

道德經

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Commentaries and explanations are available in *Tao Te Ching: Annotated & Explained* published by SkyLight Paths.

第一章

Chapter 1

道可道 非常道
名可名 非常名
無名天地之始
有名萬物之母
故常無欲 以觀其妙
常有欲 以觀其徼
此兩者 同出而異名
同謂之玄
玄之又玄 眾妙之門

The Tao that can be spoken is not the eternal Tao
The name that can be named is not the eternal name
The nameless is the origin of Heaven and Earth
The named is the mother of myriad things
Thus, constantly without desire, one observes its essence
Constantly with desire, one observes its manifestations
These two emerge together but differ in name
The unity is said to be the mystery
Mystery of mysteries, the door to all wonders

第二章

Chapter 2

天下皆知美之為美 斯惡已
皆知善之為善 斯不善已
故有無相生
難易相成
長短相形
高下相傾
音聲相和
前後相隨
是以聖人
處無為之事
行不言之教
萬物作焉而不辭
生而不有
為而不恃
功成而弗居
夫唯弗居
是以不去

When the world knows beauty as beauty, ugliness arises
When it knows good as good, evil arises
Thus being and non-being produce each other
Difficult and easy bring about each other
Long and short reveal each other
High and low support each other
Music and voice harmonize each other
Front and back follow each other
Therefore the sages:
Manage the work of detached actions
Conduct the teaching of no words
They work with myriad things but do not control
They create but do not possess
They act but do not presume
They succeed but do not dwell on success
It is because they do not dwell on success
That it never goes away

第三章

不尚賢
使民不爭
不貴難得之貨
使民不為盜
不見可欲
使民心不亂
是以聖人之治
虛其心
實其腹
弱其志
強其骨
常使民無知無欲
使夫智者不敢為也
為無為
則無不治

Chapter 3

Do not glorify the achievers
So the people will not squabble
Do not treasure goods that are hard to obtain
So the people will not become thieves
Do not show the desired things
So their hearts will not be confused
Thus the governance of the sage:
Empties their hearts
Fills their bellies
Weakens their ambitions
Strengthens their bones
Let the people have no cunning and no greed
So those who scheme will not dare to meddle
Act without contrivance
And nothing will be beyond control

第四章

道沖而用之或不盈
淵兮似萬物之宗
挫其銳
解其紛
和其光
同其塵
湛兮似或存
吾不知誰之子
象帝之先

Chapter 4

The Tao is empty; when utilized, it is not filled up
So deep! It seems to be the source of all things
It blunts the sharpness
Unravels the knots
Dims the glare
Mixes the dusts
So indistinct! It seems to exist
I do not know whose offspring it is
Its image is the predecessor of the Emperor

第五章

天地不仁
以萬物為芻狗
聖人不仁
以百姓為芻狗
天地之間
其猶橐籥乎
虛而不屈
動而愈出
多言數窮
不如守中

Chapter 5

Heaven and Earth are impartial
They regard myriad things as straw dogs
The sages are impartial
They regard people as straw dogs
The space between Heaven and Earth
Is it not like a bellows?
Empty, and yet never exhausted
It moves, and produces more
Too many words hasten failure
Cannot compare to keeping to the void

第六章

谷神不死
是謂玄牝
玄牝之門
是謂天地根
綿綿若存
用之不勤

Chapter 6

The valley spirit, undying
Is called the Mystic Female
The gate of the Mystic Female
Is called the root of Heaven and Earth
It flows continuously, barely perceptible
Utilize it; it is never exhausted

第七章

天長地久
天地所以能長且久者
以其不自生
故能長生
是以聖人
後其身而身先
外其身而身存
非以其無私邪
故能成其私

Chapter 7

Heaven and Earth are everlasting
The reason Heaven and Earth can last forever
Is that they do not exist for themselves
Thus they can last forever
Therefore the sages:
Place themselves last but end up in front
Are outside of themselves and yet survive
Is it not due to their selflessness?
That is how they can achieve their own goals

第八章

上善若水
水善利萬物而不爭
處眾人之所惡
故幾於道
居善地
心善淵
與善仁
言善信
正善治
事善能
動善時
夫唯不爭
故無尤

Chapter 8

The highest goodness resembles water
Water greatly benefits myriad things without contention
It stays in places that people dislike
Therefore it is similar to the Tao
Dwelling with the right location
Feeling with great depth
Giving with great kindness
Speaking with great integrity
Governing with great administration
Handling with great capability
Moving with great timing
Because it does not contend
It is therefore beyond reproach

第九章

持而盈之
不如其已
揣而銳之
不可長保
金玉滿堂
莫之能守
富貴而驕
自遺其咎
功遂
身退
天之道

Chapter 9

Holding a cup and overfilling it
Cannot be as good as stopping short
Pounding a blade and sharpening it
Cannot be kept for long
Gold and jade fill up the room
No one is able to protect them
Wealth and position bring arrogance
And leave disasters upon oneself
When achievement is completed, fame is attained
Withdraw oneself
This is the Tao of Heaven

第十章

載營魄抱一
能無離乎
專氣致柔
能嬰兒乎
滌除玄覽
能無疵乎
愛民治國
能無為乎
天門開闔
能為雌乎
明白四達
能無知乎
生之畜之
生而不有
為而不恃
長而不宰
是謂玄德

Chapter 10

In holding the soul and embracing oneness
Can one be steadfast, without straying?
In concentrating the energy and reaching relaxation
Can one be like an infant?
In cleaning away the worldly view
Can one be without imperfections?
In loving the people and ruling the nation
Can one be without manipulation?
In the heavenly gate's opening and closing
Can one hold to the feminine principle?
In understanding clearly all directions
Can one be without intellectuality?
Bearing it, rearing it
Bearing without possession
Achieving without arrogance
Raising without domination
This is called the Mystic Virtue

第十一章

三十幅 共一轂
當其無 有車之用
埴埴以為器
當其無 有器之用
鑿戶牖以為室
當其無 有室之用
故有之以為利
無之以為用

Chapter 11

Thirty spokes join in one hub
In its emptiness, there is the function of a vehicle
Mix clay to create a container
In its emptiness, there is the function of a container
Cut open doors and windows to create a room
In its emptiness, there is the function of a room
Therefore, that which exists is used to create benefit
That which is empty is used to create functionality

第十二章

五色令人目盲
五音令人耳聾
五味令人口爽
馳騁畋獵令人心發狂
難得之貨令人行妨
是以聖人為腹不為目
故去彼取此

Chapter 12

The five colors make one blind in the eyes
The five sounds make one deaf in the ears
The five flavors make one tasteless in the mouth
Racing and hunting make one wild in the heart
Goods that are difficult to acquire make one cause damage
Therefore the sages care for the stomach and not the eyes
That is why they discard the other and take this

