The Sacrifice XU

Wait for, wait on, attend to what is needed; wait for the right moment; the rainmakers, waiting for rain; service at a ritual.

MYTHS FOR CHANGE: THE STORY OF THE TIME

Charge to the Oracle: An immature being must be nourished. Accept this and use the energy of Attending. This means the way of eating and drinking and the sacred meal in the ancestral temple.

With Attending the enveloped spirit enters the sacrificial and ritual world, the ceremonies that connect us with the spirits. It is the force activated by sacrifice and ritual at work, symbolized by the rites of rainmaking, and being stopped by rain. It is the positive waiting, the change in awareness involved in participating in a great ritual and awaiting the spirit visitors that are coming. The gap in time the ritual opens allows you to step into the Great Stream of existence. The root of the word Attending connects it with jade pendants and tablets and the jade disc biyu that represents a hole in Heaven and Earth, an entrance to paradise. It is an ancient jade object of great veneration that assures good harvest or provokes curses, the protector of temples and people, the illustrious long-past ancestors. It evokes a feminine, animating presence and a ritual mask. The water motif that runs through the lines evokes the master of the waters and the ways, the culture hero Yu the Great. It shows the capacity of humans, through attending on the rituals and symbols, to follow the Way of Heaven. Attending also evokes the moment of gathering force and energy before King Wu received the Mandate to set the armies marching into Shang. It means measuring a danger, confident it can be surmounted with the aid of the spirits. Its shadow is timidity, fear or needless striving.

THE RESPONSE

Attending at the sacrifice: a connection to the spirits will carry you through. Shining success.

Make an offering and you will succeed.

Trial: Wise Words! the Way is open.

Advantageous to step into the Great Stream. Harvesting.

Attend, XU: Take care of, look out for, serve; necessary, need, call for; provide what is needed; wait for, hesitate; stopped by rain, wait for rain, confident while the clouds gather; know how to wait, have patience and focus; abundant, fall like rain; the River and Mountain spirits; also: a silk garment for the winter sacrifice. The old character shows rain falling from the clouds above and an old man, a sage, whose prayers bring the fertilizing water from Heaven.



 XU^1 (4673/173) shows YU^3 , rain, above and ER^2 , a beard, below. Two older characters (1 and 2) suggest a man standing below rain and the rain falling.

Attending describes your situation in terms of waiting for and serving something. The way to deal with it is to find out what is needed and carefully wait for the right moment to act. You aren't in control of things, but in time you can provide what is needed. Act this way with confidence. You are connected to the spirits and they will carry you through. One day you will bring the rain. Look after things. Think about what is necessary. Illuminate the situation through repeated efforts. This is pleasing to the spirits. Through it they will give you success, effective power and the capacity to bring the situation to maturity. Put your ideas to the trial. That generates meaning and good fortune by releasing transformative energy. This is the right time to enter the stream of life with a goal or embark on a significant enterprise. That brings profit and insight.

THE SCHOLAR SPEAKS

The hexagram figure shows an inner force confronting outer danger. Clouds mounting above Heaven. Turn potential conflict into creative tension. Attend wholeheartedly to the needs at hand. There is something immature in your situation that must be nourished. Eating and drinking together are in harmony with the Way. They serve to nourish the spirits. This is not a time to advance yourself, to champion a cause or climb a mountain. Spread repose and delight. Help leisure, peace of mind, pleasure and harmony permeate the situation like a banquet or feast. Have patience. Carefully yield to precedence and persist in your efforts. Don't think of your waiting and care as an exhausting burden. It is how you can act justly and righteously in this situation and connect what you are doing with the spirit above. It will bring you accomplishment and praise.

THE SHAMAN SPEAKS

Clouds above Heaven. Attending.

A time when Noble One feasts with friends to repose and delight in the spirits.

The spirit that wars in Heaven rewards those toiling in the Pit. This is the Dragon and the Ghost River. Rushing Water above dissolves direction and shape, while Heaven toils below, a spark of yang born at the centre of the yin. It is Water over Metal: inner concentration that confronts outer danger through careful and joyous attending on events. The ideal Realising Person reflects this by joining with others to share in the sacred feast. Work through joyous words to bring spirit to expression.

TRANSFORMING LINES: CHANGE AT WORK

INITIAL NINE

Attending at the Outskirts Altar.

Advantageous to fix the omen. Harvesting.

This is not a mistake.

Heavy going. Do not oppose it. This means not letting go of the ritual. It feels like the spirit is far away, but underneath the connection is certain. Persevere! Don't lose patience. This is the great sacrifice

used to call the dragon who brings the fertilizing rain. You are not making a mistake. Create a clear image of your goal.

Direction: Stay connected to the source of your values. Turn conflict into creative tension. The situation is already changing.

NINE AT SECOND

Attending on the sands as the waters recede.

There is the Small, talking.

Complete this. Wise Words! The Way opens.

The centre overflows. This means completing the ritual opens the Way. Yu the Great is at work, creating the channels. The waters and the ghosts recede, revealing the sands beneath. You are closer to your goal, but the situation keeps shifting and all around you small voices chatter. They can't hurt you. Keep your eye on what is important and go through this. The way to the centre is opening. Direction: The situation is already changing.

NINE AT THIRD

Attending in the bogs and swamps.

Danger. This will attract outlaws in the end.

This means calamity from without. Respectful consideration will not hurt anything now. On the riverbank, ready to cross, you have gotten bogged down in negative feelings. You have lost the sense of attending or waiting on something precious. This leaves you vulnerable to attack and loss of what you care for. There is still time, so think it over. What did you do to create this unfortunate situation? Direction: Set limits and articulate things. Take things in. Be open and provide what is needed.

Six at Fourth

Attending in blood.

Get out of the cave where this begins!

Yield and hearken to this! You are in immediate danger, about to become the victim of this sacrifice. Whatever you are doing, stop! Get out of the place where you are trapped. You can save things now if you will only listen.

Direction: Be resolute. Take action. You are connected to a creative force.

NINE AT FIFTH

Attending, drinking liquor and eating. The sacred meal.

Trial: Wise Words! The Way opens.

This is using the centre correctly. You make the connection. This is the meal shared with the spirits, the ancestors and noble people. Let pleasure, harmony, peace and joy open the Way. Share what you have. Gather with others. This cheer brings you out of your isolation.

Direction: A fertile time is approaching. If you let yourself be led, you can realise hidden potential. The situation is already changing.

SIX ABOVE

Attending. Enter the cave. The 'visitors' come without urging.

There are three coming towards you now.

Respect them and bring this to completion. Wise Words! The Way opens.

This means that though the situation is not appropriate, you do not let go of the Great. Though you are trying your best to work with the situation, you do not really know what to do. Don't worry. The spirits will arrive unexpectedly to help you. Go into the hidden centre of energy. There are three unannounced visitors coming who will show you the way. Respect them and the way to happiness will suddenly open.

Direction: Accumulate the small to achieve the great. Turn conflict into creative tension. The situation is already changing.