

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

同謂之元元之又元眾妙之門



## ONE

The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao.  
The name that can be named is not the eternal name.  
The nameless is the beginning of heaven and earth.  
The named is the mother of ten thousand things.  
Ever desireless, one can see the mystery.  
Ever desiring, one can see the manifestations.  
These two spring from the same source but differ in name;  
This appears as darkness.  
Darkness within darkness.  
The gate to all mystery.

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較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



Two

Under heaven all can see beauty as beauty only because there is ugliness.  
All can know good as good only because there is evil.

Therefore having and not having arise together;  
Difficult and easy complement each other;  
Long and short contrast each other;  
High and low rest upon each other;  
Voice and sound harmonize each other;  
Front and back follow each other.

Therefore the wise go about doing nothing, teaching no-talking.  
The ten thousand things rise and fall without cease,  
Creating, yet not possessing,  
Working, yet not taking credit.  
Work is done, then forgotten.  
Therefore it lasts forever.





### THREE

Not exalting the gifted prevents quarreling.  
Not collecting treasures prevents stealing.  
Not seeing desirable things prevents confusion of the heart.


The wise therefore rule by emptying hearts and stuffing bellies,  
By weakening ambitions and strengthening bones.  
If people lack knowledge and desire,  
Then it is best not to interfere.  
If nothing is done, then all will be well.

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



道冲而用之或不盈淵今似萬物之宗控其銳  
解其紛和其光同其塵湛今似或存

吾不知誰之子象帝之先

FOUR

The Tao is an empty vessel; it is used, but never filled.  
Oh, unfathomable source of ten thousand things!  
Blunt the sharpness,  
Untangle the knot,  
Soften the glare,  
Merge with dust.  
Oh, hidden deep but ever present!  
I do not know from whence it comes.  
It is the forefather of the ancestors.





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

FIVE

Heaven and earth are impartial;  
They see the ten thousand things as they are.  
The wise are impartial;  
They see the people as they are.

The space between heaven and earth is like a bellows.  
The shape changes but not the form;  
The more it moves, the more it yields.  
More words count less.  
Hold fast to the center.





谷神不死是謂元牝元牝之門是謂天地根  
緜緜若存用之不勤

Six

The valley spirit never dies;  
It is the woman, primal mother.  
Her gateway is the root of heaven and earth.  
It is like a veil barely seen.  
Use it; it will never fail.



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

非以其無私耶故能成其私

SEVEN

Heaven and earth last forever.

Why do heaven and earth last forever?

They are unborn,


So ever living.

The wise stay behind, and are thus ahead.

They are detached, thus at one with all.

Through selfless action, they attain fulfillment.





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。

## EIGHT

The highest good is like water.  
Water gives life to the ten thousand things and does not strive.  
It flows in places people reject and so is like the Tao.

In dwelling, be close to the land.  
In meditation, go deep in the heart.  
In dealing with others, be gentle and kind.  
In speech, be true.  
In ruling, be just.  
In business, be competent.  
In action, watch the timing.

No fight: No blame.





持而盈之不如其已揣而稅之不可長保

金玉滿堂莫之能守富貴而驕自遺其咎

功遂身退天之道





## NINE

Better stop short than fill to the brim.  
Oversharpen the blade, and the edge will soon blunt.  
Amass a store of gold and jade, and no one can protect it.  
Claim wealth and titles, and disaster will follow.  
Retire when the work is done.  
This is the way of heaven.



載此<sup>其</sup>魄抱一能無離乎專氣致柔能嬰<sup>其</sup>兒乎

滌除元覽能無疵乎愛民治國能無知乎

天門開蓋能無雌乎明白四達能無為乎

生之畜之生而不有為而不恃

長而不宰是謂元德

TEN

Carrying body and soul and embracing the one,  
Can you avoid separation?  
Attending fully and becoming supple,  
Can you be as a newborn babe?  
Washing and cleansing the primal vision,  
Can you be without stain?  
Loving the people and ruling the country,  
Can you be without cleverness?  
Opening and closing the gates of heaven,  
Can you play the role of woman?  
Understanding and being open to all things,  
Are you able to do nothing?  
Giving birth and nourishing,  
Bearing yet not possessing,  
Working yet not taking credit,  
Leading yet not dominating,  
This is the Primal Virtue.



三十輻共一轂當其無有車之用

埏埴以為器當其無有器之用

鑿空戶牖以為室當其無有室之用

故有之以為利無之以為用

## ELEVEN

Thirty spokes share the wheel's hub;  
It is the center hole that makes it useful.  
Shape the clay into a vessel;  
It is the space within that makes it useful.  
Cut doors and windows for a room;  
It is the holes that make it useful.  
Therefore profit comes from what is there;  
Usefulness from what is not there.





TWELVE

The five colors blind the eye.  
The five tones deafen the ear.  
The five flavors dull the taste.  
Racing and hunting madden the mind,  
Precious things lead us astray.

Therefore the wise are guided by what they feel and not by what they see,  
Letting go of that and choosing this.

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





寵辱若驚，貴大患若身。

何謂寵辱？若驚。何謂貴大患？若身。何謂寵辱若驚？寵為下，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






### THIRTEEN

Accept disgrace willingly.  
Accept misfortune as the human condition.

What do you mean by “Accept disgrace willingly”?  
Accept being unimportant.  
Do not be concerned with loss or gain.  
This is called “accepting disgrace willingly.”

What do you mean by “Accept misfortune as the human condition”?  
Misfortune comes from having a body.  
Without a body, how could there be misfortune?

Surrender yourself humbly; then you can be trusted to care for all things.  
Love the world as your own self; then you can truly care for all things.



視之不見名曰夷聽之不聞名曰希搏之不得名曰微昧三者不可致詰故混而為一其上不皦其下不昧  
繩不可名復歸於無物也謂無狀之狀無物之象是謂惚恍

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



FOURTEEN

Look, it cannot be seen—it is beyond form.  
Listen, it cannot be heard—it is beyond sound.  
Grasp, it cannot be held—it is intangible.  
These three are indefinable;  
Therefore they are joined in one.

From above it is not bright;  
From below it is not dark:  
An unbroken thread beyond description.  
It returns to nothingness.  
The form of the formless,  
The image of the imageless,  
It is called indefinable and beyond imagination.

Stand before it and there is no beginning.  
Follow it and there is no end.  
Stay with the ancient Tao,  
Move with the present.

