

道德经：老子原文与译文

**Tao Te Ching**  
**Original Text and**  
**A Modern Interpretation**

**Yuan Zhiming**

*English Translation*

by Daniel Baida Su and Chen Shangyu



*To LOVE  
in Heaven and on Earth*



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## Preface

To the best of my knowledge, more than one hundred English translations of the sage Lao Tzu's work *Tao Te Ching*, also referred to as *Lao Tzu*, are extant, while there are thousands of various *Lao Tzu* interpretations in the Chinese language. I trust, however, that my translation is the first attempt to decipher this Chinese classic of antiquity with references to the ancient Hebrew and Christian Bible.

*Lao Tzu* is an exceptionally refined example of the classic Chinese language, with a meaning at once both profoundly mysterious and expansive. It is difficult to clearly grasp Lao Tzu's original intention and even more impossible to reach consensus with other interpreters. From a historic point of view, huge differences have been noted between one interpretation and the next, each tinted with the individual interpreter's specific worldview, mostly from the perspectives of Confucianism, Buddhism, Legalism, Militarism, Yin and Yang, Neo-Confucianism, Marxism, and so on.

Lao Tzu is considered the founder of Taoism. Although interpreting Tao from the vantage point of Taoism seems natural, the Tao of Lao Tzu and the Tao of Zhuang Tzu, for example, are far apart in purpose and tone. Since the time of Wang Bi, another Taoist

at a later time, Lao Tzu's original intention has become indiscernible. Even so, the interpretation of Zhuang Tzu and Wang Bi are much more convincing than that of others.

Why is there such difficulty in interpreting *Lao Tzu*? The answer is that Lao Tzu himself did not totally understand Tao and thus was unable to express Tao with great clarity. Moreover, Lao Tzu did not believe that human rationality could comprehend Tao or that Tao could be explained by human language.

Until today, an age when the Christian faith has spread widely throughout China, we finally have come to realize that there was such an event as “the Incarnation”—that Tao became a human—and thus Tao became visible, touchable, explicit, and comprehensible. When I myself entered into Tao and experienced Tao's magnificent, miraculous divinity revealed through the life of Jesus, a ray of brilliant light seemed to illuminate *Lao Tzu*, enabling me to recognize the inner meaning behind each word.

Before becoming a Christian, I had written a book named *Heavy Subject* (China: People's Publishing House, 1987), an examination of traditional Chinese culture. One part of the book focuses on *Lao Tzu*. I now frankly admit that at that time, I did not really understand *Lao Tzu*.



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It is my firm belief that there must be a spiritual source linking ancient Hebrew civilization with ancient Chinese civilization, and with all other ancient civilizations. Even those who established these ancient civilizations might not recognize this internal source. Nevertheless, the origin of this source is unquestionably from the One who set all nations on one planet (Earth), and that One is the *Logos*, also known as Tao.

Through reading Lao Tzu and other Chinese ancient classics, Western readers could discover the common root between this unique Eastern Empire and Western civilization, and China would cease to be a nation to be feared. In fact, they would discover that China and other cultures both live under the same blue sky. Ultimately, China yearns for the same things all peoples do.

Our work on *Lao Tzu* contains two parts: the interpretation of Lao Tzu's original text, *Tao Te Ching*, and the explication of its meaning. Both parts are indispensable for readers new to Lao Tzu and his writing. Once the reader understands the thick explanatory volume, *Lao Tzu and the Bible*, he needs only to focus on this thin volume, which is Lao Tzu's sublime masterpiece, *Tao Te Ching*.

Yuan Zhiming

May 2010

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道德经：老子原文与译文<sup>1</sup>

# Tao Te Ching

Original Text and A Modern Interpretation <sup>2</sup>

Yuan Zhiming

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<sup>1</sup>本译文的参考，除流行古本王弼、河上公外，又冯达甫、扬家骆、刘思、任继愈、陈鼓应等，后者均瑰集了诸家成说。神光之下，广览博采，不拘一格，以求融通老子微言大义。不及之处，破读而就，以道贯之。凡此，见注。

<sup>2</sup> The present translation of this book has referenced the ancient classical translation of Wang Bi and He Shangong, in addition to Feng Dapu, Yang Jialuo, Liu Si, Ren Jiyu, Chen Guyin, and so forth. The modern translations have assimilated previous understandings of Lao Tzu. Under God's light, this translator has gathered from a broad variety of sources and ventured out of the old traditional frameworks. The living Tao has been the thread running through the whole process of translation, especially in difficult areas. Please refer to the footnotes on these points.

## CHAPTER 1

**1 Tao can be spoken of, but is not the Tao  
of whom we commonly speak;**

**A name can be given, but not a common name.<sup>3</sup>**

**2 He can be called non-being,**

**because he preceded Heaven and earth;**

**He can be called pre-being, because he gave birth to all that is.**

**3 Therefore, since he is non-being, his wonders**

**can be meditated upon;**

**Since he is being, his track can be seen.**

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<sup>3</sup> This sentence is usually translated as “Tao that can be spoken of is not an eternal Tao,” emphasizing that Tao is unspeakable. Such an interpretation deprives Lao Tzu of the possibility of explaining Tao from the outset, as well as weakens the reliability of the truth of Tao that Lao Tzu described. *Chang* (常) usually means “usual” in *Lao Tzu*. On the other hand, *Tao* in Lao Tzu’s time carried various meanings: “road” as in *I Ching*, “ruling principles” or “methods” as in *Shang Shu*, “speaking” as in *Shi Jing*. *Introduction to Shang Shu* (it is said to have been written by Confucius) refers to Tao as “usual principles” (常道). According to Feng Youlan, Tao in ancient times usually meant human principles until Lao Tzu gave it a metaphorical meaning. Thus, Lao Tzu must clarify the concept of Tao at the beginning to make sure that his Tao is understood clearly—that is, Lao Tzu’s Tao is not the usual Tao. What is it? Let us listen to Lao Tzu. Please refer to *Lao Tzu and the Bible*, Introduction IV. Tao Speaks.

**4 Non-being and being are merely two terms for the one source.**

**That the two are one is a mystery.**

**5 Mystery upon mystery—the gateway to all wonders!**

## 第一章

1 道可以说，但不是通常所说的道。名可以起，但不是通常所起的名。

2 可以说他是无，因为他在天地创始之前。也可以说他是有，因为他是万物的母亲。

3 所以，从无的角度，可以揣摩他的奥妙。从有的角度，可以看到他的踪迹。

4 有与无只是说法不同，两者其实是一回事。既是有又是无，这就叫玄。

5 玄之又玄啊，宇宙间万般奥妙的源头！

**原文** 1道可道，非常道。名可名，非常名<sup>4</sup>。

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<sup>4</sup>通常译为“可以说出来的道，就不是永恒不变的道”，强调道是不可言说的。但这样的翻译，等于一开始就剥夺了老子言说真道的可能性和可靠性。其实“常”字在《老子》中多为“通常”之意。另一方面，“道”字，到老子之时，已经用得很泛：有“道路”之意，如《易经》“履道坦坦，幽人贞吉”；有“王道”之意，如《尚书》“无有作好，遵王之道”；有“方法”之意，如《尚书》“我道惟宁王德延”；又有“言说”之意，如《诗经》“中菁

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2无，名天地之始。有，名万物之母。

3故常无，欲以观其妙。常有，欲以观其徼。

4此两者同出而异名，同谓之玄。

5玄之又玄，众妙之门。

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之言，不可道也”。《尚书序》（相传为孔子所作）说：“伏牺、神农、黄帝之书，谓之三坟，言大道也。少昊、颛乙、高辛、唐、虞之书，谓之五典，言常道也”。这里用了“常道”一词，指一般的道理。又有冯友兰先生考证说，古时所谓道，均为人道，到了老子才赋与道形而上学的意义。可见，老子要宣示上天大道，必须一开始就澄清概念，强调他下面要讲的道，绝非人们一般常指的道，不是一般的道理，即非“常道”，而是……是什么呢？就要听老子娓娓道来了。

## CHAPTER 2

- 1 If everyone knows beauty as beautiful,  
there is already ugliness;  
If everyone knows kindness as kind,  
there is already evil.  
Being and non-being beget each other;  
The difficult and the easy complement each other;  
The long and the short contrast with each other;  
The high and the low point to each other;  
The voice and its echo resound with each other;  
Before and after follow each other.**
- 3 Therefore, the Holy One acts without effort  
and teaches without speaking.**
- 4 All things rise from him, yet he claims no sovereignty;  
He multiplies all yet claims no possession;  
He benefits all yet expects no return;  
He accomplishes all yet claims no credit;**
- 5 He claims no credit yet endures forever.**

## 第二章

1 天下的人都知道以美为美，这就是丑了。都知道以善为善，这就是恶了。

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2 有和无是相互依存的，难和易是相互促成的，长和短互为比较，高和下互为方向，声响和回音相呼应，前边与后边相伴随。

3 所以圣人从事的事业，是排除一切人为努力的事业。圣人施行的教化，是超乎一切言语之外的教化。

4 他兴起万物却不自以为大，生养而不据为己有，施予而不自恃其能，成了也不自居其功。

5 他不自居其功，其功却永恆不灭。

**原文** 1 天下皆知美之为美，斯恶矣。皆知善之为善，斯不善矣。

2 有无相生，难易相成，长短相形，高下相倾，音声相和，前后相随。

3 是以圣人处无为之事，行不言之教。

4 万物作焉而不为始，生而不有，为而不恃，功成而不居。

5 夫唯不居，是以不去。



### CHAPTER 3

- 1 Do not honor the virtuous, lest people contend.**
- 2 Do not value hard-to-find treasures, lest people want to steal.**
- 3 Do not evoke evil desires, lest people become restless.**
- 4 Therefore, the Holy One rules by humbling people's hearts,  
Filling their stomachs,  
Subduing their will,  
And strengthening their bones.**
- 5 He makes them seek no knowledge and have no desire;  
Then, even the wise must curb their behavior.**
- 6 Make no effort, and there will be no lack of order.**

### 第三章

- 1 不崇尚贤能之辈，方能使世人停止争斗。
- 2 不看重珍奇财宝，方能使世人不去偷窃。
- 3 不诱发邪情私欲，方能使世人平静安稳。
- 4 所以圣人掌管万民，是使他们心里谦卑，腹里饱足，血气澹化，筋骨强壮。
- 5 人们常常处于不求知、无所欲的状态，那么，即使有卖弄智慧的人，也不能胡作非为了。
- 6 遵从无为之道，则没有不太平之理。

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原文 1 不尚贤，使民不争。

2 不贵难得之货，使民不为盗。

3 不见可欲，使民心不乱。

4 是以圣人之治，虚其心，实其腹，弱其志，强其骨。

5 常使民无知无欲，使夫智者不敢为也。

6 为无为，则无不治。

## CHAPTER 4

### **1 The power of the invisible Tao is inexhaustible;**

**Deep like an abyss, he appears as the progenitor of all things.**

### **2 Abandon self-righteousness.**

**Be free from temptations.**

**Come to the light.**

**Accept that by nature you are dust.**

**The being then may be dimly visible in the distance.**

### **3 I do not know whose child he is,**

**For he is before all visible gods.<sup>5</sup>**

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<sup>5</sup> This sentence often has been taken to prove that Lao Tzu uses Tao to deny the existence of God and thus breaks away from ancient superstition. Such an interpretation is not accurate. In this sentence, *di* (帝) obviously does not mean “God.” Some people mistakenly confuse “Xiang Di” (象帝) with “Shang Di” (上帝). Xiang is not Shang. *Xiang* means “image.” Lao Tzu often uses *Shang* to describe Heaven, heavenly virtue, heavenly man. He does not choose *Shang* in this phrase on purpose, because the gods here are not the ultimate God. Only Lao Tzu’s Tao matches the meaning of God, the only God who is infinite, eternal, and self-existent. For further discussion, please refer to *Lao Tzu and the Bible*, Part One, Chapter One, Section B, 5 “Spirits” and “Gods.”

## 第四章

1 道，空虚无形，其大能却无穷无尽，渊远深奥啊，像是万物的祖宗。

2 放弃自以为是的锐气，摆脱纷纭万象的迷惑，和于生命的光中，认同尘土的本相，便能在幽幽之中，看到（道）那似有似无的存在。

3 我不知道他是谁生的，只知道他先于一切有形之帝。

**原文** 1 道冲而用之，久不盈，渊兮似万物之宗。

2 挫其锐，解其纷，和其光，同其尘，湛兮似或存。

3 吾不知其谁之子，象帝之先<sup>6</sup>。

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<sup>6</sup>很多人用“吾不知其谁之子，象帝之先”一句，证明老子用“道”来否定上帝，破了古代的宗教迷信。这种解释不确切。这句话里的“帝”，显然并不是今日所言上帝。有人说老子原文的“象帝”就是上帝，这是不对的。“象”就是象，是“形象”的意思，不是“上”的借用。因为老子常将“上”字用于“上天、上德、上士”等等，显然老子并非不懂“上”字的用法，也并非不能使用“上帝”一词。老子不用“上帝”一词，显然是因为这个“帝”不是至高无上的，不配使用“上”字作定语。因为唯有老子的“道”，才与今日所言“上帝”之无限、永恒、自在的内涵相一致。

## CHAPTER 5

- 1 Heaven and earth have no regard for benevolence;  
They view all creatures as straw dogs offered to God.  
Nor does the Holy One have regard for benevolence;  
He likewise views common people as straw dogs.**
- 2 The space between Heaven and earth—is it not like a bellows?  
Still and inexhaustible—  
The more it moves, the more wind it creates.**
- 3 Many words lead to failure;  
It is better to be restrained.**

## 第五章

- 1 天地不理睬世人所讲的仁义，在其看来，万物不过像是祭神用的稻草狗。圣人也不理睬世人所讲的仁义，在他眼里，百姓不过像是祭神用的稻草狗。
- 2 天地之间，不正像一个冶炼的风箱吗？虚静而无穷尽，越动而风越多。
- 3 话多有失，辞不达意，还是适可而止为妙。

**原文** 1 天地不仁，以万物为刍狗。圣人不仁，以百姓为刍狗。

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2 天地之间，其犹橐籥乎？虚而不屈，动而愈出。

3 多言数穷，不如守中。

## CHAPTER 6

**1 The unfathomable God is immortal.**

**This gave birth to all mysteries.**

**2 From the gate of this motherly being come Heaven and earth.**

**Everlasting and dwelling in mystery,**

**3 She is what she seems not.**

**She gives and is not exhausted.**

## 第六章

1 幽悠无形之神，永生不死，是宇宙最深远的母体。

2 这个母体的门户，便是天地的根源。

3 冥冥之中，似非而是，延绵不绝，用之不尽。

**原文** 1 谷神不死，是谓玄牝。

2 玄牝之门，是谓天地根。

3 绵绵若存，用之不勤。

## CHAPTER 7

### 1 Heaven and earth endure.

**They endure because they are not selfish or self-preserving;**

**Therefore, they live long.**

### 2 Likewise, the Holy One thinks of himself last and comes first;

**He disregards himself and finds himself enduring.**

### 3 Is not all of this because he is fulfilled in his selflessness?

## 第七章

1 天长地久。天地之所以能长久，因为它不自贪自益其生，所以能长生。

2 所以圣人把自己置于最后，他反而在前；把自身置之度外，他反而长存。

3 这不正是由于他无私，反而成全了他的私吗？

**原文** 1 天长地久。天地所以能长且久者，以其不自生，故能长生。

2 是以圣人后其身而身先，外其身而身存。

3 非以其无私邪？故能成其私。



## CHAPTER 8

- 1 The highest good is like water,  
Nourishing all things and not contending with them;**
- 2 Dwelling in loathsome places and thus coming close to Tao;**
- 3 Dwelling among the lowly;  
Great-hearted;  
Loving in relationships;  
Sincere in speech;  
Establishing order in government;  
Demonstrating ability in undertakings;  
Perfect in its timing.**
- 4 Only where there is no contention can there be flawlessness.**

