

# The Tao

This book is chosen as an example of truth contained within a vacuum.

The book itself is written in a way that can't be argued with too harshly, as it takes its own path.

It is written in a form that uses contradiction to express truth in vagueness. Certainly, if it were quoted in a real life situation, the quoter may find themselves in a hot spot if done poorly and for wrongful intent. As the book itself seems to communicate from a perspective of compassion and peace.

As with any translated work, especially with public appeal and current day ability to research. This text should be read in comparisons and not singularly.

This is all that has been done for this document and offer it to those interested now.

This book is used specifically, as the observer will quickly notice, to showcase that translations are quite different once in English. Yet there is an essence which seems to point to their connection for each of them, and that is the point.

That is what makes this book an example.

It can provide a skill to those who discover its meaning in their own life.

Although anything can do that... As long as it resonates with you.

Tao Te Ching

Lao Tzu

老子

This section was found with this description:

This online version of Derek Lin's original translation is made available by special permission from the publisher.

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

Also Referenced was a compilation by B.Boisen.  
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Tao Te Ching  
Written by Lao-Tzu  
A translation for the public domain  
by j.h. mcdonald 1996

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The Tao Te Ching  
Translation by Tolbert McCarroll  
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Chapter 1 第一章 Chapter 1

Line 1	道可道 非常道	The Tao that can be spoken is not the eternal Tao
Line 2	名可名 非常名	The name that can be named is not the eternal name
Line 3	無名天地之始	The nameless is the origin of Heaven and Earth
Line 4	有名萬物之母	The named is the mother of myriad things
Line 5	故常無欲 以觀其妙	Thus, constantly without desire, one observes its essence
Line 6	常有欲 以觀其徼	Constantly with desire, one observes its manifestations
Line 7	此兩者 同出而異名	These two emerge together but differ in name
Line 8	同謂之玄	The unity is said to be the mystery
Line 9	玄之又玄 眾妙之門	Mystery of mysteries, the door to all wonders

"The tao that can be described  
is not the eternal Tao.  
The name that can be spoken  
is not the eternal Name.  
The nameless is the boundary of Heaven and Earth.  
The named is the mother of creation.  
Freed from desire, you can see the hidden mystery.  
By having desire, you can only see what is visibly real.  
Yet mystery and reality  
emerge from the same source.  
This source is called darkness.  
Darkness born from darkness.  
The beginning of all understanding."

"The Tao that can be spoken of is not the eternal Tao.  
The name that can be named is not the eternal name.  
The nameless is the beginning of heaven and earth.  
The name is the mother of the ten thousand things.  
Send your desires away and you will see the mystery.  
Be filled with desire and you will see only the manifestation.  
As these two come forth they differ in name.  
Yet at their source they are the same.  
This source is called a mystery.  
Darkness within darkness, the gateway to all mystery."

Line 10	天下皆知美之為美 斯惡已	When the world knows beauty as beauty, ugliness arises
Line 11	皆知善之為善 斯不善已	When it knows good as good, evil arises
Line 12	故有無相生	Thus being and non-being produce each other
Line 13	難易相成	Difficult and easy bring about each other
Line 14	長短相形	Long and short reveal each other
Line 15	高下相傾	High and low support each other
Line 16	音聲相和	Music and voice harmonize each other
Line 17	前後相隨	Front and back follow each other
Line 18	是以聖人	Therefore the sages:
Line 19	處無為之事	Manage the work of detached actions
Line 20	行不言之教	Conduct the teaching of no words
Line 21	萬物作焉而不辭	They work with myriad things but do not control
Line 22	生而不有	They create but do not possess
Line 23	為而不恃	They act but do not presume
Line 24	功成而弗居	They succeed but do not dwell on success
Line 25	夫唯弗居	It is because they do not dwell on success
Line 26	是以不去	That it never goes away

"When people see things as beautiful,  
ugliness is created.

When people see things as good,  
evil is created.

Being and non-being produce each other.

Difficult and easy complement each other.

Long and short define each other.

High and low oppose each other.

Fore and aft follow each other.

Therefore the Master

can act without doing anything  
and teach without saying a word.

Things come her way and she does not stop them;

things leave and she lets them go.

She has without possessing,  
and acts without any expectations.

When her work is done, she takes no credit.

That is why it will last forever."

"All under heaven see beauty as beauty only because they also see ugliness.  
All announce that good is good only because they also denounce what is bad.

Therefore, something and nothing give birth to one another.

Difficult and easy complete one another.

Long and short fashion one another.

High and low arise from one another.

Notes and tones harmonise with one another.

Front and back follow one another.

Thus, the True Person acts without striving and teaches without words.

Deny nothing to the ten thousand things.

Nourish them without claiming authority,

Benefit them without demanding gratitude,

Do the work, then move on.

And, the fruits of your labour will last forever."

Line 27	不尚賢	Do not glorify the achievers
Line 28	使民不爭	So the people will not squabble
Line 29	不貴難得之貨	Do not treasure goods that are hard to obtain
Line 30	使民不為盜	So the people will not become thieves
Line 31	不見可欲	Do not show the desired things
Line 32	使民心不亂	So their hearts will not be confused
Line 33	是以聖人之治	Thus the governance of the sage:
Line 34	虛其心	Empties their hearts
Line 35	實其腹	Fills their bellies
Line 36	弱其志	Weakens their ambitions
Line 37	強其骨	Strengthens their bones
Line 38	常使民無知無欲	Let the people have no cunning and no greed
Line 39	使夫智者不敢為也	So those who scheme will not dare to meddle
Line 40	為無為	Act without contrivance
Line 41	則無不治	And nothing will be beyond control

"If you overly esteem talented individuals,  
people will become overly competitive.

If you overvalue possessions,  
people will begin to steal.

Do not display your treasures  
or people will become envious.

The Master leads by  
emptying people's minds;  
filling their bellies,

weakening their ambitions,  
and making them become strong.

Preferring simplicity and freedom from desires,  
avoiding the pitfalls of knowledge and wrong action.

For those who practice not-doing,  
everything will fall into place."

"Not exalting the talented prevents rivalry.

Not valuing goods that are hard to obtain prevents stealing.

Not displaying desirable things prevents confusion of the heart.

Therefore, the True Person governs by emptying the heart of desire  
and filling the belly with food, weakening ambitions and strengthening bones.

If the people are simple and free from desire,  
then the clever ones never dare to interfere.