第十三章

寵辱若驚
貴大患若身
何謂寵辱若驚
寵為上 辱為下
得之若驚
失之若驚
是謂寵辱若驚
何謂貴大患若身
吾所以有大患者
為吾有身
及吾無身
吾有何患
故貴以身為天下
若可寄天下
愛以身為天下
若可託天下

Chapter 13

Favor and disgrace make one fearful
The greatest misfortune is the self
What does "favor and disgrace make one fearful" mean?
Favor is high; disgrace is low
Having it makes one fearful
Losing it makes one fearful
This is "favor and disgrace make one fearful"
What does "the greatest misfortune is the self" mean?
The reason I have great misfortune
Is that I have the self
If I have no self
What misfortune do I have?
So one who values the self as the world
Can be given the world
One who loves the self as the world
Can be entrusted with the world

第十四章

Chapter 14

視之不見
名曰夷
聽之不聞
名曰希
搏之不得
名曰微
此三者不可致詰
故混而為一
其上不皦
其下不昧
繩繩不可名
復歸於無物
是謂無狀之狀
無象之象
是謂惚恍
迎之不見其首
隨之不見其後
執古之道
以御今之有
能知古始
是謂道紀

Look at it, it cannot be seen
It is called colorless
Listen to it, it cannot be heard
It is called noiseless
Reach for it, it cannot be held
It is called formless
These three cannot be completely unraveled
So they are combined into one
Above it, not bright
Below it, not dark
Continuing endlessly, cannot be named
It returns back into nothingness
Thus it is called the form of the formless
The image of the imageless
This is called enigmatic
Confront it, its front cannot be seen
Follow it, its back cannot be seen
Wield the Tao of the ancients
To manage the existence of today
One can know the ancient beginning
It is called the Tao Axiom

第十五章

Chapter 15

古之善為士者
微妙玄通
深不可識
夫唯不可識
故強為之容
豫兮若冬涉川
猶兮若畏四鄰
儼兮其若容
渙兮若冰之將釋
敦兮其若樸
曠兮其若谷
混兮其若濁
孰能濁以止
靜之徐清
孰能安以久
動之徐生
保此道者不欲盈
夫唯不盈
故能蔽不新成

The Tao masters of antiquity
Subtle wonders through mystery
Depths that cannot be discerned
Because one cannot discern them
Therefore one is forced to describe the appearance
Hesitant, like crossing a wintry river
Cautious, like fearing four neighbors
Solemn, like a guest
Loose, like ice about to melt
Genuine, like plain wood
Open, like a valley
Opaque, like muddy water
Who can be muddled yet desist
In stillness gradually become clear?
Who can be serene yet persist
In motion gradually come alive?
One who holds this Tao does not wish to be overfilled
Because one is not overfilled
Therefore one can preserve and not create anew

第十六章

Chapter 16

致虛極
守靜篤
萬物並作
吾以觀復
夫物芸芸 各復歸其根
歸根曰靜
是謂復命
復命曰常
知常曰明
不知常 妄作凶
知常容
容乃公
公乃王
王乃天
天乃道
道乃久
沒身不殆

Attain the ultimate emptiness
Hold on to the truest tranquility
The myriad things are all active
I therefore watch their return
Everything flourishes; each returns to its root
Returning to the root is called tranquility
Tranquility is called returning to one's nature
Returning to one's nature is called constancy
Knowing constancy is called clarity
Not knowing constancy, one recklessly causes trouble
Knowing constancy is acceptance
Acceptance is impartiality
Impartiality is sovereign
Sovereign is Heaven
Heaven is Tao
Tao is eternal
The self is no more, without danger

第十七章

Chapter 17

太上 不知有之
其次 親而譽之
其次 畏之
其次 侮之
信不足焉
有不信焉
悠兮其貴言
功成事遂
百姓皆謂 我自然

The highest rulers, people do not know they have them
The next level, people love them and praise them
The next level, people fear them
The next level, people despise them
If the rulers' trust is insufficient
Have no trust in them
Proceeding calmly, valuing their words
Task accomplished, matter settled
The people all say, "We did it naturally"

第十八章

Chapter 18

大道廢
有仁義
智慧出
有大偽
六親不和
有孝慈
國家昏亂
有忠臣

The great Tao fades away
There is benevolence and justice
Intelligence comes forth
There is great deception
The six relations are not harmonious
There is filial piety and kind affection
The country is in confused chaos
There are loyal ministers

第十九章

Chapter 19

絕聖棄智
民利百倍
絕仁棄義
民復孝慈
絕巧棄利
盜賊無有
此三者 以為文不足
故令有所屬
見素抱樸
少私寡欲

End sagacity; abandon knowledge
The people benefit a hundred times
End benevolence; abandon righteousness
The people return to piety and charity
End cunning; discard profit
Bandits and thieves no longer exist
These three things are superficial and insufficient
Thus this teaching has its place:
Show plainness; hold simplicity
Reduce selfishness; decrease desires

第二十章

Chapter 20

絕學無憂
唯之與阿
相去幾何
善之與惡
相去若何
人之所畏 不可不畏
荒兮 其未央哉
眾人熙熙
如享太牢
如春登臺
我獨泊兮其未兆
如嬰兒之未孩
乘乘兮若無所歸
眾人皆有餘
而我獨若遺
我愚人之心也哉
沌沌兮俗人昭昭
我獨昏昏
俗人察察
我獨悶悶
澹兮其若海
颺兮若無所止
眾人皆有以
而我獨頑且鄙
我獨異於人
而貴食母

Cease learning, no more worries
Respectful response and scornful response
How much is the difference?
Goodness and evil
How much do they differ?
What the people fear, I cannot be unafraid
So desolate! How limitless it is!
The people are excited
As if enjoying a great feast
As if climbing up to the terrace in spring
I alone am quiet and uninvolved
Like an infant not yet smiling
So weary, like having no place to return
The people all have surplus
While I alone seem lacking
I have the heart of a fool indeed – so ignorant!
Ordinary people are bright
I alone am muddled
Ordinary people are scrutinizing
I alone am obtuse
Such tranquility, like the ocean
Such high wind, as if without limits
The people all have goals
And I alone am stubborn and lowly
I alone am different from them
And value the nourishing mother

第二十一章

Chapter 21

孔德之容
惟道是從
道之為物
惟恍惟惚
惚兮恍兮
其中有象
恍兮惚兮
其中有物
窈兮冥兮
其中有精
其精甚真
其中有信
自古及今
其名不去
以閱眾甫
吾何以知眾甫之狀哉
以此

The appearance of great virtue
Follows only the Tao
The Tao, as a thing
Seems indistinct, seems unclear
So unclear, so indistinct
Within it there is image
So indistinct, so unclear
Within it there is substance
So deep, so profound
Within it there is essence
Its essence is supremely real
Within it there is faith
From ancient times to the present
Its name never departs
To observe the source of all things
How do I know the nature of the source?
With this

