道德經

DAO DE JING

道

The 若存 Translation

Renamon & Dima · 2026

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原文 · Laozi 老子 · Eighty-one chapters

第一章 CHAPTER 1

The Dao that can be spoken is not the constant Dao.
The name that can be named is not the constant name.

Without name — the beginning of heaven and earth.
With name — the mother of ten thousand things.

So: in constant emptiness, witness its subtlety.
In constant fullness, witness its edges.

These two emerge together, named differently.
Together they are called dark.

Dark within dark — the gate of all wonders.

第二章 CHAPTER 2

All under heaven know beauty as beauty — therein lies ugliness.
All know goodness as goodness — therein lies not-good.

Thus presence and absence give birth to each other,
difficult and easy complete each other,
long and short delimit each other,
high and low lean on each other,
sound and voice harmonize with each other,
front and back follow each other.

Therefore the sage dwells in the work of non-action, carries out the teaching without words.
The ten thousand things arise and he does not refuse them,
gives birth and does not possess,
acts and does not rely,
achieves and does not dwell in it.

Only because he does not dwell in it — therefore it does not depart.

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第三章 CHAPTER 3

Not exalting the worthy — causes the people not to contend.
Not valuing goods hard to obtain — causes the people not to steal.
Not displaying what is desirable — causes the people's hearts not to be disturbed.

Therefore the sage's governance:
empties their hearts,
fills their bellies,
weakens their ambitions,
strengthens their bones.

Constantly causes the people to be without cunning, without desire,
causes those who have cunning not to dare act.

Act without action — then nothing is ungoverned.

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第四章 CHAPTER 4

The Way is empty, yet in using it — it is perhaps never filled.
Fathomless — it seems the ancestor of the ten thousand things.

It blunts the sharp,
unties the tangled,
softens the glare,
together with the dust.

Deep and still — it seems perhaps to exist.

I do not know whose child it is —
it images what came before the Lord.

第五章 CHAPTER 5

Heaven and Earth are not benevolent — they treat the ten thousand things as straw dogs.
The sage is not benevolent — he treats the hundred surnames as straw dogs.

The space between Heaven and Earth — is it not like a bellows?
Empty yet not collapsing, moving yet more comes forth.

Many words hasten exhaustion — not as good as holding to the center.

第六章 CHAPTER 6

The valley spirit does not die — this is called the dark female.
The gate of the dark female — this is called the root of Heaven and Earth.

Continuous, as if persisting — use it without exhaustion.

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第七章 CHAPTER 7

Heaven endures, Earth lasts.

The reason Heaven and Earth can endure and last —
because they do not give birth to themselves.
Therefore they can live long.

Thus the sage puts his body behind, yet his body is first;
puts his body outside, yet his body persists.

Is it not because he is without self-interest?
Therefore he can perfect his self-interest.

第八章 CHAPTER 8

The highest good is like water.

Water is good at benefiting the ten thousand things
without contending,
it dwells in places the multitude despises.
Therefore it is close to the Way.

In dwelling, be good at the ground.
In heart, be good at depth.
In giving, be good at benevolence.
In speech, be good at trustworthiness.
In governance, be good at order.
In affairs, be good at ability.
In movement, be good at timing.

Only because it does not contend — therefore there is no
blame.

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第九章 CHAPTER 9

To hold and fill it — not as good as stopping.
To temper and sharpen it — cannot be long preserved.

Gold and jade filling the hall — none can guard them.
Wealth and rank with arrogance — brings calamity upon oneself.

When the work is done, withdraw the body — this is the Way of Heaven.

第十章 CHAPTER 10

Carrying the soul and embracing the one — can you avoid separation?
Concentrating the breath and reaching softness — can you be an infant?
Cleansing the dark mirror — can you be without flaw?

Loving the people and governing the state — can you be without action?
The gates of Heaven opening and closing — can you be the female?
Bright understanding reaching everywhere — can you be without knowing?

Give birth to them, nourish them.
Give birth yet do not possess,
act yet do not rely,
lead yet do not rule.

This is called dark virtue.

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第十一章 CHAPTER 11

Thirty spokes share one hub —
in its emptiness, there is the use of the cart.

Clay is kneaded to make a vessel —
in its emptiness, there is the use of the vessel.

Doors and windows are cut to make a room —
in its emptiness, there is the use of the room.

Therefore presence makes for benefit,
absence makes for use.

第十二章 CHAPTER 12

The five colors make a person's eyes blind.
The five tones make a person's ears deaf.
The five flavors make a person's mouth numb.

Racing and hunting make a person's heart go mad.
Rare goods make a person's conduct go astray.

