



(xū) Waiting

If you have sincerity, your successes will be broad and wide. Persisting brings good fortune. You do well to cross the great river.

- Nine in the first place: Waiting in the country just outside the city. Persistent endurance will benefit you, with no blame.
- Nine in the second place: Waiting on the sand. The small-minded may gossip, but in the end good fortune comes.
- Nine in the third place: Waiting in the mud. Robbers arrive. *You are mired in this problem, tempting others to rob you while you are so vulnerable.*
- Six in the fourth place: Waiting in blood: get out of this pit!
- Nine in the fifth place: Waiting with food and drink: to persist brings good fortune.

- **Six at the top:** You enter into a cave [your modest home] and three uninvited guests arrive. If you treat them with respect, in the end good fortune will come.

Image

Rain atop the sky: the image of waiting. You should find peace and joy in drinking and eating.

Waiting is rarely easy. In this situation, the needed rain is in sight, but the clouds are high in the sky and have not yet descended to the parched earth where they are needed. At such times, there is nothing we can do to hasten their arrival, so we should instead focus on the simple daily pleasures of eating and drinking, and find peace in them while we wait. In this way, we can keep up our strength physically, and restore ourselves psychically by recognizing and savoring the security and joy we find in meeting present needs. This can be a real discipline when we know major problems must be dealt with, and that the means for doing so can be seen. But we will need strength in both body and mind when this period of waiting comes to an end, as it will.

The agricultural image is of a crop in need of rain, which has not yet fallen. Yet the anxious farmer needs the reminder that there is enough food and drink for this day, and that it should be consumed and enjoyed as a part of the process of waiting. To the Chinese, this situation seemed analogous to the time just before the Zhou conquest of the oppressive Shang rulers. The good King Wu already ruled his own tribe and had begun to muster his forces, but was not strong enough yet to attack Shang.

The individual lines describe six different environments for this kind of waiting, some favorable, some not. Although elsewhere

in the *Changes* energetic progress is encouraged, here sustenance and perseverance are the preferred responses. Enjoy what you have now, share it gladly with visitors even if it seems meager. A time of change is coming, but not today.

Shaughnessy, 72–73, 296.

Lynn, 165–170.

Wilhelm/Baynes, 24–26.