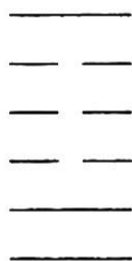


41 *sun/diminishing*

Sacrificing captives.
 MOST AUSPICIOUS.
 NO MISFORTUNE.

Augury possible
 Favourable when there is somewhere to go.
 What use are two bowls? Use them for an offering.

Base (9): *Sacrificial assignment, performed quickly:*

NO MISFORTUNE.
 Diminishing libations.

(9) 2:

Favourable augury.
Expeditions disastrous.

Neither enriching, nor diminishing.

(6) 3: Three travel together
 and one is lost;
 one who travels alone
 finds a friend.

(6) 4: Diminishing the sickness.

The assignment being performed quickly,
the outcome will be happy.
 NO MISFORTUNE.

(6) 5: Maybe enriching
 with a tortoise-shell worth ten cowries.

Unable to decline.
 MOST AUSPICIOUS.

Top (9): Not diminishing, but enriching him.

NO MISFORTUNE.
Augury AUSPICIOUS.
Favourable when there is somewhere to go.
Getting a servant without a family.

(41) **diminishing**

(Hexagram statement) The grammatical structure of the last part is debatable. The translation follows Wen Yiduo (W52). Another reading gives 'What should be used? Use two bowls in the offering.' The bowls are ritual vessels, presumably of bronze. Shaughnessy *Sources of Western Zhou history* (1991) 129–32 gives descriptions and pictures of *gui* 'tureens'. Compare the two earthenware vessels in 29:4.

(Base) Here and in Oracle 4 the translation is prompted by Wen Yiduo (W50). Unless I have analysed the statement incorrectly, there is no oracle to this line.

(2) For 'nor', Kunst (R321) gives 'but'.

(3) Compare the hexagram statement of Hexagram 2.

(5) Tortoise-shells and cowries would be gifts from the king. The same oracle occurs in 42:2. See also Note 51:2. Awards of cowries occur in bronze inscriptions (see Shaughnessy *Sources of Western Zhou history* pages 82, 90 etc). Ode 176.3 is part of a fulsome song of praise for a ruler:

When I saw the prince,
he gave me a hundred cowries.

(5) The gourd is bound near the stalk while it is growing, in order to ensure that, when it is dried for use as a flask, it will have a good shape with two bulbous parts, or at least a narrow neck. Compare the reference to drying a gourd in Analects 17.7: 'Am I a bitter gourd, fit only for hanging up (to dry and use as a bottle) not for eating?'. (W6).

The last two characters about using a *zhang* 'baton' are the same as an oracle in Hexagram 2 and resemble 42:3. See Note 2:3. Gao Heng (G287) reads *zhang* not as 'sceptre', but as 'Shang' (See note 2:3.) He therefore understands the indication as 'Destruction of Shang, toppled by Heaven.' This would be a further use of 'heaven' in a religious sense. See Note 14:top.