

29. K'an

The Abyss.

Upper Trigram: K'an; the Abyss, Water, Danger.

Lower Trigram: K'an; the Abyss, Water, Danger.

Governing Rulers: Nine in the second place.

Nine in the fifth place.

The Image:

Water flowing on continuously forms the repeated K'an.

The superior man, in accordance with this, maintains constantly the virtue of his heart and the integrity of his conduct, and practices the business of instruction.

Miscellaneous Signs:

(9, 10, 30, 55, 56)

Fire mounts in Li; water in K'an descends.

The Judgement:

K'an, here repeated, shows the possession of sincerity, through which the mind is penetrating. Action in accordance with this will be of high value.

Commentary:

K'an repeated shows us one defile succeeding another. This is the nature of water: it flows on, without accumulating its volume beyond overflow; it pursues its way through a dangerous defile, without losing its true nature.

That 'the mind is penetrating', is indicated by the strong lines in the central positions.

That 'action in accordance with this will be of high value', tells us that advance will be followed by achievement.

The dangerous height of heaven cannot be ascended; the difficult places of the earth are mountains, rivers, hills and mounds. Kings and princes arrange, by means of such strength, to maintain their territories. Great indeed is the use of what is here taught about seasons of peril.

The Lines:

Six in the bottom place:

Showing its subject in the double defile, and yet entering a cavern within it.
There will be evil.

Nine in the second place:

○

Showing its subject in all the peril of the defile. He will, however, get a little of the deliverance that he seeks.

Six in the third place:

Showing its subject, whether ascending or descending, confronted by a defile. All is peril to him and unrest. His endeavours will lead him into the cavern of the pit. There should be no action.

Six in the fourth place:

Showing its subject with a bottle of spirits and a basket of rice, while the cups and bowls are simply of earthenware. He introduces his lessons as his ruler's intelligence admits.

There will in the end be no error.

Nine in the fifth place:

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Showing the water not yet filling the defile to the full, so that it might overflow.

There will be no error.

Top-most six:

Showing its subject bound with cords of three strands or two strands, and placed in a thicket of thorns. In three years he does not learn the course for him to pursue. There will be evil.

Commentaries:

Six in the bottom place:

'In the double defile, he enters a cavern within it': he has missed his proper way and there will be evil.

Nine in the second place:

'He will get a little of the deliverance that he seeks': he will not yet escape from his environed position.

Six in the third place:

'Whether he comes or goes , he is confronted by a defile': in such circumstances he will never achieve any success.

Six in the fourth place:

'Nothing but a bottle of spirits and a basket of rice': these describe the meeting at this point of those who are represented by the strong and the weak lines.

Nine in the fifth place:

'The water is not yet filling the defile to the full, so that it might overflow': the virtue indicated by the central situation is not yet sufficiently great.

Top-most six:

'Showing its subject missing his proper course': there will be evil for three years.