Knowing the ancient beginning is the essence of Tao.

古之善為士者微妙元通深不可識

夫唯不可識故強為之容

豫焉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靜之徐清孰能毋以久動之葆生

得此道者不欲盈夫唯不盈故能蔽不新成



## FIFTEEN

The ancients were subtle, mysterious, profound, responsive.  
The depth of their knowledge is unfathomable.  
Because it is unfathomable,  
All we can do is describe their appearance.  
Watchful, as though crossing a winter stream.  
Alert, like people aware of danger.  
Courteous, like visiting guests.  
Yielding, like ice about to melt.  
Simple, like uncarved blocks of wood.  
Hollow, like caves.  
Opaque, like muddy pools.

Who can wait quietly while the mud settles?  
Who can remain still until the moment of action?  
Observers of the Tao do not seek fulfillment.  
Not seeking fulfillment, they are not swayed by desire for change.

致虛極守靜篤萬物並作吾以觀復夫物芸芸各復歸其根  
歸根曰靜是謂復命德合曰常知常曰明

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



## SIXTEEN

Empty yourself of everything.  
Let the mind become still.  
The ten thousand things rise and fall while the self watches their return.  
They grow and flourish and then return to the source.  
Returning to the source is stillness, which is the way of nature.  
The way of nature is unchanging.  
Knowing constancy is insight.  
Not knowing constancy leads to disaster.  
Knowing constancy, the mind is open.  
With an open mind, you will be openhearted.  
Being openhearted, you will act royally.  
Being royal, you will attain the divine.  
Being divine, you will be at one with the Tao.  
Being at one with the Tao is eternal.  
And though the body dies, the Tao will never pass away.



太上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



SEVENTEEN

Very few are aware of the highest.  
Then comes that which they know and love,  
Then that which is feared,  
Then that which is despised.

Those who do not trust enough will not be trusted.

When actions are performed  
Without unnecessary talk,  
People say, "We did it!"



大道廢有仁義  
智慧出有下偽

六親不和  
有孝慈  
國家昏亂  
有忠臣

EIGHTEEN

When the great Tao is forgotten,  
Kindness and morality arise.  
When wisdom and intelligence are born,  
The great pretense begins.

When there is no peace within the family,  
Filial piety and devotion arise.  
When the country is confused and in chaos,  
Loyal ministers appear.



絕聖棄智民利百倍

絕仁棄義民倍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

NINETEEN

Give up sainthood, renounce wisdom,  
And it will be a hundred times better for everyone.

Give up kindness, renounce morality,  
And people will rediscover filial piety and love.

Give up ingenuity, renounce profit,  
And bandits and thieves will disappear.

These three are outward forms alone: they are not sufficient in themselves.  
It is more important  
To see the simplicity,  
To realize our true nature,  
To cast off selfishness  
And temper desire.



絕學無在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

眾人熙熙如享太年如春登臺坐我獨泊兮其未央

如嬰兒之未孩儻儻兮若無所歸眾人皆有隊而我獨若遺

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混兮其若無止

眾人皆以而我獨頑似鄙我獨異於人而貴食母



TWENTY

Give up learning, and put an end to your troubles.

Is there a difference between yes and no?  
Is there a difference between good and evil?  
Must I fear what others fear? What nonsense!  
Other people are contented, enjoying the sacrificial feast of the ox.  
In spring some go to the park and climb the terrace,  
But I alone am drifting, not knowing where I am.  
Like a newborn babe before it learns to smile,  
I am alone, without a place to go.

Others have more than they need, but I alone have nothing.  
I am a fool. Oh, yes! I am confused.  
Others are clear and bright,  
But I alone am dim and weak.  
Others are sharp and clever,  
But I alone am dull and stupid.  
Oh, I drift like the waves of the sea,  
Without direction, like the restless wind.

Everyone else is busy,  
But I alone am aimless and without desire.  
I am different.  
I am nourished by the great mother.



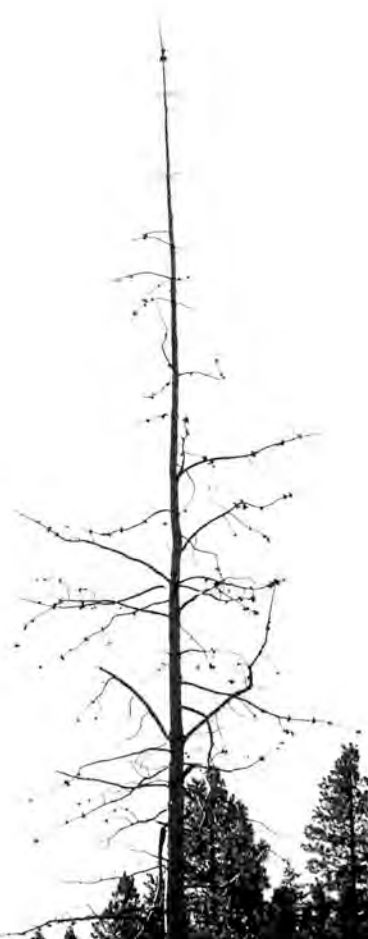



TWENTY-ONE

The greatest Virtue is to follow Tao and Tao alone.  
The Tao is elusive and intangible.  
Oh, it is intangible and elusive, and yet within is image.  
Oh, it is elusive and intangible, and yet within is form.  
Oh, it is dim and dark, and yet within is essence.  
This essence is very real, and therein lies faith.  
From the very beginning until now its name has never been forgotten.  
Thus I perceive creation.  
How do I know the ways of creation?  
Because of this.



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。





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

TWENTY-TWO

Yield and overcome;  
Bend and be straight;  
Empty and be full;  
Wear out and be new;  
Have little and gain;  
Have much and be confused.

Therefore the wise embrace the one  
And set an example to all.  
Not putting on a display,  
They shine forth.  
Not justifying themselves,  
They are distinguished.  
Not boasting,  
They receive recognition.  
Not bragging,  
They never falter.  
They do not quarrel,  
So no one quarrels with them.  
Therefore the ancients say, "Yield and overcome."  
Is that an empty saying?  
Be truly whole,  
And all things will come to you.





TWENTY-THREE

To talk little is natural.  
High winds do not last all morning.  
Heavy rain does not last all day.  
Why is this? Heaven and earth!  
If heaven and earth cannot make things last forever,  
How is it possible for us?