## 第八章

- 1 最高的善像水一样。水善于滋养万物，而不与万物相争。
- 2 它处身于众人所厌恶的地方，所以跟道很相近。
- 3 居身，安于卑下；存心，宁静深沉；交往，有诚有爱；言语，信实可靠；为政，天下归顺；做事，大有能力；行动，合乎时宜。
- 4 唯有不争不竞，方能无过无失。

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原文 1 上善若水。水善利万物而不争。

2 处众人之所恶，故几于道。

3 居善地，心善渊，与善仁，言善信，政善治，事善能，动善时。

4 夫唯不争，故无尤。

## CHAPTER 9

- 1 Better to stop pouring than to keep on overflowing.**
- 2 Forge a blade with a thousand blows;  
Its sharpness still will not last long.**
- 3 Gold and jade may fill your house,  
But how long can they be kept?**
- 4 Pride in wealth and rank will bring you only curses.**
- 5 To retire after winning success and establishing a reputation  
is the way of Heaven.**

## 第九章

- 1 抓在手里冒尖儿流，自满自溢，不如罢了吧。
- 2 千锤百炼的锋芒，也长不了的。
- 3 金玉满堂，你能守多久呢？
- 4 富贵而骄，是自取灾祸啊！
- 5 大功成了，名份有了，自己便隐去，这正是上天之道。

原文 1 持而盈之，不如其已。

2 揣而锐之，不可常保。

3 金玉满堂，莫之能守。

4 富贵而骄，自遗其咎。

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5 功成名遂身退，天之道。

## CHAPTER 10

**1 Who can unite his heart with Tao to achieve a seamless union?**

**2 Who can overcome his flesh to be meek and gentle  
as an infant?**

**3 Who can purify his heart to be clear like a mirror?**

**4 In loving the ruled and ruling the state,  
Who can rule without effort, denying himself to follow Tao?**

**5 In applying wisdom,  
Who can follow the will of Heaven, as females follow males?**

**6 In exercising discernment,  
Who can transcend understanding and knowledge?**

**7 The Creator and Sustainer of the world does not impose  
his ownership.**

**He works in all things without claiming his power.**

**The ruler of all does not govern capriciously.**

**What profound grace and virtue!**

## 第十章

1 谁能使灵魂与大道合一，毫无离隙呢？

2 谁能使血气变得柔顺，像婴儿一样呢？

3 谁能洗净内心的杂念，透亮如明镜呢？

4 爱民掌权，谁能捨己顺道、无为而治呢？

5 运用心智，谁能因应天意、如雌随雄呢？

6 明白通达，谁能超越人智、摆脱知识呢？

7 那创造并养育这个世界的，他创造养育并不强行占有，他无所不为却不自恃其能，他是万物之主而不任意宰制。这真是深不可测的恩德啊！

**原文** 1 载营魄抱一，能无离乎？

2 专气致柔，能如婴儿乎？

3 涤除玄览，能无疵乎？

4 爱国治民，能无为乎？

5 天门开阖，能为雌乎？

6 明白四达，能无知乎？

7 生之蓄之，生而不有，为而不恃，长而不宰，是谓玄德。

## CHAPTER 11

### 1 Thirty spokes unite in the hub of a wheel.

The hole in a hub is useful [and necessary for the wheel to turn].

### 2 Clay vessels are useful because of their unfilled capacity.

### 3 Windows are cut in a room—

Empty spaces useful for lighting.

### 4 The visible is useful because of the work of the invisible.

## 第十一章

1 三十根辐条集中在车轴穿过的圆木上，圆木有空的地方，才对车有用处（可行走）。

2 揉合黏土制成器皿，上面有空的地方，才有器皿的用处（能容纳）。

3 为房屋安窗户，窗户有空的地方，才对房屋有用处（取光亮）。

4 有形者对人们有利益，是由于无形者的功用啊。

**原文** 1 三十辐共一毂，当其无，有车之用。

2 埴埴以为器，当其无，有器之用。

3 凿户牖以为室，当其无，有室之用。

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4 故有之以为利，无之以为用。



## CHAPTER 12

- 1 Many colors blind the eyes;  
Many tones deafen the ears;  
Delicacies spoil the taste;  
Riding and hunting make the heart go wild;  
Hard-to-find treasures corrupt life.**
- 2 In governing the people, the Holy One provides  
inner fulfillment,  
not pleasures of the eye.  
Thus, one thing is chosen and the other discarded.**

## 第十二章

1 缤纷的色彩使人眼睛昏花，变幻的音响使人耳朵发聋，丰腴的美食使人口味败坏，驰骋打猎令人心意狂荡，珍奇财宝令人行为不轨。

2 所以圣人掌管万民，是给他们内在的充实，不是给他们外在的愉悦。据此而取舍。

**原文** 1 五色令人目盲，五音令人耳聋，五味令人口爽，驰骋打猎令人心发狂，难得之货令人行妨。

2 是以圣人之治也，为腹不为目，故去彼取此。

## CHAPTER 13

**1 Being either favored or humiliated is disturbing;**

**The greatest curse is to overvalue physical life.**

**2 What does it mean that either case is disturbing?**

**Favor comes from those above me.**

**It is a surprise to receive it;**

**It is a surprise to lose it.**

**3 What does it mean that the greatest trouble**

**is to overvalue physical life?**

**I have great worries because I have a physical life.**

**If I discard my life,**

**What troubles do I have to worry about?**

**4 Therefore, he who gives up his life for the world**

**is trusted by the world;**

**He who gives up his life for loving the world**

**is relied on by the world.**

## 第十三章

1 得宠和受辱都会内心不安，最大的祸患是看重肉身性命。

2 为什么说得宠和受辱都会内心不安呢？宠是来自上面的，得到时吃惊，失去时也吃惊，所以说得宠和受辱都会内心不安。

3 为什么说最大的祸患是看重肉身性命呢？我有大祸患之忧虑，是因为我有肉身性命要保全；及至我把肉身性命置之度外，我还有什么祸患可忧虑呢？

4 所以捨弃肉身性命去为天下的人，堪为普天下的寄托；捨弃肉身性命去爱天下的人，堪得普天下的信靠。

**原文** 1 宠辱若惊，贵大患若身。

2 何谓宠辱若惊？宠为下，得之若惊，失之若惊，是谓宠辱若惊。

3 何谓贵大患若身？吾所以有大患者，为吾有身，及吾无身，吾有何患？

4 故贵以身为天下，若可寄天下。爱以身为天下，若可托天下。

## CHAPTER 14

- 1 What can be seen but not perceived is called “Yi”;  
What can be heard but not understood is called “Xi”;  
What can be touched but not grasped is called “Wei.”**
- 2 These three are beyond comprehension—<sup>7</sup>  
Together they become one.**
- 3 Above the One, there is no light;  
Beneath the One, there is no darkness;**
- 4 The infinity of the One is ineffable,  
Returning to the intangible non-being.**
- 5 This is called the form without a form,  
The image without an image,**
- 6 Like a shadow.  
Approaching from the front, you cannot see the face;  
Approaching from behind, you cannot see the back.**
- 7 Hold fast to the Tao of antiquity,  
For then you will command all realities of the present  
And know their coming and going.  
That is the essence of Tao’s teaching.**

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<sup>7</sup> Interpretation of De Qing footnote. See also the excavated Mawangdui copy A and B. The phrase *Zhi Jie* carries the meaning of “deep investigation.”

## 第十四章

- 1 看见而不晓得，叫做“夷”；听到而不明白，叫做“希”；摸索而不可得，叫做“微”。
- 2 “夷希微”三者，不可思议，难究其竟，所以它们溷而为一。
- 3 在他之上不再有光明，在他之下不再有黑暗。
- 4 难以言说的无限延绵啊，又複归于空虚无物。
- 5 他是没有状态的状态，没有形象的形象，叫做恍惚。
- 6 迎面看不见他的先头，追踪抓不着他的尾迹。
- 7 秉持上古之道，可以把握当今万有，知道其由来始末，这便是大道的要领了。

**原文** 1 视之不见名曰夷，听之不闻名曰希，抐之不得名曰微。

- 2 此三者不可致诘<sup>8</sup>，故溷而为一。
- 3 其上不皦，其下不昧。
- 4 绳绳兮不可名，複归于无物。
- 5 是谓无状之状，无象之象，是谓惚恍。
- 6 迎之不见其首，随之不见其后。
- 7 执古之道，以御今之有，能知古始，是谓道纪。

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<sup>8</sup>释德清注：“致诘，犹言思议”。又马王堆甲乙本「致诘」作「致计」，均有深究之义。

## CHAPTER 15

**1 So subtle, discerning and profound**

**Are the ancient followers of Tao**

**That words can only poorly describe them as:**

**2 Watchful as if crossing a winter river,**

**Cautious as if in fear of their neighbors,**

**Polite and respectful like guests,**

**Natural and authentic like melting ice,**

**Simple like uncarved wood,**

**All-embracing like a valley,**

**Earthy like muddy water.**

**3 Who can settle the mud to make water clear?**

**Who can revive a stiff corpse?**

**4 Those who follow this Tao will not be conceited.**

**Only through lack of conceit can one be renewed**

**when worn out and dying.**

## 第十五章

1 古时候善于行道的人，其微妙玄通，真是深不可识。由于深不可识，只好勉强来形容他：

2 其审慎好像冬天过江，谨守好像畏惧四邻，恭敬严肃如同作客，流逸潇洒如同化冰，纯朴得好像未经雕琢，旷达得好像高山空谷，敦厚得好像浑沌不清。

3 谁能沉淀溷浊的，使之渐渐清澈呢？谁能启动僵死的，使之徐徐复活呢？

4 持守此道的人，是不会自满自溢的。唯有不自满自溢，才能在凋敝死亡中成为新人。

**原文** 1 古之善为道者，微妙玄通，深不可识。夫唯不可识，故强为之容：

2 豫兮若冬涉川，犹兮若畏四邻，俨兮其若客，涣兮若冰之释，敦兮其若朴，旷兮其若谷，溷兮其若浊。

3 孰能浊以静之徐清？孰能安以动之徐生？

4 保此道不欲盈。夫唯不盈，故能敝而新成。

## CHAPTER 16

- 1 Humble to the utmost and completely tranquil,  
I can see the coming and the going of all that grows.**
- 2 Flourishing things of a million kinds,  
All return to their roots.**
- 3 Such a return is called tranquility;**
- 4 Such tranquility is called return to life;**
- 5 Such a return is eternity.<sup>9</sup>**
- 6 To know eternity is enlightenment;**
- 7 Not to know eternity is waywardness,  
Which results in calamity.**
- 8 To know eternity is to embrace whatever comes;  
To embrace whatever comes is to be just;**
- 9 To be just is to be complete;  
To be complete is to be like Heaven;  
To be like Heaven is to return to Tao;**
- 10 To return to Tao is to live long.  
Your body falls away, yet you live on.**

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<sup>9</sup> *Chang* (常) in this sentence does not mean “regular pattern,” a terminology in the philosophy of materialism. According to Wang Bi and He Shangong, *Chang* (常) means “eternal” and “never dying.”



## 第十六章

- 1 内心虚化到极点，持守安静到纯一，就能在万物的蓬蓬勃勃中，看出其来龙去脉。
- 2 万物纷纭百态，都复归其本根。
- 3 回到本根就叫平静安息。
- 4 平静安息便是复归了真生命。
- 5 复归了真生命便是永恆。
- 6 认识永恆便是光明。
- 7 不认识永恆，就会任意妄为，后果凶险。
- 8 认识了永恆，就能万事包容。万事包容，就能公义坦荡。
- 9 公义坦荡，则为完全人。完全人，则与天同。与天同，就归入道了。
- 10 归入道，可就长久了，即使肉身消失，依然平安无恙。

**原文** 1 致虚极，守静笃。万物并作，吾以观其复。

2 夫物芸芸，各复归其根。

3 归根曰静。

4 静曰复命。

5 复命曰常<sup>10</sup>，

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<sup>10</sup>此处之“常”，绝非今日唯物论者所谓“规律”。王弼注为“性命之常”，河上公注为“使不死”，均是永恆、永生之意。

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6 知常曰明。

7 不知常，妄作，凶。

8 知常容，容乃公，

9 公乃全，全乃天，天乃道，

10 道乃久，没身不殆。

## CHAPTER 17

- 1 With the highest and best ruler,  
People do not seem to know his presence.  
Next comes the ruler who is loved and praised;  
Next comes the ruler who is feared;  
Next comes the ruler who is despised.**
- 2 Distrust is due to lack of faith.**
- 3 Tao moves freely as he wishes;  
He has no need to give commands.  
However, when a great work is completed,  
People say the occurrence is natural.**

## 第十七章

- 1 至高至善的掌权者，人们仿佛感觉不到其存在。次一等的，赢得人们的亲近赞誉。再次的，使人们畏惧害怕。更次的，遭人们侮慢轻蔑。
- 2 信实不足，才有不信。
- 3 悠悠然大道之行，无须发号施令，大功告成之后，百姓都视之为自然而然的事，说：我们本来就是这样的啊！

道德经：老子原文与译文

**原文** 1 太上，下不知有之。其次，亲而誉之。其次，畏之。其次，侮之。

2 信不足焉，有不信焉。

3 悠兮其贵言，功成事遂，百姓皆谓我自然。

## CHAPTER 18

- 1 When the great Tao is rejected,  
humanity and justice arise.**
- 2 When wisdom comes,  
great falsity arises.**
- 3 When family members cannot live in harmony,  
filial piety and compassion arise.  
When the nation is in chaos,  
loyal officials arise.**

## 第十八章

- 1 大道废弃了，才出现仁义。
- 2 智慧出来了，才有大伪诈。
- 3 六亲不和，才大讲孝慈。国家昏乱，才呼唤忠臣。

**原文** 1 大道废，有仁义。

2 智慧出，有大伪。

3 六亲不和，有孝慈。国家昏乱，有忠臣。

## CHAPTER 19

- 1 Discard accomplishment and wisdom,  
And people will benefit a hundredfold.  
Discard humanity and justice,  
And people will return to filial piety and compassion.  
Discard cleverness and profit,  
And robbers and thieves will disappear.**
- 2 It is not enough to have these three rules.  
People's hearts must return to where they belong—  
Knowing and embracing the source of life.**
- 3 Then the self can become smaller and smaller,  
And desires can become fewer and fewer.  
Discard [human] learning.  
Be free of cares.**