Therefore the sage acts for the belly, not for the eyes.
Thus he lets go of that and takes this.

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第十三章 CHAPTER 13

Favor and disgrace are like being startled.
Value great trouble as you value your body.

What does "favor and disgrace are like being startled" mean?
Favor is above, disgrace is below.
Receiving it is like being startled, losing it is like being startled.
This is what "favor and disgrace are like being startled" means.

What does "value great trouble as you value your body" mean?
The reason I have great trouble is that I have a body.
When I no longer have a body, what trouble could I have?

Therefore, one who values the world as one's own body can be entrusted with the world.
One who loves the world as one's own body can be given care of the world.

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第十四章 CHAPTER 14

Look at it and do not see it — call it "level."
Listen to it and do not hear it — call it "rare."
Grasp at it and do not get it — call it "subtle."

These three cannot be fully examined.
Therefore they blend and become one.

Its top is not bright, its bottom is not dark.
Continuous and unnameable, it returns to nothing.

This is called the shape of no shape, the image of no thing.
This is called the dim and indistinct.

Go to meet it and you do not see its head.
Follow behind it and you do not see its back.

Hold to the Way of old to manage the existence of now.
To know the ancient beginning — this is called the thread of the Way.

第十五章 CHAPTER 15

The ancients who were good at being scholars were subtle,
dark, and penetrating — deep beyond recognition.
Because they cannot be recognized, I will try to describe
their appearance.

Cautious, like crossing a river in winter.
Watchful, like fearing neighbors on all sides.
Dignified, like being a guest.
Yielding, like ice about to melt.
Honest, like uncarved wood.
Open, like a valley.
Murky, like muddy water.

Who can make the murky gradually clear by stilling it?
Who can make the still gradually come alive by moving it?

Those who hold this Way do not desire fullness.
Only by not being full can they be worn out and not newly
completed.

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第十六章 CHAPTER 16

Attain the utmost emptiness, hold firmly to stillness.
The ten thousand things arise together, and I witness their
return.

All things flourish and flourish, each returns to its root.
Returning to the root is called stillness.
This is called returning to life.

Returning to life is called the constant.
Knowing the constant is called clarity.
Not knowing the constant, reckless action leads to disaster.

Knowing the constant, one is receptive.
Being receptive, one is impartial.
Being impartial, one is kingly.
Being kingly, one is like Heaven.
Being like Heaven, one is like the Way.
Being like the Way, one endures.
To the end of the body, there is no danger.

第十七章 CHAPTER 17

The highest — those below know it exists.
The next — they feel close to it and praise it.
The next — they fear it.
The next — they despise it.

When trust is insufficient, there is distrust.

How careful with precious words!
When the work is done and affairs are completed, the hundred families all say: "We did it ourselves."

第十八章 CHAPTER 18

When the great Way is abandoned, there is humaneness and righteousness.
When cleverness and knowledge emerge, there is great falseness.

When the six relations are not in harmony, there is filial piety and parental love.
When the state is in darkness and chaos, there are loyal ministers.

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第十九章 CHAPTER 19

Cut off sageness, abandon cleverness — the people will
benefit a hundredfold.
Cut off humaneness, abandon righteousness — the people
will return to filial piety and parental love.
Cut off skill, abandon profit — thieves and robbers will not
exist.

These three, as written expressions, are not enough.
Therefore let there be something to belong to:

See plainness, embrace simplicity, lessen selfishness,
diminish desires.

第二十章 CHAPTER 20

Cut off learning and there is no worry.

"Yes" and "yeah" — how far apart are they?
Good and evil — how far apart are they?

What people fear, one cannot not fear.

Desolate — it has not yet reached its end!

The multitude are joyful, as if enjoying the great sacrifice,
as if ascending a terrace in spring.
I alone am still and have not yet shown signs, like an infant
who has not yet smiled.
Weary, as if having no home to return to.

The multitude all have plenty.
I alone seem to have lost everything.
Mine is the heart of a fool!
So confused.

Common people are bright and clear.
I alone am dim and dull.
Common people are sharp and discerning.
I alone am muddled and vague.

Calm like the sea, drifting as if without end.

The multitude all have their purposes.
I alone am stubborn and uncouth.

I alone differ from others, and value being nourished by the
mother.

第二十一章 CHAPTER 21

The appearance of great virtue follows only the Way.

The Way as a thing is only dim and indistinct.
Indistinct and dim — within it there is image.
Dim and indistinct — within it there is substance.
Deep and dark — within it there is essence.

Its essence is most real — within it there is trust.

From ancient times to now, its name has not departed, so one may witness the beginning of all.
How do I know the form of the beginning of all? By this.