Those who follow the Tao  
Are at one with the Tao.  
Those who are virtuous  
Experience Virtue.  
Those who lose their way  
Are lost.  
When you are at one with the Tao,  
The Tao welcomes you.  
When you are at one with Virtue,  
Virtue is always there.  
When you are at one with loss,  
Loss is experienced willingly.

Those who do not trust enough  
Will not be trusted.

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  
同於失者失亦樂得之信不足焉有不信焉



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

餘食贅行物或惡之故有道者不处

TWENTY-FOUR

Those who stand on tiptoe are not steady.  
Those who stride cannot maintain the pace.  
Those who put on a show are not enlightened.  
Those who are self-righteous are not respected.  
Those who boast achieve nothing.  
Those who brag will not endure.  
According to followers of the Tao,  
“These are unnecessary food and baggage.”  
They do not bring happiness.  
Therefore followers of the Tao avoid them.





有物混成先天地生

寂兮寥兮今獨立不改周行而不殆可為天下母

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

TWENTY-FIVE

Something mysteriously formed,  
Born before heaven and earth.  
In the silence and the void,  
Standing alone and unchanging,  
Ever present and in motion.  
Perhaps it is the mother of ten thousand things.  
I do not know its name.  
Call it Tao.  
For lack of a better word, I call it great.

Being great, it flows.  
It flows far away.  
Having gone far, it returns.

Therefore, "Tao is great;  
Heaven is great;  
Earth is great;  
The human being is also great."  
These are the four great powers of the universe,  
And the human being is one of them.

The human being follows the earth.  
Earth follows heaven.  
Heaven follows the Tao.  
Tao follows what is natural.





TWENTY-SIX

The heavy is the root of the light;  
The still is the master of unrest.

Therefore the wise, traveling all day,  
Do not lose sight of their baggage.  
Though there are beautiful things to be seen,  
They remain unattached and calm.


Why should the lord of ten thousand chariots act lightly in public?  
To be light is to lose our root.  
To be restless is to lose control.

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

奈何萬乘之主不以身輕天下輕則安乎躁則失君





善行無繼也善言無效說善與不以善爲樂善則無厭樂亦不謂善結無約亦不可解  
是以聖人常善功之故無棄人常善利物故無棄物  
是謂龍德也故善人者不善人之師不善人有善人之望不貴其師  
不愛其資雖智不迷之謂善也

TWENTY-SEVEN


A good walker leaves no tracks;  
A good speaker makes no slips;  
A good reckoner needs no tally,  
A good door needs no lock,  
Yet no one can open it.  
Good binding requires no knots,  
Yet no one can loosen it.

Therefore the wise take care of everyone  
And abandon no one.  
They take care of all things  
And abandon nothing.

This is called "following the light."

What is a good person?  
The teacher of a bad person.  
What is a bad person?  
A good person's charge.  
If the teacher is not respected,  
And the student not cared for,  
Confusion will arise, however clever one is.  
This is the crux of mystery.





知其雄守其雌為天下竊為天下竊常德不離恒心歸於嬰兒  
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

TWENTY-EIGHT

Know the strength of a man,  
But keep a woman's care!  
Be the stream of the universe!  
Being the stream of the universe,  
Ever true and unswerving,  
Become as a little child once more.

Know the white,  
But keep the black!  
Be an example to the world!  
Being an example to the world,  
Ever true and unwavering,  
Return to the infinite.

Know honor,  
Yet remain humble.  
Be the valley of the universe!  
Being the valley of the universe,  
Ever true and resourceful,  
Return to the state of the uncarved block.

When the block is carved, it becomes useful.  
When the wise use it, they become rulers.  
Thus, "A great tailor makes few cuts."





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左失之

故物或行或隨或歛或散或吹或強或羸或挫或隕

是以聖人去甚去奢去泰



TWENTY-NINE

Do you think you can conquer the universe and improve it?  
I do not believe this can be done.

The universe is sacred.  
You cannot improve it.  
If you try to change it, you will ruin it.  
If you try to hold on to it, you will lose it.

So sometimes things are ahead and sometimes they are behind;  
Sometimes breathing is hard, sometimes it comes easily;  
Sometimes there is strength, and sometimes weakness;  
Sometimes one is up and sometimes down.

Therefore the wise avoid extremes, excesses, and complacency.

以道佐人主者不以兵強天下其事好還

師之所處荆棘生焉大軍之後必有凶年吾有果不己不敢以果強  
果而不積果而不伐果而不驕果而不得己果而不強  
物壯則老是謂不道不道早已

THIRTY

Whenever you advise rulers in the way of Tao,  
Counsel them not to use force to conquer the universe.  
For this would only cause resistance.  
Thorn bushes spring up wherever the army has passed.  
Lean years follow in the wake of a great war.  
Just do what needs to be done.  
Never take advantage of power.

Achieve results,  
But never glory in them.  
Achieve results,  
But never boast.  
Achieve results,  
But never be proud.  
Achieve results,  
Because this is the natural way.  
Achieve results,  
But not through violence.

Force is followed by loss of strength.  
This is not the way of the Tao.  
That which goes against the Tao  
Comes to an early end.





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  
不得已而用之活法為上勝而不美而美之者是樂殺人  
夫兵殺人之器則不可以得志於天下矣吉事尚左凶尚右  
偏將軍居左上將軍居右言以喪禮處之  
殺人之眾以哀悲泣之戰勝以喪禮處之

### THIRTY-ONE

Good weapons are instruments of fear; all creatures hate them.  
Therefore followers of Tao never use them.  
The wise prefer the left.  
Soldiers prefer the right.

Weapons are instruments of fear; they are not tools of the wise.  
They use them only when there is no choice.  
Peace and quiet are dear to their hearts,  
And victory no cause for rejoicing.  
If you rejoice in victory, then you delight in killing;  
If you delight in killing, you cannot fulfill yourself.

On happy occasions precedence is given to the left,  
On sad occasions to the right.  
In the army the general stands on the left,  
The commander-in-chief on the right.  
This means that war is conducted like a funeral.  
When many people are killed,  
They should be mourned in heartfelt sorrow.  
That is why a victory must be observed like a funeral.