## 第十九章

- 1 弃绝成功与智慧，对人民有百倍的好处。弃绝仁义的说教，人民就会复归孝慈。弃绝技巧与功利，就不会有盗贼为患。
- 2 然而，用这三者作诫律是不够的，一定要让人心有所归属才行，就是：认识生命的本根，持定存在的本原。

3 使自我越来越少，使欲望越来越澹。拒绝人间的学问，保持无忧无虑的心。

**原文** 1 绝圣弃智，民利百倍。绝仁弃义，民复孝慈。绝巧弃利，盗贼无有。

2 此三者以为文不足，故令有所属：见素抱朴。

3 少私寡欲，绝学无忧。

## CHAPTER 20

**1 To flatter or to despise—what is the difference?**

**To praise or to resent—how are they different?**

**Fear what people fear.**

**2 What a vast and deserted land!**

**Crowds of people hustle and bustle—**

**As if enjoying a feast or being onstage.**

**3 I alone do not share the feeling—**

**As if uncivilized, uncultivated,**

**Like a newborn infant not knowing how to smile.**

**Exhausted and sad,**

**I do not know where to return.**

**4 All people have more than enough;**

**I alone seem to have lost something.**

**I have the heart of a fool!**

**5 Worldly people see clearly;**

**I alone see dimly.**

**Worldly people bargain;**

**I alone cannot see the difference.**

**6 The water is vast like an ocean;**

**The wind blows without a trace.**

**All people have their own trades;**

**I alone am useless and stubborn.**

**7 I differ from all people**



**Because I value feeding on the Mother.**

**第二十章**

1 恭维与呵斥，相差有多远？赞美与厌恶，区别在哪里？人所畏惧的，不能不畏惧啊。

2 荒野啊，广漠无际！众人熙熙攘攘，像是在享受盛大的宴席，像是登上了欢乐的舞台。

3 唯独我浑然无觉，好像不曾开化的样子；溷溷沌沌，像初生婴儿还不知嘻笑的时候；疲惫沮丧，像是四处流浪无家可归的人。

4 众人都自得自满流溢而出，唯独我仿佛遗失了什么。我真是愚笨人的心肠啊！

5 世俗的人个个明明白白，唯独我一个昏昏然然。世俗的人个个斤斤计较，唯独我一个马虎不清。

6 大水荡荡淼如海，高风习习行无踪。众人都有一套本事，唯独我又没用又顽固。

7 我这样与众不同，是把吃喝母亲，看得高于一切啊！

**原文** 1 唯之与阿，相去几何？美之与恶，相去若何？人之所畏，不可不畏。

2 荒兮其未央哉！众人熙熙，如享太牢，如春登台。

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3 我独泊兮其未兆，沌沌兮如婴儿之未孩，儻儻兮若无所归。

4 众人皆有馀，而我独若遗。我愚人之心也哉！

5 俗人昭昭，我独昏昏。俗人察察，我独闷闷。

6 澹兮其若海，飂兮若无止。众人皆有以，而我独顽且鄙。

7 我独异于人，而贵食母。

## CHAPTER 21

**1 The highest form of morality is to completely obey Tao.**

**2 Tao exists like a shadow.**

**In the shadow there appears to be an image;**

**In the shadow there appears to be a real being.**

**3 In its depth and darkness is a spirit;**

**The spirit is authentic, full of faithfulness.**

**4 From antiquity till now, his name has never vanished**

**So that people may see the father of all.**

**5 How do I know the father of all?**

**By Him.**

## 第二十一章

1 最高的道德形态，是彻底顺从道。

2 道作为存在物，完全是恍恍惚惚的。恍惚之中有形象，恍惚之中有实在。

3 在他的深远幽暗中，有一个精神存在着。这个精神至真至切，充满了信实。

4 从古到今，他的名字从不消失，好叫人们看到万物之父。

5 我怎么晓得万物之父呢？就是由他而来。

**原文 1** 孔德之容，惟道是从。

2 道之为物，惟恍惟惚。惚兮恍兮，其中有象。恍兮惚兮，其中有物。

3 窈兮冥兮，其中有精。其精甚真，其中有信。

4 自今及古，其名不去，以阅众甫。

5 吾何以知众甫之状哉？以此。

## CHAPTER 22

- 1 What is twisted shall be straightened;  
The wronged shall be rehabilitated;  
Lowlands shall be filled;  
The dying shall be renewed;  
The needy shall receive;  
The plentiful shall be confused.**
- 2 Therefore, the Holy One unites with Tao  
To be the instrument to Heaven for all people. <sup>11</sup>**
- 3 Unaware that he sees,  
He sees clearly.  
Not holding himself to be right,  
He proves to be right.  
Not seeking his own glory,  
He accomplishes great missions.  
Not regarding himself as great,  
He becomes the king of all.**
- 4 Precisely because he does not contend,  
No one can contend with him.**
- 5 The ancients said: “The wronged will conquer.”**

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<sup>11</sup> *Shi* (式) refers to an astronomical tool in ancient times; however, in this sentence, it is used as a metaphor to portray the Holy One’s function as a tool for people to know the Tao of Heaven. See also Chapter 28.

**That is no empty saying.**

**Truly, the world will return to the conqueror.**

## 第二十二章

1 受屈辱，就得成全；受冤枉，可得伸直；低洼的，就被充满，将残的得新生，缺乏的便获得，富有的便迷惑。

2 所以圣人单一持守道，做天下人认识上天的器具。

3 不自以为能看见，所以看得分明。不自以为是，所以是非昭彰。不求自己的荣耀，所以大功告成。不自以为大，所以为天下王。

4 正因为不争不竞，天下没有能与之争竞的。

5 古人说“受屈辱必得成全”的话，岂是虚构的吗？那确实得成全者，天下便归属他。

**原文** 1 曲则全，枉则直，洼则盈，敝则新，少则得，多则惑。

2 是以圣人抱一为天下式<sup>12</sup>。

3 不自见故明，不自是故彰，不自伐故有功，不自矜故长。

4 夫唯不争，故天下莫能与之争。

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<sup>12</sup> “式”，即「丁」，古代太史占天文的工具，在两块木板上刻者列干支，可以转动。此处用来喻圣人成为人们认识上天大道的工具。又见二十八章。

5 古之所谓曲则全者，岂虚言哉？诚全而归之。

## CHAPTER 23

- 1 To speak little is natural.
- 2 High winds will not howl the entire morning;  
A downpour will not last the entire day.  
Who is behind the wind and the rain?  
Heaven and earth.  
Even heaven and earth cannot last long;  
How can humanity?
- 3 Therefore, those who follow Tao identify with Tao;  
Those who have virtue identify with virtue;  
Those who are lost identify with loss.
- 4 Tao accepts those who identify with Tao;  
Virtue welcomes those who identify with it;  
Loss embraces those who identify with it.
- 5 Distrust is due to lack of faith.

## 第二十三章

- 1 少说话，合乎自然本相。
- 2 狂风刮不了一清晨，暴雨下不了一整天。兴起风雨的是谁呢？是天地。天地都不能长久，何况人呢？



3 所以，修道的人就认同道，养德的人就认同德，犯罪的人就认同罪。

4 认同道的人，道便悦纳他；认同德的人，德便悦纳他；认同罪的人，罪便悦纳他。

5 信心不足，才有不信。

**原文** 1 希言，自然。

2 故飘风不终朝，骤雨不终日。孰为此者？天地。天地尚不能久，而况于人乎？

3 故从事于道者同于道，德者同于德，失者同于失。

4 同于道者，道亦乐得之。同于德者，德亦乐得之。同于失者，失亦乐得之。

5 信不足焉，有不信焉。

## CHAPTER 24

- 1 Those who stand on tiptoe cannot remain standing;  
Those who stride cannot walk.**
- 2 Blind are those who think they can see;  
Foolish are those who think they are wise.**
- 3 Those who boast have not achieved;  
Those who brag cannot be leaders.**
- 4 Tao views these as leftover food and burdens—detestable.  
Those who follow Tao will not do such things.**

## 第二十四章

- 1 翘着脚就站立不住，蹦着高就走不成路。
- 2 自以为能看见的是瞎子，自以为聪明的是傻子。
- 3 自我夸耀的徒劳无功，自高自大的不能为首。
- 4 从道的眼光来看，这些东西像多余的饭，累赘的事，只会让人厌恶。有道的人不会这样的。

- 原文** 1 企者不立，跨者不行。
- 2 自见者不明，自是者不彰。
  - 3 自伐者无功，自矜者不长。
  - 4 其在道也，曰馀食赘形。物或恶之，故有道者不处。

**CHAPTER 25**

**1 An integrated being existed before the birth of Heaven  
and earth.**

**2 How still! How void!**

**Standing all by himself and never changing,  
He moves in and through all and is not wearied,**

**3 Worthy to be the mother of Heaven and earth.**

**4 I do not know his name;**

**So, I call it “Tao.”**

**If forced to name him,**

**I would name him “the Great.”**

**5 Being great, he keeps expanding—**

**Reaching to the farthest distance,  
until he returns.**

**6 Therefore, Tao is great;**

**Heaven is great;**

**Earth is great;**

**Human being is also great.**

**In the universe, the four are great,**

**And the human is one of them.**

**7 Human beings emulate the earth;**

**The earth emulates Heaven;**

**Heaven emulates Tao;**

**And Tao emulates what is as is.**

## 第二十五章

- 1 在产生天地之前，有一个溷然一体的存在。
- 2 寂静啊，空虚啊！独立自在，永不改变。普天运行，永不疲倦。
- 3 称得上是天地万物的母亲。
- 4 我不知道他的名字，姑且写作“道”，勉强起个名字叫“大”。
- 5 大，便无限飞逝，飞逝而致远，至远而回返。
- 6 所以道为大，天为大，地为大，人也为大。宇宙中四个为大的，人是其中之一。
- 7 然而人要以地为法度，地以天为法度，天以道为法度，道以自身为法度。

**原文** 1 有物溷成，先天地生。

- 2 寂兮寥兮，独立而不改，周行而不殆，
- 3 可以为天地母。
- 4 吾不知其名，强字之曰道，强为之名曰大。
- 5 大曰逝，逝曰远，远曰反。
- 6 故道大，天大，地大，人亦大。域中有四大，而人居其一焉。
- 7 人法地，地法天，天法道，道法自然。

## CHAPTER 26

**1 The heavy is the foundation of the light;**

**2 Stillness is the master of restlessness.**

**Therefore, the gentleman in his daily travels  
brings luggage carts.**

**Despite beauty and glory, he still enjoys rest and freedom.**

**3 However, some rulers of great nations are self centered,**

**Making light of the world to their own ruin.**

**4 To be light is to lose the root;**

**To be agitated is to lose control.**

## 第二十六章

1 重是轻的根基，静是躁的主人。

2 所以君子每天出行时都带着辎重。虽有荣华壮观，他却安然超脱。

3 然而有的大国君主，只重自身，轻慢天下，以致灭亡。

4 轻浮就会失去根基，骄躁就会失去控制。

原文 1 重为轻根，静为躁君。

2 是以君子终日行不离辎重。虽有荣观，燕处超然。

3 奈何万乘之主，而以身轻天下。

4 轻则失根，躁则失君。

## CHAPTER 27

- 1 A good traveler leaves no track;  
A good speaker speaks without blemish;  
A good discerner needs no device.**
- 2 Those good at shutting doors do so without bolts,  
And the doors cannot be opened;  
Those good at tying knots do so without ropes,  
And the knots cannot be untied.**
- 3 Likewise, the Holy One is good at saving people,  
And no one is abandoned.  
He is good at saving all things,  
And nothing is abandoned.**
- 4 This is called following the light.**
- 5 Hence, the kind one is the teacher of the unkind;  
The unkind is the resource of the kind.**
- 6 One is helplessly lost—however wise he is—  
If he does not respect the Teacher or love his resource.  
This is an important mystery!**

## 第二十七章

1 善于行走的不留踪迹，善于言辞的没有瑕疵，善于计算的不用器具。

- 2 善于关门的不用门插，却无人能开；善于捆绑的不用绳索，却无人能解。
- 3 圣人就是这样一直善于拯救世人，无人被弃之不顾；一直善于挽救万物，无物被弃之不顾。
- 4 这就叫承袭、传递光明。
- 5 所以说，善人是不善之人的老师，不善之人亦是善人的资财。
- 6 如果不敬重老师，或者不爱惜其资财，那么，再有智慧也是大大地迷失了。这是一个至关重要的奥妙啊！

**原文** 1 善行无辙迹，善言无瑕谪，善数不用筹策。

- 2 善闭无关键而不可开，善结无绳约而不可解。
- 3 是以圣人常善救人，故无弃人。常善救物，故无弃物。
- 4 是谓袭明。
- 5 故善人者，不善人之师。不善人者，善人之资。
- 6 不贵其师，不爱其资，虽智大迷，是谓要妙。



## CHAPTER 28

- 1 Knowing his masculine strength, but keeping  
to a feminine tenderness,  
He thus becomes the stream for the world.**
- 2 As the stream for the world, he has the eternal virtue with him,  
[enabling people to] return to being infants.**
- 3 Knowing his brightness but keeping to obscurity,  
He thus becomes the instrument for the world  
[to know Heaven].**
- 4 As the vehicle for the world to know Heaven,  
He has the eternal virtue with him, [enabling people to]  
return to the infinite.**
- 5 Knowing his glory but bearing disgrace,  
He thus becomes the valley for the world.**
- 6 As the valley for the world, he is abundant in eternal grace,  
[enabling people to] return to their original state of being.**
- 7 Once applied, this state of being becomes a vehicle.  
The Holy One uses it to become the ruler.**
- 8 Hence, the greatest wisdom is undivided.**

## 第二十八章

- 1 知道其雄伟强壮，却甘守雌爱柔顺，而成为天下的溪流。

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- 2 作为天下的溪流，永恆的恩德与他同在，（使人）複归于纯洁的婴儿。
- 3 知道其光明所在，却甘守暗昧，而成为世人认识上天的工具。
- 4 作为世人认识上天的工具，永恆的恩德至诚不移，（使人）複归于无限的境界。
- 5 知道其荣耀，却甘守羞辱，而成为天下的虚谷。
- 6 作为天下的虚谷，永恆的恩德充足丰满，（使人）複归于存在的本原。
- 7 这本原化散在不同的人身上，成为不同的器物。圣人使用他们，而成为掌权者。
- 8 如此，至大的智慧是浑然为一、不可分割的。

- 原文**
- 1 知其雄，守其雌，为天下溪。
  - 2 为天下溪，常德不离，複归于婴儿。
  - 3 知其白，守其黑，为天下式。
  - 4 为天下式，常德不忒，複归于无极。
  - 5 知其荣，守其辱，为天下谷。
  - 6 为天下谷，常德乃足，複归于朴。
  - 7 朴散则为器，圣人用之，则为官长。
  - 8 故大智不割。

