



THE TOLTEC
I CHING

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64 KEYS TO INSPIRED ACTION
IN THE NEW WORLD

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INTRODUCTION

The Eternal Path

Although the outer world has changed dramatically in the past several thousand years, the inner world of the soul remains unchanged since the time of the ancients. The inner life of our ancestors, particularly the soul questions and soul decisions they faced, was no different than our own:

What is my purpose in life?

Why must all that I know and love die?

Is there a meaning to this universe I find myself in?

In all the known world, why are human beings the only ones with doubt?

How can I be sure of the right thing to do?

How can I eradicate wrong without doing wrong?

What is real success, real progress, real power?

Is my fate predetermined or am I creating the person I choose to be?

How can I face my own death with calm joy and an unshakeable sense of victory?

What is the best path of life and how do I keep from stepping off it?

The inner path each of us takes is determined by the way we answer soul questions and act on soul decisions. While it takes great courage to not fall in line with the forces of materialism and self-interest, it requires even greater courage to hold to our path for an entire lifetime. It is in the nature of people to rebel against the prevailing view when they are young or passing through unexpected trials, but too few use those opportunities to take up a way of life that will last them forever. The longing for recognition, acceptance, and approval drives most of us to pursue the external goals of those around us. For this reason,

difficult as it is to step onto the spiritual path, it is many times more difficult to finish the journey still on the path.

How to bring the inner and outer worlds into balance and harmony so that we might live a vital and meaningful life—*that* is the soul question whose answer places us firmly on the lifelong path of spiritual transformation, evolution, and metamorphosis. How to bring our inner intent and outer actions into balance and harmony so that we might contribute to others living vital and meaningful lives—*that* is the soul decision whose implementation keeps us from stepping onto the path of materialism, self-interest, and spiritual stagnation.

The more complex and divisive the outer world becomes, the more difficult it is to find the harmony and balance between it and the inner world of the soul. Competing interests and ideologies vie for our energy and devotion, factions of every type call us to join their side. Technology continually threatens to change the way we interact with one another and nature. The pendulum of history continues to swing between those who control resources and those who will control them. The generations pass and old animosities become dominant landmarks of civilization instead of deserted ruins in a long-forgotten past. Advancements that promise peace and prosperity for all seem instead to end up serving the interests of those who benefit from conflict and inequality. We come into this world with an innate sense of rightness and find ourselves instructed from all sides to replace it with a form of practicality that keeps the mistakes of the past alive. Every generation, we find it more difficult to withstand the demand for conformity—and even more difficult to permanently change our surroundings for the better. When the outer world is so far out of balance and harmony with itself, how are we to find balance and harmony between it and the inner world of the soul?

There are two ways to approach this problem. The first is by adopting a new global perspective. It entails viewing this period in history as a time of transition between the Old World of conflict and greed and the New World of peace and prospering for all. It involves not naive idealism but, rather, the most even-handed pragmatism. Only naive ideologues believe that civilization can continue on its present course—every practical person in the world can see that civilization

must undergo a profound metamorphosis if it is to avoid certain self-destruction. We have reached a time when everyone has access to all the information they need to reach this conclusion. Because those in positions of power are loath to abandon their Old World dreams of conquest and domination, it falls to the rest of us to bring about the reality of the New World of harmony between humanity, nature, and the sacred. Never have so many been so well-informed. Or well-intentioned. Or inspired. It is no exaggeration to say that all of human history has been leading up to this time in which we can reshape our common destiny.

The movement away from the Old World of force and competition toward the New World of ethics and cooperation, then, is a natural metamorphosis of the baser instincts into the higher aspirations. Toward this end, *The Toltec I Ching* sets out a practical code of conduct and perception that has been long held by the savants of every culture to assure the founding of the Golden Age of Humanity.

