| KÙN (47) | 8 | — — | — — | HUÀN (59) |
| BURDENED | 7 | —— | —— | THE FLOOD |

KÙN (47)
BURDENED
Blessed. It is auspicious for a big man to persevere, he will come to no harm. Words spoken against him will not be believed.

8 — —
7 ——
9 ⟶
6 — ⟶
7 ——
8 — —

HUÀN (59)
THE FLOOD
Swept by a flood. Blessed. A king calls down blessings to this temple. It is favorable to cross a great river. It is favorable to persevere.

Usually the first situation is seen as changing into the second.

The yarrow method It is best to use actual yarrow stalks, preferably about a foot or so long, but thin wooden rods like chopsticks can also be used and even toothpicks will do in a pinch.

preliminary step: Start with 50 sticks. Set one aside to make 49.
bottom line:

A.1 — Divide the 49 sticks at random into two bundles.

A.2 — Remove a stick from one of the two bundles and set it aside.

A.3 — Count through each bundle by fours.
Set aside the last group of 1 to 4 sticks from each bundle.
Combine the two bundles.
The combined bundles will total 44 or 40 sticks.

B.1 — Divide the 44 or 40 sticks at random into two bundles.

B.2 — Remove a stick from one bundle, as in A.2.

B.3 — Count through, set aside, and combine, as in A.3.
The total will now be 40, 36, or 32 sticks.

C.1 — Divide the remaining 40, 36, or 32 sticks at random, as in A.1 or B.1.

C.2 — Remove a stick, as in A.2 or B.2.

C.3 — Count through, set aside and combine, as in A.3 or B.3.
The total will now be 36, 32, 28, or 24 sticks.

D   — Divide the remaining 36, 32, 28, or 24 sticks into bundles of four sticks each.
There will be 9, 8, 7, or 6 bundles, respectively.
Write this number down for the bottom line of the hexagram.

line two: Repeat steps A–D.
line three: Repeat steps A–D.
line four: Repeat steps A–D.
line five: Repeat steps A–D.
top line: Repeat steps A–D.

The advantage (and disadvantage) of the yarrow method is the amount of time it takes. The complexity of the operation makes divination a serious process and helps to clear and concentrate the mind.

The procedure described here, long and complicated as it is, is slightly simpler than the traditional one described in other translations. Both are based on Chapter 9 of the *Appended Judgments* (繫辭 *Xìcí*), one of the *Ten Wings.* The traditional procedure follows an interpretation of that chapter by the Song Dynasty philosopher *Zhū Xǐ* 朱熹 ; I follow a reinterpretation by Gao (1963) and Chen (1972).

The coin method This simple method has been popular since the Tang and Song dynasties (600–1300 A.D.). It is the method commonly used in the West today:

1. Use three coins. Chinese copper coins are available in many Chinese curio shops.
2. Throw them all three together like dice, once for each line of the hexagram, starting with the bottom line.
3. Tails (inscribed side of a Chinese coin) = 2.
   Heads (uninscribed side or side with less writing) = 3.
4. three tails = $2 + 2 + 2 = 6$
   two tails, one heads = $2 + 2 + 3 = 7$
   two heads, one tails = $3 + 3 + 2 = 8$
   three heads = $3 + 3 + 3 = 9$
5. Repeat once for each line of the hexagram.

The method of sixteen This is a new and even simpler method proposed by Schoenholtz (1975). Its main advantage is a statistical one. With the yarrow method, the probabilities of getting each of the four different kinds of lines are not the same: the chances of getting a broken line (8 — —) are 7 out of 16; the chances of getting a solid line (7 ——) are 5 out of 16; for a solid line that changes (9 ——→), they are 3 out of 16; and for a broken line that changes (6 — →), there is only 1 chance in 16.

With the coin method, on the other hand, the chances of getting either kind of stable line are 6 out of 16 and those of getting either kind of changing line are 2 out of 16.

The method of sixteen reproduces the probabilities of the yarrow