## CHAPTER 29

**1 To win the world with [human] effort—**

**I see that it can only fail.**

**2 The world is God's vessel—unobtainable with [human] effort.**

**[Human] effort will fail;**

**He who holds on to it will lose it.**

**3 [This is what the human world is like:]**

**Some lead and some follow;**

**Some blow warm air and some cold;**

**Some strengthen and some weaken;**

**Some inherit and some overturn.**

**4 The Holy One abandons what is forcefully grasped,  
extravagant and full of pride.**

## 第二十九章

1 想用人为的努力去赢得天下，我看达不到目的。

2 天下是神的器物，不是人为努力可以得到的。人为努力的，必然失败；人为持守的，必然丧失。

3 世间是这样：有占先前行的，就有尾追不舍的；有哈暖气的，就有吹冷风的；有促其强盛的，就有令其衰弱的；有承载的，就有颠覆的。

道德经：老子原文与译文

4 所以圣人摈弃一切强求的、奢侈的和骄恣的东西。

**原文** 1 将欲取天下而为之，吾见其不得已。

2 天下神器，不可为也。为者败之，执者失之。

3 故物或行或随，或嘘或吹，或强或羸，或载或隳。

4 是以圣人去甚，去奢，去泰。

## CHAPTER 30

- 1 He who follows Tao in exercising Tao's sovereignty  
will not rule the world with an army.  
Force and arms bring retribution.**
- 2 Thorns and brambles spring up where an army has encamped;  
Tragic years follow great wars.**
- 3 Goodness will produce good results—no need to obtain them  
by force.**
- 4 Despite achievements, he does not boast;  
Despite achievements, he does not seek glory;  
Despite achievements, he does not become arrogant;  
Despite achievements, he lives as if he has not achieved;  
Despite achievements, he does not rely on force.**
- 5 Anything that flaunts its superiority and shows its strength  
must grow old and fade.  
This is not in accordance with Tao.  
Those who are not inside of Tao are doomed to die.**

## 第三十章

- 1 用道来行使主权的人，不靠武力而称强天下。用武力总是有报应的。
- 2 军队进驻之地，荆棘便长出来；每逢大战之后，凶年接着

来到。

3 良善自会结果，无须强夺硬取。

4 成了而不矜持，成了而不炫耀，成了而不骄傲，成了像是不得已，成了而不逞强。

5 任何事物一逞强示壮就会老朽，这不是出于道。不是出于道的，是早已注定要死亡了。

**原文** 1 以道作人主者，不以兵强天下。其事好还。

2 师之所处，荆棘生焉。大军之后，必有凶年。

3 善有果而已，不敢以取强。

4 果而勿矜，果而勿伐，果而勿骄。果而不得已，果而勿强。

5 物壮则老，是谓不道，不道早已。

## CHAPTER 31

### **1 Arms are instruments of ill omen;**

**a gentleman does not use them.**

**He uses them only when he has no alternative, and even then,  
in a serene manner and with restraint.**

**He does not see victory as something good.**

**To see victory as something good is to take pleasure  
in killing people.**

**He who takes pleasure in killing people will not succeed  
as a ruler.**

### **2 As for arms, they are instruments of ill omen;**

**all things hate them;**

**He who has Tao does not use them.**

**A gentleman values the left in times of peace  
and the right in times of war,  
because the left symbolizes good omens  
and the right symbolizes bad omens.**

**The lieutenant stands on the left and the general on the right.**

**The way they stand means to treat a war like a funeral.**

**After killing many, one should weep in mourning;**

**After winning a war, one should observe the rites  
of mourning.**

### 第三十一章

1 兵是不吉利的东西，不是君子所使用的。万不得已而用之，也是以恬澹之心，适可而止，打胜了也不当成美事。以打胜仗为美事的人，就是以杀人为乐。以杀人为乐的人，是绝不可能得志于天下的。

2 所谓兵，是不吉利的东西，万物都厌恶，得道的人不用它。君子平时以左方为贵，战时以右方为贵，因为左方表示吉祥，右方代表凶丧。偏将军在左边，上将军在右边，就是以凶丧来看待战事。杀人多了，就挥泪哀悼；打了胜仗，也像办丧事一样。

**原文** 1 兵者不祥之器，非君子之器。不得已而用之，恬澹为上，胜而不美。而美之者，是乐杀人。夫乐杀人者，则不可得志于天下矣。

2 夫兵者，不祥之器，物或恶之，故有道者不处。君子居则贵左，用兵则贵右。吉事尚左，凶事尚右。偏将军居左，上将军居右，言以丧礼处之。杀人之众，以悲哀泣之，战胜以丧礼处之。



## CHAPTER 32

- 1 Tao normally does not reveal his name.**
- 2 The being behind existence is small in origin,  
yet there is no higher authority above him.  
If lords and princes could obey him,  
all things would abide by him.**
- 3 Heaven and earth would be in harmony,  
and sweet dew would fall.  
It would fall on everyone naturally and equally  
without being decreed.**
- 4 The moment the universe started, hierarchy was already there.  
With hierarchy being there, man ought to know his own limit  
and not trespass.  
To know the limit and to pause in time—that is to avert harm.**
- 5 Tao guides the whole world to himself, as streams and valleys  
guide water to rivers and the sea.**

## 第三十二章

- 1 道，通常不显露其名份。
- 2 存在的本原（即道的本体）虽然精淼微小，天下却没有什麼能支配他。王侯若能持守他，万物会自动归顺。
- 3 天地相和，降下甘露，无人分配，自然均匀。

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4 宇宙一开始有秩序，就有了名份。既有了名份，人就该知道自己的限度，不可僭越。知道人的限度而及时止步，就可以平安无患了。

5 道，引导天下万民归向自己，就好像河川疏导诸水流向大海。

**原文** 1 道常无名。

2 朴虽小，天下莫能臣。

3 天地相合，以降甘露，民莫之令而自均。

4 始制有名，名亦既有，夫亦将知止。知止，可以不殆。

5 譬道之在天下，犹川谷之于江海。

## CHAPTER 33

- 1 To know others is wisdom;  
To know oneself is enlightenment.**
- 2 To conquer others is to prove one's force;  
To conquer oneself is to prove one's strength.**
- 3 He who knows contentment is wealthy;**
- 4 He who strives and perseveres has willpower;**
- 5 He who does not lose his position has endurance;**
- 6 He who dies without perishing has longevity.**

## 第三十三章

- 1 能识透别人，算有智慧；能识透自己，才有光明。
- 2 能战胜别人，算有力量；能战胜自己，才是真强。
- 3 知足的人富有。
- 4 攻克己身、顺道而行的人有志气。
- 5 持守本相、不失不离的人可以长久。
- 6 肉身虽死、生命活着的人才叫长生。

原文 1 知人者智，自知者明。

2 胜人者有力，自胜者强。

3 知足者富。

道德经：老子原文与译文

4 强行者有志。

5 不失其所者久。

6 死而不亡者寿。

## CHAPTER 34

### **1 The great Tao flows and fills the land**

**—to the left and to the right.**

### **2 He upholds all things, yet he does not boast;**

**He accomplishes great work, yet he claims no credit.**

### **3 He loves and sustains all things, yet he claims no lordship;**

**He seems to be small.**

**When all existence returns to him,**

**he still does not claim his lordship.**

**Thus, his name is great.**

### **4 From beginning to end, he never claims his greatness—**

**Thus, his greatness is established.**

## 第三十四章

1 大道弥漫，无所不在，周流左右。

2 万物都是籍着他生的，他不自夸自诩。大功都是由他而来的，他不彰明昭着。

3 他爱抚滋养万物，却不以主宰自居，看起来微不足道的样子。当万物都依附归向他时，他仍然不以主宰自居，这样，他的名份可就大了。

4 由于他从始至终不自以为大，这就成就了他的伟大。

道德经：老子原文与译文

原文 1 大道泛兮，其可左右。

2 万物恃之以生而不辞，功成不名有。

3 爱养万物而不为主，可名于小；万物归焉而不为主，可名为大。

4 以其终不自为大，故能成其大。

## CHAPTER 35

**1 He who holds on to the image of the great [Tao]**

**will have the whole world come to him.**

**Coming to him, people will not harm each other;**

**Instead, they will have rest and inner and outer peace.**

**2 Travelers in a hurry would linger for music and delicacies.**

**3 Tao, when spoken, lacks flavor.**

**He does not appeal to the eye or to the ear;**

**However, when applied, his benefits are not exhausted.**

## 第三十五章

1 秉持大道之象者，普天下都前往归向他。普天下都归向他，也不会互相妨害，反而得享安息、平安、太平。

2 人间的美乐佳宴，使匆匆过客们沉溺不前。

3 大道出口成为话语，平澹无味，看起来不起眼，听起来不入耳，用起来却受益无穷。

**原文** 1 执大象，天下往。往而不害，安、平、泰。

2 乐与饵，过客止。

3 道之出口，澹乎其无味，视之不足见，听之不足闻，用之不足既。

## CHAPTER 36

**1 Expand before ending it;**

**Strengthen before weakening it;**

**Revitalize before tearing it down;**

**Yield before snatching it.**

**This is called the dim light [of cleverness].**

**2 The soft and the weak will overcome the hard and the strong.**

**3 Fish cannot leave the water [to go ashore];**

**Neither can a country's sovereignty and power be displayed  
to the people, once it is separated from Tao.**

## 第三十六章

1 要收敛的，必先张弛一下。要削弱的，必先加强一下。要废弃的，必先兴起一会儿。要夺取的，必先让与一点儿。这是微妙的亮光。

2 柔弱的胜过刚强的。

3 鱼不能离开深水，国家的秘密武器也不能让人知道。

**原文** 1 将欲歛之，必故张之。将欲弱之，必故强之。将欲废之，必故兴之。将欲取之，必故与之。是谓微明。

2 柔弱胜刚强。



3 鱼不可脱于渊，国之利器不可以示人。

## CHAPTER 37

- 1 Tao normally seems idle,  
But, in fact, he is in the doing of every thing.**
- 2 Were lords and princes able to respect this,  
All things would transform accordingly.**
- 3 When desires rise in the transformation,  
Let them be conquered by the nameless being.  
Desires will die in the being that cannot be named.**
- 4 When desires are dead, human hearts are calm;  
Then the world will be at peace naturally.**

## 第三十七章

- 1 道，看起来无所作为的样子，实际上没有一事物不是他成就的。
- 2 王侯如果能持守住道，万事万物会自动归化。
- 3 归化中有私欲发作，便用那无以名状的本原来镇住。在这个无以名状的本原里，欲望将断绝。
- 4 欲望断绝、人心平静了，天下自然便安稳了。

**原文** 1 道常无为而无不为。

2 侯王若能守之，万物将自化。

Tao Te Ching: Original Text and A Modern Interpretation

3 化而欲作，吾将镇之以无名之朴。无名之朴，夫亦将无欲。

4 不欲以静，天下将自定。

## CHAPTER 38

- 1 A man of high morality needs no moral commands,  
Because they are within him;  
A man of low morality needs moral commands,  
Because he lacks them within.**
- 2 A man of high morality makes no [human] effort,  
And his morality has no ulterior motives;  
A man of low morality seeks morality,  
And his morality has ulterior motives.**
- 3 A man of great benevolence seeks benevolence,  
And he does not seek it out of an ulterior motive.  
A man with a great sense of justice seeks justice,  
And he seeks it out of an ulterior motive.**
- 4 A man of great propriety seeks propriety,  
But he rolls up his sleeves to use force when no one responds.**
- 5 Therefore, morality is required when Tao is lost;  
Benevolence is emphasized when morality is lost;  
Justice is sought once benevolence is lost;  
Propriety is obligatory when justice is lost.  
So called propriety is needed,  
When little loyalty and faithfulness remain.  
This is a sign of disorder.**
- 6 So called foreknowledge is merely a tiny shred of Tao's glory;  
It is the beginning of folly.**

**Therefore, the great man dwells in the abundance [of Tao],  
Not in the poverty [of propriety];  
He dwells in the substance [of Tao],  
Not in his outer glory.  
Thus, one is chosen, and the other is discarded.**

### 第三十八章

- 1 道德高尚的人，不必以道德诫命来自律，因为他内心自有道德。道德低下的人，需要恪守道德诫命，因为他内心没有道德。
- 2 道德高尚的人是无为的，其道德不是刻意为了实现什么。道德低下的人是在追求道德，其道德是为了达到某种目的。
- 3 有大仁爱的人，是在追求仁爱，却不是刻意实现某种目的。有大正义的人，是在追求正义，而且其正义是为了实现某种目的。
- 4 有大礼法的人，是在追求礼法，却没有人响应，就抡起胳膊去强迫人了。
- 5 所以，丧失了大道，这才强调道德；丧失了道德，这才强调仁爱；丧失了仁爱，这才强调正义；丧失了正义，这才强调礼法。所谓礼法，不过表明了忠信的浅薄缺乏，其实是祸乱的端倪了。

6 所谓人的先见之明，不过采摘了大道的一点虚华，是愚昧的开始。所以，大丈夫立身于丰满的大道中，而不站在浅薄的礼法上；立身于大道的朴实中，而不站在智慧的虚华上。据此而取捨。

**原文** 1上德不德，是以有德；下德不失德，是以无德。

2上德无为而无以为；下德无为而有以为。

3上仁为之而无以为；上义为之而有以为。

4上礼为之而莫之应，则攘臂而扔之。

5 故失道而后德，失德而后仁，失仁而后义，失义而后礼。夫礼者，忠信之薄，而乱之首。

6 前识者，道之华，而愚之始。是以大丈夫处其厚，不居其薄；处其实，不居其华。故去彼取此。

## CHAPTER 39

**1 What the ancients attained is the One.**

**2 By attaining the One—**

**Sky becomes clear;**

**Earth is stable;**

**Gods work wonders;**

**Rivers flow;**

**All living things grow;**

**Lords and princes establish their rule.**

**3 It thus follows:**

**If not clear, sky might split;**

**If not stable, earth might collapse;**

**If not working wonders, gods might disappear;**

**If not flowing, rivers might dry up;**

**If not growing, all living things might become extinct;**

**If not establishing their rule, lords and princes might fall.**

**4 The noble has the degraded as essence;**

**The high has the low as foundation.**

**Therefore, lords and princes call themselves**

**“orphaned,” “widowed,” or “hapless.”**

**This is having the degraded as essence, is it not?**

**5 Therefore, do not seek glittering jade;**

**Be strong like a rock.**

### 第三十九章

- 1 古人所得的，是一（唯一者，原初者，化一者，即道）。
- 2 天空得一而清虚，大地得一而安稳，神祇得一而显灵，江河得一而流水，万物得一而生长，王侯得一而天下归正。
- 3 推而言之：天空若不清虚，恐怕要裂开了；大地若不安稳，恐怕要坍塌了；神祇若不显灵，恐怕要消失了；江河若不流水，恐怕要干枯了；万物若不生长，恐怕要灭绝了；王侯不能使天下归正，恐怕要跌倒了。
- 4 贵是以贱为本体的，高是以低为基础的。所以王侯都自称孤家、寡人、不善。这不正是以贱为本体吗？不是吗？所以最高的荣誉恰恰没有荣誉。
- 5 所以不要追求晶莹如美玉，坚硬如顽石。

**原文** 1 昔之得，一者。

- 2 天得一以清，地得一以宁，神得一以灵，谷得一以盈，万物得一以生，侯王得一以为天下贞。
- 3 其致之也，谓天无以清，将恐裂；地无以宁，将恐废；神无以灵，将恐歇；谷无以盈，将恐竭；万物无以生，将恐灭；侯王无以正，将恐蹶。
- 4 故贵以贱为本，高以下为基。是以侯王自称孤、寡、不谷。此非以贱为本邪？非乎？故致誉无誉。



5是故不欲琤琤如玉，珞珞如石。

## CHAPTER 40

**1 To reverse is how Tao works;<sup>13</sup>**

**The power of Tao resides in weakness.**

**2 All things under Heaven are born of beings;**

**Beings are born of the non-being.**

## 第四十章

1 相反，是道的运动所在。柔弱，是道的力量所在。

2 天下万物都生于有，有出自无。

原文 1 反者道之动<sup>14</sup>，弱者道之用。

2 天下万物生于有，有生于无。

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<sup>13</sup> *Reverse* (反) carries a double meaning: to reverse and to return—that is, to change course, meaning “go opposite from the way of the world,” and to return, meaning “return to Tao.” For more detailed discussion, please refer to *Lao Tzu and The Bible*, Part Three, Chapter 1, Principle 1, Reverse.