道常無名樸雖小天下莫能臣也侯王若能守之萬物將自賓  
天地相合以降甘露此莫之令而自均

治制有名名亦既有夫亦將知心知心可以不殆

解言道之在天下猶川谷之於江海

## THIRTY-TWO

The Tao is forever undefined.  
Small though it is in the unformed state, it cannot be grasped.  
If leaders could harness it,  
The ten thousand things would naturally obey.  
Heaven and earth would come together  
And gentle rain fall.  
People would no longer need laws and all things would take their course.

Once the whole is divided, the parts need names.  
There are already enough names.  
We need to know when to stop.  
Knowing when to stop averts trouble.  
Tao in the world is like a river flowing home to the sea.







知人者智自知者明勝人者有力自勝者強  
知其在安流則其在有志不發乎斯其在久死而不止在壽



THIRTY-THREE

Knowing others is wisdom;  
Knowing the self is enlightenment.  
Mastering others requires force;  
Mastering the self needs strength.

Those who know they have enough are rich.  
Perseverance is a sign of willpower.  
Those who stay where they are endure.  
To die but not to perish is to be eternally present.



大道也今其有五石万物持之而生而不辞也成不多有

初美万物而不为主常無欲可名於小

万物歸焉而不由主其大以天師不自為大故能成其大

THIRTY-FOUR


The great Tao flows everywhere, both to the left and to the right.  
The ten thousand things depend on it; it holds nothing back.  
It fulfills its purpose silently and makes no claim.

It nourishes the ten thousand things,  
But does not rule them.  
It has no aim; it is very small.

The ten thousand things return to it,  
Yet it does not rule them.  
It is very great.

It does not show greatness,  
And is therefore truly great.





執事於天下徃徃而不害安乎天下與而歸過之者正

為之出口淡守天者味視之不足見聽之不足聞用之不足流

THIRTY-FIVE

Everyone is drawn to those who keep to the one,  
For there lie rest and happiness and peace.

Passersby may stop for music and good food,  
But it is not possible to describe the Tao.  
Without substance or flavor,  
It cannot be seen, it cannot be heard,  
And yet it cannot be exhausted.



THIRTY-SIX

That which shrinks  
Must first expand.  
That which fails  
Must first be strong.  
That which is cast down  
Must first be raised.  
Before receiving  
There must be giving.



This is called perception of the nature of things.  
Soft and weak overcome hard and strong.

Fish cannot leave deep water,  
And a country's weapons should not be displayed.



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

是謂微明柔弱者剛強莫大於此

國之利器不可示人



不常與有而無不為侯王若能守之

萬物將自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



THIRTY-SEVEN

Tao abides in non-action,  
Yet nothing is left undone.  
If those in power observed this,  
The ten thousand things would develop naturally.  
If they still desired to act,  
They would return to the simplicity of formless substance.  
Without form there is no desire.  
Without desire there is tranquillity.  
And in this way all things would be at peace.



上德不德是有德下德不德是以無德

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擗臂而扔之

故失道不後德失德而後仁失仁而後義我友而以礼女忠信之活而礼之首

前識者道之華之愚之始是以丈夫处其厚不活其薄知其害不居其華

故去彼取此



### THIRTY-EIGHT

Truly good people are not aware of their goodness,  
And are therefore good.  
Foolish people try to be good,  
And are therefore not good.

Truly good people do nothing,  
Yet leave nothing undone.  
Foolish people are always doing,  
Yet much remains to be done.

When truly kind people do something, they leave nothing undone.  
When just people do something, they leave a great deal to be done.  
When disciplinarians do something and no one responds,  
They roll up their sleeves and try to enforce order.

Therefore when Tao is lost, there is goodness.  
When goodness is lost, there is kindness.  
When kindness is lost, there is justice.  
When justice is lost, there is ritual.  
Now ritual is the husk of faith and loyalty, the beginning of confusion.  
Knowledge of the future is only a flowery trapping of Tao.  
It is the beginning of folly.

Therefore truly great people dwell on what is real and not what is on the surface,  
On the fruit and not the flower.  
Therefore accept the one and reject the other.



昔之得二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  
其致之天無以清將恐裂地無以寧將恐誅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貴高將恐蹶故貴以賤為本高以下為基  
是以侯王自謂孤寡不穀此非以賤為本耶非乎故致數與無與不欲碌碌如玉玷玷如石

THIRTY-NINE

These things from ancient times arise from one:  
The sky is whole and clear.  
The earth is whole and firm.  
The spirit is whole and strong.  
The valley is whole and full.  
The ten thousand things are whole and alive.  
Those in power are whole, and the country is upright.  
All these are in virtue of wholeness.

The clarity of the sky prevents it from falling.  
The firmness of the earth prevents it from splitting.  
The strength of the spirit prevents it from being exhausted.  
The fullness of the valley prevents it from drying up.  
The growth of the ten thousand things prevents their extinction.  
Good leadership by those in power prevents the country from failing.

Therefore the humble is the root of the noble.  
The low is the foundation of the high.  
The wise consider themselves “orphaned,” “widowed,” and “worthless.”  
Their humility is the source of their strength.

Too much success is not an advantage.  
Do not tinkle like jade  
Or clatter like stone chimes.





反者道之動弱者道之用

天下萬物生於有有生於無

FORTY

Returning is the motion of the Tao.  
Yielding is the way of the Tao.  
The ten thousand things arise from being.  
Being arises from not being.





FORTY-ONE

The wise student hears of the Tao and practices it diligently.  
The average student hears of the Tao and thinks about it now and then.  
The foolish student hears of the Tao and laughs out loud  
If there were no laughter, the Tao would not be what it is.

Hence it is said:  
The bright path seems dim;  
Going forward seems like retreat;  
The easy way seems hard;  
The highest Virtue seems empty;  
Great purity seems sullied;  
A wealth of Virtue seems inadequate;  
The strength of Virtue seems frail;  
Real Virtue seems unreal;  
The perfect square has no corners;  
Great talents ripen late;  
The highest notes are hard to hear;  
The greatest form has no shape.  
The Tao is hidden and without name.  
The Tao alone nourishes  
And brings everything to fulfillment.





上士聞道勤而行之中士聞道若存若亡下士聞道大笑之不足以為道  
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貞真若渝

大方無隅大器晚成不自希聲大象無形

道隱無名夫唯道善貸且成

FORTY-TWO

The Tao begot one.  
One begot two.  
Two begot three.  
And three begot the ten thousand things.

The ten thousand things carry yin and embrace yang.  
They achieve harmony by combining these forces.

People hate to be “orphaned,” “widowed,” or “worthless,”  
But this is how the wise describe themselves.

