



25. *Fidelity (No Error)*

Fidelity is creative and developmental. It is beneficial to be correct; if it is not correct, there will be disaster, and it will not be beneficial to go anywhere.

EXPLANATION

Fidelity means wholehearted sincerity without duplicity. As for the qualities of the hexagram, above is *heaven* ☰, strong, and below is *thunder* ☳, active. Being active, firm and strong, wherever one's determination lies, one carries it out; therefore it is called *fidelity*.

This hexagram represents vigorous advancement of yang; it follows on the previous hexagram *stripping away*. *Stripping away* means that when one submits to one's desires, yin strips away yang. The stripping away of yang is all because of not knowing how to advance yang, and having it stripped away by yin. If you know how to advance yang, and with total attention purely on reality, twenty-four hours a day, without interruption, consider essence and life the one matter of importance, then external things cannot thwart you, and you can gradually reach true fidelity, the state of integration with celestial principle; this is fidelity with the path of creation and development.

In the hexagram, the action is in the inside; this is setting the will on the Tao. Once the heart is set on the Tao and the living potential is activated, the original creative energy returns. In the hexagram the strength is on the outside; this is earnestness in practice. When earnest in practice, celestial qualities can be cultivated and the original creative energy can grow. It is through this restoration and growth that fidelity is creative and developmental.

However, though one be capable of creativity and development, it is of course inevitable that it is only beneficial if the action is correct and the strength is correct. When action is correct, the original creative energy is not damaged; when strength is correct, the original creative energy increases. By correct fidelity, the mind of Tao is always present, the human mentality becomes extinct, and one sees again the original self as it really is, at peace, unmoved by myriad things.

If fidelity is not right, then when one acts it is not at the right time, and exertion of strength is inappropriate; though one originally wanted fidelity, without error, on the contrary one produces falsehood and error—this is called disaster, in which case it is not beneficial to go anywhere. The advancement of yang is aimed at fidelity to truth, because there

is vanity and falsehood; fidelity that is not right does things on the basis of the human mind, acting in pursuit of personal desires. Then the medicinal substances are not genuine, the firing process is amiss—how can one complete the great Path? Therefore the path of fidelity, in which creation and development are inherent, is most beneficial when correctly oriented; only then is it genuine fidelity, without error.

- **First yang:** Fidelity, without error; it is auspicious to go.

EXPLANATION

In the beginning of fidelity, when one is firm and has found what is right, one does not dare to have any vanity; the fortunes of human affairs all are in the beginning of arousing thought. If thought is correct, then action is correct; if thought is wrong, action is wrong. If one can be without error within, then one will naturally be without error outwardly; if one goes on thereby to practice the Tao, one will not fail to attain good fortune. This is fidelity in which one is able to be careful in the beginning.

- **2 yin:** Not plowing or harvesting, not making new fields, then it is beneficial to go somewhere.

EXPLANATION

When one is flexible but not firm, it is appropriate to be still, not to be active; this is like not plowing or harvesting, not making new fields. To plow and harvest, to open new fields, requires that one have strength and seed to do this. When one is yielding, without firmness, one has no strength, no seed—how can one presume to act arbitrarily? However, if flexibility is properly balanced, and one keeps oneself open minded, one can borrow another's yang to balance one's own yin. Emptying the mind, one can fill the belly; using flexibility in this way, it is beneficial to go somewhere. One with error can thus be freed from error. This is fidelity flexibly following the firm.

- **3 yin:** The misfortune of fidelity; a tethered ox is a gain for a traveler, misfortune for the townspeople.

EXPLANATION

If one's wisdom is small yet one has great schemes, wrongly seeking the treasure of heaven, not only will there be no gain, it will even harm one. This is the misfortune of fidelity. Causing misfortune by fidelity is following the contrivances of the mind, clinging tightly, without giving way. This is like a tethered ox, a gain for a traveler, misfortune for the townspeople. Before one gets anything from others, one first loses oneself. Even if true yang is in view, it is not one's own. This is fidelity following desires.