<sup>14</sup>反，有相反、返归二意。二意相通：反于世界，返归于道。

**CHAPTER 41**

- 1** When the finest man hears Tao,  
He practices it diligently;  
When the average man hears Tao,  
He only seems to understand—attaining some and losing some;  
When the worst man hears Tao,  
He bursts out laughing.  
If not laughed at, can Tao be still Tao?
- 2** Therefore, *Jian Yan* has it:  
Tao is bright, but men take Tao to be dark;  
To be growing in Tao seems to be retreating;  
To have peace in Tao appears difficult.
- 3** The highest virtue assumes positions [that are]  
low like a valley;  
In humiliation lies the greatest honor.
- 4** The abundance of virtue seems insufficient;  
The strength of virtue appears weak;  
The truth of virtue sounds empty.
- 5** The great room has no corners;  
The great vessel takes the longest time to form;
- 6** The great voice is too loud to be heard;  
The great image is too grand to be seen.
- 7** Tao is hidden and nameless,  
Yet only Tao excels in giving and bringing all to completion.

## 第四十一章

- 1 优秀的人听了道之后，勤勉地遵行。一般的人听了道之后，仍是似懂非懂、若有若无的样子。俗陋的人听了道之后，大声嘲笑。若不被这种人嘲笑，那还叫道吗？
- 2 所以《建言书》上说：道是光明的，世人却以为暗昧。在道里长进，却似乎是颓废。在道里有平安，看起来却像是艰难。
- 3 至高的道德却好像幽谷低下，极大的荣耀却好像受了侮辱，
- 4 宽广之德却被视若不足，刚健之德视若苟且，实在的真理视若虚无，
- 5 至大的空间没有角落，伟大的器皿成形在后，
- 6 声音太大时，人在其中就听不到什么；形象太大时，人在其中就看不到什么。
- 7 道是隐秘的；然而只有道，善施与、又能成全。

**原文** 1 上士闻道，勤而行之。中士闻道，若存若亡。下士闻道，大笑之。不笑不足以为道。

- 2 故建言有之：明道若昧，进道若退，夷道若纇，
- 3 上德若谷，大白若辱，
- 4 广德若不足，建德若偷，质真若渝，
- 5 大方无隅，大器晚成，
- 6 大音希声，大象无形。

7 道隐无名。夫唯道，善贷且成。

## CHAPTER 42

**1 Tao begat one;**

**One begat two;**

**Two begat three;**

**Three begat all things. <sup>15</sup>**

**2 All things carry *yin* on their backs**

**and embrace *yang* in their arms;**

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<sup>15</sup> People from later generations have interpreted this concept according to either a materialistic view or the Yin and Yang theory; however, neither matches Lao Tzu's original meaning. Zhuang Tzu's great exegesis echoes throughout *Tao Te Ching*: Since there is One, what else can be said? Once One has given One a name, has not One uttered "One"? The original One and what the original One says about the original One become two. These two plus the original One are three. From nothing to something, it stops at three (Da Zhong Shi). Zhuang Tzu's explanation about the three "one" may not be very clear to many. To put it simply, what he says of one, two, three represents Tao itself, the name of Tao, and the manifestation of Tao. Lao Tzu's concept is translated in reference to Zhuang Tzu—to use Tao to explain Tao. Wang Bi's explanation also has referred to Zhuang Tzu. The name, substance, and form of Tao and their relationship are touched upon in *Tao Te Ching*, chapters 1, 4, 6, 9, 14, 21, 25, 32, 41, and 42. See also *Lao Tzu and the Bible*, Part One, Chapter Two, Section A, 3. Analysis: "One, Two, Three" and Chapter V, Section C, 2. "Name, Substance, and Form" United as One, and 3. Lao Tzu's Discussion about "Name, Substance, and Form."

**The blending of the two results in harmony. <sup>16</sup>**

**3 Men detest being orphaned, widowed, or hapless,**

**Yet lords and princes describe themselves as such.**

**4 Therefore, men lose only to gain and gain only to lose.**

**5 What ancients have taught me I thus teach you:**

**Those relying on their own strength will not die peacefully.**

**Let this saying be the beginning of my teachings.**

## 第四十二章

1 道先于万物而自在，这是他的实在，称为一。道被言说为道，这是他的名份，称为二。道的实在，能被言说为道的名份，是因为他有表象，称为三。三而一的道生养了万物。

2 万物都有背道之阴和向道之阳，两者相互激荡以求平和。

3 人们所厌恶的，不就是孤、寡、不善吗？王公却用这些字眼儿自称。

4 所以有时求益反而受损，有时求损反而获益。

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<sup>16</sup> Tao is absolute brightness; there is no darkness above Tao or beneath Tao. Tao is One. All things have two sides—toward the light or opposite to the light, also called “embracing Yang while bearing Yin.” Two forces, running toward and opposite of Tao, drive each other and balance each other to reach a state of peace relying on Qi (灵 – Spirit).

5 先人教我的，我也用来教你们：自恃其强、偏行己路的人绝没有好下场。这句话，就作为教训的开始。

**原文 1** 道生一，一生二，二生三，三生万物<sup>17</sup>。

2 万物负阴而抱阳，冲气以为和<sup>18</sup>。

3 人之所恶，唯孤、寡、不谷，而王公以为称。

4 故物或损之而益，或益之而损。

5 人之所教，我亦教之：强梁者不得其死，吾将以为教父。

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<sup>17</sup>后人的解释要么依据唯物辩证法，要么依据阴阳学说，均非老子本意，在《老子》其他任何一章中也找不到任何一节来证明。庄子对此早有精妙的解释，在老子通篇中都可以找到佐证。庄子说：“既然是‘一’了，还有什么好说的呢？然而，既然称之为‘一’了，岂不是已经说出口了吗？这个‘一’，与我们对它的言说，就是‘二’了。‘二’，再加上‘一’原本的存在，就是‘三’。所以从无到有，到‘三’为止（《大宗师》）”。庄子所说的三个“一”，很绕口，其实就是“道的表像、道的名份、道的实在”这三者。此处译文即根据庄子，以道解道。王弼亦明显参考了庄子。道的名、实、像及其三者的关系，在《老子》一、四、六、九、十四、二十一、二十五、三十二、四十一和四十二章等，都有论及。详见第一部二章一节之三“辨析一二三”，五章一节之二“名实像、三合一”、之三“老子谈名实像”。

<sup>18</sup>道是「其上不皦、其下不昧」的纯粹光明，是「一」。万物却有向光与背光的两面，故曰「抱阳而负阴」。向道与背道这两面相互激荡，靠「气」（灵？）而平和。



## CHAPTER 43

- 1 The softest in the world will overcome the hardest;  
That which has no substance penetrates  
into that which has no cracks.**
- 2 Thus I come to know the benefits of making no effort.**
- 3 Teaching without words and the benefits of making no effort—  
Few people come to know these.**

## 第四十三章

- 1 天下最柔弱的，驾御、驰骋于天下最坚强的。没有实体的，进入没有空隙的。
- 2 我由此便知道无为的益处。
- 3 这种无言的教化，无为的益处，天下很少有人能得着啊！

**原文** 1 天下之至柔，驰骋天下之至坚。无有入无间。

2 吾是以知无为之有益。

3 不言之教，无为之益，天下希及之。

## CHAPTER 44

**1 Fame or life, which is more precious to you?**

**Life or wealth, which is more valuable to you?**

**Gaining [the world] or losing [your life]:**

**which is the greater suffering?**

**2 Much greed will lead to great disasters;**

**Storing much will lead to great losses.**

**3 Therefore, be content and thus spare yourself troubles.**

**Know when to stop and thus avoid dangers.**

**Then, you will live long.**

## 第四十四章

1 名声与生命，哪一样与你更密切呢？生命与财富，哪一样对你更重要呢？得着世界与丧失生命，哪一样是病态呢？

2 贪得无厌的人必有大损害，囤积财富的人必有大失丧。

3 所以，知道满足，便不受困辱；知道停止，才能免除危险，可以得享长久的生命。

**原文** 1 名与身孰亲？身与货孰多？得与亡孰病？

2 甚爱必大费；多藏必厚亡。

3 故知足不辱，知止不殆，可以长久。

## CHAPTER 45

- 1 The highest perfection seems lacking,  
Yet whenever applied, it never fails.**
- 2 The greatest fullness seems empty,  
Yet use does not exhaust it.  
The most upright seems bent;  
The wisest seems naive;  
The most eloquent seems slow [in speech].**
- 3 Tranquility overcomes restlessness as cold overcomes heat.  
Simplicity and tranquility is the true way for the world.**

## 第四十五章

- 1 那完善至极的，看起来却好像欠缺的样子，然而永不败坏。那丰盈四溢的，看起来却好像虚无的样子，然而用之无穷。
- 2 最正直的好像弯曲，最聪明的好像愚拙，最善辩的好象口讷。
- 3 安静胜于躁动，一如寒冷抵御炎热。唯有清静，是天下的正道。

**原文** 1 大成若缺，其用不弊。大盈若冲，其用不穷。

2 大直若屈，大巧若拙，大辩若讷。

道德经：老子原文与译文

3静胜躁，寒胜热。清静，为天下正。

## CHAPTER 46

- 1 When Tao prevails in the world,  
War horses are used to plough fields;  
When Tao does not prevail in the world,  
Even pregnant horses will have to go to battle.**
- 2 There is no greater misfortune than discontent;  
There is no greater sin than greed.  
Therefore, he who knows enough as enough  
will be content forever.**

## 第四十六章

- 1 天下有道的时候，最好的战马却用来种地。天下无道的时候，怀驹的母马也要上战场。
- 2 最大的祸害就是不知足，最大的罪过就是贪婪。所以，以知足为满足的人，其满足是永恆的。

- 原文** 1 天下有道，却走马以粪。天下无道，戎马生于郊。
- 2 祸莫大于不知足，咎莫大于欲得。故知足之足，常足矣。

## CHAPTER 47

- 1 No need to go out to know the whole world;  
No need to look out the window to see the Tao of Heaven;  
The farther one travels, the less one knows.**
- 2 Therefore, the Holy One  
Knows without having to experience,  
Sees without looking,  
Accomplishes without effort.**

## 第四十七章

- 1 不出屋门便可知天下，不望窗外便可见天道。出去的越远，知道的越少。
- 2 所以圣人不必经历便知道，不必看见就明白，不靠努力而成就。

**原文** 1 不出户，知天下。不窥牖，见天道。其出弥远，其知弥少。

2 是以圣人行而知，不见而明，不为而成。

## CHAPTER 48

- 1 Pursue knowledge,  
And you will become increasingly conceited;  
Pursue Tao,  
And you will become increasingly humble.  
Keep humbling yourself,  
And you will reach the state of being effort free.**
- 2 When human beings are effort free,  
Tao then is able to accomplish all things.**
- 3 The world is not won by forceful effort;  
Even though you have made every attempt,  
You still will not win the world.**

## 第四十八章

- 1 追求知识会越来越膨胀自负，追求真道会越来越谦卑虚己。一直谦卑虚己下去，就可以达到无为的境界了。
- 2 在（人）无为的境界里，（道）便可以无所不为了。
- 3 得到天下不是靠勉强，倘若极尽其能事，不足以得到天下。

**原文** 1 为学日益，为道日损。损之又损，以至于无为。

2 无为而无不为。

道德经：老子原文与译文

3 取天下常以无事，及其有事，不足以取天下。



## CHAPTER 49

**1 The heart of the Holy One is not concerned about himself; <sup>19</sup>**

**His heart is concerned about the concerns of the people.**

**2 He is good to those who are good,**

**And he is also good to those who are not good.**

**There is thus goodness.**

**3 He trusts in those who are trustworthy,**

**And he also trusts in those who are not trustworthy.**

**There is thus trust.**

**4 In this world, the Holy One, with his breath,**

**makes people's hearts simple. <sup>20</sup>**

**People fix their eyes and ears on him,**

**And he treats them like children.**

## 第四十九章

1 圣人没有一己之心，而是一心为了百姓的心。

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<sup>19</sup> The original text literally means “no heart” or “no usual heart,” referring to “no selfish concerns.” The Mawangdui copy has it as “no stubborn heart.”

<sup>20</sup> “Inhale” the breath of the spirit, portraying the movement of the spirit toward people.

2 良善的人，以良善待他；不良善的人，也以良善待他，从而结出良善的果子。

3 信实的人，以信实待他；不信实的人，也以信实待他，从而结出信实的果子。

4 圣人在天下，以其气息使人心浑然纯朴。百姓们全神贯注，凝视凝听，圣人则把他们当婴孩看待。

**原文** 1 圣人无常心<sup>21</sup>，以百姓心为心。

2 善者吾善之，不善者吾亦善之，德善。

3 信者吾信之，不信者吾亦信之，德信。

4 圣人在天下，歙歙焉<sup>22</sup>为天下浑其心，百姓皆注其耳目，圣人皆孩之。

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<sup>21</sup>「无常心」，有本作「常无心」、「无心」，即无私心。马王堆本「常」为「恆」，「无恆心」亦即不固执一己之心。

<sup>22</sup>「歙」，音「吸」，纳气入内。「歙歙焉」，有灵气运行、并非人意之状。

## CHAPTER 50

**1 At the moment of birth, men begin to die.**

**Men live with their four limbs and nine apertures;**

**Men die with their four limbs and nine apertures.**

**Men send themselves to their graves**

**with their four limbs and nine apertures.<sup>23</sup>**

**2 Why is this so?**

**Because they have overindulged in worldly pleasures.**

**3 This saying exists about the one who is good**

**at holding on to true life:**

**He will not meet with tigers in his journey;**

**He will not get wounded in battle.**

**Standing before him,**

**Rhinoceros do not know how to pitch their horns;**

**Tigers do not know how to stretch out their claws;**

**Enemies do not know how to wield their knives.**

**4 Why is this so?**

**Because he has risen above the realm of death.**

---

<sup>23</sup> According to Hanfei Tzu, alive or dead, human beings have four limbs and nine apertures. Men live and die with their four limbs and nine apertures.