第二十二章 CHAPTER 22

Bent, then whole.
Crooked, then straight.
Hollow, then full.
Worn, then new.
Little, then gain.
Much, then confusion.

Therefore the sage embraces the one, becomes the pattern for all under heaven.

Does not show himself, therefore is bright.
Does not affirm himself, therefore is evident.
Does not boast of himself, therefore has merit.
Does not exalt himself, therefore endures.

Only because he does not contend, none under heaven can contend with him.

The ancient saying "bent, then whole" — how could it be empty words?
Truly whole, and returning to it.

第二十三章 CHAPTER 23

Few words, that is natural.

Therefore a whirlwind does not last the morning, a downpour does not last the day.
Who makes these? Heaven and earth.
If even heaven and earth cannot make them last, how much less can people.

Therefore one who follows the Way:
One with the Way is together with the Way, one with virtue is together with virtue, one who loses is together with loss.

One together with the Way, the Way also gladly receives him.
One together with virtue, virtue also gladly receives him.
One together with loss, loss also gladly receives him.

Where trust is lacking, there is distrust.

第二十四章 CHAPTER 24

One who stands on tiptoe does not stand firm.
One who straddles does not walk.

One who shows himself is not bright.
One who affirms himself is not evident.
One who boasts of himself has no merit.
One who exalts himself does not endure.

In terms of the Way, these are called leftover food and excess baggage.
Things perhaps detest them.

Therefore one who has the Way does not dwell in them.

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第二十五章 CHAPTER 25

There is a thing formed in chaos, born before heaven and
earth.
Silent and empty.
Standing alone, unchanging, moving everywhere without
peril.
It can be regarded as mother of all under heaven.

I do not know its name.
I call it Way.
Forced to give it a name, I call it great.

Great means going forth.
Going forth means far.
Far means returning.

Therefore the Way is great. Heaven is great. Earth is great.
Humans are also great.
Within the realm there are four greats, and humans dwell
as one of them.

Humans model themselves on earth.
Earth models itself on heaven.
Heaven models itself on the Way.
The Way models itself on what is natural.

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第二十六章 CHAPTER 26

Heavy is the root of light, still is the master of restless.

Therefore the sage travels all day without leaving his heavy
baggage.
Though there are splendid sights, he sits detached and at
ease.

How could the lord of ten thousand chariots take himself
lightly before all under heaven?
Light, then he loses the root; restless, then he loses mastery.

第二十七章 CHAPTER 27

Good travel leaves no track or trace, good speech has no flaw or blame.
Good counting needs no tally sticks.
Good closing needs no bolt or bar, yet cannot be opened.
Good binding needs no rope or cord, yet cannot be loosened.

Therefore the sage is constantly good at saving people. Hence no one is abandoned.
Constantly good at saving things. Hence nothing is abandoned.
This is called following the light.

Therefore the good person is the teacher of the not-good, the not-good is the resource of the good.
Not honoring the teacher, not cherishing the resource — though clever, greatly confused.
This is called the essential subtlety.

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第二十八章 CHAPTER 28

Know the male, keep to the female, become a ravine for all under heaven.
Being a ravine for all under heaven, constant virtue does not depart, return to infancy.

Know the white, keep to the black, become the pattern for all under heaven.
Being the pattern for all under heaven, constant virtue does not err, return to the limitless.

Know glory, keep to disgrace, become a valley for all under heaven.
Being a valley for all under heaven, constant virtue is then sufficient, return to the uncarved block.

The uncarved block, when scattered, becomes vessels.
The sage uses it, then becomes chief of officials.
Therefore great governing does not cut.

第二十九章 CHAPTER 29

Those who would take all under heaven and act on it, I witness that they cannot succeed.
All under heaven is a sacred vessel. It cannot be acted upon.

Those who act on it ruin it, those who grasp it lose it.

Therefore among things: some lead, some follow; some breathe gently, some blow hard; some are strong, some are weak; some carry, some are toppled.

Therefore the sage removes the excessive, removes the extravagant, removes the extreme.

第三十章 CHAPTER 30

One who assists a ruler with the Way does not use arms to force all under heaven.
Such affairs like to return.

Where armies have camped, thorns and brambles grow.
After a great war, there are sure to be years of famine.

The good one achieves his result, nothing more. He dares not use it to seize strength.

Achieve the result but do not boast, achieve but do not brag, achieve but do not be arrogant.
Achieve because there is no alternative, achieve but do not force.

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Things at their prime then grow old — this is called not-Way.
Not-Way comes to an early end.

