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LUÓ

SHINING LIGHT

Shining light.
It is favorable to stay as one is.
Blessed.
Keeping a cow is auspicious.

A faithful subject is bathed in the shining light of his ruler's favor.
Keeping a cow is auspicious because the cow is like a faithful subject.¹

Lines

first line/9 ——— He comes on shoes of gold.
Honor him and avert harm.

Sunrise. A shining ruler appears, who will be either scourge or benefactor, depending on how he is received. "Shoes of gold" are cloth shoes embroidered with gold or other yellow metal thread.²

line two/6 — — Yellow light.
Supremely auspicious.

Noon. The shining benefactor's favor is at its height. Line two is the place of the faithful subject, who is passive (— —). Yellow is associated with loyalty.

line three/9 ——— In the light of the declining sun.
Beat the drum and sing
Or sigh an old man's grief.
Misfortune.

Evening. What is declining is either the ruler himself or his favor

toward his subject. In either case, the subject can do nothing but just enjoy the time that is left to him. Line three is the place of adversity.³

line four/9 ——— Sudden their coming:
Fire, death, abandonment.

Nightfall. The benefactor's favor is removed.

line five/6 — — Tears swell and fall
With sobs of grief.
Auspicious.

Midnight. When the night is darkest, the light is on its way back.

top line/9 ——— The king marches forth.
Those who take heads are rewarded.
One captures a host of the enemy
And escapes harm.

A new dawn. The subject marches forth with his king and is rewarded for prowess in battle. This top line is associated with conflict and with the beginning of a new cycle. The solid line (——) suggests action.

STRUCTURE ䷶ 離 Luó Shining Light (shining, shone upon, within)
䷶ 離 Luó Shining Light

The subject is within his ruler's entourage and shone upon by his light.

SEQUENCE The protagonist of KǎN (29) PITS accepted the authority of a ruler and was helped out of difficulties. This present hexagram describes the cycle of a faithful subject's relations with his ruler. PITS and SHINING LIGHT are one of the four pairs of hexagrams that are reverse (solid lines for broken) rather than inverse (upside down) pairs.

Notes

1. LUÓ — The character 離 is normally read *lí*. I believe it should be read *luó* because of the words it is made to rhyme with and because the recently excavated Han manuscript from Mawang Dui uses the character 羅 *luó* here.

2. “shoes of gold” (first line) — Compare the “plain cloth shoes” in the first line of LÜ (10) TREADING.

3. “drum” (line three) — The drum referred to is one made of pottery. The same word 缶 *fǒu* can also mean “jar.”