- **4 yang:** One should be correct; then there is no error.

EXPLANATION

Promoting strength by action, when one is compounding the elixir, if there is the slightest carelessness the medicine and fire fly off, so that there is error in spite of fidelity. However, using strength with flexibility, one can be correct and preserve correctness, guarding against danger, quietly awaiting action, using yin to nurture yang, thus naturally free from the fault of losing what one has gained. This is fidelity in which one is firm yet can be flexible.

- **5 yang:** For sickness without error don't use medicine; there will be joy.

EXPLANATION

When firmness and strength are balanced correctly, and one follows one's heart's desire without stepping over the line, the spiritual embryo has formed, striving is completed, and effortlessness comes to the fore. This is like sickness without error, which need not be treated with medicine for there to be the joy of health. This is because the spiritual embryo has solidified and the primordial has already been restored; there is fundamentally no sickness, and what sickness there is is no more than the residual acquired yin that has not yet been transmuted—but the basis is firm, the homeland is at peace; ultimate sincerity will naturally return to freedom from error. This is fidelity in which firmness and flexibility are mixed together.

- **Top yang:** If fidelity in action has faults, there is no benefit.

EXPLANATION

At the end of fidelity, one is already strong and yet still applies strength, knowing how to advance but not how to withdraw, continuing to go at full blast. If one wants to comprehend essence and life by fidelity to strength alone, this will surely cause the firing process to go awry, losing what has been gained; therefore if fidelity in action has faults, there is no benefit. This is fidelity not knowing when enough is enough.

So the benefit of the path of fidelity is all a matter of gaining balance and correct orientation. Without balance and correctness, action and strength are not properly regulated, and cannot produce good fortune, but instead bring on misfortune.

The "moon reaching fullness" is in oral transmission of the secret; the subtlety of "the hour reaching midnight" is communicated mentally. If one does not get the instruction of a teacher, one is vainly indulging in guesswork. When the one yang of *thunder* ☳ arises under the yins, the hour has reached midnight; when the three yangs of *heaven* ☰ return

to pure wholeness, the moon has reached fullness. At midnight, advance yang; when the moon is full, activate yin: Advancing yang has its time, activating yin has its day. If you know yang but not yin, know how to advance but not how to withdraw, any time you get your hands on the gold elixir you will surely lose it after getting it, and the misfortune of fidelity is a matter of course then. So practitioners of the Tao should make haste to seek the personal instruction of enlightened teachers.



25. *No Error*

heaven above,
thunder below

Thunder moves under heaven, things accompany with no error. Thus did the kings of yore promote flourishing appropriate to the time and nurture myriad beings.

No error means no wandering mind and no arbitrary action. Above is *heaven* ☰, below is *thunder* ☳; thunder moves under heaven. When thunder is active in accord with the times of nature, myriad things stir with it; as long as the thunder is without error, myriad things also are without error. This is the image of *no error*.

What the ancient kings saw in this was that just as nature gives birth

to beings with time, sages develop people with virtue; therefore they caused the Tao of perfect sincerity without error to flourish, fulfilling themselves and fulfilling others, responding to the times of nature, nurturing myriad beings, causing all to live according to their true natures, and to eventually be free from error.

By promoting flourishing appropriate to the time, so that the growth and the season are in harmony, thus nurturing beings so that all have their places, the activity of nurturing according to the time shares the function of heaven and the movement and stillness of thunder—how could there be error?

When practitioners of the Tao make no error in process or proportion, and advance and withdraw, hurry and relax, in the proper manner, this also promotes flourishing appropriate to the time. Unifying the elements of being into a single integral energy, so that myriad principles ultimately coalesce, is also nurturing myriad beings.

Developing beings according to the time, all beings are imbued with reality, and all ultimately are free from error. Thus it is that heaven and thunder have no error, thus it is that the ancient kings had no error, and thus it is too that practice of the Tao is without error. The way to be free from error is to act in a manner that is appropriate to the time.