Practise action without striving and all will be in order."

Line 42	道冲而用之或不盈	The Tao is empty; when utilized, it is not filled up
Line 43	淵兮似萬物之宗	So deep! It seems to be the source of all things
Line 44	挫其銳	It blunts the sharpness
Line 45	解其紛	Unravels the knots
Line 46	和其光	Dims the glare
Line 47	同其塵	Mixes the dusts
Line 48	湛兮似或存	So indistinct! It seems to exist
Line 49	吾不知誰之子	I do not know whose offspring it is
Line 50	象帝之先	Its image is the predecessor of the Emperor

"The Tao is like an empty container:  
it can never be emptied and can never be filled.  
Infinitely deep, it is the source of all things.  
It dulls the sharp, unties the knotted,  
shades the lighted, and unites all of creation with dust.  
It is hidden but always present.  
I don't know who gave birth to it .  
It is older than the concept of God."

"The Tao is like an empty bowl, yet it may be  
used without ever needing to be filled.  
It is the deep and unfathomable source of the ten thousand things.  
Blunt the sharpness.  
Untie the knot.  
Soften the glare.  
Settle with the dust.  
It is hidden deep yet ever present.  
I do not know whose child it is.  
It existed before the common ancestor."

Line 51	天地不仁	Heaven and Earth are impartial
Line 52	以萬物為芻狗	They regard myriad things as straw dogs
Line 53	聖人不仁	The sages are impartial
Line 54	以百姓為芻狗	They regard people as straw dogs
Line 55	天地之間	The space between Heaven and Earth
Line 56	其猶橐籥乎	Is it not like a bellows?
Line 57	虛而不屈	Empty, and yet never exhausted
Line 58	動而愈出	It moves, and produces more
Line 59	多言數窮	Too many words hasten failure
Line 60	不如守中	Cannot compare to keeping to the void

"Heaven and earth are not moved by offerings of straw-dogs.  
 The True Person is not moved by offerings of straw-dogs.  
 The space between heaven and earth is like a bellows.  
 It is empty and yet never exhausted.  
 The more it works the more comes out.  
 Many words lead to exhaustion.  
 Better to hold fast to your centre."

"Heaven and Earth are impartial;  
 they treat all of creation as straw dogs.  
 The Master doesn't take sides;  
 she treats everyone like a straw dog.  
 The space between Heaven and Earth is like a bellows;  
 it is empty, yet has not lost its power.  
 The more it is used, the more it produces;  
 the more you talk of it, the less you comprehend.  
 It is better not to speak of things you do not understand."

Line 61	谷神不死	The valley spirit, undying
Line 62	是謂玄牝	Is called the Mystic Female
Line 63	玄牝之門	The gate of the Mystic Female
Line 64	是謂天地根	Is called the root of Heaven and Earth
Line 65	綿綿若存	It flows continuously, barely perceptible
Line 66	用之不勤	Utilize it; it is never exhausted

"The spirit of emptiness is immortal.  
It is called the Great Mother  
because it gives birth to Heaven and Earth.  
It is like a vapor,  
barely seen but always present.  
Use it effortlessly."

"The valley spirit never dies. It is the unknown  
first mother, whose gate is the root  
from which grew heaven and earth.  
It is dimly seen, yet always present.  
Draw from it all you wish; it will never run dry."

Line 67	天長地久	Heaven and Earth are everlasting
Line 68	天地所以能長且久者	The reason Heaven and Earth can last forever
Line 69	以其不自生	Is that they do not exist for themselves
Line 70	故能長生	Thus they can last forever
Line 71	是以聖人	Therefore the sages:
Line 72	後其身而身先	Place themselves last but end up in front
Line 73	外其身而身存	Are outside of themselves and yet survive
Line 74	非以其無私邪	Is it not due to their selflessness?
Line 75	故能成其私	That is how they can achieve their own goals

"The Tao of Heaven is eternal,  
and the earth is long enduring.  
Why are they long enduring?  
They do not live for themselves;  
thus they are present for all beings.  
The Master puts herself last;  
And finds herself in the place of authority.  
She detaches herself from all things;  
Therefore she is united with all things.  
She gives no thought to self.  
She is perfectly fulfilled."

"Heaven and earth last forever.  
The reason why heaven and earth last forever  
is that they do not live for themselves.  
Hence, they last forever.  
Therefore, the True Person leaves self behind  
and thus is found in front,  
is not guarded and thus is preserved,  
is self-free and thus is able to find fulfilment."

Line 76	上善若水	The highest goodness resembles water
Line 77	水善利萬物而不爭	Water greatly benefits myriad things without contention
Line 78	處眾人之所惡	It stays in places that people dislike
Line 79	故幾於道	Therefore it is similar to the Tao
Line 80	居善地	Dwelling with the right location
Line 81	心善淵	Feeling with great depth
Line 82	與善仁	Giving with great kindness
Line 83	言善信	Speaking with great integrity
Line 84	正善治	Governing with great administration
Line 85	事善能	Handling with great capability
Line 86	動善時	Moving with great timing
Line 87	夫唯不爭	Because it does not contend
Line 88	故無尤	It is therefore beyond reproach

"The supreme good is like water,  
which benefits all of creation  
without trying to compete with it.  
It gathers in unpopular places.

Thus it is like the Tao.

The location makes the dwelling good.  
Depth of understanding makes the mind good.  
A kind heart makes the giving good.  
Integrity makes the government good.  
Accomplishments make your labors good.  
Proper timing makes a decision good.  
Only when there is no competition  
will we all live in peace."

"The highest good is like water.  
For water benefits the ten thousand things without striving.  
It settles in places that people avoid and so is like the Tao.  
In choosing your home look to the land.  
In preparing your heart go deep.  
In associating with others value gentleness.  
In speaking exhibit good faith.  
In governing provide good order.  
In the conduct of business be competent.  
In action be timely.  
Then there is no strife, nothing goes amiss."

Line 89	持而盈之	Holding a cup and overfilling it
Line 90	不如其已	Cannot be as good as stopping short
Line 91	揣而銳之	Pounding a blade and sharpening it
Line 92	不可長保	Cannot be kept for long
Line 93	金玉滿堂	Gold and jade fill up the room
Line 94	莫之能守	No one is able to protect them
Line 95	富貴而驕	Wealth and position bring arrogance
Line 96	自遺其咎	And leave disasters upon oneself
Line 97	功遂	When achievement is completed, fame is attained
Line 98	身退	Withdraw oneself
Line 99	天之道	This is the Tao of Heaven

"It is easier to carry an empty cup  
than one that is filled to the brim.  
The sharper the knife  
the easier it is to dull.  
The more wealth you possess  
the harder it is to protect.  
Pride brings it's own trouble.  
When you have accomplished your goal  
simply walk away.  
This is the pathway to Heaven."