第二十二章

Chapter 22

曲則全
枉則直
窪則盈
敝則新
少則得
多則惑
是以聖人抱一
為天下式
不自見故明
不自是故彰
不自伐故有功
不自矜故長
夫唯不爭
故天下莫能與之爭
古之所謂曲則全者
豈虛言哉
誠全而歸之

Yield and remain whole
Bend and remain straight
Be low and become filled
Be worn out and become renewed
Have little and receive
Have much and be confused
Therefore the sages hold to the one
as an example for the world
Without flaunting themselves – and so are seen clearly
Without presuming themselves – and so are distinguished
Without praising themselves – and so have merit
Without boasting about themselves – and so are lasting
Because they do not contend
the world cannot contend with them
What the ancients called "the one who yields and remains whole"
Were they speaking empty words?
Sincerity becoming whole, and returning to oneself

第二十三章

希言自然
故飄風不終朝
驟雨不終日
孰為此者 天地
天地尚不能久
而況於人乎
故從事於道者
道者同於道
德者同於德
失者同於失
同於道者
道亦樂得之
同於德者
德亦樂得之
同於失者
失於樂得之
信不足焉有不信焉

第二十四章

企者不立
跨者不行
自見者不明
自是者不彰
自伐者無功
自矜者不長
其在道也 曰餘食贅形
物或惡之
故有道者不處

Chapter 23

Sparse speech is natural
Thus strong wind does not last all morning
Sudden rain does not last all day
What makes this so? Heaven and Earth
Even Heaven and Earth cannot make it last
How can humans?
Thus for those who follow the Tao:
Those of the Tao are with the Tao
Those of virtue are with virtue
Those of loss are with loss
Those who are with the Tao
the Tao is also pleased to have them
Those who are with virtue
virtue is also pleased to have them
Those who are with loss
loss is also please to have them
Those who do not trust sufficiently, others have no trust in them

Chapter 24

Those who are on tiptoes cannot stand
Those who straddle cannot walk
Those who flaunt themselves are not clear
Those who presume themselves are not distinguished
Those who praise themselves have no merit
Those who boast about themselves do not last
Those with the Tao call such things leftover food or tumors
They despise them
Thus, those who possesses the Tao do not engage in them

第二十五章

Chapter 25

有物混成
先天地生
寂兮寥兮
獨立不改
周行而不殆
可以為天下母
吾不知其名
字之曰道
強為之名曰大
大曰逝
逝曰遠
遠曰反
故道大
天大
地大
王亦大
域中有四大
而王居其一焉
人法地
地法天
天法道
道法自然

There is something formlessly created
Born before Heaven and Earth
So silent! So ethereal!
Independent and changeless
Circulating and ceaseless
It can be regarded as the mother of the world
I do not know its name
To identify it, I call it "Tao"
Forced to describe it, I call it great
Great means passing
Passing means receding
Receding means returning
Therefore the Tao is great
Heaven is great
Earth is great
The sovereign is also great
There are four greats in the universe
And the sovereign occupies one of them
Humans follow the laws of Earth
Earth follows the laws of Heaven
Heaven follows the laws of Tao
Tao follows the laws of nature

第二十六章

Chapter 26

重為輕根
靜為躁君
是以聖人終日行
不離輜重
雖有榮觀
燕處超然
奈何萬乘之主
而以身輕天下
輕則失根
躁則失君

Heaviness is the root of lightness
Quietness is the master of restlessness
Therefore the sages travel an entire day
Without leaving the heavy supplies
Even though there are luxurious sights
They are composed and transcend beyond
How can the lords of ten thousand chariots
Apply themselves lightly to the world?
To be light is to lose one's root
To be restless is to lose one's mastery

第二十七章

Chapter 27

善行無轍跡
善言無瑕謫
善數不用籌策
善閉無關楗而不可開
善結無繩約而不可解
是以聖人
常善救人
故無棄人
常善救物
故無棄物
是謂襲明
故善人者 不善人之師
不善人者 善人之資
不貴其師
不愛其資
雖智大迷
是謂要妙

Good traveling does not leave tracks
Good speech does not seek faults
Good reckoning does not use counters
Good closure needs no bar and yet cannot be opened
Good knot needs no rope and yet cannot be untied
Therefore sages:
Often save others
and so do not abandon anyone
They often save things
and so do not abandon anything
This is called following enlightenment
Therefore the good person is the teacher of the bad person
The bad person is the resource of the good person
Those who do not value their teachers
And do not love their resources
Although intelligent, they are greatly confused
This is called the essential wonder

第二十八章

Chapter 28

知其雄 守其雌
為天下谿
為天下谿
常德不離
復歸於嬰兒
知其白 守其黑
為天下式
為天下式
常德不忒
復歸於無極
知其榮 守其辱
為天下谷
為天下谷
常德乃足
復歸於樸
樸散則為器
聖人用之
則為官長
故大制不割

Know the masculine, hold to the feminine
Be the watercourse of the world
Being the watercourse of the world
The eternal virtue does not depart
Return to the state of the infant
Know the white, hold to the black
Be the standard of the world
Being the standard of the world
The eternal virtue does not deviate
Return to the state of the boundless
Know the honor, hold to the humility
Be the valley of the world
Being the valley of the world
The eternal virtue shall be sufficient
Return to the state of plain wood
Plain wood splits, then becomes tools
The sages utilize them
And then become leaders
Thus the greater whole is undivided

第二十九章

將欲取天下而為之
吾見其不得已
天下神器
不可為也
為者敗之
執者失之
故物
或行或隨
或歔或吹
或強或羸
或挫或隳
是以聖人
去甚
去奢
去泰

Chapter 29

Those who wish to take the world and control it
I see that they cannot succeed
The world is a sacred instrument
One cannot control it
The one who controls it will fail
The one who grasps it will lose
Thus all things:
Either lead or follow
Either blow hot or cold
Either have strength or weakness
Either have ownership or take by force
Therefore the sage:
Eliminates extremes
Eliminates excess
Eliminates arrogance

第三十章

Chapter 30

以道佐人主者
不以兵強天下
其事好還
師之所處
荊棘生焉
大軍之後
必有凶年
善有果而已
不敢以取強
果而勿矜
果而勿伐
果而勿驕
果而不得已
果而勿強
物壯則老
是謂不道
不道早已

The one who uses the Tao to advise the ruler
Does not dominate the world with soldiers
Such methods tend to be returned
The place where the troops camp
Thistles and thorns grow
Following the great army
There must be an inauspicious year
A good commander achieves result, then stops
And does not dare to reach for domination
Achieves result but does not brag
Achieves result but does not flaunt
Achieves result but is not arrogant
Achieves result but only out of necessity
Achieves result but does not dominate
Things become strong and then get old
This is called contrary to the Tao
That which is contrary to the Tao soon ends

