

Hexagram 30, Clarity



Key Questions

What do you see?

What does it mean?

How can you nourish and sustain a high level of awareness?

Oracle

'Clarity. Constancy bears fruit.

Creating success.

Raising female cattle is good fortune.'

The ancient Chinese character for Clarity shows a flying bird, and a net to capture it. Birds are messengers; this one represents flashes of insight, the way things can light up and shine out clearly. We weave a net of concepts to grasp the message and hold its meaning in awareness. This is not passive seeing, but a meeting of outer and inner light.

Seeing the truth and holding to it with constancy bears fruit. Then the moment of insight can become lasting awareness, so that we enter into creative communication with the signs and messages around us, and truly see other people.

Just as a bright light needs fuel, such a level of attention and understanding demands a great deal of energy. Female cattle represent the reserves of strength that sustain awareness, along with a quiet willingness for that strength to be used and guided. They would be the support of an old farming culture, providing both food and power so that the people could develop a higher culture and a better understanding of their world.

So take care of your cattle, and build up your reserves. As well as paying attention to what you see, nurture your capacity to see; cultivate the part of you that shelters and nourishes new insight.

Image

Doubled light gives rise to Clarity.

Great People with continuous light illuminate the four regions.'

The trigram for fire and light is doubled in this hexagram, both inside and outside. So this is not just a flash of light that vanishes into the gloom, but continuous illumination. The inner awareness of great people shines out, spreading understanding further and further into the world – perhaps not because of how brightly it burns, but because it is an unbroken stream of light.

Sequence

Clarity follows from Hexagram 29, Repeating Chasms:

*Falling naturally has occasion to hold together, and so Clarity follows.
Clarity means holding together.'*

In the chasms, you find nothing solid to catch hold of in the outside world; you're falling, and you must 'hold fast your heart'. When there is nothing else, what you hold on to will be the truth. Light is renewed by the experience of darkness, and clarity arises from emotional depths.

Line 1

*'Treading in confusion.
Honour it,
Not a mistake.'*

The beginnings of clarity are like waking up. All the options, messages, emotions and responsibilities of the situation flood in on you, like an intense light that hurts your eyes. Life was much less disorientating when you were asleep.

Perhaps you go out in the morning light to see whether spirits in animal form have left traces in the smoothed earth. Even if their tracks are confused and indecipherable, you can see that they visited, and honour that. That is, you can perceive that there *is* a message here for you, and it is important to respect it even though you cannot read it.

In the same way, you can honour the fact that you are in motion yourself, even though the right way to go is not clear and you can only make provisional plans. You don't yet have a context to contain and interpret the messages, and it can be very disconcerting to move before you can see the whole picture. Nonetheless, it is not a mistake to be underway.

Line 2

*'Clear golden light.
From the source, good fortune.'*

The bright radiance of full sunlight is the life-sustaining energy that everything is made of. You know it as an inner light that burns clearly and steadily: it does not blaze up to extremes; it is not showy or dazzling, it simply radiates out evenly into the world.

This is the energy that illuminates your understanding as it circulates endlessly behind and through your emotions – celebration or mourning, attachment and moving on. It exists in motion and is not dependent on a single source, and so it is not extinguished.

Line 3

*'In the clear light of the setting sun,
If not beating a pot and singing,*

*Then you will be making the lament of great old age.
Pitfall.'*

The sun sets; the world turns; a day comes to its close. This is the end of one phase of your life, and the light of endings colours everything you see. It is time to take in what has happened, and move into the present moment.

At this time, you need to sing your own song, beat your drum and celebrate the real achievements of the day. When you find you cannot keep the sun from setting, this is not a reason to feel ineffectual or helpless.

Unless you celebrate deliberately and loudly, you will sink into melancholy, mounting a futile resistance to the passing of time. You will find yourself dwelling on what is lost to you as you watch the light and colour fade from your visions.

Line 4

*'Sudden,
It comes,
Burns,
Dies,
Thrown out.'*

A tremendously bright light flares up, shines out – maybe beautifully, maybe painfully – and demands attention. And then it dies away and is discarded. This is not good or bad, it's just the nature of a flame that does not have enough fuel to sustain itself for long.

Don't be misled by its brilliance, or set too much store by what you imagine you have seen: it is not as significant as it appears. The glow of images and roles lives just as long as they do, then dies away, and what you see in that brief burst of light is not the complete picture.

Line 5

*'Weeping tears like flowing streams,
Sad as if in mourning,
Good fortune.'*

It is good to see what you have lost, and to mourn it – to let grief flow, like time. And it is good to recognise one another with compassion, and see how transience and loss unite us. Tears cleanse the eyes.

Line 6

*'The king uses this to march out,
There are honours.
He executes the chief – the captives are not so ugly.
Not a mistake.'*

You are learning to see what needs to be done, and you have the motivation and energy to undertake it. Like the king who is ready to lead out his armies, you have the initiative.

You might prefer not to have it; it might be easier to have less power and be less exposed to the risk of failure. However, though there seem to be countless problems you need to deal with, in fact there is just one. There is a chief – a single root cause of the trouble – and all the rest follows.

Rather than misplacing your aggression and wasting your energy in misdirected attacks around the periphery, you need to focus all your powers on seeking out that central cause. You need not worry about leaving other problems unaddressed; they will be disarmed when you succeed at the centre.