"Better to stop in time than to fill to the brim.  
Hone a blade to the sharpest point, and it will soon be blunt.  
Fill your house with gold and jade, and no one can protect it.  
Be prideful about wealth and position, and you bring disasters upon yourself.  
Retire when the work is done.  
This is the way of heaven."

Line 100	載營魄抱一	In holding the soul and embracing oneness
Line 101	能無離乎	Can one be steadfast, without straying?
Line 102	專氣致柔	In concentrating the energy and reaching relaxation
Line 103	能嬰兒乎	Can one be like an infant?
Line 104	滌除玄覽	In cleaning away the worldly view
Line 105	能無疵乎	Can one be without imperfections?
Line 106	愛民治國	In loving the people and ruling the nation
Line 107	能無為乎	Can one be without manipulation?
Line 108	天門開闔	In the heavenly gate's opening and closing
Line 109	能為雌乎	Can one hold to the feminine principle?
Line 110	明白四達	In understanding clearly all directions
Line 111	能無知乎	Can one be without intellectuality?
Line 112	生之畜之	Bearing it, rearing it
Line 113	生而不有	Bearing without possession
Line 114	為而不恃	Achieving without arrogance
Line 115	長而不宰	Raising without domination
Line 116	是謂玄德	This is called the Mystic Virtue

"Nurture the darkness of your soul  
until you become whole.  
Can you do this and not fail?  
Can you focus your life-breath until you become  
supple as a newborn child?  
While you cleanse your inner vision  
will you be found without fault?  
Can you love people and lead them  
without forcing your will on them?  
When Heaven gives and takes away  
can you be content with the outcome?  
When you understand all things  
can you step back from your own understanding?  
Giving birth and nourishing,  
making without possessing,  
expecting nothing in return.  
To grow, yet not to control:  
This is the mysterious virtue."

"While carrying your active life on your head  
can you embrace the quiet spirit in your arms, and not let go?  
While being fully focused on your vital breath  
can you make it soft like that of a newborn babe?  
While cleaning your inner mirror  
can you leave it without blemish?  
While loving the people and ruling the country  
can you dispense with cleverness?  
While opening and closing the gates of heaven  
can you be like a mother bird?  
While penetrating the four quarters with your insight  
can you remain simple?  
Help the people live!  
Nourish the people!  
Help them live yet lay no claim to them.  
Benefit them yet seek no gratitude.  
Guide them yet do not control them.  
This is called the hidden Virtue."

Line 117	三十幅 共一轂	Thirty spokes join in one hub
Line 118	當其無 有車之用	In its emptiness, there is the function of a vehicle
Line 119	埴埴以為器	Mix clay to create a container
Line 120	當其無 有器之用	In its emptiness, there is the function of a container
Line 121	鑿戶牖以為室	Cut open doors and windows to create a room
Line 122	當其無 有室之用	In its emptiness, there is the function of a room
Line 123	故有之以為利	Therefore, that which exists is used to create benefit
Line 124	無之以為用	That which is empty is used to create functionality

"Thirty spokes are joined together in a wheel,  
but it is the center hole  
that allows the wheel to function.  
We mold clay into a pot,  
but it is the emptiness inside  
that makes the vessel useful.  
We fashion wood for a house,  
but it is the emptiness inside  
that makes it livable.  
We work with the substantial,  
but the emptiness is what we use."

"Thirty spokes connect to the wheel's hub;  
yet, it is the centre hole that makes it useful.  
Clay is shaped into a vessel;  
yet, it is the emptiness within that makes it useful.  
Doors and windows are cut for a room;  
yet it is the space where there is nothing that makes it useful.  
Therefore, though advantage comes from what is;  
usefulness comes from what is not."

Line 125	五色令人目盲	The five colors make one blind in the eyes
Line 126	五音令人耳聾	The five sounds make one deaf in the ears
Line 127	五味令人口爽	The five flavors make one tasteless in the mouth
Line 128	馳騁畋獵令人心發狂	Racing and hunting make one wild in the heart
Line 129	難得之貨令人行妨	Goods that are difficult to acquire make one cause damage
Line 130	是以聖人為腹不為目	Therefore the sages care for the stomach and not the eyes
Line 131	故去彼取此	That is why they discard the other and take this

"Five colors blind the eye.  
Five notes deafen the ear.  
Five flavors make the palate go stale.  
Too much activity deranges the mind.  
Too much wealth causes crime.  
The Master acts on what she feels and not what she sees.  
She shuns the latter, and prefers to seek the former."

"The five colours blind the eye.  
The five notes deafen the ear.  
The five flavours dull the palate.  
Racing and hunting drive the heart wild.  
Goods that are hard to obtain hinder the journey.  
Therefore, the True Person  
is guided more by the belly than the eye,  
and prefers this within to that without."

Line 132	寵辱若驚	Favor and disgrace make one fearful
Line 133	貴大患若身	The greatest misfortune is the self
Line 134	何謂寵辱若驚	What does "favor and disgrace make one fearful" mean?
Line 135	寵為上 辱為下	Favor is high; disgrace is low
Line 136	得之若驚	Having it makes one fearful
Line 137	失之若驚	Losing it makes one fearful
Line 138	是謂寵辱若驚	This is "favor and disgrace make one fearful"
Line 139	何謂貴大患若身	What does "the greatest misfortune is the self" mean?
Line 140	吾所以有大患者	The reason I have great misfortune
Line 141	為吾有身	Is that I have the self
Line 142	及吾無身	If I have no self
Line 143	吾有何患	What misfortune do I have?
Line 144	故貴以身為天下	So one who values the self as the world
Line 145	若可寄天下	Can be given the world
Line 146	愛以身為天下	One who loves the self as the world
Line 147	若可託天下	Can be entrusted with the world

"Success is as dangerous as failure,  
and we are often our own worst enemy.

What does it mean that success is as dangerous as failure?

He who is superior is also someone's subordinate.

Receiving favor and losing it both cause alarm.

