

# 19



LÍN

## LEADERSHIP

Leadership.

Showing leadership is supremely blessed.

It is favorable to keep on.

But keeping on to the eighth month  
will bring misfortune.

A subordinate rises from below to lead those around him. He is not in a position to force others to follow him, but must lead by influence and example. He must not go too far or keep on too long, lest he appear to challenge the authority of someone more powerful than himself.<sup>1, 2</sup>

### *Lines*

first line/9 ——— He leads by his influence.  
Auspicious.

From this low position he can lead only by influence and example.

line two/9 ——— He leads by his influence.  
Auspicious.  
Favorable.

Line two is the place of the subject or subordinate. Normally, it would be unfavorable for a subordinate to lead, but not if he leads only by example.

line three/6 — — Strict leadership.  
Unfavorable.  
Regret averts harm.

He is not in a position to enforce harsh orders. Fortunately, he is able to back off safely. Line three is the place of trouble or danger.<sup>3</sup>

line four/6 — — He reaches a position of leadership.  
No harm.

It is now safe for him to be recognized as a leader. Line four is the place of the officer, a leader who is still subordinate to the ruler.

line five/6 — — Wise leadership.  
Befits a great lord.  
Auspicious.

Line five is the place of the ruler. Wise leadership is gentle (weak or gentle line — —).

top line/6 — — Leadership by force.  
Auspicious. No harm.

Only now is it permissible to use force. This top line, above the line of the ruler, is associated with conflict.<sup>4</sup>

STRUCTURE    ☰ ☱ Kūn    Acquiescent (gentle, obedient, a crowd, accepting)  
                  ☷ ☱ Dui    Stand Straight

One stands up from below (lower trigram ☷ ) and is accepted by those above (upper trigram ☰ ). The two strong lines at the bottom rise through and lead the crowd of acquiescent weak lines above them.

SEQUENCE    This situation can be seen as following that of either SUÍ (17) THE HUNT or Gǔ (18) ILLNESS. One arrives as a leader either after going out hunting for advancement or after stepping back from the outside world to solve a problem at home. In this hexagram's inverse, GUĀN (20) WATCHING, one will halt in order to observe the situation and to avoid appearing to challenge one's ruler.

## Notes

1. LÍN — The word 臨 *lín* means “look out over,” “supervise,” “control,” and is used of kings and of Heaven.

2. “eighth month” (opening text) — In the *Changes*, the number seven appears to refer to one complete cycle of events, perhaps because seven steps carry one from the opening text right through

all six lines of a hexagram. “Keeping on to the eighth month” would take one into GUĀN (20) WATCHING, where exercising leadership is not advised. For the number seven, see FÙ (24) RETURN, ZHÈN (51) THUNDERBOLT, line two, and JÌ JÌ (63) ALREADY ACROSS, line two.

3. “strict” (line three) — See also JIÉ (60) RESTRAINT, line five.

4. “by force” (top line) — See also FÙ (24) RETURN, line five, and GĒN (52) KEEP STILL, top line.