第三十一章

Chapter 31

夫佳兵者 不祥之器
物或惡之
故有道者不處
君子居則貴左
用兵則貴右
兵者不祥之器
非君子之器
不得已而用之
恬淡為上
勝而不美
而美之者
是樂殺人者
夫樂殺人者
則不可得志於天下矣
吉事尚左
凶事尚右
偏將軍居左
上將軍居右
言以喪禮處之
殺人之眾
以悲哀泣之
戰勝以喪禮處之

A strong military, a tool of misfortune
All things detest it
Therefore, those who possess the Tao avoid it
Honorable gentlemen, while at home, value the left
When deploying the military, value the right
The military is a tool of misfortune
Not the tool of honorable gentlemen
When using it out of necessity
Calm detachment should be above all
Victorious but without glory
Those who glorify
Are delighting in the killing
Those who delight in killing
Cannot achieve their ambitions upon the world
Auspicious events favor the left
Inauspicious events favor the right
The lieutenant general is positioned to the left
The major general is positioned to the right
We say that they are treated as if in a funeral
Those who have been killed
Should be mourned with sadness
Victory in war should be treated as a funeral

第三十二章

道常無名
樸雖小
天下莫能臣也
侯王若能守之
萬物將自賓
天地相合
以降甘露
民莫之令而自均
始制有名
名亦既有
夫亦將知止
知止可以不殆
譬道之在天下
猶川谷之於江海

Chapter 32

The Tao, eternally nameless
Its simplicity, although imperceptible
Cannot be treated by the world as subservient
If the sovereign can hold on to it
All will follow by themselves
Heaven and Earth, together in harmony
Will rain sweet dew
People will not need to force it; it will adjust by itself
In the beginning, there were names
Names came to exist everywhere
One should know when to stop
Knowing when to stop, thus avoiding danger
The existence of the Tao in the world
Is like streams in the valley into rivers and the ocean

第三十三章

知人者智
自知者明
勝人者有力
自勝者強
知足者富
強行者有志
不失其所者久
死而不亡者壽

Chapter 33

Those who understand others are intelligent
Those who understand themselves are enlightened
Those who overcome others have strength
Those who overcome themselves are powerful
Those who know contentment are wealthy
Those who proceed vigorously have willpower
Those who do not lose their base endure
Those who die but do not perish have longevity

第三十四章

大道汎兮
其可左右
萬物恃之以生而不辭
功成而不名有
衣養萬物而不為主
常無欲
可名於小
萬物歸焉而不為主
可名為大
以其終不自為大
故能成其大

Chapter 34

The great Tao is like a flood
It can flow to the left or to the right
The myriad things depend on it for life, but it never stops
It achieves its work, but does not take credit
It clothes and feeds myriad things, but does not rule over them
Ever desiring nothing
It can be named insignificant
Myriad things return to it but it does not rule over them
It can be named great
Even in the end, it does not regard itself as great
That is how it can achieve its greatness

第三十五章

執大象
天下往
往而不害 安平太
樂與餌 過客止
道之出口
淡乎其無味
視之不足見
聽之不足聞
用之不足既

Chapter 35

Hold the great image
All under heaven will come
They come without harm, in harmonious peace
Music and food, passing travelers stop
The Tao that is spoken out of the mouth
Is bland and without flavor
Look at it, it cannot be seen
Listen to it, it cannot be heard
Use it, it cannot be exhausted

第三十六章

Chapter 36

將欲歛之
必固張之
將欲弱之
必固強之
將欲廢之
必固興之
將欲奪之
必固與之
是謂微明
柔弱勝剛強
魚不可脫於淵
國之利器
不可以示人

If one wishes to shrink it
One must first expand it
If one wishes to weaken it
One must first strengthen it
If one wishes to discard it
One must first promote it
If one wishes to seize it
One must first give it
This is called subtle clarity
The soft and weak overcomes the tough and strong
Fish cannot leave the depths
The sharp instruments of the state
Cannot be shown to the people

第三十七章

Chapter 37

道常無為
而無不為
侯王若能守之
萬物將自化
化而欲作
吾將鎮之以無名之樸
無名之樸
夫亦將無欲
不欲以靜
天下將自定

The Tao is constant in non-action
Yet there is nothing it does not do
If the sovereign can hold on to this
All things shall transform themselves
Transformed, yet wishing to achieve
I shall restrain them with the simplicity of the nameless
The simplicity of the nameless
They shall be without desire
Without desire, using stillness
The world shall steady itself

第三十八章

Chapter 38

上德不德
是以有德
下德不失德
是以無德
上德無為
而無以為
下德為之
而有以為
上仁為之
而無以為
上義為之
而有以為
上禮為之
而莫之應
則攘臂而扔之
故失道而後德
失德而後仁
失仁而後義
失義而後禮
夫禮者
忠信之薄
而亂之首
前識者
道之華
而愚之始
是以大丈夫
處其厚 不居其薄
處其實 不居其華
故去彼取此

High virtue is not virtuous
Therefore it has virtue
Low virtue never loses virtue
Therefore it has no virtue
High virtue takes no contrived action
And acts without agenda
Low virtue takes contrived action
And acts with agenda
High benevolence takes contrived action
And acts without agenda
High righteousness takes contrived action
And acts with agenda
High etiquette takes contrived action
And upon encountering no response
Uses arms to pull others
Therefore, the Tao is lost, and then virtue
Virtue is lost, and then benevolence
Benevolence is lost, and then righteousness
Righteousness is lost, and then etiquette
Those who have etiquette
are a thin shell of loyalty and sincerity
And the beginning of chaos
Those with foreknowledge
Are the flowers of the Tao
And the beginning of ignorance
Therefore the great person:
Abides in substance, and does not dwell on the thin shell
Abides in the real, and does not dwell on the flower
Thus they discard that and take this

第三十九章

昔之得一者
天得一以清
地得一以寧
神得一以靈
谷得一以盈
萬物得一以生
侯王得一以為天下貞
其致之一也
天無以清將恐裂
地無以寧將恐發
神無以靈將恐歇
谷無以盈將恐竭
萬物無以生將恐滅
侯王無以貞而貴高將恐蹶
故貴以賤為本
高以下為基
是以侯王自稱孤寡不穀
此非以賤為本耶 非乎
故致數與無與
不欲琤琤如玉
珞珞如石

第四十章

反者道之動
弱者道之用
天下萬物生於有
有生於無

Chapter 39

Those that attained oneness since ancient times:
The sky attained oneness and thus clarity
The earth attained oneness and thus tranquility
The gods attained oneness and thus divinity
The valley attained oneness and thus abundance
The myriad things attained oneness and thus life
The rulers attained oneness and became the world's standard
These all emerged from oneness
The sky, lacking clarity, would break apart
The earth, lacking tranquility, would erupt
The gods, lacking divinity, would vanish
The valley, lacking abundance, would wither
Myriad things, lacking life, would be extinct
The rulers, lacking lofty standards, would be toppled
Therefore, the honored uses the lowly as basis
The higher uses the lower as foundation
Thus the rulers call themselves alone, bereft, and unworthy
Is this not using the lowly as basis? Is it not so?
Therefore, the ultimate honor is no honor
Do not wish to be shiny like jade
Be dull like rocks

