

# TAI CHI IN THE YI JING

## *from the heart of the Great Treatise (Da Zhuan)*

### **Chapter 11-12 of the Fifth Wing of the Yi Jing**

Master says: What is change? It is both what causes things to happen in the first place and what brings the affairs to completion at the end. It blindly rushes out upon the way of the world appearing to be this even as it is already becoming that.

Thus, the Sages were sure to be expressive with their wills in the world. They were decisive with their doubts in the world and they were determined with their labors in the world.

Thus, the virtues of yarrow are round and spiritual while the virtues of symbol are square and knowing. What becomes significant in the six lines is the very gift of change itself.

The Sages acted accordingly by clearing their hearts and withdrawing. They hid in seclusion from both fortune and misfortune. They hid from the people and their mutual sufferings. Through spirit they knew what was coming and through knowing they stored up what was going. Who is it that can raise up their ancient ideal? Who is it that has enough cunning, clarity, insight, knowledge, and spirit to be able to move through the war while neither killing nor being killed?

Thus, it is brightness that reveals the way of the sky and looking at it that reveals the motivations of the people. Spirit thrives in all things, right here to be used at all times. The Sages acted in accord and were cautious and balanced with the virtue of that spiritual brightness.

Thus, closing the door is called receiving (Kun) and opening the door is called giving (Qian). One closing and one opening is called alternation. Coming and going ceaselessly is called expression. What is then perceived is called an image. What is then formed is called a tool. Establishing it and then employing it is called a method. Favorably using this issuing out and entering in for the sake of all people is called spirit.

Thus, change has an absolute polarity (Tai Chi) that generates two forces. These two forces then generate the four images. These four images then generate the eight symbols. Through these eight symbols can be determined the fortunes and misfortune. It is the fortune and misfortune that ultimately generates the nature of the great task.

Thus, there is no image or method that could be greater than that of the universe. There is no alternation or expression that could be greater than that of the four seasons. There is no revealing of images or shining of brightness that could be greater than that of the sun and moon. There is no beauty that could be more exquisite than the beauty of that which is most rare and precious in the world. When it comes to preparing things to be useful and furnishing the tools that bring favor to all the world there is nobody that can do it better than the Sages. For searching the depths and seeking out the hidden, for baiting the sublime and enabling the profound, for understanding the fortunes and misfortunes of the world, and finally for succeeding in the world with both passion and resolve, there is nothing greater than the yarrow and tortoise.

Thus, the sky generates the spirits of things and the Sages follow them. The universe alternates and transforms and the Sages copy it. The sky dangles down the images of fortune and misfortune and the Sages dream them. The He River gave forth a map, the Luo River gave forth a chart, and the Sages follow them.

Just as change has four basic images that are placed just so in order to show, likewise, here this treatise has been placed just so in order to inform and to help pick apart whatever fortunes and misfortunes. It has been placed just so to help dispel any doubts.

Master says: Writing it cannot say as much as speaking it and speaking it cannot say as much as thinking it. Thus it follows that the actual thoughts of the Sages cannot be directly known.

Master says: The Sages established the images in order to express as much of their thoughts as possible. They designed the symbols in order to express as much of their feelings as possible. They attached commentary in order to express as much of their words as possible. They alternated and expressed in order to reveal as much favor as possible. They drummed and danced in order to express as much spirit as possible.

Change is the mystical motive force that generates Giving and Receiving. Giving and Receiving have long been classified and organized and the changes have all been positioned between them. But if Giving and Receiving were somehow corrupted, it would follow then that change would disappear. And if change disappeared then Giving and Receiving would of course also cease to be.

Thus, up above it takes the form of the way, while down below it takes the form of a tool. Transforming and simplifying is called alternation. Pushing forward and mobilizing is called expression. The redressing of wrongs in the world for the sake of all people is called working at the task.

Thus, the images are what the Sages used to see into what is abstruse and profound in the world. They then drafted the various forms and figures and matched everything with a respective image. The images are what the Sages used to notice what was moving in the world. They watched it assemble and express and let it mobilize their laws and rituals. They attached commentaries to the lines in order to pick apart the fortunes and misfortunes. The peak of what is most abstruse and profound in the world can be found with the symbols. The rhythm of what moves in the world can be found with the commentaries. The transformation and simplification of it is in the alternations. The pushing and mobilization of it is in the expressions. The spirit and brightness is in the people. The final secret and achievement of it, wordless and trusting, can be found in the mobilization of virtue.