



43. Parting

Parting is lauded in the royal court. The call of truth involves danger. Addressing one's own domain, it is not beneficial to go right to war, but it is beneficial to go somewhere.

EXPLANATION

Parting is separating and leaving. In the body of the hexagram, one yin is on top of five yangs—yang is about to become pure, while yin is about to disappear. The qualities of the hexagram are strength and harmony: Harmoniously acting with strength, strong but not violent, it equally has the meaning of using yang to get rid of yin, so it is called *parting*.

This hexagram represents repelling yin by yang; it follows on the previous hexagram *reduction*. In *reduction*, one stills rejoicing and does not rejoice arbitrarily, so as to foster yang and repel yin, using inherent sane energy to repel the energy of external influences. The energy of external influences is invited by the discriminatory consciousness; so if you want to repel external influences, nothing is better than to first part with the discriminatory consciousness.

After people get mixed up in temporal conditioning, the discriminatory consciousness takes charge of affairs; wine and sex distract them from reality, the lure of wealth deranges their nature, emotions and desires well forth at once, thoughts and ruminations arise in a tangle, and the mind-ruler is lost in confusion. Because habituation becomes second nature over a long period of time, it cannot be abruptly removed. It is neces-



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sary to work on the matter in a serene and equanimous way, according to the time: Eventually discrimination will cease, and the original spirit will return; the human mind will sublimate and the mind of Tao will be complete—again you will see the original self.

But this discriminating consciousness is loved by the human mind: If you want to part from it, it is best first to clarify the mind. Once the mind is clarified, the mind of Tao appears, and the discriminatory consciousness is easily dismissed. Therefore “parting is lauded in the royal court.” The royal court is the abode of the mind-ruler, where true and false are distinguished. When the mind clearly understands true and false, then the mind is not deluded by the discriminatory consciousness, and easily parts from it.

But since the discriminatory consciousness has been in charge of things for so long, its roots are deep and its authority is tremendous; one cannot attack it impetuously, but must find the right way between intensity and laxity before it is possible to settle anything.

When the text says “the call of truth,” it means the true mind and genuine intent, as the means to amass sane energy; when it says “involves danger,” it means caution and wariness is the way to ward off aberrant energy. “Addressing one’s own domain” means refining the self. “It is not beneficial to go right to war” means to wait for the proper time.

Once one has been able to amass the right kind of energy and ward off the wrong kind of energy, and also has refined oneself, awaiting the proper time to act, myriad objects are all empty, and there is just the discriminating consciousness alone—take advantage of the right time to detach from this, and there will be unfailing benefit.

The qualities of the hexagram are strength and harmony: serene, without pressure, awaiting the right time to act—this seems to be the secret of parting from yin.

- ***First yang:* Vigor in the advancing feet, going but not prevailing, this is faulty.**

EXPLANATION

At the beginning of parting from yin, merely adamant and lacking flexibility, impetuously pushing forward, is “vigor in the advancing feet.” Vigor in the advancing feet not only is incapable of parting from yin, on the contrary it even fosters yin. So the celestial does not prevail over the earthly, and where there was no fault one brings about fault by oneself. This is being strong but not careful in parting from yin.

- ***2 yang:* If one is cautious and alert, though there be armed troublemakers in the night, one need not worry.**

EXPLANATION

If one is strong yet able to yield, is cautious and alert, taking strict measures of precaution, even if there are armed troublemakers in the night,

one has already spied them out before they act, so there is nothing to worry about. This is being firm yet gentle in parting from yin.

- **3 yang:** *Vigor in the face has bad luck. A superior person leaves what is to be left; going alone, encountering rain and so getting wet, there is irritation, but no fault.*

EXPLANATION

When one is excessively forceful, in a hurry to achieve, the vigor shows this in the face, and bad luck normally ensues. It is lucky if one uses truth to get rid of falsehood, as the decisiveness of a superior person leaving what should be left. The only trouble is that one is firm alone without flexibility; when one runs into rain, gets wet, and cannot immediately achieve the objective, there is irritation. However, once one has gotten wet, though at first one was unable to effect a firm resolution, in the end one will surely resolve it gently, and can avoid the fault of aggressiveness. This is adamantly rushing to part from yin.

- **4 yang:** *No flesh on the buttocks, not making progress. Leading a sheep, regret disappears. Hearing the words but not believing.*

EXPLANATION

When strength is not correctly oriented, the mind of Tao is burdened by the human mentality; this is like having no flesh on the buttocks, so being unable to sit at ease, and also not making progress in action, not successfully parting from yin. It is lucky if the mind of Tao has not yet disappeared, and one can therefore lead in positive energy to increase it; then the regret that was there can vanish. But the problem is that one does not believe words about parting from yin earthliness, still having the human mentality mixed in with the mind of Tao. This is strength being damaged by weakness, not knowing how to part with yin.

