

HEXAGRAM 60

CHIEH RESTRAINT¹



Component trigrams:

Below: TUI, a body of water, pool, marsh, joy.

Above: K'AN, water, a pit.

TEXT Restraint—success! It is wrong to persist in harsh restraint.

COMMENTARY ON THE TEXT This hexagram signifies success because the firm and yielding lines are equal in number and the firm (fifth line) is central (to the upper trigram). Harsh restraint must not be persistently applied because it leads to exhaustion. Joy is experienced in undertaking what is dangerous.² The central line (of the upper trigram) is correctly placed and (signifies) reaching (our) goal. It is through the restraint of the celestial and terrestrial forces that the four seasons arrive each at its proper time. When restraint is exercised in the work of governing, property suffers no damage and the people are not harmed.

SYMBOL This hexagram symbolizes water (held by a dyke) above a marshy lake.³ The Superior Man employs a system of regulations in his plans for the (widespread) practice of virtue.

The Lines

9 FOR THE BOTTOM PLACE He goes not forth from the outer gates and courtyards (of his home)—no error! **COMMENTARY** He acts thus from his knowledge of when things can be carried through (to their end) and when they will be blocked.³

9 FOR THE SECOND PLACE He goes not forth from the inner gates and courtyards (of his home)—misfortune! **COMMENTARY** Misfortune because he neglects to take advantage of an opportunity now presenting itself.⁴

6 FOR THE THIRD PLACE Sighing over an apparent lack of restraint—no error! **COMMENTARY** Who would find fault with that?⁵

6 FOR THE FOURTH PLACE Peaceful restraint—success! **COMMENTARY** Success is indicated by the firm line immediately above this one.

9 FOR THE FIFTH PLACE Voluntary restraint—good fortune! Advancing now wins praise.⁶ **COMMENTARY** This is indicated by the central position of this ruling line.

6 FOR THE TOP PLACE Painful restraint—persistence brings misfortune! However, regret will cease later. **COMMENTARY** Misfortune in the sense that the road we are following peters out.⁷

NOTES (1) Like several other hexagrams, this one reminds us that there are times when non-action is the best action we can take. (2) A reference to the component trigrams. The insertion about the dyke is pure guesswork on my part. (3) The implication is that we should now hold back. (4) The implication is that it would be wrong to hold back now. (5) It is salutary to regret lack of restraint in ourselves or others. (6) Presumably this means that we have rightly exercised restraint and that the time has now come for us to continue our advance. (7) This implies that we should stop following our present course and that, by doing so, we shall eliminate the cause of our present worry or regret.