## 第五十章

1 人一生出来，就进入了死亡（程序）。人以四肢九窍活着，人以四肢九窍死去，人以这四肢九窍，将自己的生命送到死地。

2 为什么会这样？因为世人太贪婪今生的享乐了。

3 听说善于得到并持守真生命的人，行路不会遇到老虎，打仗不会受到伤害。在他面前，凶牛不知怎么投射它的角，勐虎不知怎么扑张它的爪，敌兵不知怎么挥舞他的刀。

4 为什么会这样？因为他已脱离了死亡的境地啊！

**原文** 1 出生入死。生之徒十有三，死之徒十有三。人之生，动之于死地，亦十有三<sup>24</sup>。

2 夫何故？以其生生之厚。

3 盖闻善摄生者，路行不遇兕虎，入军不被甲兵，兕无所投其角，虎无所用其爪，兵无所容其刃。

4 夫何故？以其无死地。

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<sup>24</sup>从韩非子注。不论生死，人皆有四肢九窍；送生致死，亦以此四肢九窍。

## CHAPTER 51

- 1 All things are created by Tao,  
Nurtured by his grace,<sup>25</sup>  
Formed into matter,  
And completed in his care.**
- 2 Therefore, all things revere Tao and honor his virtues.**
- 3 Tao is worthy of reverence and his virtues worthy of honor—  
Not because Tao decrees it,  
But because this is naturally so and will be forever.**
- 4 Tao gives all things life, nurses and develops them,  
providing them peace, love, and protection.  
Though he begets and raises them, he claims no ownership;  
Though he is the lord of all, he does not rule arbitrarily.  
This is unfathomable grace!**

## 第五十一章

1 万物都是由道所生，又有恩德去蓄养，化育为物形，得势而成长。

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<sup>25</sup> *De* (德) has many meanings, including virtue, grace, gain, gratitude, traits, and so on. In Tao, the word *grace* seems most fitting.

- 2 所以万物没有不敬畏大道、不珍惜恩德的。
- 3 大道的可敬和恩德的可贵，在于他不是情动一时、令出一时，乃是自然而然、永恆如此。
- 4 所以说，道生出万物，又以恩德去蓄养，使它们成长发育，给它们平安稳定，对它们抚爱保护。然而他这样创造养育却不强行占有，他这样无所不为却不自恃己功，他是万物之主却不任意宰制，这可真是深不可测的恩德啊！

**原文** 1 道生之，德<sup>26</sup>蓄之，物形之，势成之。

- 2 是以万物莫不尊道而贵德。
- 3 道之尊，德之贵，夫莫之命而常自然。
- 4 故道生之，德畜之，长之育之，亭之毒之，养之覆之。生而不有，为而不恃，长而不宰，是谓玄德。

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<sup>26</sup>「德」，有品德、恩德、得着、感德、属性等意。用于大道者，当是恩德。

## **CHAPTER 52**

**1 The world has a beginning;**

**The beginning is the mother of the world.**

**2 Knowing the mother, we know we are sons.**

**3 Knowing we are sons, we must return to wait on mother;**

**We thus can be safe and sound,**

**even when our bodies disappear.**

**4 Block the passage to your senses,**

**Shut the door to your intelligence,**

**Your whole life then will be trouble free.**

**Unblock the passage to your senses,**

**Use your cleverness and ability,**

**And throughout your life, you will not reach salvation.**

**5 To see the small is to be bright;**

**To remain soft is to be strong.**

**6 Following the light [of Tao],**

**Returning to its brightness,**

**One will avoid calamities.**

**Thus is to inherit eternity.**

## 第五十二章

- 1 天下有始，以为天下母。
- 2 既得其母，以知其子。
- 3 既知其子，複守其母，没身不殆。
- 4 塞其兑，闭其门，终身不勤。开其兑，济其事，终身不救。
- 5 见小曰明，守柔曰强。
- 6 用其光，複归其明，无遗身殃，是为袭常。

**译文** 1 世界有一个开始，那开始的，就是世界的母亲。

- 2 既晓得有一位母亲，就知道我们是儿子。
- 3 既知道我们是儿子，就应当回归守候母亲。若能这样，纵然身体消失，依旧安然无恙。
- 4 塞住通达的感官，关闭认识的门户，你就终身不会有劳苦愁烦。敞开你的通达感官，极尽你的聪明能事，你便终生不能得救了。
- 5 能见着精微才叫明亮，能持守柔顺才叫强壮。
- 6 藉着大道洒下的光亮，複归其光明之中，就不会留下身后的祸殃了。这就是承袭永恆、得着永生的意思。



## CHAPTER 53

- 1 This is why I am certain [of Tao] and walk in his path—  
The only thing I fear is going astray.**
- 2 The great Tao is complete peace, but men prefer bypaths.**
- 3 The court is corrupt indeed;  
The fields are full of weeds;  
The granaries are all empty.  
Are they not indeed robbers —  
Those wearing fine robes,  
Those bearing sharp swords,  
Those indulging in delicacies,  
Those storing too much wealth?  
This is rebellion against Tao!**

## 第五十三章

- 1 这使我对大道确信不疑，行于其中，唯恐偏失。
- 2 大道非常平安，世人却偏行险路。
- 3 朝廷已很污秽，田园已很荒芜，粮仓已很空虚，却穿着华美的服饰，佩戴锋利的刀剑，吃腻佳肴美味，囤积金银财宝，这不就是强盗头子吗？这个背离大道的世代啊！

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**原文** 1 使我介然有知，行于大道，唯施是畏。

2 大道甚夷，而人好径。

3 朝甚除，田甚芜，仓甚虚。服文采，带利剑，厌饮食，财货有馀，是为盗夸。非道也哉！

## CHAPTER 54

- 1 What the perfect builder builds cannot be destroyed;  
What the perfect preserver preserves cannot be lost.**
- 2 Your descendants ought to offer sacrifices [to the perfect One]  
without ceasing.**
- 3 Thus cultivated, a person will have genuine virtues;  
Thus cultivated, a family will have more than sufficient virtues;  
Thus cultivated, a village will have virtues that endure;  
Thus cultivated, a nation will have virtues in abundance;  
Thus cultivated, the world will have virtues that prevail.**
- 4 Therefore, applying that to oneself,  
one comes to know oneself;  
Applying that to itself, a family comes to know itself;  
Applying that to itself, a village comes to know itself;  
Applying that to itself, a nation comes to know itself;  
Applying that to itself, the world comes to know itself.  
How do I get to know what the world is like?  
By such application.**

## 第五十四章

1 那善于建造的，他建造的不能拔除。那善于保守的，他保守的不会失落。

2 子子孙孙不应该停止祭祀（他）。

3 一个人若这样，这个人的道德必真实无伪。一家若这样，这一家的恩德必充实有余。一乡若这样，这一乡的恩德必深远流长。一国若这样，这一国的恩德必丰满兴隆。若以此教化天下，其恩德必普行于天下。

4 所以，用这个道理看一人，则知一人；看一家，则知一家；看一乡，则知一乡；看一国，则知一国；看天下，则知天下。我从何知晓天下之事呢？就是从这里。

**原文 1** 善建者不拔，善抱者不脱。

2 子孙以祭祀不辍。

3 修之于身，其德乃真。修之于家，其德乃馀。修之于乡，其德乃长。修之于邦，其德乃丰。修之于天下，其德乃普。

4 故以身观身，以家观家，以乡观乡，以邦观邦，以天下观天下。吾何以知天下然哉？以此。

## CHAPTER 55

- 1 One who has abundant virtues is like a newborn infant.**
- 2 Poisonous insects do not sting him;  
Ferocious animals do not attack him;  
Birds of prey do not harm him.  
His bones and muscles are weak, but his grasp is strong;  
He does not know the union of man and woman,  
Yet his organ stands firm—  
This is because his sexual vitality is pure and full.  
He can cry all day without becoming hoarse—  
This is because he is in perfect harmony.**
- 3 To know harmony is to know eternity;  
To know eternity is to see light.**
- 4 It is a blessing when your life receives benefits;  
It is a strength when your heart controls your flesh.**
- 5 When things grow to maturity, they begin to decay—  
This is in contrast to the way of eternity.  
That which is contrary to the way of eternity is doomed to die.**

## 第五十五章

- 1 道德丰厚的人，就像赤裸的婴儿一样。

2 毒虫不螫他，猛兽不咬他，凶鸟不伤他。他的筋骨柔弱，却抓得牢握得紧。他不懂男女交合之事，生殖器却常硬朗，这是精气纯全的缘故啊！他终日哭叫而不哑，这是天然合和的缘故啊！

3 认识天然合和就叫做认识永恒，认识永恒就叫做认识光明。

4 使生命更丰盛就叫做福祥，心灵掌管血气就叫做强壮。

5 相反，物质的东西一壮大就会老朽，不合乎永恒之道。不合乎永恒之道的，是早已注定要死亡了。

**原文** 1 含德之厚，比于赤子。

2 毒虫不螫，猛兽不据，攫鸟不搏。骨弱筋柔而握固。未知牝牡之合而□作。精之至也。终日号而不嘎，和之至也。

3 知和曰常，知常曰明。

4 益生曰祥，心使气曰强。

5 物壮则老，谓之不道。不道早已。

## CHAPTER 56

- 1 He who knows [Tao] does not speak;  
He who speaks does not know [Tao].**
- 2 Block the passage to your senses,  
Shut your door to temptations,  
Abandon self-righteousness,  
Disengage from entanglements,  
Come to the light,  
Accept that you are only dust.  
This is to enter the realm of union [with Tao].**
- 3 To one who is not in this realm, there appear intimacy  
or alienation, benefits or harm, nobility or lowliness.  
Therefore, this realm of union with Tao  
is the only precious one.**

## 第五十六章

- 1 知“道”者不好说，好说者不知“道”。
- 2 塞住通达的感官，关闭受惑的门户，放弃自以为是的锐气，摆脱纷纭万象的迷惑，和于你生命的光中，认同你尘土的本相，这就是深奥玄妙的同一境界了。

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3 不能进入这个境界，才产生亲近和疏远，才会有利益和损害，才分出高贵和低贱。所以，唯有这个境界才是真正可贵的。

**原文** 1 知者不言，言者不知。

2 塞其兑，闭其门，挫其锐，解其纷，和其光，同其尘，是谓玄同。

3 故不可得而亲，不可得而疏，不可得而利，不可得而害，不可得而贵，不可得而贱。故为天下贵。



## CHAPTER 57

**1 Rule the nation with an upright heart;**

**Wage wars with surprise tactics;**

**Win the world by making no [human] effort.**

**How do I know this is so?**

**These are the reasons:**

**2 The more prohibitions there are,**

**The poorer the people become;**

**The more sharp knives people have,**

**The less stable the country becomes;**

**The more tactics people learn,**

**The more bizarre things appear;**

**The more refined the legal codes become,**

**The more criminals there are.**

**3 Thus says the Holy One:**

**I make no [human] effort—**

**And people's hearts are transformed by themselves;**

**I live in tranquility—**

**And people's hearts are set right by themselves;**

**I disengage myself—**

**And people grow prosperous by themselves;**

**I have no desires—**

**And people become pure by themselves.**

## 第五十七章

1 以恆常的法度治理国家，以出奇的策略用兵打仗，以无为之道得天下。我何以知道这一层道理呢？你们看：

2 天下越多禁令，人民越是贫穷。人们的利器越多，国家越是溷乱。人的技巧发达了，千奇百怪的事就出现了。法令越是彰明，罪犯就越多。

3 所以圣人说，我无为，民心自然归化。我好静，民心自然匡正。我无事，我民自然富有。我无欲，我民自然纯朴。

**原文** 1 以正治国，以奇用兵，以无事取天下。吾何以知其然哉？以此：

2 天下多忌讳，而民弥贫。民多利器，国家滋昏。人多伎巧，奇物滋起。法令滋彰，盗贼多有。

3 故圣人云：我无为而民自化，我好静而民自正，我无事而民自富，我无欲而民自朴。

## CHAPTER 58

- 1 When the government is not suspicious,  
The people are honest;  
When the government is calculating,  
The people are cunning.**
- 2 Blessings follow misfortunes, and misfortunes, blessings—  
Who can know the mystery behind it?**
- 3 The sensible becomes absurd;  
Good becomes evil.  
For a long time, this has been a mystery for man.**
- 4 Therefore, the Holy One lives uprightly yet judges no one;  
He is sharp but does no harm.  
He is forthright but not unrestrained;  
He shines but does not dazzle.**

## 第五十八章

- 1 一国的政治浑然无觉，其人民便纯朴敦厚。一国的政治明察秋毫，其人民便尖刻浇薄。
- 2 祸患啊，带来福份；福份啊，隐含着祸患。谁能知晓其中的奥秘呢？

3 本来正常的，又变得荒诞。以为良善的，又成为邪恶。这种现象令人迷惑不解，已经很深很久了。

4 所以，圣人行为方正，却不以此审判别人；心思锐利，却不因此伤害别人；品性缙直而不放肆；明亮如光却不炫耀。

**原文** 1 其政闷闷，其民淳淳。其政察察，其民缺缺。

2 祸兮福之所倚，福兮祸之所伏。孰知其极？

3 正复为奇，善复为妖。人之迷，其日固久。

4 是以圣人方而不割，廉而不刿，直而不肆，光而不耀。

## CHAPTER 59

- 1 When one rules the state to serve Heaven,  
the most important thing is to have compassion.**
- 2 To have compassion is to be watchful and ready;**
- 3 To be watchful and ready is to accumulate virtues.**
- 4 With virtues accumulated, one can overcome everything;**
- 5 Overcoming everything, one will know no limit;**
- 6 Knowing no limit, one then can rule the state.**
- 7 If the state has the Mother, it then can last long.**
- 8 This [the Mother] is Tao—deep rooted and firm,  
eternal and long awaited.**

## 第五十九章

- 1 治理人事，侍奉上天，最重要的是惜爱。
- 2 唯有惜爱，是警醒预备。
- 3 警醒预备，即所谓厚积恩德。
- 4 厚积恩德，则无往而不克。
- 5 无往而不克，则力量无限。
- 6 力量无限，就可以拥有国度了。
- 7 有了国度的母亲，就可以长久。
- 8 母亲就是那根深蒂固、永生盼望之道。

