



13. Sameness with People

Sameness with people in the wilderness is developmental. It is beneficial to cross great rivers. It is beneficial for a superior person to be upright.

EXPLANATION

Sameness with people means other people and oneself are as one. As for the qualities of the hexagram, above is *heaven* ☰, strong, and below is *fire* ☲, luminous: Employing strength with illumination, making illumination effective by strength, being truthful within and adept without, developing oneself and others as well, it is therefore called *sameness with people*.

This hexagram represents mixing in with the ordinary world, concealing one's illumination, skillfully assimilating to others. It follows on the previous hexagram *tranquility*. In *tranquility*, yin and yang match each other, strength and receptivity are united. When practitioners of Tao reach the point where yin and yang are balanced, strength and receptivity are unified, and the spiritual embryo is formed, then they can merge with the ordinary world, hiding their illumination, to cultivate advanced practice.

But to mix with the ordinary world, concealing one's own light, requires great impartiality and impersonality. This is a matter of being selfless. If there is no self, there are no others. When there is no self or others, the sense of others and self leaves; when the sense of others and self leaves, then others are oneself and oneself is identified with others. This is like the sky's covering everything, like the sun's shining everywhere. One can thus return others and self to emptiness, being like others in the wilderness, as it were, this assimilation being unfailingly developmental. The wilderness is a vastness where there are no people: Being like people as though in a wilderness means there is no image of self, no image of others, no image of people.

If one cannot be the same as other people with a true heart, and can only be the same as them in favorable circumstances but not in adversity, only in times of ease but not in danger, then this sameness is not true and sure, and is ultimately not developmental. When the text says "It is beneficial to cross great rivers," it means that if one can go along through situations of danger and difficulty, then where there is no danger or difficulty, wherever one goes it will be beneficial.

Every ordinary person in the world assimilates to others; but most people do so for personal reasons, and do not do it correctly—they assimilate to those they should be the same as, but they also assimilate to those whom they shouldn't be like. This is not the meaning of sameness with people in the wilderness. Therefore the benefit of crossing great rivers is beneficial insofar as one is upright like a superior person. The superior person assimilates based on correctness, not on sentiment. What is correct is only a matter of what is right and true; sentiment changes, while truth has no change.

If one assimilates based on truth, then there is no sentiment; when there is no sentiment, the ideas of others and self both are transformed. Only truth is to be preserved; inwardly one can thereby develop oneself, and outwardly develop others. Seeing afar by means of illumination, acting directly by means of strength, strength and illumination both working, firmness and flexibility balancing each other, inwardly not losing oneself, outwardly not hurting others, round and bright, clean and bare, one stands in the midst of myriad things without being inhibited by myriad things; one is within yin and yang without being constrained by yin and yang.

- ***First yang:* Sameness with people at the gate is blameless.**

EXPLANATION

In the beginning of sameness with others, when one is strong and lucid, going to go out the gate to assimilate to others, before one is even out the gate, one already distinguishes right and wrong, whether it is suitable to be the same as people or not, and then after that one assimilates to those whom it is right to be like. Thus one can assimilate blamelessly. This is sameness with strength and prudence in the beginning.

- ***2 yin:* Sameness with people in the clan is regrettable.**

EXPLANATION

Dwelling in the inner body, in the same place with two yangs, this is being the same as people in the clan. If one can only be the same as relatives or friends and not strangers, this is the path of shame and regret in being the same as others. This is sameness which is weak and not far-reaching.

- ***3 yang:* Subduing fighters in the bush, climbing up a high hill, even in three years there will be no flourishing.**

EXPLANATION

When one is too strong and bright and honors and aggrandizes oneself, sometimes assimilation to others is forced and unnatural. This is likened to subduing fighters in the bush and climbing up a high hill. Sameness on a high hill is being able to be the same as those who accord with oneself but unable to be the same as those opposite to oneself. Such people cannot make the work of being the same as other people thrive even after a long period of three years. This is sameness with adamant forcefulness.

- **4 yang:** Mounting the wall, unable to attack. This is auspicious.

EXPLANATION

Mounting obstinacy with obstinacy, others powerful and oneself strong, others and oneself cannot be of the same mind. This is likened to mounting the wall yet being unable to attack. However, if one is firm and yet able to be flexible, and does not try to force the issue when unable to assimilate, this too is an auspicious way of sameness with others. This is sameness with firmness and ability to be flexible.

- **5 yang:** In sameness with people, first there is weeping, afterward laughter. A great general wins, then meets others.

EXPLANATION

When firm strength is in proper balance and correct orientation, the path is completed and one is full of virtue; before there was no one who was the same, but afterward there will surely be those who will emulate. This is represented by first weeping and later laughing in sameness with others. To those whose way is lofty slander comes; toward those cultivated in virtue criticism arises—it is not to be wondered at if there are few who understand and appreciate. But after one has perfected oneself, if one would perfect other people one must be completely firm and impartial, assimilating correctly, like a great general winning over them, eventually able to move people by sincerity and truth—only then will they honor and submit and all emulate him. Why worry that sympathizers will not be met? This is sameness with great fairness and impartiality, beneficial for great undertakings.

- **Top yang:** Being the same as people in the countryside, there is no regret.

EXPLANATION

When strength is used with flexibility, one can be in the world yet out of it at the same time; though outwardly the same, inwardly one is not the same. This is likened to sameness with people in the countryside. Sameness in the countryside is having great knowledge yet appearing ignorant, having great skill yet appearing inept. Circumstances cannot move one; one does not cause regret, and does not have any regret oneself. This is sameness that is harmonization without being influenced.

So in the path of sameness with people, it is necessary to be able to adapt to changes, to assess the time and determine what is to be done; it is important that assimilation be correct. If assimilation is correct, being strong and lucid, one can assimilate wherever one goes, without any forced assimilation anywhere. Then the meaning of sameness with people in the wilderness is realized.



13. *Sameness with Others*

heaven above,
fire below

Heaven with fire, sameness with others; thus do superior people distinguish things in terms of categories and groups.

Sameness with others means being the same as other people. Above is *heaven* ☰, below is *fire* ☲. Fire is the sun; the sky covers everything, the sun shines on everything—the sky and the sun are in the same place, impartial and illuminating. This is the image of *sameness with others*.

What superior people see in this is that when practitioners of the Tao deal with people, it is important to be able to be the same as others, yet it is most important not to assimilate to them arbitrarily; so they distinguish them in terms of categories and groups. Categories and groups are internally similar and united, like different classes of people each having their own groups. Superior people see each group as a category in which all members are the same.

Distinguishing means differentiating; things are things that are right or wrong, good or bad. Superior people must distinguish things; they dare not arbitrarily consider all categories and groups the same. This is how they model themselves on the impartiality of heaven, and distinguish things in emulation of the illumination of the sun. When one is impartial and also lucidly aware, there is no one in the world one cannot be the same as, and there is nothing in the world that is arbitrarily considered the same as something different.

This is because superior people assimilate by means of the Tao, not in terms of mentality; they assimilate by means of reason, not in terms of personality. This is what is called harmonizing without being influenced, associating without becoming a partisan. This is how the sky and sun are the same toward things, and this is how superior people are the same with others.