ancestors you can become Great. Accept this and use the energy of Nearing. Release the spirit. This means becoming Great.*

Nearing or Approaching describes the ceremonies through which a newly dead noble is turned into an ancestor. The soul or ghost is escorted into the tomb through elaborate funeral ceremonies and ritual mourning that feed it, while the spirit is enshrined in a spirit image or tablet in the Ancestral Temple that serves as a connection or doorway to the power above. The ancestor that mounts from the tablet acts as an intermediary. It calls down Heaven's protection, protection from above that showers blessings on the people. The root of the word 'Nearing' also shows a dignitary, an official in royal service, who directly carries out orders from above and suggests signs and oracles, divination books, oracle books in temples.

The creation of this power, symbolized as the Ancestor's Eyes watching from above on the bronze ritual vessels, is surrounded by the formal lamentations of a funeral procession and the activities of the *wugui*, Intermediaries concerned with the unquiet dead. Mourners exhaust themselves in the ceremony, offering sacrifice of rare goods and vessels. The Crane Dancers literally followed the dead into the tomb, accompanied by lamentations and cries of triumph. All these rituals are part of an investment in darkness, a ceremony that turns the experience of death into an ancestor through whom blessings can flow. They make the ghost comfortable in the tomb, releasing it from the desire to re-enact earthly passions, so that it will eventually merge once again with the Ghost River. It suggests that any great accomplishment, any great blessing or approach, must be founded on a sacrifice, an acknowledgement of the dark powers without whom nothing can grow or flourish.

The *xia* and *di* ceremonies complete the creation of the ancestor spirit. In the *xia* sacrifice and feast, the newly dead ancestor is reunited with and installed in the line of ancestors after the end of the mourning period. The *di* ceremony sets the royal ancestors among the ranks that sit at the right and left of the High Lord in his court in the Great Bear. This marks the 'Nearing', the beginning of the ancestor's power to bestow blessings and act as intermediary, moving between the spirit tablet in the Ancestral Temple and the court of the High Lord.

THE RESPONSE

Nearing. The Source of Success: Advantageous Trial. Harvesting.

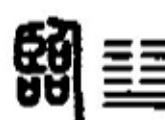
Ending this in the eighth moon: Trap! The Way closes.

Nearing, LIN: a beneficent spirit or an honoured person approaches to confer favour and blessing; look at with love, care and sympathy; arrive, make contact, point of arrival; be honoured with a visit, be commanded to come nearer; moment when positive force comes to the fore; mount in power, watch over, shower blessings, the ancestor's eyes; ceremonies at a funeral to ensure the repose of the dead; bring boats together, facing; lamentations, public mourning; 'descending to the valley', approaching a critical point, nearing death, mourning and sickness. The old character shows a spirit-person bending down to pour out blessings from a vessel, blessings that pass through his descendant to three open mouths that receive it.



*LIN*² (7135/131) is composed of a man, *REN*² (1), bending over, a vertical eye *MU*² (2), a vassal or descendant *CHEN*² and three mouths *PIN*³ (3), indicating a number of people one cares for. Another old form (a) shows connecting lines between the eye and the mouths.

Nearing describes your situation in terms of something approaching, particularly something great approaching something smaller. It



is the first arrival and point of new contact. The way to deal with it is to move towards what is approaching without expecting to get what you want immediately. Look at things with care and sympathy. Welcome the approach of others. Keep your expectations modest. This contact opens a whole new cycle of time. It is particularly favourable for what is growing. So beware. Trying to rush to completion and an early harvest will cut you off from the spirits and leave you open to danger.