That is what is meant by success is as dangerous as failure.

What does it mean that we are often our own worst enemy?

The reason I have an enemy is because I have ""self"".

If I no longer had a ""self"", I would no longer have an enemy.

Love the whole world as if it were your self;

then you will truly care for all things."

"Both favour and disgrace bring fear.

Great trouble comes from having a body.

What is meant by: "Both favour and disgrace bring fear"?

Favour leads to a fear of losing it and  
disgrace leads to a fear of greater trouble.

What is meant by: "Great trouble comes from having a body"?

The reason you have trouble is that you are self-conscious.

No trouble can befall a self-free person.

Therefore, surrender your self-interest.

Love others as much as you love yourself.

Then you can be entrusted with all things under heaven."

Line 148	視之不見	Look at it, it cannot be seen
Line 149	名曰夷	It is called colorless
Line 150	聽之不聞	Listen to it, it cannot be heard
Line 151	名曰希	It is called noiseless
Line 152	搏之不得	Reach for it, it cannot be held
Line 153	名曰微	It is called formless
Line 154	此三者不可致詰	These three cannot be completely unraveled
Line 155	故混而為一	So they are combined into one
Line 156	其上不皦	Above it, not bright
Line 157	其下不昧	Below it, not dark
Line 158	繩繩不可名	Continuing endlessly, cannot be named
Line 159	復歸於無物	It returns back into nothingness
Line 160	是謂無狀之狀	Thus it is called the form of the formless
Line 161	無象之象	The image of the imageless
Line 162	是謂惚恍	This is called enigmatic
Line 163	迎之不見其首	Confront it, its front cannot be seen
Line 164	隨之不見其後	Follow it, its back cannot be seen
Line 165	執古之道	Wield the Tao of the ancients
Line 166	以御今之有	To manage the existence of today
Line 167	能知古始	One can know the ancient beginning
Line 168	是謂道紀	It is called the Tao Axiom

"Look for it, and it can't be seen.  
 Listen for it, and it can't be heard.  
 Grasp for it, and it can't be caught.  
 These three cannot be further described,  
 so we treat them as The One.  
 It's highest is not bright.  
 It's depths are not dark.  
 Unending, unnameable, it returns to nothingness.  
 Formless forms, and image less images,  
 subtle, beyond all understanding.  
 Approach it and you will not see a beginning;  
 follow it and there will be no end.  
 When we grasp the Tao of the ancient ones,  
 we can use it to direct our life today.  
 To know the ancient origin of Tao:  
 this is the beginning of wisdom."

"Look at it, you cannot see it. It is invisible.  
 Listen to it, you cannot hear it. It is inaudible.  
 Reach for it, you cannot grasp it. It is intangible.  
 These three qualities are unfathomable  
 and so they fuse together and become one.  
 The upper part is not bright.  
 The lower part is not dark.  
 Ceaselessly the Unnamed moves back to nothingness.  
 It has the form of the formless,  
 the image of the imageless.  
 It is indefinable and shadowy.  
 Go up to it and you will not see its front.  
 Follow it and you will not see its back.  
 Yet, hold fast to this ancient Tao  
 and you will experience the present now-moment.  
 Know its beginnings and you can follow the path of the Tao."

Line 169	古之善為士者	The Tao masters of antiquity
Line 170	微妙玄通	Subtle wonders through mystery
Line 171	深不可識	Depths that cannot be discerned
Line 172	夫唯不可識	Because one cannot discern them
Line 173	故強為之容	Therefore one is forced to describe the appearance
Line 174	豫兮若冬涉川	Hesitant, like crossing a wintry river
Line 175	猶兮若畏四鄰	Cautious, like fearing four neighbors
Line 176	儼兮其若容	Solemn, like a guest
Line 177	渙兮若冰之將釋	Loose, like ice about to melt
Line 178	敦兮其若樸	Genuine, like plain wood
Line 179	曠兮其若谷	Open, like a valley
Line 180	混兮其若濁	Opaque, like muddy water
Line 181	孰能濁以止	Who can be muddled yet desist
Line 182	靜之徐清	In stillness gradually become clear?
Line 183	孰能安以久	Who can be serene yet persist
Line 184	動之徐生	In motion gradually come alive?
Line 185	保此道者不欲盈	One who holds this Tao does not wish to be overfilled
Line 186	夫唯不盈	Because one is not overfilled
Line 187	故能蔽不新成	Therefore one can preserve and not create anew

"The Sages of old were profound  
and knew the ways of subtlety and discernment.  
Their wisdom is beyond our comprehension.  
Because their knowledge was so far superior  
I can only give a poor description.  
They were careful  
as someone crossing an frozen stream in winter.  
Alert as if surrounded on all sides by the enemy.  
Courteous as a guest.  
Fluid as melting ice.  
Whole as an uncarved block of wood.  
Receptive as a valley.  
Turbid as muddied water.  
Who can be still  
until their mud settles  
and the water is cleared by itself?  
Can you remain tranquil until right action occurs by itself?  
The Master doesn't seek fulfillment.  
For only those who are not full are able to be used  
which brings the feeling of completeness.."

"The ancient followers of the Tao  
were subtle, mysterious, and penetrating.  
They were too deep to be fathomed.  
All we can do is describe their appearance.  
Hesitant, as if crossing a winter stream.  
Watchful, as if aware of neighbours on all sides.  
Respectful, like a visiting guest.  
Yielding, like ice beginning to melt.  
Simple, like an Uncarved Block.  
Open, like a valley.  
Obscure, like muddy water.  
Who else can be still and let the muddy water  
slowly become clear?  
Who else can remain at rest and slowly come to life?  
Those who hold fast to the Tao  
do not try to fill themselves to the brim.  
Because they do not try to be full  
they can be worn out and yet ever new."