- **5 yang:** *Wild burdock root; cut through resolutely. Balanced action is impeccable.*

EXPLANATION

Close on the yin line above, while the earthly is in the upper position the celestial is in the lower position—the mind of Tao is fooled by the human mentality, and clings fondly to the discriminatory consciousness, now separating from it, now not separating. It is like wild burdock root, which must be cut through resolutely—the roots cannot be cut through all at once. However, the contest between the mind of Tao and the human mentality is a matter of a hairbreadth—on this side, the mind of Tao, on that side, the human mentality: If one succeeds in parting from earthliness, this is the

mind of Tao; if one does not succeed in parting from earthliness, this is the human mentality. The mind is the abode of the consciousness; the discriminatory consciousness is connected with the human mentality, so whether they can be split apart definitively is uncertain. Luckily when the celestial yang is about to become pure and the earthly yin is about to disappear, reason ultimately prevails over desire, and even if one cannot part from it spontaneously, one will be able to do so with effort. Therefore by balance in action one can be impeccable. This is parting from negativity by effort when strength is being dragged by weakness.

■ ***Top yin:* No call; in the end there is misfortune.**

EXPLANATION

At the end of *parting*, the aggregate of mundanity has receded, leaving only the single mundanity of the discriminatory consciousness as yet undissolved. At that time it should be parted with, and its force then must pass away. When the celestial energy makes one more advance, the mundane energy will then dissolve; therefore there is "no call; in the end there is misfortune." "No call" of mundane energy is none other than the "call of truth" of celestial energy. The "final misfortune" of mundane energy is the ultimate fortune of celestial energy. This is parting in which the celestial energy becomes pure and complete, while mundane energy vanishes entirely.

So in the path of parting from mundanity, it will not do to be too adamant or too yielding; one must have flexibility within firmness, and firmness within flexibility, parting gradually, advancing a portion of celestial energy, repelling a portion of mundanity, so that celestial energy advances to wholeness and mundanity spontaneously sublimates. If you don't know how to operate the process with appropriate intensity and relaxation, and wish to accomplish it rapidly, that will on the contrary foster mundane energy and damage celestial energy, so that after all you will be unable to repel mundanity. So the path of repelling mundanity requires deep understanding of process.

43. *Parting*

lake above,
heaven below

Moisture ascends to heaven, which parts with it. Thus do superior people distribute blessings to reach those below, while avoiding presumption of virtue.

Parting is a bursting forth. Above is *lake* == and below is *heaven* ===; moisture ascends to heaven, then changes into rain and waters myriad creatures. It is as though heaven is being unselfish and parts with the moisture to let it flow down. This is the image of *parting*.

What superior people see in this is that just as myriad creatures grow when there is moisture in the sky, so are the people secure and peaceful when those above have benevolence. Therefore they distribute blessings to reach those below, causing everyone to benefit from their kindness.

To distribute to those below is to distribute blessings; if one distributes blessings unselfconsciously, then the giving is great, the generosity is real. This is like heaven covering everything and giving life to all creatures. This is what is meant by the saying "Those of great virtue do not consider themselves virtuous; they are companions of heaven."

If one is conscious of distribution of blessings being virtuous, this is presumption of virtue; there is still selfishness in the heart, and the distribution of blessings will not endure. This is not to be considered virtue; this is what those who distribute blessings are to strictly avoid.

Therefore superior people view others and self as the same; distributing blessings, they do not expect any reward. They have virtue but do not presume upon it, so their virtue grows day by day while their minds grow humbler day by day. They part with all self-satisfaction and self-importance. This comes about as inevitably as moisture in the sky falls to the earth.

Working on the Tao, accumulating achievement and building up practice, carrying out such and such expedients to benefit others, is like distributing blessings to people. But many who carry out expedients to benefit others do so without genuine sincerity; some do it for reputation, some do it for profit, some make an ineffective outward show of helping people based on ancient models and then blame others when things don't go quite as they wish. These are all cases of having no virtue yet presuming on virtue, and are not worthy of the name of benefiting others.

Observe how heaven bestows blessings on myriad creatures; does it expect any reward from them? Not expecting any reward from myriad creatures, heaven has virtue but does not presume upon it. If even heaven does not presume upon its virtue, how much less is the virtue of ordinary people to be presumed upon? Whenever one does anything for the benefit of others, if one can emulate heaven in not presuming upon virtue, one's virtue will not fail to be great.