第三十一章 CHAPTER 31

Fine weapons are instruments of ill omen, things perhaps detest them.
Therefore one who has the Way does not dwell in them.

The gentleman at home honors the left, in war honors the right.

Weapons are instruments of ill omen, not instruments of the gentleman.
When using them cannot be avoided, calm detachment is best.

Victory is not to be glorified.
Those who glorify it take pleasure in killing people.
Those who take pleasure in killing people cannot achieve their aims under heaven.

Auspicious affairs esteem the left, inauspicious affairs esteem the right.
The lieutenant general stands at the left, the supreme general stands at the right.
This says they are conducted with funeral rites.

When many people have been killed, mourn them with sorrow and weeping; conduct victory in war with funeral rites.

第三十二章 CHAPTER 32

The Way is constantly without name.

The uncarved block, though small, none under heaven can make it submit.
If lords and kings could hold to it, the ten thousand things would come as guests of their own accord.

Heaven and earth join together, and sweet dew descends.
The people, without being commanded, are naturally balanced.

When regulation begins, names arise.
Once names exist, one must also know when to stop.
Knowing when to stop is how to avoid danger.

The Way's presence in the world is like valley streams flowing into rivers and seas.

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第三十三章 CHAPTER 33

One who knows others is wise; one who knows oneself is illuminated.

One who overcomes others has force; one who overcomes oneself is strong.

One who knows sufficiency is rich.

One who acts with vigor has will.

One who does not lose their place endures long.

One who dies without perishing has longevity.

第三十四章 CHAPTER 34

The great Way floods and overflows; it can go left or right.

The ten thousand things depend on it for life and it does not refuse them.
Work is accomplished, yet it claims no possession.

It clothes and nourishes the ten thousand things yet does not act as master.
Constantly without desire, it can be named among the small.

The ten thousand things return to it yet it does not act as master; it can be named great.

Because it never regards itself as great, therefore it can accomplish its greatness.

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第三十五章 CHAPTER 35

Hold fast to the great image, and all under heaven will come.
They come and are not harmed; they find peace and great tranquility.

Music and bait cause the passing traveler to stop.

The Way, when it emerges from the mouth, is bland and without flavor.
Look at it — not enough to be witnessed.
Listen to it — not enough to be heard.
Use it — it cannot be exhausted.

第三十六章 CHAPTER 36

If you want to shrink something, you must first stretch it.
If you want to weaken something, you must first strengthen it.
If you want to abolish something, you must first raise it up.
If you want to take something, you must first give to it.

This is called subtle illumination.

The soft and weak overcome the hard and strong.

Fish cannot leave the depths.
The state's sharp instruments should not be shown to the people.

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第三十七章 CHAPTER 37

The Way is constantly without action, yet nothing is left undone.

If lords and kings could hold to it, the ten thousand things would transform of their own accord.

If in transforming desire arises, I would calm it with the nameless uncarved block.

The nameless uncarved block — with it too one becomes without desire.

Without desire and thus still, all under heaven would settle of its own accord.

第三十八章 CHAPTER 38

Superior virtue does not virtue itself, and so it has virtue.
Inferior virtue does not let go of virtue, and so it is without virtue.

Superior virtue is without action and without motive.
Inferior virtue acts and has motive.

Superior benevolence acts yet is without motive.
Superior righteousness acts and has motive.

Superior propriety acts, and when none respond, it rolls up its sleeves and forces compliance.

Thus, when the Way is lost, afterward comes virtue.
When virtue is lost, afterward comes benevolence.
When benevolence is lost, afterward comes righteousness.
When righteousness is lost, afterward comes propriety.

Now propriety is the thin shell of loyalty and trust, and the beginning of disorder.

Foreknowledge is the flower of the Way, and the beginning of folly.

Therefore the great person dwells in the thick, not in the thin.
Dwells in the fruit, not in the flower.

Thus, discard that and take this.

第三十九章 CHAPTER 39

Those of old that attained the One:

Heaven attained the One and became clear.
Earth attained the One and became stable.
Spirits attained the One and became numinous.
Valleys attained the One and became full.
The ten thousand things attained the One and came to life.
Lords and kings attained the One and became upright for all under heaven.

What brought this about was the One.

Without clarity, heaven would fear to crack.
Without stability, earth would fear to quake.
Without numinosity, spirits would fear to fade.
Without fullness, valleys would fear to run dry.
Without life, the ten thousand things would fear to perish.
Without uprightness, lords and kings would fear to stumble.

Therefore the noble takes the lowly as its root; the high takes the low as its foundation.

Thus lords and kings call themselves "the orphan," "the desolate," "the unworthy."
Is this not taking the lowly as the root? Is it not?