Chapter 40

The returning is the movement of the Tao
The weak is the utilization of the Tao
The myriad things of the world are born of being
Being is born of non-being

第四十一章

Chapter 41

上士聞道
勤而行之
中士聞道
若存若亡
下士聞道
大笑之
不笑不足以為道
故建言有之
明道若昧
進道若退
夷道若類
上德若谷
大白若辱
廣德若不足
建德若偷
質真若渝
大方無隅
大器晚成
大音希聲
大象無形
道隱無名
夫唯道
善貸且成

Higher people hear of the Tao
They diligently practice it
Average people hear of the Tao
They sometimes keep it and sometimes lose it
Lower people hear of the Tao
They laugh loudly at it
If they do not laugh, it would not be the Tao
Therefore a proverb has the following:
The clear Tao appears unclear
The advancing Tao appears to retreat
The smooth Tao appears uneven
High virtue appears like a valley
Great integrity appears like disgrace
Encompassing virtue appears insufficient
Building virtue appears inactive
True substance appears inconstant
The great square has no corners
The great vessel is late in completion
The great music is imperceptible in sound
The great image has no form
The Tao is hidden and nameless
Yet it is only the Tao
That excels in giving and completing everything

第四十二章

道生一
一生二
二生三
三生萬物
萬物負陰而抱陽
沖氣以為和
人之所惡
唯孤寡不穀
而王公以為稱
故物
或損之而益
或益之而損
人之所教
我亦教之
強梁者不得其死
吾將以為教父

Chapter 42

Tao produces one
One produces two
Two produce three
Three produce myriad things
Myriad things, backed by yin and embracing yang
Achieve harmony by integrating their energy
What the people dislike
Are alone, bereft, and unworthy
But the rulers call themselves with these terms
So with all things
Appear to take loss but benefit
Or receive benefit but lose
What the ancients taught
I will also teach
The violent one cannot have a natural death
I will use this as the principal of all teachings

第四十三章

天下之至柔
馳騁天下之至堅
無有
入於無間
吾是以知無為之有益
不言之教
無為之益
天下希及之

Chapter 43

The softest things of the world
Override the hardest things of the world
That which has no substance
Enters into that which has no openings
From this I know the benefits of unattached actions
The teaching without words
The benefits of actions without attachment
Are rarely matched in the world

第四十四章

Chapter 44

名與身孰親
身與貨孰多
得與亡孰病
是故甚愛必大費
多藏必厚亡
知足不辱
知止不殆
可以長久

Fame or the self, which is dearer?
The self or wealth, which is greater?
Gain or loss, which is more painful?
Thus excessive love must lead to great spending
Excessive hoarding must lead to heavy loss
Knowing contentment avoids disgrace
Knowing when to stop avoids danger
Thus one can endure indefinitely

第四十五章

Chapter 45

大成若缺
其用不弊
大盈若沖
其用不窮
大直若屈
大巧若拙
大辯若訥
躁勝寒
靜勝熱
清靜為天下正

Great perfection seems flawed
Its function is without failure
Great fullness seems empty
Its function is without exhaustion
Great straightness seems bent
Great skill seems unrefined
Great eloquence seems inarticulate
Movement overcomes cold
Stillness overcomes heat
Clear quietness is the standard of the world

第四十六章

Chapter 46

天下有道
卻走馬以糞
天下無道
戎馬生於郊
罪莫大於可欲
禍莫大於不知足
咎莫大於欲得
故知足之足
常足矣

When the world has the Tao
Fast horses are retired to till the soil
When the world lacks the Tao
Warhorses give birth on the battlefield
There is no crime greater than greed
No disaster greater than discontentment
No fault greater than avarice
Thus the satisfaction of contentment
is the lasting satisfaction

第四十七章

Chapter 47

不出戶 知天下
不闚牖 見天道
其出彌遠
其知彌少
是以聖人
不行而知
不見而名
不為而成

Without going out the door, know the world
Without peering out the window, see the Heavenly Tao
The further one goes
The less one knows
Therefore the sage
Knows without going
Names without seeing
Achieves without striving

第四十八章

Chapter 48

為學日益
為道日損
損之又損
以至於無為
無為而無不為
取天下常以無事
及其有事
不足以取天下

Pursue knowledge, daily gain
Pursue Tao, daily loss
Loss and more loss
Until one reaches unattached action
With unattached action, there is nothing one cannot do
Take the world by constantly applying non-interference
The one who interferes
is not qualified to take the world

第四十九章

聖人無常心
以百姓心為心
善者 吾善之
不善者 吾亦善之
德善
信者 吾信之
不信者 吾亦信之
德信
聖人之在天下歛歛焉
為天下渾其心
百姓皆注其耳目
聖人皆孩之

Chapter 49

The sages have no constant mind
They take the mind of the people as their mind
Those who are good, I am good to them
Those who are not good, I am also good to them
Thus the virtue of goodness
Those who believe, I believe them
Those who do not believe, I also believe them
Thus the virtue of belief
The sages live in the world
They cautiously merge their mind for the world
The people all pay attention with their ears and eyes
The sages care for them as children

第五十章

出生入死
生之徒 十有三
死之徒 十有三
人之生 動之於死地
亦十有三
夫何故
以其生生之厚
蓋聞善攝生者
陸行不遇兕虎
入軍不被甲兵
兕無所投其角
虎無所措其爪
兵無所容其刃
夫何故
以其無死地

Chapter 50

Coming into life, entering death
The followers of life, three in ten
The followers of death, three in ten
Those whose lives are moved toward death
Also three in ten
Why?
Because they live lives of excess
I've heard of those who are good at cultivating life
Traveling on the road, they do not encounter rhinos or tigers
Entering into an army, they are not harmed by weapons
Rhinos have nowhere to thrust their horns
Tigers have nowhere to clasp their claws
Soldiers have nowhere to lodge their blades
Why?
Because they have no place for death

第五十一章

Chapter 51

道生之
德畜之
物形之
勢成之
是以萬物
莫不尊道而貴德
道之尊 德之貴
夫莫之命
而常自然
故道生之
德畜之
長之育之
成之熟之
養之覆之
生而不有
為而不恃
長而不宰
是謂玄德

Tao produces them
Virtue raises them
Things shape them
Forces perfect them
Therefore the myriad things
all respect the Tao and value virtue
The respect for Tao, the value of virtue
Not due to command
but to constant nature
Thus Tao produces them
Virtue raises them
Grows them, educates them
Perfects them, matures them
Nurtures them, protects them
Produces but does not possess
Acts but does not flaunt
Nurtures but does not dominate
This is called Mystic Virtue