For one gains by losing  
And loses by gaining.

What others teach, I also teach; that is:  
“A violent person will die a violent death!”  
This is the essence of my teaching.





FORTY-THREE

The softest thing in the universe  
Overcomes the hardest thing in the universe.  
That without substance can enter where there is no room.  
Hence I know the value of non-action.

Teaching without words and working without doing  
Are understood by very few.





天下之至柔馳騁天下之至堅無有不無間  
吾是以知無為之有益

不言之教無為之益天下希及之

名與身孰親身與貨孰多得與止孰抑  
是故甚愛必大費多藏必厚亡  
知足不辱知止不殆可以長久



FORTY-FOUR

Fame or self: Which matters more?  
Self or wealth: Which is more precious?  
Gain or loss: Which causes more pain?

Those who are attached to things will suffer greatly.  
Those who save will suffer heavy losses.  
Those who are contented are never disappointed.  
Those who know when to stop do not find themselves in trouble.  
They remain forever safe.





大成若缺其用不弊大盈若冲其用不窮

大真若屈大巧若拙大辯若訥

躁勝寒靜勝熱清靜為天下正

FORTY-FIVE

Great accomplishment seems imperfect,  
Yet it does not outlive its usefulness.  
Great fullness seems empty,  
Yet it cannot be exhausted.

Great straightness seems twisted.  
Great intelligence seems stupid.  
Great eloquence seems awkward.

Movement overcomes cold.  
Stillness overcomes heat.  
Stillness and tranquillity restore order in the universe.





天下有道卻去以道棄天下無道我為生於耶此也夫于子欲  
禍莫大于不仁是皆莫大于欲也故是口之口常口又天

FORTY-SIX

When the Tao is present in the universe,  
The horses haul manure.  
When the Tao is absent from the universe,  
War horses are bred outside the city.

There is no greater sin than craving,  
No greater curse than discontent,  
No greater misfortune than wanting something for ourselves.  
Therefore those who know that enough is enough will always have enough.



不出戶知天下不闕牖見天道其出弥遠其知弥少  
以是聖人不行而知不見而名不為而成



FORTY-SEVEN

Without going outside, you may know the whole world.  
Without looking through the window, you may see the ways of heaven.  
The farther you go, the less you know.

Thus the wise know without traveling;  
See without looking;  
Work without doing.

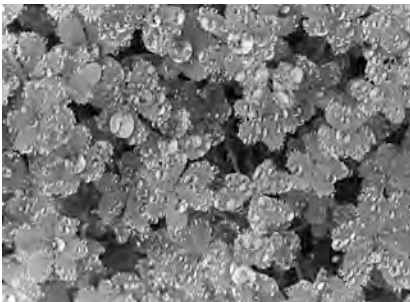


為學日益為道日損

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





FORTY-EIGHT

In the pursuit of learning, something is acquired every day.  
In the pursuit of the Tao, every day something is relinquished.

Less and less is done  
Until non-action is achieved.  
When nothing is done, nothing is left undone.

The world is governed by letting things take their course.  
It cannot be governed through interference.



聖人無常心以百姓心為心善者吾善之

不善者吾亦善之德上善信者吾信之不信者吾亦信之德信

聖人在天下歛歛為天下渾乎心百姓皆過其耳目聖人皆孩之



FORTY-NINE

The wise do not hold opinions.  
They are aware of the needs of others.

I am good to people who are good.  
I am also good to people who are not good,  
Because Virtue is goodness.  
I have faith in people who are faithful.  
I also have faith in people who are not faithful,  
Because Virtue is faithfulness.

The wise are shy and humble.  
They behave like small children.  
To the world they seem confusing.  
Yet people look to them and listen.



出生入死生之徒十有三死之徒十有三人之生動之死地亦十有三夫何故以生之厚

盖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





#### FIFTY

Between birth and death,  
Three in ten are followers of life,  
Three in ten are followers of death,  
And people just passing from birth to death also number three in ten.  
Why is this?  
Because they live their lives on the gross level.

Those who know how to live walk abroad  
Without fear of rhinoceroses or tigers.  
They will not be wounded in battle.  
For in them the rhinoceros finds no place to thrust its horn,  
Nor the tiger to use its claws,  
And weapons no place to pierce.  
Why is this?  
Because they have no place for death to enter.



道生之德畜之物形之執成之

是以万物莫不尊道而貴德

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亭之毒之齊之養之

生而不有為而不恃長而不宰是謂之德

FIFTY-ONE

All things arise from Tao.  
They are nourished by Virtue.  
They are formed from matter.  
They are shaped by environment.  
Thus the ten thousand things respect Tao and honor Virtue.  
Respect of Tao and honor of Virtue are not demanded,  
But they are in the nature of things.

Therefore all things arise from Tao.  
By Virtue they are nourished,  
Developed, cared for,  
Sheltered, comforted,  
Grown, and protected.  
Creating without claiming,  
Doing without taking credit,  
Guiding without interfering.  
This is Primal Virtue.



FIFTY-TWO

The beginning of the universe  
Is the mother of all things.  
Knowing the mother, you also know the sons.  
Knowing the sons, yet remaining in touch with the mother,  
Brings freedom from the fear of death.

Keep your mouth shut,  
Guard the senses,  
And life is always full.  
Open your mouth,  
Always be busy,  
And life is beyond hope.

Seeing the small is insight;  
Yielding to force is strength.  
Using the outer light, return to insight,  
And in this way be saved from harm.  
This is learning constancy.



天下有始為天下母既知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動開其兌濟其事終身不  
見凶明守柔莫淫用其光復歸其明無遺身殃是為習常



使我介於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絲帶利劍厭飲食

財貨有餘是謂盜夸非道也哉



FIFTY-THREE

If I have even just a little sense,  
I will walk on the main road and my only fear will be of straying from it.  
Keeping to the main road is easy,  
But people are easily distracted.

When the court is arrayed in splendor,  
The fields are full of weeds,  
And the granaries are empty.  
Some wear gorgeous clothes,  
Carry sharp swords,  
And indulge in food and drink;  
They have more possessions than they can use.  
They are robber barons.  
This is certainly not the way of Tao.



FIFTY-FOUR


What is firmly established cannot be uprooted.  
What is firmly grasped cannot slip away.  
It will be honored from generation to generation.