Line 188	致虛極	Attain the ultimate emptiness
Line 189	守靜篤	Hold on to the truest tranquility
Line 190	萬物並作	The myriad things are all active
Line 191	吾以觀復	I therefore watch their return
Line 192	夫物芸芸 各復歸其根	Everything flourishes; each returns to its root
Line 193	歸根曰靜	Returning to the root is called tranquility
Line 194	是謂復命	Tranquility is called returning to one's nature
Line 195	復命曰常	Returning to one's nature is called constancy
Line 196	知常曰明	Knowing constancy is called clarity
Line 197	不知常 妄作凶	Not knowing constancy, one recklessly causes trouble
Line 198	知常容	Knowing constancy is acceptance
Line 199	容乃公	Acceptance is impartiality
Line 200	公乃王	Impartiality is sovereign
Line 201	王乃天	Sovereign is Heaven
Line 202	天乃道	Heaven is Tao
Line 203	道乃久	Tao is eternal
Line 204	沒身不殆	The self is no more, without danger

"If you can empty your mind of all thoughts  
your heart will embrace the tranquility of peace.  
Watch the workings of all of creation,  
but contemplate their return to the source.  
All creatures in the universe  
return to the point where they began.  
Returning to the source is tranquility  
because we submit to Heavens mandate.  
Returning to Heavens mandate is called being constant.  
Knowing the constant is called 'enlightenment'.  
Not knowing the constant is the source of evil deeds  
because we have no roots.  
By knowing the constant we can accept things as they are.  
By accepting things as they are, we become impartial.  
By being impartial, we become one with Heaven.  
By being one with Heaven, we become one with Tao.  
Being one with Tao, we are no longer concerned about  
loosing our life because we know the Tao is constant  
and we are one with Tao."

"Empty everything out; hold fast to your stillness.  
Even though all things are stirring together,  
watch for the movement of return.  
The ten thousand things flourish and then  
each returns to the root from which it came.  
Returning to the root is stillness.  
Through stillness each fulfils its destiny.  
That which has fulfilled its destiny  
becomes part of the Always-so.  
To be aware of the Always-so is to awaken.  
Those who innovate while in ignorance of the Always-so  
move toward disaster.  
Those who act with awareness of the Always-so  
embrace all, are not possessed  
by particular desire, and move toward the Tao.  
Those who are at one with the Tao abide forever.  
Even after their bodies waste away, they are safe and whole."

Line 205	太上不知有之	The highest rulers, people do not know they have them
Line 206	其次親而譽之	The next level, people love them and praise them
Line 207	其次畏之	The next level, people fear them
Line 208	其次侮之	The next level, people despise them
Line 209	信不足焉	If the rulers' trust is insufficient
Line 210	有不信焉	Have no trust in them
Line 211	悠兮其貴言	Proceeding calmly, valuing their words
Line 212	功成事遂	Task accomplished, matter settled
Line 213	百姓皆謂我自然	The people all say, "We did it naturally"

"The best leaders are those the people hardly know exist.  
 The next best is a leader who is loved and praised.  
 Next comes the one who is feared.  
 The worst one is the leader that is despised.  
 If you don't trust the people,  
 they will become untrustworthy.  
 The best leaders value their words, and use them sparingly.  
 When she has accomplished her task,  
 the people say, ""Amazing:  
 we did it, all by ourselves!"""

"The best leader is one whose existence is barely known by the people.  
 Next comes one whom they love and praise.  
 Next comes one they fear.  
 Next comes one they defy.  
 If you do not trust enough, you will not be trusted.  
 True Persons do not offer words lightly.  
 When their task is accomplished  
 and their work is completed,  
 the people say, "It happened to us naturally.""

Line 214	大道廢	The great Tao fades away
Line 215	有仁義	There is benevolence and justice
Line 216	智慧出	Intelligence comes forth
Line 217	有大偽	There is great deception
Line 218	六親不和	The six relations are not harmonious
Line 219	有孝慈	There is filial piety and kind affection
Line 220	國家昏亂	The country is in confused chaos
Line 221	有忠臣	There are loyal ministers

"When the great Tao is abandoned,  
charity and righteousness appear.

When intellectualism arises,  
hypocrisy is close behind.

When there is strife in the family unit,  
people talk about 'brotherly love'.

When the country falls into chaos,  
politicians talk about 'patriotism!'"

"When the great Tao is forgotten,  
benevolence and moral codes arise.

When shrewdness and cleverness appear,  
great hypocrisy follows.

When there is no harmony in the family,  
filial manners are developed

When the country is in disorder,  
ministers appear as loyal servants."

Line 222	絕聖棄智	End sagacity; abandon knowledge
Line 223	民利百倍	The people benefit a hundred times
Line 224	絕仁棄義	End benevolence; abandon righteousness
Line 225	民復孝慈	The people return to piety and charity
Line 226	絕巧棄利	End cunning; discard profit
Line 227	盜賊無有	Bandits and thieves no longer exist
Line 228	此三者 以為文不足	These three things are superficial and insufficient
Line 229	故令有所屬	Thus this teaching has its place:
Line 230	見素抱樸	Show plainness; hold simplicity
Line 231	少私寡欲	Reduce selfishness; decrease desires

"Forget about knowledge and wisdom,  
and people will be a hundred times better off.  
Throw away charity and righteousness,  
and people will return to brotherly love.  
Throw away profit and greed,  
and there won't be any thieves.  
These three are superficial and aren't enough  
to keep us at the center of the circle, so we must also:  
Embrace simplicity.  
Put others first.  
Desire little."

"Stop being learned and your troubles will end.  
Give up wisdom, discard cleverness,  
and the people will benefit a hundredfold.  
Give up benevolence, discard moral judgements,  
and the people will rediscover natural compassion.  
Give up shrewdness, discard gain,  
and thieves and robbers will disappear.  
These three false adornments are not enough to live by.  
They must give way to something more solid.  
Look for what is simple and hold onto the Uncarved Block.  
Diminish thoughts of self and restrain desires."

Line 232	絕學無憂	Cease learning, no more worries
Line 233	唯之與阿	Respectful response and scornful response
Line 234	相去幾何	How much is the difference?
Line 235	善之與惡	Goodness and evil
Line 236	相去若何	How much do they differ?
Line 237	人之所畏 不可不畏	What the people fear, I cannot be unafraid
Line 238	荒兮 其未央哉	So desolate! How limitless it is!
Line 239	眾人熙熙	The people are excited
Line 240	如享太牢	As if enjoying a great feast
Line 241	如春登臺	As if climbing up to the terrace in spring
Line 242	我獨泊兮其未兆	I alone am quiet and uninvolved
Line 243	如嬰兒之未孩	Like an infant not yet smiling
Line 244	乘乘兮若無所歸	So weary, like having no place to return
Line 245	眾人皆有餘	The people all have surplus
Line 246	而我獨若遺	While I alone seem lacking
Line 247	我愚人之心也哉	I have the heart of a fool indeed – so ignorant!
Line 248	沌沌兮俗人昭昭	Ordinary people are bright
Line 249	我獨昏昏	I alone am muddled
Line 250	俗人察察	Ordinary people are scrutinizing
Line 251	我獨悶悶	I alone am obtuse
Line 252	澹兮其若海	Such tranquility, like the ocean
Line 253	颺兮若無所止	Such high wind, as if without limits
Line 254	眾人皆有以	The people all have goals
Line 255	而我獨頑且鄙	And I alone am stubborn and lowly
Line 256	我獨異於人	I alone am different from them
Line 257	而貴食母	And value the nourishing mother