第五十二章

Chapter 52

天下有始
以為天下母
既得其母
以知其子
既知其子
復守其母
沒身不殆
塞其兌
閉其門
終身不勤
開其兌
濟其事
終身不救
見小曰明
守柔曰強
用其光
復歸其明
無遺身殃
是為習常

The world has a beginning
We regard it as the mother of the world
Having its mother
We can know her children
Knowing her children
Still holding on to the mother
Live without danger all through life
Close the mouth
Shut the doors
Live without toil all through life
Open the mouth
Meddle in the affairs
Live without salvation all through life
Seeing details is called clarity
Holding on to the soft is called strength
Utilize the light
Return to the clarity
Leaving no disasters for the self
This is called practicing constancy

第五十三章

使我介然有知
行於大道
唯施是畏
大道甚夷
而民好徑
朝甚除
田甚蕪
倉甚虛
服文綵
帶利劍
厭飲食
財貨有餘
是謂盜夸
非道也哉

Chapter 53

If I have a little knowledge
Walking on the great Tao
I fear only to deviate from it
The great Tao is broad and plain
But people like the side paths
The courts are corrupt
The fields are barren
The warehouses are empty
Officials wear fineries
Carry sharp swords
Fill up on drinks and food
Acquire excessive wealth
This is called robbery
It is not the Tao!

第五十四章

善建者不拔
善抱者不脫
子孫以祭祀不輟
修之於身 其德乃真
修之於家 其德乃餘
修之於鄉 其德乃長
修之於國 其德乃豐
修之於天下 其德乃普
故
以身觀身
以家觀家
以鄉觀鄉
以國觀國
以天下觀天下
吾何以知天下然哉
以此

Chapter 54

That which is well established cannot be uprooted
That which is strongly held cannot be taken
The descendants will commemorate it forever
Cultivate it in yourself; its virtue shall be true
Cultivate it in the family; its virtue shall be abundant
Cultivate it in the community; its virtue shall be lasting
Cultivate it in the country; its virtue shall be prosperous
Cultivate it in the world; its virtue shall be widespread
Therefore:
Observe others with yourself
Observe other families with your family
Observe other communities with your community
Observe other countries with your country
Observe the world with the world
With what do I know the world?
With this

第五十五章

Chapter 55

含德之厚
比於赤子
毒蟲不螫
猛獸不據
攫鳥不搏
骨弱筋柔
而握固
未知牝牡之合而全作
精之至也
終日號而不嗄
和之至也
知和曰常
知常曰明
益生曰祥
心使氣曰強
物壯則老
謂之不道
不道早已

Those who hold an abundance of virtue
Are similar to newborn infants
Poisonous insects do not sting them
Wild beasts do not claw them
Birds of prey do not attack them
Their bones are weak, tendons are soft
But their grasp is firm
They do not know of sexual union but can manifest arousal
Due to the optimum of essence
They can cry the whole day and yet not be hoarse
Due to the optimum of harmony
Knowing harmony is said to be constancy
Knowing constancy is said to be clarity
Excessive vitality is said to be inauspicious
Mind overusing energy is said to be aggressive
Things become strong and then grow old
This is called contrary to the Tao
That which is contrary to the Tao will soon perish

第五十六章

Chapter 56

知者不言
言者不知
塞其兌
閉其門
挫其銳
解其紛
和其光
同其塵
是謂玄同
故不可得而親
不可得而疏
不可得而利
不可得而害
不可得而貴
不可得而賤
故為天下貴

Those who know do not talk
Those who talk do not know
Close the mouth
Shut the doors
Blunt the sharpness
Unravel the knots
Dim the glare
Mix the dust
This is called Mystic Oneness
They cannot obtain this and be closer
They cannot obtain this and be distant
They cannot obtain this and be benefited
They cannot obtain this and be harmed
They cannot obtain this and be valued
They cannot obtain this and be degraded
Therefore, they become honored by the world

第五十七章

Chapter 57

以正治國
以奇用兵
以無事取天下
吾何以知其然哉
以此
天下多忌諱
而民彌貧
民多利器
國家滋昏
人多伎巧
奇物滋起
法令滋彰
盜賊多有
故聖人云
我無為而民自化
我好靜而民自正
我無事而民自富
我無欲而民自樸

Govern a country with upright integrity
Deploy the military with surprise tactics
Take the world with non-interference
How do I know this is so?
With the following:
When there are many restrictions in the world
The people become more impoverished
When people have many sharp weapons
The country becomes more chaotic
When people have many clever tricks
More strange things occur
The more laws are posted
The more robbers and thieves there are
Therefore the sage says:
I take unattached action, and the people transform themselves
I prefer quiet, and the people right themselves
I do not interfere, and the people enrich themselves
I have no desires, and the people simplify themselves

第五十八章

其政悶悶
其民淳淳
其政察察
其民缺缺
禍兮福之所倚
福兮禍之所伏
孰知其極
其無正耶
正復為奇
善復為妖
人之迷
其日固久
是以聖人
方而不割
廉而不劌
直而不肆
光而不耀

Chapter 58

When governing is lackluster
The people are simple and honest
When governing is scrutinizing
The people are shrewd and crafty
Misfortune is what fortune depends upon
Fortune is where misfortune hides beneath
Who knows their ultimate end
Or if they have no determined outcome?
Rightness reverts to become strange
Goodness reverts to become wicked
The confusion of people
has lasted many long days
Therefore the sages are:
Righteous without being scathing
Incorruptible without being piercing
Straightforward without being ruthless
Illuminated without being flashy

第五十九章

治人事天
莫若嗇
夫唯嗇是謂早服
早服謂之重積德
重積德則無不克
無不克
則莫知其極
莫知其極 可以有國
有國之母 可以長久
是謂深根固柢
長生久視之道

Chapter 59

In governing people and serving Heaven
There is nothing like conservation
Only with conservation is it called submitting early
Submitting early is called emphasis on accumulating virtues
Accumulating virtues means there is nothing one cannot overcome
When there is nothing that one cannot overcome
One's limits are unknown
The limitations being unknown, one can possess sovereignty
With this mother principle of power, one can be everlasting
This is called deep roots and firm foundation
The Tao of longevity and lasting vision

第六十章

治大國若烹小鮮
以道蒞天下
其鬼不神
非其鬼不神
其神不傷人
非其神不傷人
聖人亦不傷人
夫兩不相傷
故德交歸焉

Chapter 60

Ruling a large country is like cooking a small fish
Using the Tao to manage the world
Its demons have no power
Not only do its demons have no power
Its gods do not harm people
Not only do its gods not harm people
The sages also do not harm people
They both do no harm to one another
So virtue merges and returns

第六十一章

大國者下流
天下之交
天下之牝
牝常以靜勝牡
以靜為下
故大國以下小國
則取小國
小國以下大國
則取大國
故或下以取
或下而取。
大國不過欲兼畜人
小國不過欲入事人
夫兩者各得其所欲
大者宜為下