THE SCHOLAR SPEAKS

The hexagram figure shows desire for contact expressed through a willingness to work and serve. Above the mists there is Earth. This is the return of the great. Invite it to come nearer. The proper thing to do is to bring things together. When you teach, use your teaching to continually ponder the heart's concerns. Tolerate and protect things and people outside your normal set of values without setting limits on them. There is an undeveloped potential that you rely on without knowing it. What is strong and firm in this situation increases gradually. Work to express it. Keep yourself centred and connected to things. If you want something great to come of this, you must continually correct yourself. That is Heaven's Way. Stay on an even path. Rushing to finish things will leave you open to harm. The whole situation will dissolve.

THE SHAMAN SPEAKS

Earth above Mists. Nearing. Releasing the Spirit.

A time when Noble One teaches and ponders without exhaustion,

tolerating and protecting the commoners without limit.

Spirit speaks and spreads joy through the Intermediaries. Offer service at the Earth Altar. The Intermediaries are working in the Earth. Field above yields and sustains, while Mists rising from below stimulate and fertilize, joyous words that cheer and inspire. This is Earth over Metal: stimulation within the Earth that prepares the approach of great power. The ideal Realising Person reflects this, meditating on the Way, spreading the teachings to inspire the lives of all. Work through joyous words to bring spirit to expression. Gather the resources for a great project.

TRANSFORMING LINES: CHANGE AT WORK

INITIAL NINE

Chanting, keening, salty tears.

Conjunction Nearing. Release the spirit.

Trial: Wise Words! The Way is open.

This means your purpose is moving correctly. Lamenting at the funeral. The spirit liberated now belongs with you like parts of a previously separated whole. This is a connection made in Heaven. It will stimulate and inspire you. Have no doubts. The Way is open.

Direction: Organize your forces. This is the return of something important. Be open. Provide what is needed.

NINE AT SECOND

Chanting, keening, salty tears.

Conjunction Nearing. Release the spirit.

Wise Words! The Way is open.

Nothing not advantageous.

Not yielding to fate. Lamenting at the funeral. The spirit liberated now belongs with you like parts of a previously separated whole. This is a connection made in Heaven, at the centre of the inner world. It will stimulate and inspire you. There is nothing that will not benefit from this connection. The good consequences have hardly begun.

Direction: This is the return of something important. Be open. Provide what is needed.

SIX AT THIRD

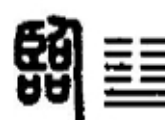
Enough lamenting!

Sweetly Nearing, there is no advantageous direction.

If you are already grieving, there will be no mistake.

Not an appropriate situation, but the fault does not last. Leave off! The approaching spirit may look sweet, but no good can come of it. This is simply not right for you. Painful though it may be, if you have already realised it you won't make mistakes. Let go of the influence or the opportunity.

Direction: This change begins a flourishing new time. Turn conflict into creative tension. The situation is already changing.



SIX AT FOURTH

Wailing and crying.

Climax Nearing. Release the spirit.

This is not a mistake.

This is an appropriate situation. The climax approaches. Don't hold back. Give yourself fully. This is not a mistake. It releases the spirit. *Direction:* Turn conflict into creative tension. The situation is already changing.

SIX AT FIFTH

Overseeing the sacrifice.

Knowledge Nearing. Release the spirit.

The Great Leader sacrifices at the Earth Altar.

Wise Words! The Way is open.

This is called moving the centre. This is the Great War Leader announcing the launch of the armies that will conquer Shang. It is the knowledge a great leader uses to help and change the people. It is time to take action. The spirit will be with you. This can change the way you see yourself and your life.

Direction: Articulate this. Find your voice. Take things in. Provide what is needed.

SIX ABOVE

Chanting and keening without restraint.

Generosity and wealth are Nearing. Release the spirit.

Wise Words! The Way opens.

This is not a mistake.

Locate your purpose within. The ancestor spirit responds fully. Generosity, wealth and the power of enjoyment enter your life through this connection. Be generous with what you acquire. Hold on to your sense of inner purpose. Your desires will be fulfilled.

Direction: Decrease present involvement to make new energy available. Make the sacrifice. Something important returns. Provide what is needed.