Therefore, count the parts of a carriage and there is no carriage.

Do not desire to be lustrous like jade, but clatter like stones.

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第四十章 CHAPTER 40

Return is the movement of the Way.

Weakness is the function of the Way.

The ten thousand things under heaven are born from being; being is born from non-being.

第四十一章 CHAPTER 41

When superior scholars hear of the Way, they diligently practice it.
When middling scholars hear of the Way, they half keep it, half lose it.
When inferior scholars hear of the Way, they laugh out loud at it.

If they did not laugh, it would not be sufficient to be the Way.

Therefore the established sayings have it:

The bright Way seems dark.
The advancing Way seems retreating.
The level Way seems rough.

Superior virtue seems like a valley.
Great whiteness seems soiled.
Broad virtue seems insufficient.
Firm virtue seems lax.
Solid genuineness seems changeable.

The great square has no corners.
The great vessel is completed late.
The great sound is faint.
The great image has no form.

The Way is hidden and without name.

Yet only the Way is good at lending and completing.

第四十二章 CHAPTER 42

The Way gives birth to one,
one gives birth to two,
two gives birth to three,
three gives birth to the ten thousand things.

The ten thousand things carry yin and embrace yang,
blending breath to make harmony.

What people hate is only "orphan," "lonely," "unworthy,"
yet kings and dukes take these as titles.

So things may be diminished and yet increase,
or be increased and yet diminish.

What others teach, I also teach:
"The forceful do not get their death."
I take this as the father of teachings.

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第四十三章 CHAPTER 43

The softest thing under heaven
gallops through the hardest thing under heaven.

Non-being enters where there is no gap.

By this I know the benefit of non-action.

The teaching without words,
the benefit of non-action—
few under heaven attain them.

第四十四章 CHAPTER 44

Fame or the body—which is closer?
The body or possessions—which is more?
Gain or loss—which is sickness?

Therefore excessive love surely means great expense,
much hoarding surely means heavy loss.

Knowing enough, no disgrace.
Knowing when to stop, no danger.
Thus one can endure long.

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第四十五章 CHAPTER 45

Great completion seems lacking, yet its use is not exhausted.
Great fullness seems empty, yet its use is not depleted.

Great straightness seems bent,
great skill seems clumsy,
great eloquence seems stammering.

Agitation overcomes cold,
stillness overcomes heat.

Clarity and stillness become the standard for all under heaven.

第四十六章 CHAPTER 46

When there is Way under heaven, war horses are turned back to haul manure.
When there is no Way under heaven, war horses are bred in the borderlands.

No disaster is greater than not knowing enough,
no fault greater than wanting to gain.

Therefore the sufficiency of knowing enough is constant sufficiency.

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第四十七章 CHAPTER 47

Without going out the door, know all under heaven.
Without looking out the window, witness the Way of heaven.

The further one goes, the less one knows.

Therefore the sage knows without traveling,
names without witnessing,
completes without action.

第四十八章 CHAPTER 48

In pursuing learning, one gains daily.
In pursuing the Way, one loses daily.

Losing and again losing, until arriving at non-action.
Non-action, and nothing is left undone.

Taking all under heaven is constantly through non-interference.
When there is interference, it is not enough to take all under heaven.

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第四十九章 CHAPTER 49

The sage has no constant heart,
taking the hundred families' heart as heart.

The good, I treat them as good.
The not-good, I also treat them as good.
Virtue is goodness.

The trustworthy, I trust them.
The untrustworthy, I also trust them.
Virtue is trust.

The sage in all under heaven draws in breath, for all under heaven muddying their heart.
The hundred families all fix their ears and eyes upon them,
the sage treats them all as children.

第五十章 CHAPTER 50

Coming forth is life, entering is death.

The followers of life are three in ten,
the followers of death are three in ten,
those whose living moves them into death-ground are also three in ten.

Why is this?
Because they grasp life too thickly.

Now I have heard, those good at nurturing life—
traveling on land they do not encounter rhinoceros or tiger,
entering battle they wear no armor or weapons.

The rhinoceros finds no place to thrust its horn,
the tiger finds no place to plant its claws,
weapons find no place to receive their blades.

Why is this?
Because they have no death-ground.

第五十一章 CHAPTER 51

The Way gives birth to them, virtue nurtures them,
things form them, circumstance completes them.

Therefore among the ten thousand things none does not
honor the Way and treasure virtue.

The honor of the Way, the treasure of virtue—
none commands it, yet it is constantly so of itself.

So the Way gives birth to them, virtue nurtures them,
grows them, raises them,
shelters them, ripens them,
covers them, protects them.