Cultivate Virtue in yourself,  
And Virtue will be real.  
Cultivate it in the family,  
And Virtue will abound.  
Cultivate it in the village,  
And Virtue will grow.  
Cultivate it in the nation,  
And Virtue will be abundant.  
Cultivate it in the universe,  
And Virtue will be everywhere.

Therefore look at the body as body;  
Look at the family as family;  
Look at the village as village;  
Look at the nation as nation;  
Look at the universe as universe.

How do I know the universe is like this?  
By looking!

善事者不敗善抱者不脫子以宗祀不輟  
修其身其德乃具修之於家其德乃餘  
修之於鄉其德乃長修之於國其德乃豐  
修之於天下其德乃音  
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



含德之厚比於赤子蜂虻虺蛇不螫猛獸不據攫鳥不搏骨弱筋柔而撻固  
木知牝牡之合而全作精之至也終日号而不咳知之至也  
知和日常知常曰明益生日祥心使氣曰強物壯則老謂之不道不為早已



#### FIFTY-FIVE

If you are filled with Virtue you are like a newborn child.  
Wasps and serpents will not harm you;  
Wild beasts will not pounce on you;  
You will not be attacked by birds of prey.  
Your bones are soft, your muscles weak,  
But your grip is firm.  
You have not experienced the union of man and woman, yet you are whole.  
You are strong.  
You may shout all day without becoming hoarse.  
This is perfect harmony.

Knowing harmony is constancy.  
Knowing constancy is enlightenment.

It is not wise to rush about.  
Trying to control the breath causes strain.  
If too much energy is used, exhaustion follows.  
This is not the way of Tao.  
Whatever is contrary to Tao will not last long.

知在不言言者不知塞其兑用其門  
挫其銳解其分和其光同其塵

是謂之同

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

FIFTY-SIX

Those who know do not talk.  
Those who talk do not know.

Close your mouth.  
Guard your senses.  
Temper your sharpness.  
Simplify your problems.  
Mask your brightness.  
Be at one with the dust of the earth.  
This is primal union.

Those who have achieved this state  
Do not distinguish between friends and enemies,  
Between good and harm, between honor and disgrace.  
This is the highest state of being.





世治國以奇用兵以無可取天下

必有知其然哉以也

天下多忌諱而民彌貧先多利器國家滋昏  
人多伎巧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

FIFTY-SEVEN



Rule a nation with justice.  
Wage war with surprise tactics.  
Become the master of the universe without striving.  
How do I know that this is so?  
Because of this!

The more laws and restrictions there are,  
The poorer people become.  
The sharper men's weapons,  
The more trouble in the land.  
The more ingenious and clever people are,  
The more strange things happen.  
The more rules and regulations,  
The more thieves and robbers.

Therefore the wise one says:  
"I take no action and people behave themselves.  
I enjoy peace and people become honest.  
I do nothing and people become rich.  
I have no desires and people return to the good and simple life."

其政罔其比浮浮其政罔其比缺缺  
禍兮福之所倚福兮禍之所伏孰知夫極其與心  
心後為奇善後為妖人之速其日固久  
是以聖人而不割廉而不刺方而不肆克而不懼


FIFTY-EIGHT

When the country is ruled with a light hand  
The people are simple.  
When the country is ruled harshly,  
The people are cunning.

Happiness is rooted in misery.  
Misery lurks beneath happiness.  
Who knows what the future holds?  
There is no honesty.  
Honesty becomes dishonest.  
Goodness becomes delusion.  
People's delusion lasts for a long time.

Therefore the wise are sharp but not cutting,  
Pointed but not piercing,  
Straightforward but not unrestrained,  
Brilliant but not blinding.





治人可天莫若雷夫唯雷是迅早服早服謂之聖績德  
聖績德則無不克無不克則莫知夫極莫知夫極可以有國  
有國之母可以長久是謂深根固柢長生久視之道

FIFTY-NINE

In caring for others and serving heaven,  
There is nothing like using restraint.  
Restraint begins with giving up our own ideas.  
This depends on Virtue gathered in the past.  
If there is a good store of Virtue, then nothing is impossible.  
If nothing is impossible, then there are no limits.  
If we know no limits, then we are fit to rule.  
The mother principle of ruling holds good for a long time.  
This is called having deep roots and a firm foundation,  
The Tao of long life and eternal vision.





治大國若烹小鮮以道莅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  
夫物不相傷故德之歸焉

SIXTY

Ruling the country is like cooking a small fish.  
Approach the universe with Tao,  
And evil will have no power.  
Not that evil is not powerful,  
But its power will not be used to harm others.  
Not only will it do no harm to others,  
But the wise will also be protected.  
We will not hurt one another,  
And the Virtue in each of us refreshes everyone.





大國在流天下之交天下之軌  
此常以靜勝牡以靜為下

故大國以下小國則身小國小國以下大國則取大國故或下以衆或下而取

大國不過欲為天下人小國不過欲事一人

夫兩在為心乎所故夫在實一在下



SIXTY-ONE

A great nation is like low land.  
It is the meeting ground of the universe,  
The mother of the universe.

The female overcomes the male with stillness,  
Lying low in stillness.

Therefore if a great nation yields to a smaller nation,  
It will conquer the smaller nation.  
And if a smaller nation submits to a great nation,  
It can conquer the great nation.  
Therefore those who would conquer must yield,  
And those who conquer do so through yielding.

A great nation needs more people;  
A small nation needs to serve.  
Each gets what it wants.  
It is fitting for a great nation to yield.




SIXTY-TWO

Tao is the source of the ten thousand things.  
It is the treasure of the good and the refuge of the bad.  
Sweet words can buy honor;  
Good deeds can gain respect.  
If people are bad, do not abandon them.  
Therefore on the day the emperor is crowned,  
Or the three officers of state installed,  
Do not send a gift of jade and a team of horses,  
But remain still and offer the Tao.  
Why does everyone value the Tao?  
Isn't it because you find what you seek and are forgiven when you sin?  
Therefore this is the greatest treasure in the universe.

子(女)万物之奥，吾人之宝，不可言，人之所保。  
夫言可以市，可以加人，之不善，何乘之有。  
故立天子，置三公，虽有拱璧以先駟马，不如坐进此(玉)也。  
古之所谓贵(玉)者，何不以求，而有以死，以免，乡故为天下贵。





为善为了善了味善味亦多少报怨以德  
善哉于天吊为大于天细天下难了必作于吊  
天下大也必作于细且以善人善不为大故善哉于大  
夫轻诺必寡信多易必多难是以善人犹难之  
故弥善哉矣

SIXTY-THREE

Practice non-action.  
Work without doing.  
Taste the tasteless.  
Magnify the small, increase the few.  
Reward bitterness with care.