"Renounce knowledge and your problems will end.  
 What is the difference between yes and no?  
 What is the difference between good and evil?  
 Must you fear what others fear?  
 Nonsense, look how far you have missed the mark!  
 Other people are joyous,  
 as though they were at a spring festival.  
 I alone am unconcerned and expressionless,  
 like an infant before it has learned to smile.  
 Other people have more than they need;  
 I alone seem to possess nothing.  
 I am lost and drift about with no place to go.  
 I am like a fool; my mind is in chaos.  
 Ordinary people are bright;  
 I alone am dark.  
 Ordinary people are clever;  
 I alone am dull.  
 Ordinary people seem discriminating;  
 I alone am muddled and confused.  
 I drift on the waves on the ocean,  
 blown at the mercy of the wind.  
 Other people have their goals,  
 I alone am dull and uncouth.  
 I am different from ordinary people.  
 I nurse from the Great Mother's breasts."

"How great is the difference between "yea" and "yeah"?  
 How great is the distinction between "good" and "evil"?  
 Must I fear what others fear? How silly!  
 Everyone else is joyous as if enjoying the greatest feast,  
 or going up the terraces in spring.  
 I alone am drifting without direction, like a baby who has not yet smiled.  
 I alone am moping as if I had no home.  
 Everyone else has more than they need,  
 I alone seem in want.  
 I have the mind of a fool, how confused I am!  
 Other people are bright and clever,  
 I alone am dark.  
 Other people are alert and self-assured,  
 I alone am dull and muddled.  
 I am unsettled like the waves of the sea, like the restless wind.  
 Everyone else has a purpose,  
 I alone am stubborn and awkward.  
 I am different from other people,  
 Even so, I am nourished by the Great."

Line 258	孔德之容	The appearance of great virtue
Line 259	惟道是從	Follows only the Tao
Line 260	道之為物	The Tao, as a thing
Line 261	惟恍惟惚	Seems indistinct, seems unclear
Line 262	惚兮恍兮	So unclear, so indistinct
Line 263	其中有象	Within it there is image
Line 264	恍兮惚兮	So indistinct, so unclear
Line 265	其中有物	Within it there is substance
Line 266	窈兮冥兮	So deep, so profound
Line 267	其中有精	Within it there is essence
Line 268	其精甚真	Its essence is supremely real
Line 269	其中有信	Within it there is faith
Line 270	自古及今	From ancient times to the present
Line 271	其名不去	Its name never departs
Line 272	以閱眾甫	To observe the source of all things
Line 273	吾何以知眾甫之狀哉	How do I know the nature of the source?
Line 274	以此	With this

"The greatest virtue you can have  
comes from following only the Tao;  
which takes a form that is intangible and evasive.  
Even though the Tao is intangible and evasive,  
we are able to know it exists.  
Intangible and evasive, yet it has a manifestation.  
Secluded and dark, yet there is a vitality within it.  
Its vitality is very genuine.  
Within it we can find order.  
Since the beginning of time, the Tao has always existed.  
It is beyond existing and not existing.  
How do I know where creation comes from?  
I look inside myself and see it."

"The Great Virtue is to follow the Tao and only the Tao.  
The Tao is shadowy and intangible.  
Intangible and evasive, and yet within it is a form.  
Evasive and intangible, and yet within it is a substance.  
Shadowy and dark, and yet within it is a vital force.  
This vital force is real and can be relied upon.  
From ancient times to the present the  
Tao's instructions have not been forgotten.  
Through it can be perceived the beginning of the story of life.  
How do I know how it was at the beginning of the story of life?  
Because of what is within me."

Line 275	曲則全	Yield and remain whole
Line 276	枉則直	Bend and remain straight
Line 277	窪則盈	Be low and become filled
Line 278	敝則新	Be worn out and become renewed
Line 279	少則得	Have little and receive
Line 280	多則惑	Have much and be confused
Line 281	是以聖人抱一	Therefore the sages hold to the one
Line 282	為天下式	as an example for the world
Line 283	不自見故明	Without flaunting themselves – and so are seen clearly
Line 284	不自是故彰	Without presuming themselves – and so are distinguished
Line 285	不自伐故有功	Without praising themselves – and so have merit
Line 286	不自矜故長	Without boasting about themselves – and so are lasting
Line 287	夫唯不爭	Because they do not contend
Line 288	故天下莫能與之爭	the world cannot contend with them
Line 289	古之所謂曲則全者	What the ancients called "the one who yields and remains whole"
Line 290	豈虛言哉	Were they speaking empty words?
Line 291	誠全而歸之	Sincerity becoming whole, and returning to oneself

"If you want to become whole,  
first let yourself become broken.  
If you want to become straight,  
first let yourself become twisted.  
If you want to become full,  
first let yourself become empty.  
If you want to become new,  
first let yourself become old.

Those whose desires are few gets them,  
those whose desires are great go astray.  
For this reason the Master embraces the Tao,  
as an example for the world to follow.  
Because she isn't self centered,  
people can see the light in her.  
Because she does not boast of herself,  
she becomes a shining example.  
Because she does not glorify herself,  
she becomes a person of merit.  
Because she wants nothing from the world,  
the world cannot overcome her.  
When the ancient Masters said,  
""If you want to become whole,  
then first let yourself be broken,""  
they weren't using empty words.  
All who do this will be made complete."

"Yield and overcome; bend and be straight.  
Empty out and be full; wear out and be renewed.  
Have little and gain; have much and be confused.  
Therefore, the True Person embraces the One  
and becomes a model for all.  
Do not look only at yourself, and you will see much.  
Do not justify yourself, and you will be distinguished.  
Do not brag, and you will have merit.  
Do not be prideful, and your work will endure.