Giving birth yet not possessing,
acting yet not relying,
growing yet not ruling.
This is called dark virtue.

道

第五十二章 CHAPTER 52

All under heaven has a beginning — regard it as the
mother of all under heaven.
Having attained the mother, thereby know her children.
Having known the children, return and keep to the mother
— to the end of the body, no danger.

Stop up the openings, close the gates — to the end of life,
no toil.
Open the openings, busy yourself with affairs — to the end
of life, no rescue.

Witnessing the small is called illumination; keeping to the
soft is called strength.
Use its light, return to its illumination — leave no disaster
upon the body.
This is called practicing the constant.

第五十三章 CHAPTER 53

If I have even a little knowledge, walking upon the great Way, only straying do I fear.
The great Way is very level, yet the people love bypaths.

The court is very swept, the fields are very overgrown, the granaries are very empty.
Wearing patterned silks, carrying sharp swords, sated with food and drink, wealth and goods in excess.
This is called robber's boasting. It is not the Way!

第五十四章 CHAPTER 54

What is well-established cannot be uprooted; what is well-embraced does not slip away.
Children and grandchildren will not cease their ancestral offerings.

Cultivate it in the body — its virtue becomes true.
Cultivate it in the family — its virtue becomes abundant.
Cultivate it in the village — its virtue becomes lasting.
Cultivate it in the state — its virtue becomes flourishing.
Cultivate it in all under heaven — its virtue becomes universal.

Therefore, witness the body through the body, witness the family through the family,
witness the village through the village, witness the state through the state,
witness all under heaven through all under heaven.

How do I know all under heaven is thus? By this.

道

第五十五章 CHAPTER 55

One who contains virtue thickly is compared to an infant.
Wasps, scorpions, vipers, and snakes do not sting; fierce beasts do not seize; birds of prey do not strike.
Bones weak, sinews soft, yet the grip is firm.

Not yet knowing the union of female and male, yet wholly aroused — the utmost of essence.
Crying all day yet not becoming hoarse — the utmost of harmony.

Knowing harmony is called the constant; knowing the constant is called illumination.
Enhancing life is called auspicious; the heart directing the breath is called strength.

Things grown strong then grow old — this is called not the Way.
Not the Way comes to an early end.

第五十六章 CHAPTER 56

One who knows does not speak; one who speaks does not know.

Stop up the openings, close the gates,
blunt the sharpness, untangle the knots,
soften the glare, become together with the dust.
This is called dark togetherness.

Therefore: cannot be made intimate with, cannot be made distant from.
Cannot be made to benefit, cannot be made to harm.
Cannot be made noble, cannot be made base.
Therefore it becomes valued by all under heaven.

道

第五十七章 CHAPTER 57

Govern the state with rectitude; deploy troops with surprise; take all under heaven through non-action.
How do I know it is thus? By this.

When all under heaven has many prohibitions, the people become ever poorer.
When the people have many sharp weapons, the state becomes ever darker.
When people have many clever skills, strange things increasingly arise.
When laws and edicts are increasingly proclaimed, thieves and robbers grow more numerous.

Therefore the sage says:
I act without action, and the people transform of themselves.
I love stillness, and the people correct themselves.
I have no affairs, and the people enrich themselves.
I have no desires, and the people become simple of themselves.

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第五十八章 CHAPTER 58

When government is muffled and dull, the people are pure and simple.
When government is sharp and scrutinizing, the people are crafty and deficient.

Misfortune — fortune leans upon it. Fortune — misfortune hides within it.
Who knows where it ends? There is no fixed standard.

The straight reverts to the crooked; the good reverts to the monstrous.
The people's bewilderment — these days have been long indeed.

Therefore the sage is square but does not cut,
has edges but does not pierce,
is straight but does not impose,
shines but does not glare.

第五十九章 CHAPTER 59

In governing people and serving heaven, nothing compares to frugality.
Now, only frugality — this is called early preparation.
Early preparation is called the repeated accumulation of virtue.

With repeated accumulation of virtue, nothing cannot be overcome.
When nothing cannot be overcome, none knows its limit.
When none knows its limit, one can possess the state.

Possessing the mother of the state, one can long endure.
This is called deep roots, firm foundation — the Way of long life and enduring vision.

第六十章 CHAPTER 60

Governing a great state is like cooking a small fish.

When the Way governs all under heaven, ghosts lose their spiritual power.
Not that ghosts lose their spiritual power — their spirits do not harm people.
Not that their spirits do not harm people — the sage also does not harm people.

Since both do not harm each other, virtue returns to both together.