Chapter 61

The large country is like the lowest river
The converging point of the world
The receptive female of the world
The female always overcomes the male with serenity
Using serenity as the lower position
Thus if the large country is lower than the small country
Then it can take the small country
If the small country is lower than the large country
Then it can be taken by the large country
Thus one uses the lower position to take
The other uses the lower position to be taken
The large country only wishes to gather and protect people
The small country only wishes to join and serve people
So that both obtain what they wish
The larger one should assume the lower position

第六十二章

Chapter 62

道者萬物之奧
善人之寶
不善人之所保
美言可以市尊
美行可以加人
人之不善
何棄之有
故立天子
置三公
雖有拱璧以先駟馬
不如坐進此道
古之所以貴此道者何
不曰求以得
有罪以免耶
故為天下貴

The Tao is the wonder of all things
The treasure of the kind person
The protection of the unkind person
Admirable words can win the public's respect
Admirable actions can improve people
Those who are unkind
How can they be abandoned?
Therefore, when crowning the Emperor
And installing the three ministers
Although there is the offering of jade before four horses
None of it can compare to being seated in this Tao
Why did the ancients value this Tao so much?
Is it not said that those who seek will find,
And those with guilt will not be faulted?
Therefore, it is the greatest value in the world

第六十三章

Chapter 63

為無為	Act without action
事無事	Manage without meddling
味無味	Taste without tasting
大小多少	Great, small, many, few
報怨以德	Respond to hatred with virtue
圖難於其易	Plan difficult tasks through the simplest tasks
為大於其細	Achieve large tasks through the smallest tasks
天下難事	The difficult tasks of the world
必作於易	Must be handled through the simple tasks
天下大事	The large tasks of the world
必作於細	Must be handled through the small tasks
是以聖人終不為大	Therefore, sages never attempt great deeds all through life
故能成其大	Thus they can achieve greatness
夫輕諾必寡信	One who makes promises lightly must deserve little trust
多易必多難	One who sees many easy tasks must encounter much difficulty
是以聖人猶難之	Therefore, sages regard things as difficult
故終無難矣	So they never encounter difficulties all through life

第六十四章

Chapter 64

其安易持
其未兆易謀
其脆易破
其微易散
為之於未有
治之於未亂
合抱之木
生於毫末
九層之台
起於累土
千里之行
始於足下
為者敗之
執者失之
是以聖人
無為故無敗
無執故無失
民之從事
常於幾成而敗之
慎終如始
則無敗事
是以聖人欲不欲
不貴難得之貨
學不學
復眾人之所過
以輔萬物之自然
而不敢為

When it is peaceful, it is easy to maintain
When it shows no signs, it is easy to plan
When it is fragile, it is easy to break
When it is small, it is easy to scatter
Act on it when it has not yet begun
Treat it when it is not yet chaotic
A tree thick enough to embrace
Grows from the tiny sapling
A tower of nine levels
Starts from the dirt heap
A journey of a thousand miles
Begins beneath the feet
The one who meddles will fail
The one who grasps will lose
Therefore, sages:
Do not meddle and thus do not fail
Do not grasp and thus do not lose
People, in handling affairs
Often come close to completion and fail
If they are as careful in the end as the beginning
Then they would have no failure
Therefore, sages desire not to desire
and do not value goods that are hard to acquire
They learn to unlearn
and redeem the fault of the people
To assist the nature of all things
Without daring to meddle

第六十五章

古之善為道者
非以明民
將以愚之
民之難治
以其智多
故以智治國
國之賊
不以智治國
國之福
知此兩者亦稽式
常知稽式
是謂玄德
玄德 深矣 遠矣
與物反矣
然後乃至大順

Chapter 65

Those of ancient times who were adept at the Tao
Used it not to make people brighter
But to keep them simple
The difficulty in governing people
Is due their excessive cleverness
Therefore, using cleverness to govern the state
Is being a thief of the state
Not using cleverness to govern the state
Is being a blessing of the state
Know that these two are both standards
Always knowing these standards
Is called Mystic Virtue
Mystic Virtue: Profound! Far-reaching!
It goes opposite to material things
Then it reaches great congruence

第六十六章

江海之所以能為百谷王者
以其善下之
故能為百谷王
是以聖人欲上民
必以言下之
欲先民
必以身後之
是以聖人處上
而民不重
處前
而民不害
是以天下樂推而不厭
以其不爭
故天下莫能與之爭

Chapter 66

Rivers and oceans can be the kings of a hundred valleys
Because of their goodness in staying low
So they can be the kings of a hundred valleys
Thus if sages wish to be over people
They must speak humbly to them
If they wish to be in front of people
They must place themselves behind them
Thus the sages are positioned above
But the people do not feel burdened
They are positioned in front
But the people do not feel harmed
Thus the world is glad to push them forward without resentment
Because they do not contend
So the world cannot contend with them

第六十七章

Chapter 67

天下皆謂我道大
似不肖
夫唯大
故似不肖
若肖
久矣其細也夫
我有三寶
持而保之
一曰慈
二曰儉
三曰不敢為天下先
慈故能勇
儉故能廣
不敢為天下先
故能成器長
今捨慈且勇
捨儉且廣
捨後且先
死矣
夫慈以戰則勝
以守則固
天將救之
以慈衛之

Everyone in the world calls my Tao great
As if it is beyond compare
It is only because of its greatness
That it seems beyond compare
If it can be compared
It would already be insignificant long ago!
I have three treasures
I hold on to them and protect them
The first is called compassion
The second is called conservation
The third is called not daring to be ahead in the world
Compassionate, thus able to have courage
Conserving, thus able to reach widely
Not daring to be ahead in the world
Thus able to assume leadership
Now if one has courage but discards compassion
Reaches widely but discards conservation
Goes ahead but discards being behind
Then death!
If one fights with compassion, then victory
With defense, then security
Heaven shall save them
And with compassion guard them

第六十八章

善為士者不武
善戰者不怒
善勝敵者不與
善用人者為之下
是謂不爭之德
是謂用人之力
是謂配天
古之極

Chapter 68

The great generals are not warlike
The great warriors do not get angry
Those who are good at defeating enemies do not engage them
Those who are good at managing people lower themselves
It is called the virtue of non-contention
It is called the power of managing people
It is called being harmonious with Heaven
The ultimate principle of the ancients

第六十九章

用兵有言
吾不敢為主而為客
不敢進寸而退尺
是謂
行無行
攘無臂
扔無敵
執無兵
禍莫大於輕敵
輕敵幾喪吾寶
故抗兵相加
哀者勝矣

Chapter 69

In using the military, there is a saying:
I dare not be the host, but prefer to be the guest
I dare not advance an inch, but prefer to withdraw a foot
This is called:
Marching in formation without formation
Raising arms without arms
Grappling enemies without enemies
Holding weapons without weapons
There is no greater disaster than to underestimate the enemy
Underestimating the enemy almost made me lose my treasures
So when evenly matched armies meet
The side that is compassionate shall win