It is because you do not strive that no one under heaven can strive with you.  
The saying of the Old Ones, "Yield and Overcome," is not an empty phrase.  
True wholeness is achieved by blending with life."

Line 292	希言自然	Sparse speech is natural
Line 293	故飄風不終朝	Thus strong wind does not last all morning
Line 294	驟雨不終日	Sudden rain does not last all day
Line 295	孰為此者天地	What makes this so? Heaven and Earth
Line 296	天地尚不能久	Even Heaven and Earth cannot make it last
Line 297	而況於人乎	How can humans?
Line 298	故從事於道者	Thus for those who follow the Tao:
Line 299	道者同於道	Those of the Tao are with the Tao
Line 300	德者同於德	Those of virtue are with virtue
Line 301	失者同於失	Those of loss are with loss
Line 302	同於道者	Those who are with the Tao
Line 303	道亦樂得之	the Tao is also pleased to have them
Line 304	同於德者	Those who are with virtue
Line 305	德亦樂得之	virtue is also pleased to have them
Line 306	同於失者	Those who are with loss
Line 307	失於樂得之	loss is also please to have them
Line 308	信不足焉有不信焉	Those who do not trust sufficiently, others have no trust in them

"Nature uses few words:

when the gale blows, it will not last long;

when it rains hard, it lasts but a little while;

What causes these to happen? Heaven and Earth.

Why do we humans go on endlessly about little

when nature does much in a little time?

If you open yourself to the Tao,  
you and Tao become one.

If you open yourself to Virtue,  
then you can become virtuous.

If you open yourself to loss,  
then you will become lost.

If you open yourself to the Tao,  
the Tao will eagerly welcome you.

If you open yourself to virtue,  
virtue will become a part of you.

If you open yourself to loss,  
the lost are glad to see you.

""When you do not trust people,  
people will become untrustworthy.""

"To talk little is to follow nature.

A whirlwind does not last all morning.

A sudden shower does not last all day.

Who produces these things?

Heaven and earth!

Even heaven and earth cannot make  
wild things last long.

How then can people hope to do so?

People of the Tao conform to the Tao.

People of Virtue conform to Virtue.

People who lose the way conform to the loss.

Those who conform to the Tao are welcomed into the Tao.

Those who conform to Virtue are welcomed into Virtue.

Those who conform to the loss are welcomed into the loss.

Those who do not trust enough will not be trusted."

Line 309	企者不立	Those who are on tiptoes cannot stand
Line 310	跨者不行	Those who straddle cannot walk
Line 311	自見者不明	Those who flaunt themselves are not clear
Line 312	自是者不彰	Those who presume themselves are not distinguished
Line 313	自伐者無功	Those who praise themselves have no merit
Line 314	自矜者不長	Those who boast about themselves do not last
Line 315	其在道也 曰餘食贅形	Those with the Tao call such things leftover food or tumors
Line 316	物或惡之	They despise them
Line 317	故有道者不處	Thus, those who possesses the Tao do not engage in them

"Those who stand on tiptoes  
do not stand firmly.

Those who rush ahead  
don't get very far.

Those who try to out shine others  
dim their own light.

Those who call themselves righteous  
can't know how wrong they are.

Those who boast of their accomplishments  
diminishes the things they have done.

Compared to the Tao, these actions are unworthy. If we are to follow the Tao,  
we must not do these things."

"The person on tiptoe is not steady.

The person with legs astride cannot walk.

Those who look only at themselves see little.

Those who justify themselves are not distinguished.

Those who brag have no merit.

The work of prideful people will not endure.

From the standpoint of the Tao, these things are

"excessive food and tumours of the body."

As they bring sickness, followers of the Tao do not linger around them."

Line 318	有物混成	There is something formlessly created
Line 319	先天地生	Born before Heaven and Earth
Line 320	寂兮寥兮	So silent! So ethereal!
Line 321	獨立不改	Independent and changeless
Line 322	周行而不殆	Circulating and ceaseless
Line 323	可以為天下母	It can be regarded as the mother of the world
Line 324	吾不知其名	I do not know its name
Line 325	字之曰道	To identify it, I call it "Tao"
Line 326	強為之名曰大	Forced to describe it, I call it great
Line 327	大曰逝	Great means passing
Line 328	逝曰遠	Passing means receding
Line 329	遠曰反	Receding means returning
Line 330	故道大	Therefore the Tao is great
Line 331	天大	Heaven is great
Line 332	地大	Earth is great
Line 333	王亦大	The sovereign is also great
Line 334	域中有四大	There are four greats in the universe
Line 335	而王居其一焉	And the sovereign occupies one of them
Line 336	人法地	Humans follow the laws of Earth
Line 337	地法天	Earth follows the laws of Heaven
Line 338	天法道	Heaven follows the laws of Tao
Line 339	道法自然	Tao follows the laws of nature

"Before the universe was born  
there was something in the chaos of the heavens.  
It stands alone and empty,  
solitary and unchanging.  
It is ever present and secure.  
It may be regarded as the Mother of the universe.  
Because I do not know it's name,  
I call it the Tao.  
If forced to give it a name,  
I would call it 'Great'.  
Because it is Great means it is everywhere.  
Being everywhere means it is eternal.  
Being eternal means everything returns to it.  
Tao is great.  
Heaven is great.  
Earth is great.  
Humanity is great.  
Within the universe, these are the four great things.  
Humanity follows the earth.  
Earth follows Heaven.  
Heaven follows the Tao.  
The Tao follows only itself."

"Something formless yet complete, existing before heaven and earth.  
Silent and limitless, it stands alone and does not change.  
Reaching everywhere, it does not tire.  
Perhaps it is the Mother of all things under heaven.  
I do not know its name so I call it "Tao."  
When I have to describe it I call it "great."  
Being great it flows.  
It flows far away.  
Having gone far away, it returns.  
Therefore, the Tao is great.  
Heaven is great.  
Earth is great.  
People are also great.  
Thus, people constitute one of the  
four great things of the universe.  
People conform to the earth.  
The earth conforms to heaven.  
Heaven conforms to the Tao.  
The Tao conforms to its own nature."