See simplicity in the complicated.  
Achieve greatness in small things.

In the universe the difficult things are done as though they were easy.  
In the universe great acts are made up of small deeds.  
The wise do not attempt anything very big,  
And thus achieve greatness.

Easy promises make for little trust.  
Taking things lightly results in great difficulty.  
Because the wise always confront difficulties,  
They never experience them.



夫世易其末也為其腹而洋天微為散為之於未有治之於未亂  
合抱之木生于毫末九層之宮起于累土千里之行始於足下  
為女教之執女教之言以化人無所故無敗無執故無失  
此之治也常于几成而敗之慎於始則無敗也  
是以聖人欲不欲不貴不富之貨不子不子像取人之竹而  
以無方物之用然而不敢也





SIXTY-FOUR

Peace is easily maintained;  
Trouble is easily overcome before it starts.  
The brittle is easily shattered;  
The small is easily scattered.

Deal with things before they happen.  
Put things in order before there is confusion.


A tree as great as a man's embrace springs from a small shoot;  
A terrace nine stories high begins with a pile of earth;  
A journey of a thousand miles starts under one's feet.

Those who act defeat their own purpose;  
Those who grasp lose.  
The wise do not act and so are not defeated.  
They do not grasp and therefore do not lose.

People usually fail when they are on the verge of success.  
So give as much care to the end as to the beginning;  
Then there will be no failure.

Therefore the wise seek freedom from desire.  
They do not collect precious things.  
They learn not to hold onto ideas.  
They bring people back to what they have lost.  
They help the ten thousand things find their own nature,  
Yet they refrain from action.






石之善者道也。此以物比將以愚之比之。確以以夫智多  
故以智以國國之誠不以智以國國之福  
知此而身以務武常知務武且以治之德  
元德深矣。遠矣。其物反矣。後乃至大噴。

SIXTY-FIVE

In the beginning those who knew the Tao did not try to enlighten others,  
But kept it hidden.  
Why is it so hard to rule?  
Because the people are so clever.  
Rulers who try to use cleverness  
Cheat the country.  
Those who rule without cunning  
Are a blessing to the land.  
These are the two alternatives.  
Understanding these is Primal Virtue.  
Primal Virtue goes deep and far.  
It leads all things back  
Toward the great oneness.





江海所以能百谷者以其下之故  
所以能上民以言下之故  
先民必以身後之  
是以聖人外上而民不重  
外下而民不害  
是以天下乐推而不厭  
莫與爭功  
天下莫能與爭


SIXTY-SIX

Why is the sea king of a hundred streams?  
Because it lies below them.  
Therefore it is the king of a hundred streams.

If you would guide the people, you must serve with humility.  
If you would lead them, you must follow behind.  
In this way when you rule, the people will not feel oppressed;  
When you stand before them, they will not be harmed.  
The whole world will support you and will not tire of you.

Because you do not compete,  
You will not have competition.





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  
我有三寶貞特而保之曰慈曰儉曰不敢為天下先  
慈故能勇儉故能廣不敢為天下先故能成器長  
今舍慈且勇舍儉且廣舍後且先死矣  
夫慈以戰則勝以守則固天將救之以慈儻之

SIXTY-SEVEN

Everyone under heaven says that my Tao is great and beyond compare.  
Because it is great, it seems different.  
If it were not different, it would have vanished long ago.

I have three treasures which I hold and keep.  
The first is mercy; the second is economy;  
The third is daring not to be ahead of others.  
From mercy comes courage; from economy comes generosity;  
From humility comes leadership.

Nowadays people shun mercy but try to be brave;  
They abandon economy but try to be generous;  
They do not believe in humility but always try to be first.  
This is certain death.

Mercy brings victory in battle and strength in defense.  
It is the means by which heaven saves and guards.



言のまゝに武を成さば怒言罵詈雑言  
言用人は為之下且之に不為手之何  
是治用人之方且之治配天古之極



SIXTY-EIGHT

A good soldier is not violent.

A good fighter is not angry.

A good winner is not vengeful.

A good employer is humble.


This is known as the Virtue of not striving.

This is known as the ability to deal with people.

This since ancient times has been known as the ultimate unity with heaven.







用兵有言吾不敢為主而為客不敢進寸而退尺  
是謂行無行攘無臂執無敵執無兵  
禍莫大於輕敵輕敵幾喪吾寶故抗兵相加哀者勝矣

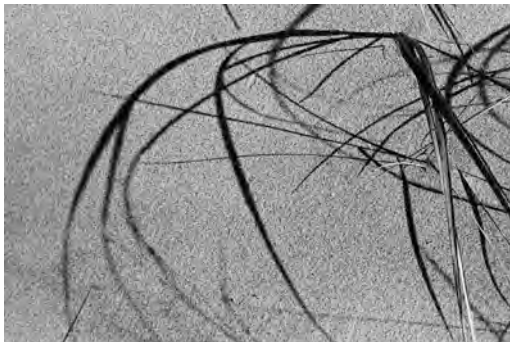
SIXTY-NINE

There is a saying among soldiers:  
"I dare not make the first move but would rather play the guest;  
I dare not advance an inch but would rather withdraw a foot."

This is called marching without appearing to move,  
Rolling up your sleeves without showing your arm,  
Capturing the enemy without attacking,  
Being armed without weapons.

There is no greater catastrophe than underestimating the enemy.  
By underestimating the enemy, I risk losing what I value.

Therefore when the battle is joined,  
The underdog will win.




SEVENTY

My words are easy to understand and easy to perform,  
Yet no one under heaven knows them or practices them

My words have ancient beginnings.  
My actions are disciplined.  
Because people do not understand, they have no knowledge of me.

Those that know me are few;  
Those that abuse me are honored.  
Therefore the wise wear rough clothing and hold the jewel in their heart.





吾言甚易知甚易行天下莫能知莫能行  
言有宗事有君天唯無知是以不我和  
知我者布則我者貴是以聖人被褐懷玉

SEVENTY-ONE

Knowing ignorance is strength.  
Ignoring knowledge is sickness.