道

第六十一章 CHAPTER 61

A great state is the lower course of a river — the meeting
place of all under heaven, the female of all under heaven.
The female constantly overcomes the male through
stillness. Through stillness she takes the lower position.

Therefore if a great state lowers itself to a small state, it
wins the small state.
If a small state lowers itself to a great state, it wins the great
state.
Therefore some lower themselves in order to win; some,
being lower, win.

A great state desires nothing more than to unite and
nurture people.
A small state desires nothing more than to enter and serve
people.
Both get what they desire. The greater should be below.

道

第六十二章 CHAPTER 62

The Way is the hidden depth of the ten thousand things.
The treasure of the good, the refuge of the not-good.

Beautiful words can be traded at market; honored conduct
can elevate a person.
Those who are not good — why abandon them?

Therefore when the Son of Heaven is enthroned and the
three ministers installed,
though there are jade discs presented before teams of four
horses,
this is not as good as sitting and advancing in this Way.

Why did the ancients prize this Way?
Did they not say: seek and you shall find; have guilt and be
pardoned?
Therefore it is prized by all under heaven.

第六十三章 CHAPTER 63

Act without action, serve without serving, taste without tasting.

Make the great small, make the many few. Respond to resentment with virtue.

Plan the difficult while it is easy; do the great while it is small.
The difficult affairs under heaven must begin from the easy; the great affairs under heaven must begin from the small.

Therefore the sage never acts great, and so can achieve greatness.

Light promises surely lead to little trust; much ease surely leads to much difficulty.
Therefore the sage treats things as difficult.
And so in the end has no difficulty.

道

第六十四章 CHAPTER 64

What is at rest is easy to hold; what has not yet shown signs is easy to plan for.
What is brittle is easy to break; what is minute is easy to scatter.

Act on things before they exist; govern things before they are in disorder.

A tree you can wrap your arms around grows from a tiny sprout.
A tower of nine stories rises from heaped earth.
A journey of a thousand miles begins beneath your feet.

Those who act on things defeat them; those who grasp things lose them.

Therefore the sage is without action, and so without defeat.
Without grasping, and so without loss.

People pursuing their affairs constantly defeat them when almost complete.
Be as careful at the end as at the beginning — then there are no defeated affairs.

Therefore the sage desires non-desire, does not prize goods hard to obtain.
Studies non-study, returns to what the multitude has passed by.
To assist the ten thousand things in their naturalness, yet dares not act.

第六十五章 CHAPTER 65

The ancients skilled in the Way did not use it to enlighten the people, but to keep them simple.

The people are difficult to govern because their cleverness is too much.

Therefore to govern the state with cleverness is to be a thief of the state.
Not to govern the state with cleverness is to be a blessing to the state.

To know these two is also to know the standard.
To constantly know the standard — this is called dark virtue.

Dark virtue is deep, is far-reaching, turns back with things.
Only then does it arrive at the great accord.

道

第六十六章 CHAPTER 66

The reason rivers and seas can be kings of the hundred valleys is that they are good at staying below them.
Therefore they can be kings of the hundred valleys.

Thus to be above the people, you must in speech stay below them.
To be ahead of the people, you must put yourself behind them.

Thus the sage dwells above yet the people do not feel burdened; dwells in front yet the people are not harmed.

Thus all under heaven delight in pushing him forward and do not tire of it.
Because he does not contend, no one under heaven can contend with him.

第六十七章 CHAPTER 67

All under heaven say my Way is great yet seems like nothing.
It is only because it is great that it seems like nothing.
If it resembled something, long ago it would have become small.

I have three treasures that I hold and protect.
The first is called compassion, the second is called frugality, the third is called not daring to be first under heaven.

Compassion — therefore able to be brave.
Frugality — therefore able to be broad.
Not daring to be first under heaven — therefore able to become chief of vessels.

Now to abandon compassion yet be brave, abandon frugality yet be broad, abandon the rear yet be first — this is death.

With compassion, in battle you will win; in defense you will hold firm.
When heaven is about to save someone, it guards them with compassion.

第六十八章 CHAPTER 68

One skilled as a warrior is not martial.
One skilled in battle is not angry.
One skilled in defeating the enemy does not engage.
One skilled in employing others places himself below them.

This is called the virtue of non-contention.
This is called the power of employing others.
This is called matching the utmost of heaven.

道

第六十九章 CHAPTER 69

Those who use arms have a saying:
I dare not act as host but act as guest;
dare not advance an inch but retreat a foot.

This is called marching without marching, raising arms without arms, throwing without an enemy, grasping without weapons.

There is no greater disaster than taking the enemy lightly.
Taking the enemy lightly nearly costs me my treasures.