原文 1 治人事天，莫若嗇。

2 夫为嗇，是谓早服。

3 早服，谓之重积德。

4 重积德，则无不克。

5 无不克，则莫知其极。

6 莫知其极，可以有国。

7 有国之母，可以长久。

8 是谓深根固柢，长生久视之道。

## CHAPTER 60

**1 Ruling a state is like cooking a small fish.**

**2 When the state is ruled under Tao,  
Ghosts will trouble no one.**

**3 Not only do ghosts trouble no one—  
Even gods harm no one.**

**4 Not only do gods harm no one—  
Even saints will not harm anyone.**

**5 Thus, the two do no harm to each other,  
And virtues meet to return [to Tao].**

## 第六十章

1 治理大国，要像煎小鱼一样。

2 以道来统辖天下时，鬼怪不作祟于人。

3 不仅鬼怪不作祟于人，神祇也不伤害人。

4 不仅神祇不伤害人，圣人也不伤害人。

5 这样，两相和好，互不伤害，德就交汇融合于道，归入其源头了。

**原文** 1 治大国，若烹小鲜。

2 以道莅天下，其鬼不神。

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3 非其鬼不神，其神不伤人。

4 非其神不伤人，圣人亦不伤人。

5 夫两不相伤，故德交归焉。



## CHAPTER 61

**1 If a big country humbles itself,**

**All countries will look to it [for leadership].**

**2 It would be like a mother to them.**

**The female often overcomes the male  
with her stillness and humility.**

**3 Therefore, if a big country can be humble**

**toward a small country,**

**It wins its [trust];**

**If a small country humbles itself toward a big country,**

**It wins its [respect].**

**Hence, the one benefits because of its humility,**

**And the other is benefited because of its humility.**

**What a big country wants is to annex a small country;**

**What a small country wants is to co-exist with a big country.**

**If both countries are to have their desires fulfilled,**

**The big country must humble itself.**

## 第六十一章

1 大国如果谦卑处下，慈柔如母，就能成为天下汇归之处。

2 母性常常胜于雄性，就在于她能安安静静，处身卑下。

3 所以大国若对小国谦卑处下，便能得着小国的信赖。小国若对大国谦卑处下，便能得着大国的信任。所以，或者因谦卑处下而得着，或者因谦卑处下被得着。大国不过想兼蓄小国，小国不过想见容于大国。若要让两者都得着自己所谋求的，大国谦卑处下是最要紧的。

**原文** 1 大国者若下流，天下之交，天下之牝。

2 牝常以静胜牡，以静为下。

3 故大国以下小国，则取小国。小国以下大国，则取大国。故或下以取，或下而取。大国不过欲兼蓄人，小国不过欲入事人。夫两者各得其所，大者宜为下。

## CHAPTER 62

### 1 Tao is the lord of all things, <sup>27</sup>

#### The treasure of the good man and the mediator for sinners. <sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> *Ao* (奧) is translated by He Shang Gong as “preserve” and as “shield” by Wang Bi. The Mawangdui silk manuscript A and B note the word as *lord*, which contains the meaning of “preserve” and “shield.”

<sup>28</sup> Regarding the word *mediator* (保), the translation of Ren Jiyu and Chen Guyin concurred with He Shangong: “Tao is also for sinners to keep every step of the way.” This is obviously a problematic interpretation, since sinners are those who cannot hold on to Tao. Wang Bi interprets the word as “to preserve from damage”; Feng Dapu follows Wang Shi: “The unkind relies on Tao for protection,” which implies that sinners can hold on to Tao for protection although they do not know Tao. This kind of interpretation is off the mark even to the interpreters themselves.

“The treasure of the good man” and “the mediator for sinners” are two related concepts that work together. Sinners are being passively mediated by Tao, while the good man actively applies Tao as the utmost treasure to save people. Putting the two concepts together, the meaning is very clear: Tao is the treasure used by the good man to mediate for sinners. This relates to what Lao Tzu says previously: “The Holy One is good at saving people and no one is abandoned; the kind one is the teacher of the unkind; the unkind is the resource of the kind” (27:3-6). To mediate for sinners means to lead them into Tao so that they may discard their wickedness and their sins may be forgiven. This point is emphasized in *Tao Te Ching*,

**2 Beautiful words can win honor;**

**Good deeds can win respect,**

**But how can a man purge his sin?**

**3 Therefore, it is far better to dwell in Tao**

**than to be crowned emperor**

**or appointed a high official with glory and wealth!**

**4 Why was Tao greatly valued in antiquity?**

**Is it not because in him, seekers find what they are seeking,**

**and sinners find forgiveness?**

**Therefore, Tao should be the most honored in the world.**

## 第六十二章

1 道是万物的主宰，善人的宝贝，罪人的中保。

2 美好的言词固然可以博取尊荣，美好的行为固然使人得到敬重，然而人的不善怎能被剔除弃绝呢？

3 所以，就是立为天子，封为三公（太师、太傅、太保），财宝无数，荣华加身，还不如坐进这大道里呢！

4 古时候为什么重视道呢？不就是因为在他里面，寻求就能得着，有罪能得赦免吗？所以道是天下最尊贵的啊！

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Chapter 62. See *Lao Tzu and the Bible*, Part Two, Chapter Two, Section B, 2. “Mediator”: Mediate for Sinners.

- 原文 1 道者，万物之奥<sup>29</sup>。善人之宝，不善人之所保<sup>30</sup>。
- 2 美言可以市尊，美行可以加人，人之不善，何弃之有？
- 3 故立天子，置三公，虽有拱璧，以先驷马，不如坐进此道。
- 4 古之所以贵此道者何？不曰有求以得，有罪以免邪？故为天下贵。

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<sup>29</sup> “奥”字，河上公注为“藏”，王弼注为“庇荫”，马王堆汉墓出土的帛书甲、乙本均作“注”，读作“主”。其实，道作为万物之“主”，已将“保藏、庇荫”万物的意思涵括进去了。

<sup>30</sup> “保”字，任继愈和陈鼓应的译文，均依河上公“道者，不善人之所宝倚也”，说“道也是恶人所要处处保持的”。这话显然不妥，因为恶人即不道之人，这是尽人皆知、亦老子明明判了的（18，19，53等），恶人怎能处处保持道呢？王弼注为“保以全也”，冯达甫据此译为“道为不善人所赖以保全”，即“不善人虽未尝重道，但能保持道亦可全其身”。这种解释恐怕连解释者本人也会感到牵强附会的。“善人之宝”与“不善人之所保”两句相对应，“之所保”显然是被动式语态，意即不善之人被“道”所担保，即为中保；“善人之宝”是主动态，意即善人视“道”为至宝，用来救人。两句联起来，意思很明白：“道”是善人所用之“宝”，用来“保”不善之人。这可以联系前面老子所说“圣人常善救人，无人被弃之不顾；他是不善人之师，不善人是其资材”（27：3-6）的话来看，所谓“保”不善之人，就是使他们坐进大道里，使其不善得以遗弃，使其罪得以赦免，这正是老子接下来所强调的（62：2-4）。

## CHAPTER 63

### **1 Do non-doing.**

**Engage in disengagement.**

**Savor the flavorless.**

### **2 Regard the small as big and the few as many.**

**Repay evil with goodness.**

### **3 Tackle the difficult when it is still easy.**

**Achieve great things by starting small.**

**Difficult achievements under Heaven are started  
when still easy;**

**Great achievements under Heaven are started  
when still small.**

### **4 Therefore, the Holy One, not aiming to be great, accomplishes great things.**

### **5 Quick promises are not reliable;**

**The seemingly easy will turn out to be difficult.**

### **6 Therefore, despite difficulties,**

**the Holy One eventually will overcome.**

## 第六十三章

1 把清静无为当成作为，以平安无事作为事情，用恬澹无味当作味道。

- 2 以小为大，以少为多，以德报怨。
- 3 在容易之时谋求难事，在细微之处成就大事。天下的难事，必从容易时做起；天下的大事，必从细微处着手。
- 4 所以，圣人自始至终不自以为大，而能成就其伟大的事业。
- 5 轻易的许诺，必不大可信；看起来容易的，到头来必难。
- 6 所以，圣人犹有艰难之心，但终无难成之事。

**原文** 1 为无为，事无事，味无味。

- 2 大小多少，抱怨以德。
- 3 图难于其易，为大于其细。天下难事，必作于易，天下大事，必作于细。
- 4 是以圣人终不为大，故能成其大。
- 5 夫轻诺必寡信，多易必多难。
- 6 是以圣人犹难之，故终无难矣。

## CHAPTER 64

- 1 It is easier to maintain a peaceful situation;  
It is easier to plan before signs emerge.  
What is fragile can easily collapse;  
What is tiny can easily dissolve.  
Act before it happens;  
Govern before disorder sets in.**
- 2 A tree too big to embrace grows from a tiny shoot;  
A terrace nine-stories high rises from piles of earth;  
A journey of ten-thousand miles begins with a single step.**
- 3 [Human] efforts will fail;  
For someone to lay hold of something is to lose it.  
Therefore, the Holy One will not fail,  
Because he makes no [human] efforts;  
What is not for men to lay hold of will not be lost.**
- 4 [Human] efforts tend to fail on the verge of success.  
Proceed as carefully at the end as at the beginning,  
And there will be no failure.**
- 5 Therefore, the Holy One appreciates what men abandon;  
He depreciates what men value.  
He learns what men do not want to learn;  
He leads men back from their transgressions.  
This is in accordance with the nature of all things;  
It is not [human] effort.**



## 第六十四章

1 安然平稳，便容易持守；未见兆端，可从容图谋。脆弱不支的，容易瓦解；细微不显时，容易消散。要趁事情未发生时努力，要趁世道未溷乱时治理。

2 合抱的粗木，是从细如针毫时长起来的；九层的高台，是一筐土一筐土筑起来的；千里的行程，是一步又一步迈出来的。

3 人为努力的，必然失败；人为持守的，必然丧失。所以，圣人不是靠自己的作为，就不失败；不是自己努力去持守，就不丧失。

4 世人行事，往往是几近成功的时候又失败了。到最后一刻还像刚开始时一样谨慎，就不会有失败的事了。

5 所以，圣人要世人所遗弃不要的，而不看重世人所珍惜看重的；圣人学世人以为愚拙而不学的，将众人从过犯中领回来。圣人这样做，是顺应万物的自在本相，而不是一己的作为。

**原文** 1 其安易持，其未兆易谋。其脆易泮，其微易散。为之于未有，治之于未乱。

2 合抱之木，生于毫末；九层之台，起于累土；千里之行，始于足下。

3 为者败之，执者失之。是以圣人无为故无败，无执故无失。

4 民之从事，常于几成而败之。慎终如始，则无败事。

道德经：老子原文与译文

5 是以圣人欲不欲，不贵难得之货；学不学，复众人之所过。  
以辅万物之自然，而不敢为。

## CHAPTER 65

- 1 Ancient followers of Tao did not make people clever;  
Instead, they made them dull.**
- 2 People are difficult to rule,  
because they are too [humanly] wise.  
Therefore, to rule a nation with [human] wisdom  
will be a detriment to the nation;  
To rule a nation without [human] wisdom  
will be a blessing to the nation.**
- 3 Know that these two are eternal principles;  
To always remember eternal principles is to have great virtues.**
- 4 What great virtues!  
How mysterious!  
How profound!  
They run contrary to human affairs;  
And they lead to great harmony.**

## 第六十五章

- 1 古时善于行道的人，不是使越来越聪明，而是使世人越来越愚朴。

2 世人所以难管理，就因为人的智慧诡诈多端。所以若以人的智慧治理国家，必然祸国殃民；若不以人的智慧治理国家，则是国家的福气。

3 要知道，这两条是不变的法则。能永远记住这个法则，就是至高无上的恩德。

4 这至高无上的恩德啊！多么奥妙，多么深远，与一般事理多么不协调，甚至大相径庭，然而，唯此才是通向大顺的啊！

**原文** 1 古之善为道者，非以明民，将以愚之。

2 民之难治，以其智多。故以智治国，国之贼；不以智治国，国之福。

3 知此两者亦稽式。常知稽式，是谓玄德。

4 玄德深矣，远矣，与物反矣，然后乃至大顺。

## CHAPTER 66

- 1 The sea gathers a hundred rivers because it lies low;  
Because of its low position, it is the king over a hundred rivers.**
- 2 He who desires to rise above the people  
must first humble himself;  
He who desires to go before the people  
must first follow from behind.**
- 3 Thus, when the Holy One rules above, people feel no burden;  
When he leads, people are not harmed.  
Therefore, the whole world gladly supports him  
and never tires of him.**
- 4 He does not contend;  
Therefore, no one in the world contends with him.**

## 第六十六章

- 1 大江大海能汇聚容纳百川流水，是因为它所处低下，便为百川之王。
- 2 若有人想在万民之上，先得自谦为下；要为万民之先，先得自卑为后。
- 3 圣人正是这样，他在上，人民没有重担；他在前，人民不会受害。所以普天下都热心拥戴而不厌倦。

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4 他不争不竞，谦卑虚己，所以天下没有人能和他相争。

**原文** 1 江海所以能为百谷王者，以其善下之，故能为百谷王。

2 是以欲上民，必以言下之；欲先民，必以身后之。

3 是以圣人处上而民不重，处前而民不害。是以天下乐推而不厌。

4 以其不争，故天下莫能与之争。

**CHAPTER 67**

- 1 Everyone says that my Tao is too big to be imagined  
to resemble anything;  
It is precisely because he is so big  
that he does not resemble anything.  
If he resembled anything, he would be small.**
- 2 I have three treasures to keep and cherish:  
The first is love;  
The second is frugality;  
The third is not striving to lead.**
- 3 Love enables one to be brave,  
Frugality enables one to save,  
Not striving to lead enables one to be a mentor.**
- 4 Nowadays, people have lost love but try to be brave,  
They have lost frugality but try to save,  
They have lost humility but try to lead.  
They are not far from death!**
- 5 With love, you triumph in attack and stand strong in defense.  
Those Heaven wants to save, it protects with love.**

## 第六十七章

- 1 世人都说我的道太大，简直难以想像为何物。正因为他大，才不具体像什么。若具体像什么，他早就藐小了。
- 2 我有三件宝贝，持守不渝。一是慈爱，二是俭朴，三是不敢在这世上争强好胜，为人之先。
- 3 慈爱才能勇敢，俭朴才能扩增，不与人争强好胜，才能为人师长。
- 4 当今之人，失了慈爱只剩下勇敢，失了俭朴只追求扩增，失了谦卑只顾去抢先，离死亡不远了！
- 5 慈爱，用它来征战就胜利，用它来退守必坚固。上天要拯救的，必以慈爱来护卫保守。

**原文** 1 天下皆谓我道大，似不肖。夫唯大，故似不肖。若肖，久矣其细也夫。

2 我有三宝，持而保之。一曰慈，二曰俭，三曰不敢为天下先。

3 慈故能勇，俭故能广，不敢为天下先，故能成器长。

4 今舍慈且勇，舍俭且广，舍后且先，死矣。

5 夫慈，以战则胜，以守则固。天将救之，以慈卫之。



## CHAPTER 68

- 1 The best warrior is not ferocious,  
The finest fighter does not act with anger,  
The greatest victor does not have to confront his enemy,  
The most gifted manager of men seeks to humble himself  
before them.**
- 2 This is the virtue of non-contention;  
This is the ability of attracting and using men;  
This matches the will of Heaven—the way of antiquity!**