If one is sick of sickness, then one is not sick.  
The wise are not sick because they are sick of sickness.  
Therefore they are not sick.





知不知上不知病夫唯病病是以不病聖人不病以其病病是以不病



民不畏威則大威全

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

SEVENTY-TWO

When people lack a sense of awe, there will be disaster.

Do not intrude into their homes.

Do not harass them at work.

If you do not interfere, they will not weary of you.

Therefore the wise know themselves but make no show,

Have self-respect but are not arrogant.

They let go of that and choose this.





勇於敵則殺，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。  
蹶然而善謀，天網恢恢，疏而不失。



SEVENTY-THREE

A brave and passionate person will kill or be killed.  
A brave and calm person will always preserve life.  
Of these two which is good and which is harmful?  
Some things are not favored by heaven. Who knows why?  
Even the wise are unsure of this.

The Tao of heaven does not strive and yet it overcomes.  
It does not speak and yet is answered.  
It does not ask, yet all its needs are met.  
It seems to have no aim and yet its purpose is fulfilled.

Heaven's net is cast wide.  
Though its meshes are coarse, nothing slips through.





SEVENTY-FOUR

If people are not afraid to die,  
It is of no avail to threaten them with death.


If people live in constant fear of dying,  
And if breaking the law means that someone will be killed,  
Who will dare to break the law?

There is always an official executioner.  
If you try to take his place,  
It is like trying to be a master carpenter and cutting wood.  
If you try to cut wood like a master carpenter, you will only hurt your hand.

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





民之饑以其上食稅之多是也。饑民之難治以其上之有為是也。難治民之輕死以其上求生之厚。是以輕死。夫唯無以生為者。是賢於貴生。



SEVENTY-FIVE

Why are the people starving?  
Because the rulers eat up the money in taxes.  
Therefore the people are starving.

Why are the people rebellious?  
Because the rulers interfere too much.  
Therefore the people are rebellious.

Why do the people think so little of death?  
Because the rulers demand too much of life.  
Therefore the people take death lightly.

Having little to live on, they know better than to value life too highly.

人之生也柔弱其死也堅強萬物尊柔之生也柔脆  
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兵斫天下柔弱者上



SEVENTY-SIX

We are born gentle and weak, but at death are stiff and hard.  
Green plants are tender and filled with sap.  
At their death they are withered and dry.

Therefore the stiff and unbending is the disciple of death.  
The gentle and yielding is the disciple of life.

Thus an army without flexibility never wins a battle.  
A tree that is unbending is easily broken.

The hard and strong will fall.  
The soft and weak will overcome.





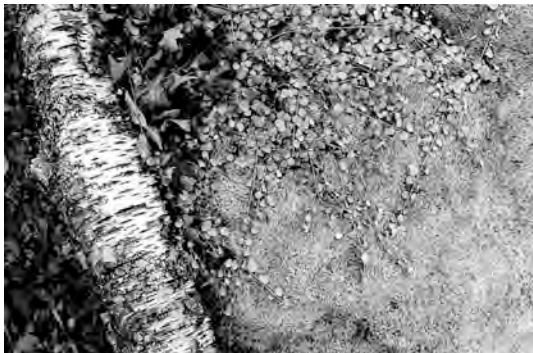
天子自天猶浪多與高女抑之下女率之

有餘女損之不足女補之

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女

是以聖人西而不恃功成而不处其不欲見賢





SEVENTY-SEVEN

The Tao of heaven is like bending a bow.  
The high is lowered and the low is raised.  
If the string is too long, it is shortened;  
If there is not enough, it is made longer.

The Tao of heaven is to take from those who have too much and give to those who do not have enough.  
Ordinary people act differently.  
They take from those who do not have enough and give to those who already have too much.  
Who has more than enough and gives it to the world?  
Only the wise.

Therefore the wise work without recognition.  
They achieve what has to be done without dwelling on it.  
They do not try to show their knowledge.

天下莫柔於水而攻堅物者莫之能勝以夫無以易之  
前之勝物柔之勝剛天下莫不知莫能行  
是以聖人之受國之垢曰吾社稷主受則不祥  
是乃天下王正言若反



SEVENTY-EIGHT

Under heaven nothing is more soft and yielding than water.  
Yet for attacking the solid and strong, nothing is better;  
It has no equal.  
The weak can overcome the strong;  
The supple can overcome the stiff.  
Under heaven everyone knows this,  
Yet no one puts it into practice.  
Therefore the wise say:  
“If you take on the humiliation of the people, you are fit to rule them.  
If you take upon yourself the country’s disasters,  
You deserve to be ruler of the universe.”  
The truth often sounds paradoxical.




SEVENTY-NINE

After a bitter quarrel, some resentment remains.  
What can be done about this?  
The wise keep their half of the bargain  
But do not exact their due.  
Virtuous people perform their part,  
But those without Virtue require others to fulfill their obligations.  
The Tao of heaven is impartial.  
It remains with those who are good.



和大怒必有餘怒  
毋可以為善  
言之以與人  
振五袷  
亦不責於人  
有德司契  
無德司劓  
大道無親  
常而善人





小國寡民使有什伯之器而不用  
使此重斂而不遠徙使有舟輿無所乘之  
使有甲兵無所恃之使人復結繩而用之  
甘其食美其服安其居樂其俗  
鄰國相望鳩犬之聲相聞  
此之謂老死不相往來

## EIGHTY

A small country has fewer people.  
Though there are machines that can work ten to a hundred times faster than people,  
They are not needed.  
The people take death seriously and do not travel far.  
Though they have boats and carriages, no one uses them.  
Though they have armor and weapons, no one displays them.  
People return to the knotting of rope in place of writing.  
Their food is plain and healthy, their clothes fine but simple, their homes secure;  
They are happy in their lives.  
Though they live within sight of their neighbors,  
And crowing cocks and barking dogs are heard across the way,  
Yet they leave each other in peace while they grow old and die.





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，己愈有；既以與人，己愈多。  
天之道，利而不害；聖人之道，為而不爭。



EIGHTY-ONE

Truthful words are not beautiful.  
Beautiful words are not truthful.  
Good people do not argue.  
Those who argue are not good.  
Those who know are not learned.  
The learned do not know.

The wise never try to hold onto things.  
The more you do for others, the more you have.  
The more you give to others, the greater your abundance.  
The Tao of heaven is sharp but does no harm.  
The Tao of the wise is to work without effort.