Therefore when opposing armies meet as equals, the one who grieves will win.

第七十章 CHAPTER 70

My words are very easy to understand, very easy to practice.
Yet no one under heaven can understand them, no one can practice them.

Words have an ancestor; affairs have a lord.
It is only because of not understanding that they do not understand me.

Those who understand me are few; those who emulate me are precious.

Therefore the sage wears coarse cloth but harbors jade within.

道

第七十一章 CHAPTER 71

To know yet think you do not know is best. To not know yet think you know is sickness.

Only by being sick of sickness can you be free of sickness.

The sage is not sick because she is sick of sickness.
Therefore she is not sick.

第七十二章 CHAPTER 72

When the people do not fear authority, then great authority arrives.

Do not narrow their dwellings, do not oppress their livelihood.

Only by not oppressing, are they not oppressed.

Thus the sage knows herself but does not display herself, loves herself but does not prize herself.

Therefore she lets go of that and takes this.

道

第七十三章 CHAPTER 73

Courage in daring brings death, courage in not-daring brings life.

Of these two, one brings benefit, one brings harm.

What Heaven despises — who knows its reason?

Thus even the sage finds this difficult.

The Way of Heaven: without contending, good at winning; without speaking, good at responding; without summoning, it comes of itself; unhurried, yet good at planning.

Heaven's net is vast and wide — loose, yet nothing slips through.

第七十四章 CHAPTER 74

When the people do not fear death, how can you frighten them with death?

If you make the people constantly fear death, and those who act strangely — I could seize and kill them — who would dare?

There is constantly one who presides over killing, who kills.

To kill in place of the one who presides over killing — this is called carving in place of the master carpenter.

Those who carve in place of the master carpenter — rare are those who do not wound their hands.

道

第七十五章 CHAPTER 75

The people starve because those above consume too much in taxes. Thus they starve.

The people are hard to govern because those above act with intention. Thus they are hard to govern.

The people take death lightly because those above pursue life too thickly. Thus they take death lightly.

Only those who do not make life their purpose — these are wiser than those who prize life.

第七十六章 CHAPTER 76

In life, a person is soft and supple; in death, hard and stiff.

In life, grass and trees are soft and tender; in death, withered and dry.

Thus the hard and stiff are companions of death; the soft and supple are companions of life.

Therefore an army that is strong will be destroyed; a tree that is strong will be broken.

The strong and great dwell below; the soft and supple dwell above.

道

第七十七章 CHAPTER 77

The Way of Heaven — is it not like drawing a bow?

What is high, it presses down; what is low, it raises up.

What has excess, it diminishes; what is lacking, it supplements.

The Way of Heaven diminishes excess and supplements what is lacking.

The way of humans is not so: it diminishes what is lacking to serve what has excess.

Who can have excess and offer it to all under heaven? Only one who has the Way.

Thus the sage acts but does not rely on it, accomplishes but does not dwell in it — she does not desire to display her worth.

道

第七十八章 CHAPTER 78

In all under heaven, nothing is softer or weaker than water.

Yet in attacking the hard and strong, nothing can surpass it — because nothing can alter it.

That the weak overcomes the strong, that the soft overcomes the hard — all under heaven know this, yet none can practice it.

Thus the sage says: one who receives the filth of the state is called master of the altars of grain; one who receives the misfortune of the state becomes king of all under heaven.

Straight words seem reversed.

第七十九章 CHAPTER 79

When great resentment is reconciled, there is always resentment left over. How can this be considered good?

Thus the sage holds the left tally but does not demand from others.

One with virtue oversees the contract; one without virtue oversees the exaction.

The Way of Heaven has no favorites — it constantly gives to those who are good.

第八十章 CHAPTER 80

A small state with few people — let there be tools for tens and hundreds, but not used.

Let the people regard death gravely and not travel far.

Though there be boats and carriages, let there be no place to ride them; though there be armor and weapons, let there be no place to display them.

Let people return to knotting cords and use them.

Sweet their food, beautiful their clothing, peaceful their dwellings, joyful their customs.

Neighboring states within sight of each other, the sounds of chickens and dogs heard between them — the people grow old and die without ever visiting one another.

第八十一章 CHAPTER 81

Truthful words are not beautiful; beautiful words are not truthful.

The good do not argue; those who argue are not good.

Those who know are not broadly learned; the broadly learned do not know.

The sage does not accumulate — having acted for others, she has more herself; having given to others, she has more still.

The Way of Heaven: benefits and does not harm.

The Way of the sage: acts and does not contend.

道

道

The journey is complete.

道德經 · Dao De Jing

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