## 第六十八章

- 1 真正的勇士不会杀气腾腾，善于打仗的人不用气势汹汹，神机妙算者不必与敌交锋，善于用人者甘居于人之下。
- 2 这就叫不争不竞之美德，这就是得人用人之能力，这就算相配相合于天道。上古之时便如此啊！

**原文** 1 善为士者不武，善战者不怒。善胜敌者不与，善用人者为之下。

2 是谓不争之德，是谓用人之力，是谓配天，古之极。

## CHAPTER 69

### 1 Military strategists have this saying:

**“I dare not take the initiative in attack  
but would rather rise to defend;  
I dare not advance an inch  
but would rather retreat a foot.”**

**Thus, there will be no need to line up, roll up sleeves,  
or pick up weapons,  
For there will be no enemies.**

### 2 The greatest disaster is to take your rivals lightly;

**Taking them lightly nearly cost me my treasures.**

### 3 Of two armies of nearly equal strength,

**the grief-stricken side will win.**

## 第六十九章

1 用兵者有言：“我不敢主动地举兵伐人，而只是被动地起兵自卫；我不敢冒犯人家一寸，而宁肯自己退避一尺。”这样，就不用列队，不必赤臂，不需武器，因为天下没有敌人了。

2 最大的祸害是轻敌，轻敌几乎能断送我的宝贝。

3 所以若两军对峙，旗鼓相当，那悲伤哀恸的一方必胜无疑。

**原文** 1 用兵有言：「吾不敢为主而为客，不敢进寸而退尺。」

是谓行无行，攘无臂，执无兵，扔无敌。

2 祸莫大于轻敌，轻敌几丧吾宝。

3 故抗兵相若，哀者胜矣。

## CHAPTER 70

- 1 My words are easy to understand and easy to live by,  
Yet no one in the world understands them or lives by them.**
- 2 My words have a source,  
and my undertaking is for my master.  
You do not know [the source or my master];  
Therefore, you do not understand me [my words  
and my undertaking].**
- 3 The fewer the people who understand me,  
The more precious what I have is.**
- 4 Therefore, the Holy One clothes himself in coarse garments,  
hiding a treasure within.**

## 第七十章

- 1 我的话很容易明白，很容易实行。天下的人却不能明白，不能实行。
- 2（我的）话有根源，（我的）事有主人。你们自以为有知识，所以不认识我（的话和我的事）。
- 3 明白我的人越是稀少，表明我所有的越是珍贵。
- 4 所以圣人外表是粗麻衣，内里有真宝贝。

原文 1 吾言甚易知，甚易行。天下莫能知，莫能行。

2 言有宗，事有君。夫唯有知，是以不我知。

3 知我者希，则我者贵。

4 是以圣人被褐而怀玉。

## CHAPTER 71

- 1 It is good for men to know that they are ignorant;  
It is sad for the ignorant to presume they know.**
- 2 To avoid sickness, one needs to treat sickness as it is.**
- 3 The Holy One never gets sick,  
because he treats sickness as it is.  
Therefore, he never gets sick.**

## 第七十一章

- 1 知道自己无知，最好。无知却自以为知道，有病。
- 2 只有把病当成病来看，才会不病。
- 3 圣人不病，就是因为他知道这是病，所以不病。

- 原文** 1 知不知，上。不知知，病。
- 2 夫唯病病，是以不病。
  - 3 圣人不病，以其病病，是以不病。

## CHAPTER 72

- 1 When people fear no authority,  
The greater authority is about to come.**
- 2 Do not intrude into their dwellings;  
Do not interfere with their livelihood.  
If you do not weary them,  
They will not become weary of you.**
- 3 Therefore, the Holy One knows himself  
but does not display himself;  
He loves himself but does not exalt himself.  
Thus, one is chosen and the other discarded.**

## 第七十二章

- 1 当人民不再敬畏任何人的权威时，真正的大权威就来到了。
- 2 不要妨害人们的安居，不要搅扰人们的生活。只要不令人们生厌，人们就不会厌恶权威。
- 3 所以，圣人深知自己，却不自我炫耀；他珍爱自己，却不自我尊贵。

原文 1 民不畏威，则大威至。

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2无狎其所居，无厌其所生。夫唯不厌，是以不厌。

3是以圣人自知不自见，自爱不自贵。故去彼取此。



## CHAPTER 73

- 1 He who is brave enough to rely on his daring will be killed;  
He who is brave enough not to rely on his daring will live.  
Of the two, one is beneficial, the other harmful.**
- 2 Who can know the reason behind what Heaven hates?**
- 3 The Tao of Heaven  
Wins without contention,  
Responds eloquently without words,  
Shows up without being summoned,  
Fulfills his plan without being noted.**
- 4 The net of Heaven is vast;  
Its meshes may not be fine, yet nothing slips through.**

## 第七十三章

- 1 有勇气自恃果敢，冒然行事的，必死。有勇气自认怯懦，不敢妄为的，得活。这两种勇气，一个有利，一个有害。
- 2 上天所厌恶的，谁晓得个中原委呢？
- 3 上天的道，总是在不争不竞中得胜有余，在无言无语中应答自如，在不期然而至，在悠悠然中成全。
- 4 上天的道，如同浩瀚飘淼的大网，稀疏得似乎看不见，却没有什麼可以漏网逃脱。

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原文 1 勇于敢则杀，勇于不敢则活。此两者，或利或害。

2 天之所恶，孰知其故？

3 天之道，不争而善胜，不言而善应，不召而自来，繹然而善谋。

4 天网恢恢，疏而不失。

## CHAPTER 74

**1 If people do not fear death,**

**What is the point of using death to scare them?**

**2 If people are made to fear death and violators are executed,**

**Who then would dare to be a violator?**

**3 Throughout eternity, there has always been an executor.**

**If one tries to take his place and executes,**

**It would be like someone in place of the master carpenter  
chopping wood.**

**In chopping wood in place of the master carpenter,**

**few can avoid hurting their hands.**

## 第七十四章

1 人民若不怕死，以死来恫吓他们又有什么用呢？

2 如果先使人民惧怕死亡，有为非作歹的人再处死，这样谁还敢为非作歹呢？

3 冥冥永恆中，已有一位主宰生杀予夺的。企图取而代之去主宰生杀予夺的人，就好象外行人代替木匠砍削木头。代替木匠砍削木头的人，少有不伤着自己手的。

原文 1 民不畏死，奈何以死惧之？

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2 若使民常畏死，而为奇者，吾得执而杀之，孰敢？

3 常有司杀者杀，夫代司杀者杀，是谓代大匠斲。夫代大匠斲者，希有不伤其手矣。

## CHAPTER 75

**1 People are starving,**

**because their ruler eats up too much in taxes.**

**No wonder the people are starving.**

**2 People are difficult to rule,**

**because the ruler does too much.**

**Therefore, they are difficult to rule.**

**3 People take their death lightly,**

**because they seek this world too much.**

**No wonder they take their death lightly.**

**4 Thus, those who are unattached to this life are more virtuous**

**than those who value this life too much.**

## 第七十五章

1 人民吃不饱，是因为统治者吃税太多，所以吃不饱。

2 人民不好管，是因为统治者人为造事，所以不好管。

3 人民不在乎死，是以为他们追求今生太过份，以致不在乎死。

4 所以，唯有不执着于今生享乐的，比那些过份看重今生的人更高明。

原文 1 民之飢，以其上食税之多，是以飢。

2 民之难治，以其上之有为，是以难治。

3 民之轻死，以其求生之厚，是以轻死。

4 夫唯无以生为者，是贤于贵生。

## CHAPTER 76

- 1 A man's body is soft and weak when alive,  
but hard and stiff when dead.**
- 2 Grass and trees are supple and pliant when alive,  
but dried up when dead.**
- 3 Therefore, the hard and the strong belong to death;  
The soft and the weak belong to life.**
- 4 An army will vanish when it becomes strong;  
A tree will fall when it grows strong.  
The strong occupies the inferior position;  
The weak occupies the superior position.**

## 第七十六章

- 1 人活着的时候，身体是柔弱的，一死就僵硬了。
- 2 草木活着得时候，枝叶是柔脆的，一死就枯藁了。
- 3 所以坚强的，属于死亡；柔弱的，属于生命。草木之生也柔脆，其死也枯藁。
- 4 军队一强大就要被消灭了，树木一强盛就要被砍伐了。
- 5 强大的处于下势，柔弱的处于上势。

原文 1 人之生也柔弱，其死也坚强。

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2 草木之生也柔脆，其死也枯槁。

3 故坚强者死之徒，柔弱处生之徒。

4 是以兵强则灭，木强则折。

5 强大处下，柔弱处上。



## CHAPTER 77

- 1 The way of Heaven is like the flexing of a bow.  
It presses the high and raises the low;  
It slackens the string when overstretched;  
It stretches the string when overly slackened.**
- 2 The way of Heaven takes from those in excess  
to help those in want.  
Not so the way of man.  
It takes from those in want to profit those in excess.**
- 3 Who has excess and gives it to the world?  
Only those who have Tao.**
- 4 Therefore, in his undertakings, the Holy One  
does not rely on his own ability;  
At completion, he claims no credit  
and makes no display of his virtues.**

## 第七十七章

- 1上天的道，不就像张弓射箭一样吗？高了向下压，低了向上举，拉过了松一松，不足时拉一拉。
- 2上天的道，是减少有余的，补给不足的。人间的道却不这样，是损害不足的，加给有余的。
- 3谁能自己有余而用来奉献给天下呢？唯独有道的人。

4 所以，圣人做事不仗恃自己的能力，事成了也不视为自己的功劳，不让人称赞自己有才能。

**原文** 1 天之道，其犹张弓欤？高者抑之，下者举之，有馀者损之，不足者补之。

2 天之道，损有馀而补不足。人之道则不然，损不足以奉有馀。

3 孰能有馀以奉天下？唯有道者。

4 是以圣人为而不恃，功成而不处，其不欲见贤。

## CHAPTER 78

**1 Nothing in the world is as soft and weak as water,  
Yet for attacking the hard and the strong, nothing works  
as well.**

**This is because water is too soft and weak to be altered.**

**2 The weak will overcome the strong;  
The soft will overcome the hard.  
This principle is known to all people under Heaven,  
Yet no one puts it into practice.**

**3 Thus, the Holy One says:  
“He who is humiliated is the lord of the society;  
He who is sacrificed is the king of the world.”<sup>31</sup>**

**4 Words of truth are paradoxical.**

## 第七十八章

1 天下万物中，没有什么比水更柔弱了。然而对付坚强的东西，没有什么能胜过水了。这是因为水柔弱得没有什么能改变它。

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<sup>31</sup> A country's humiliation is a result of sin, and the Holy One bears its humiliation; the country's calamities are ominous, and the Holy One sacrifices to save his people.

2 这个柔弱胜刚强的道理，天下的人没有不知道的，却没有能实行的。

3 所以圣人说：那为国受辱的，就是社稷之主；那为国受难的，就是天下之王。

4 这些正面肯定的话，听起来好像反话一样，不容易理解。

**原文** 1 天下莫柔弱于水，而攻坚强者莫之能胜，以其无以易之。

2 弱之胜强，柔之胜刚，天下莫不知，莫能行。

3 是以圣人云：受国之垢，是谓社稷主；受国不祥，是为天下王<sup>32</sup>。

4 正言若反。

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<sup>32</sup>国之污垢，即罪恶；担其罪，即受辱。不祥，即凶殃；承其凶，即受难。

## CHAPTER 79

### **1 Dissolving great hatred through mediation**

**will not remove all of it.**

**How can this be regarded as good?**

### **2 Therefore, the Holy One holds the loan,**

**but does not ask for payment;**

**A creditor of virtue knows the debt but seeks no payment;**

**A creditor of no virtue demands payment by every means.<sup>33</sup>**

### **3 The Tao of Heaven shows no favoritism;**

**He is always with good men.**

## 第七十九章

1 用调和的办法化解怨恨，怨恨并不能消失殆尽，这岂算得上善呢？

2 所以，圣人掌握着欠债的存根，却不索取偿还。有德之人明瞭欠债而已，并不追讨；无德之人却是苛取搜刮，珠锱必较。

3 上天之道，公义无私，永远与良善的人同在。

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<sup>33</sup> In ancient times, the proof of a loan was carved on a piece of wood, which was slit into two parts, the left for the creditor and the right for the debtor.

原文 1 和大怨，必有馀怨，安可以为善？

2 是以圣人执左契，而不责于人。有德司契，无德司彻<sup>34</sup>。

3 天道无亲，常与善人。

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<sup>34</sup>古时借债，刻在一块板上，劈开，债主存左边，债人存右边；此为「司契」。「司彻」则是贵族按成征收税租，一种剥削。

**CHAPTER 80**

**1 A small country has a small population.**

**Unused, its tools are ten or a hundred times  
more powerful than men;**

**Because of the fear of death, people do not travel far;**

**Standing idle are its boats and carriages;  
unemployed is its military.**

**2 Let people return to using knotted ropes for writing,**

**To eating their food as enjoyable,**

**To viewing their clothes as beautiful,**

**To being content with their residences,**

**To finding joy in their customs.**

**People of neighboring countries reside  
within sight of each other;**

**Dogs barking and cocks crowing can be heard  
across the border,**

**Yet they do not have to deal with each other  
even when old and dying.**

## 第八十章

1 国家小，人口少。即使有十倍百倍于人力的器具也不使用。人们畏惧死亡而不远行迁徙。虽有车船，却没有地方使用；虽有军队，也没有地方部署。

2 让人们再用结绳记事的办法，以其饮食为甘甜，以其服饰为美好，以其居处为安逸，以其习俗为快乐。邻国的人们相互可以看见，鸡鸣狗叫声相互可以听到，但人民直到老死也不相互往来。

**原文** 1 小国寡民。使有什伯之器而不用，使民重死而不远徙。虽有舟舆，无所乘之，虽有甲兵，无所陈之。

2 使民复结绳而用之，甘其食，美其服，安其居，乐其俗。邻国相望，鸡犬之声相闻，民至老死不相往来。



## CHAPTER 81

- 1 Words of truth are not pleasing to the ears;  
What is pleasing to the ears are not words of truth.**
- 2 Good men are not good at arguing;  
Those good at arguing are not good.**
- 3 He who knows has no deep learning,  
He who has deep learning does not know.**
- 4 The Holy One does not accumulate.  
He lives for others; so, he possesses more;  
He gives all to the world; so, he becomes richer.**
- 5 The Tao of Heaven is benevolent, causing no harm.  
The way of the Holy One is to act on behalf of the people;  
He does not contend with them.**

## 第八十一章

- 1 可信的不华美，华美的不可信。
- 2 良善的不巧辩，巧辩的不良善。
- 3 真懂的不广博，广博的不真懂。
- 4 圣人不为自己积攒什么：既然一切都是为了世人，自己就愈发拥有了；既然一切都已给了世人，自己就愈发丰富了。

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5 上天的道，有利于天下，而不加害于天下。圣人的道，是为了世人，而不与世人相争。

**原文** 1 信言不美，美言不信。

2 善者不辩，辩者不善。

3 知者不博，博者不知。

4 圣人不积，既以为人已愈有，既以与人已愈多。

5 天之道，利而不害。圣人之道，为而不争。

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