The second approach is by adopting a new individual perspective. It entails trying to see through the complexity of our surroundings and into the essential relationships we have with the outer world—by trying, in other words, to concentrate less on understanding our surroundings and more on understanding our responses to what is happening around us. By focusing on our responses instead of our circumstances, we are able to develop a consistent strategy of behavior that is based on values and integrity instead of guesswork and mind reading. Because the complex and ever-changing nature of the outer world makes it impossible to ever have enough information to make a decision with absolute certainty, it is best to return to the unchanging inner world of the soul for a map of time-proven responses that chart the course of a successful life.

Long before the outer world reached its present level of complexity, the ancients explored the inner world of the soul in order to conceive a map of orderly responses human beings might make to the chaos of circumstances faced in the course of a lifetime. This is an eminently practical approach because experience teaches that even though we have little control of the circumstances we face in life, we have the potential for complete control of our responses to them. It is

this move—away from trying to control the world and toward trying to control our responses to it—that can be said to mark the starting point of the ancients' wisdom.

Until we as individuals achieve some mastery of our responses to events, in other words, we have little hope of fulfilling our ancestors' vision of an uninterrupted reign of peace and prosperity for all. Although the question of what it is that we are collectively building may seem far removed from our daily concerns and activities, experience teaches that our intention to achieve a goal is what gets us to the goal. Just as the wind arrives ahead of the rain, our intention to create peace and prosperity for all is the necessary precursor to reaching that most ancient of goals.

Of more immediate concern, of course, is the capacity each of us possesses for achieving a sense of well-being, happiness, and success in life regardless of the twists and turns of fate we encounter. Here, too, it is our inner responses that determine how we interpret, how we feel about, and how we react to the circumstances with which we are presented. Again, it is when we stop trying to control how others are treating us and begin trying to control how we are treating others that we can be said to be putting the ancients' wisdom into practice. By setting aside hopes and disappointments and concentrating instead on integrity and consistency, we can move beyond the cycle of desire and frustration into the cycle of authenticity and fulfillment.

In this sense, we are seeking to control our outer responses by first controlling our inner responses. It is clearly impossible to make long-lasting changes in our behavior until we have changed the thoughts and feelings that make us behave as we do. While we were trained by those around us to think and feel in certain ways that have become inner habits, however, the training to replace those habits with new, more authentic, habits has to be done on our own. This takes time and will power. It takes dedication and passion. It takes sincerity and seriousness of purpose. It takes the kind of courage that is able to face self-defeating behaviors and patiently, persistently, overcome them. It takes the kind of training that puts a time-honored code of conduct and perception into daily practice.

When someone works like this at self-transformation they are said to be a spirit warrior.

The Spirit Warrior

It has long been observed that people can be overcome without force if their spirit can be defeated first. The opposite, of course, is equally true: Even when defeated by force, people cannot be overcome so long as their spirit remains undefeated.

When we think of being overcome, we think first about threats to our personal freedom and safety. Being overcome, after all, can occur in various ways: physically, economically, culturally, psychologically. And the dynamics of being overcome, moreover, can involve different numbers of people: An individual can be overcome by another individual, an individual can be overcome by a group, a group can be overcome by an individual, and a group can be overcome by another group. Personal experience and the lessons of history can provide each of us with examples of all these forms of either being overcome or of overcoming others.

While it may be a little more difficult, we can also find examples in which the effort to overcome was thwarted by a spirit so indomitable it could not be defeated. Such examples provide us with a picture of the spirit warrior's actions in the outer world but they do not necessarily open a window onto the ongoing war the spirit warrior wages on the battlefield of the inner world of the soul. This difference is important because the capacity to resist being overcome in the outer world is a direct reflection of our capacity to resist being overcome by our inner fears, doubts, and passions. It is here, on this inner battlefield, that we confront the perennial enemy, the real enemy, the most insidious enemy. It is here, in the daily war within the inner world of the soul, that we confront the enemy-within, that shadow side of ourselves making up all our self-defeating attitudes and behaviors.

This is the real and consequential war we each face because the indomitable spirit that cannot be overcome in the outer world does not arise from a person suffering daily defeat from within. For this