第七十章

吾言甚易知 甚易行
天下莫能知 莫能行
言有宗
事有君
夫唯無知
是以不我知
知我者希
則我者貴
是以聖人被褐懷玉

Chapter 70

My words are easy to understand, easy to practice
The world cannot understand, cannot practice
My words have basis
My actions have principle
People do not understand this
Therefore they do not understand me
Those who understand me are few
Thus I am highly valued
Therefore the sage wears plain clothes but holds jade

第七十一章

知不知上
不知知病
夫唯病病
是以不病
聖人不病
以其病病
是以不病

Chapter 71

To know that you do not know is highest
To not know but think you know is flawed
Only when one recognizes the fault as a fault
can one be without fault
The sages are without fault
Because they recognize the fault as a fault
That is why they are without fault

第七十二章

民不畏威
則大威至
無狎其所居
無厭其所生
夫唯不厭
是以不厭
是以聖人
自知不自見
自愛不自貴
故去彼取此

Chapter 72

When people no longer fear force
They bring about greater force
Do not limit their place
Do not reject their livelihood
Because the ruler does not reject them
Therefore they do not reject the ruler
Therefore the sages:
Know themselves but do not glorify themselves
Respect themselves but do not praise themselves
Thus they discard that and take this

第七十三章

勇於敢則殺
勇於不敢則活
此兩者或利或害
天之所惡 孰知其故
是以聖人猶難之
天之道
不爭而善勝
不言而善應
不召而自來
繹然而善謀
天網恢恢
疏而不失

第七十四章

民不畏死
奈何以死懼之
若使民常畏死
而為奇者
吾得執而殺之
孰敢
常有司殺者殺
夫代司殺者殺
是謂代大匠斲
夫代大匠斲者
希有不傷其手矣

Chapter 73

The bold in daring will be killed
The bold in not daring will survive
Of these two, one may benefit, the other may harm
The one hated by Heaven – who knows the reason?
Even the sages still find this difficult
The Tao of Heaven:
Does not contend and yet excels in winning
Does not speak and yet excels in responding
Is not summoned and yet comes on its own
Is unhurried and yet excels in planning
The heavenly net is vast
Loose, and yet does not let anything slip through

Chapter 74

People do not fear death
How can they be threatened with death?
If people are made to constantly fear death
Then those who act unlawfully
I can capture and kill them
Who would dare?
There exists a master executioner that kills
If we substitute for the master executioner to kill
It is like substituting for the great carpenter to cut
Those who substitute for the great carpenter to cut
It is rare that they do not hurt their own hands

第七十五章

民之饑
以其上食稅之多
是以饑
民之難治
以其上之有為
是以難治
民之輕死
以其求生之厚
是以輕死
夫唯無以生為者
是賢於貴生

Chapter 75

The people's hunger
Is due to the excess of their ruler's taxation
So they starve
The people's difficulty in being governed
Is due to the meddling of their ruler
So they are difficult to govern
The people's disregard for death
Is due to the glut in their ruler's pursuit of life
So they disregard death
Therefore those who do not strive for living
Are better than those who value living

第七十六章

人之生也柔弱
其死也堅強
萬物草木
之生也柔脆
其死也枯槁
故堅強者
死之徒
柔弱者
生之徒
是以兵強則不勝
木強則共
強大處下
柔弱處上

Chapter 76

While alive, the body is soft and pliant
When dead, it is hard and rigid
All living things, grass and trees,
While alive, are soft and supple
When dead, become dry and brittle
Thus that which is hard and stiff
is the follower of death
That which is soft and yielding
is the follower of life
Therefore, an inflexible army will not win
A strong tree will be cut down
The big and forceful occupy a lowly position
While the soft and pliant occupy a higher place

第七十七章

天之道
其猶張弓乎
高者抑之
下者舉之
有餘者損之
不足者補之
天之道
損有餘
而補不足
人之道則不然
損不足
以奉有餘
孰能有餘以奉天下
唯有道者
是以聖人為而不恃
功成而不處
其不欲見賢

Chapter 77

The Tao of Heaven
Is like drawing a bow
Lower that which is high
Raise that which is low
Reduce that which has excess
Add to that which is lacking
The Tao of heaven
Reduces the excessive
And adds to the lacking
The Tao of people is not so
It reduces the lacking
In order to offer to the excessive
Who can offer their excess to the world?
Only those who have the Tao
Therefore sages act without conceit
Achieve without claiming credit
They do not wish to display their virtue!

第七十八章

天下莫柔弱於水
而攻堅強者莫之能勝
以其無以易之
弱之勝強
柔之勝剛
天下莫不知
莫能行
是以聖人云
受國之垢
是謂社稷主
受國不祥
是為天下王
正言若反

Chapter 78

Nothing in the world is softer or weaker than water
Yet nothing is better at overcoming the hard and strong
This is because nothing can replace it
That the weak overcomes the strong
And the soft overcomes the hard
Everybody in the world knows
But cannot put into practice
Therefore sages say:
The one who accepts the humiliation of the state
Is called its master
The one who accepts the misfortune of the state
Becomes king of the world
The truth seems like the opposite

第七十九章

Chapter 79

和大怨
必有餘怨
安可以為善
是以聖人執左契
而不責於人
有德司契
無德司徼
天道無親
常與善人

After settling a great dispute
There must be remaining resentments
How can this be considered good?
Therefore the sage holds the left part of the contract
But does not demand payment from the other person
Those who have virtue hold the contract
Those without virtue hold the collections
The Heavenly Tao has no favorites
It constantly gives to the kind people

第八十章

Chapter 80

小國寡民
使有什伯之器
而不用
使民重死
而不遠徙
雖有舟輿
無所乘之
雖有甲兵
無所陳之
使民復結繩而用之
甘其食 美其服
安其居 樂其俗
鄰國相望
雞犬之聲相聞
民至老死
不相往來

Small country, few people
Let them have many weapons
But not use them
Let the people regard death seriously
And not migrate far away
Although they have boats and chariots
They have no need to take them
Although they have armors and weapons
They have no need to display them
Let the people return to tying knots and using them
Savor their food, admire their clothes
Content in their homes, happy in their customs
Neighboring countries see one another
Hear the sounds of roosters and dogs from one another
The people, until they grow old and die
Do not go back and forth with one another

第八十一章

Chapter 81

信言不美
美言不信
善者不辯
辯者不善
知者不博
博者不知
聖人不積
既以為人已愈有
既以與人已愈多
天之道
利而不害
聖人之道
為而不爭

True words are not beautiful
Beautiful words are not true
Those who are good do not debate
Those who debate are not good
Those who know are not broad of knowledge
Those who are broad of knowledge do not know
Sages do not accumulate
The more they assist others, the more they possess
The more they give to others, the more they gain
The Tao of heaven
Benefits and does not harm
The Tao of sages
Assists and does not contend