Line 340	重為輕根	Heaviness is the root of lightness
Line 341	靜為躁君	Quietness is the master of restlessness
Line 342	是以聖人終日行	Therefore the sages travel an entire day
Line 343	不離輜重	Without leaving the heavy supplies
Line 344	雖有榮觀	Even though there are luxurious sights
Line 345	燕處超然	They are composed and transcend beyond
Line 346	奈何萬乘之主	How can the lords of ten thousand chariots
Line 347	而以身輕天下	Apply themselves lightly to the world?
Line 348	輕則失根	To be light is to lose one's root
Line 349	躁則失君	To be restless is to lose one's mastery

"Heaviness is the basis of lightness.  
Stillness is the standard of activity.  
Thus the Master travels all day  
without ever leaving her wagon.  
Even though she has much to see,  
is she at peace in her indifference.  
Why should the lord of a thousand chariots  
be amused at the foolishness of the world?  
If you abandon yourself to foolishness,  
you lose touch with your beginnings.  
If you let yourself become distracted,  
you will lose the basis of your power."

"The solid must be the root of the light.  
The still must be the master of the restless.  
Therefore, wise people when travelling all day  
do not lose sight of their baggage cart.  
Although there are beautiful scenes to see,  
they remain quietly in their own place.  
Should a lord of ten thousand chariots  
appear more frivolous than a simple traveller?  
To be light is to lose the root.  
To be restless is to lose the master."

Line 350 善行無轍跡	Good traveling does not leave tracks
Line 351 善言無瑕謫	Good speech does not seek faults
Line 352 善數不用籌策	Good reckoning does not use counters
Line 353 善閉無關鍵而不可開	Good closure needs no bar and yet cannot be opened
Line 354 善結無繩約而不可解	Good knot needs no rope and yet cannot be untied
Line 355 是以聖人	Therefore sages:
Line 356 常善救人	Often save others
Line 357 故無棄人	and so do not abandon anyone
Line 358 常善救物	They often save things
Line 359 故無棄物	and so do not abandon anything
Line 360 是謂襲明	This is called following enlightenment
Line 361 故善人者 不善人之師	Therefore the good person is the teacher of the bad person
Line 362 不善人者 善人之資	The bad person is the resource of the good person
Line 363 不貴其師	Those who do not value their teachers
Line 364 不愛其資	And do not love their resources
Line 365 雖智大迷	Although intelligent, they are greatly confused
Line 366 是謂要妙	This is called the essential wonder

"A good traveler leaves no tracks,  
and a skillful speaker is well rehearsed.  
A good bookkeeper has an excellent memory,  
and a well-made door is easy to open and needs no locks.  
A good knot needs no rope and it cannot come undone.  
Thus the Master is willing to help everyone,  
and doesn't know the meaning of rejection.  
She is there to help all of creation,  
and doesn't abandon even the smallest creature.  
This is called embracing the light.  
What is a good person but a bad person's teacher?  
What is a bad person but raw material for his teacher?  
If you fail to honor your teacher or fail to enjoy your student,  
you will become deluded no matter how smart you are.  
It is the secret of prime importance."

"A skilful traveller leaves no track.  
A skilful speaker makes no slip.  
A skilful reckoner needs no counting rod.  
A skilfully made door requires no bolts, yet it cannot be opened.  
A skilful binding has no cords or knots, yet it cannot be untied.  
Therefore, the True Person  
is skilful in assisting people,  
and abandons nobody;  
Is skilful in assisting things,  
and abandons nothing.  
This is called "Following the Inner Light."  
Therefore, the skilful person is the teacher  
of the person without skill.  
The person without skill is the material  
for the skilful person.  
If you do not respect the teacher,  
if you do not care for the material,  
you are on the road to confusion  
and your cleverness will not save you.  
This is an essential principle."

Line 367	知其雄 守其雌	Know the masculine, hold to the feminine
Line 368	為天下谿	Be the watercourse of the world
Line 369	為天下谿	Being the watercourse of the world
Line 370	常德不離	The eternal virtue does not depart
Line 371	復歸於嬰兒	Return to the state of the infant
Line 372	知其白 守其黑	Know the white, hold to the black
Line 373	為天下式	Be the standard of the world
Line 374	為天下式	Being the standard of the world
Line 375	常德不忒	The eternal virtue does not deviate
Line 376	復歸於無極	Return to the state of the boundless
Line 377	知其榮 守其辱	Know the honor, hold to the humility
Line 378	為天下谷	Be the valley of the world
Line 379	為天下谷	Being the valley of the world
Line 380	常德乃足	The eternal virtue shall be sufficient
Line 381	復歸於樸	Return to the state of plain wood
Line 382	樸散則為器	Plain wood splits, then becomes tools
Line 383	聖人用之	The sages utilize them
Line 384	則為官長	And then become leaders
Line 385	故大制不割	Thus the greater whole is undivided

"Know the masculine,  
but keep to the feminine:  
and become a watershed to the world.

If you embrace the world,  
the Tao will never leave you  
and you become as a little child.

Know the white,  
yet keep to the black:  
be a model for the world.

If you are a model for the world,  
the Tao inside you will strengthen  
and you will return whole to your eternal beginning.

Know the honorable,  
but do not shun the disgraced:  
embracing the world as it is.

If you embrace the world with compassion,  
then your virtue will return you to the uncarved block.

The block of wood is carved into utensils  
by carving void into the wood.

The Master uses the utensils, yet prefers to keep to the block  
because of its limitless possibilities.

Great works do not involve discarding substance."

"Develop the strength of a man, but live as gently as a woman.

Become a brook and receive all things under heaven.

If you are such a brook then Virtue will constantly flow into you  
and you will become a simple child again.

Know the pure but live the life of the sullied.  
Become a fountain to all things under heaven.

If you become such a fountain  
then you will have abundant Virtue  
and you will return to the state of the Uncarved Block.

When the Uncarved Block is cut up into pieces,  
it is turned into specialised instruments.

But the True Person makes use of it whole  
and becomes the master of the instruments.

Hence, it is said, "The finest carver cuts little."

將欲取天下而為之	Those who wish to take the world and control it
吾見其不得已	I see that they cannot succeed
天下神器	The world is a sacred instrument
不可為也	One cannot control it
為者敗之	The one who controls it will fail
執者失之	The one who grasps it will lose
故物	Thus all things:
或行或隨	Either lead or follow
或歔或吹	Either blow hot or cold
或強或羸	Either have strength or weakness
或挫或隳	Either have ownership or take by force
是以聖人	Therefore the sage:
去甚	Eliminates extremes
去奢	Eliminates excess
去泰	Eliminates arrogance

"Do you want to rule the world and control it?  
I don't think it can ever be done.  
The world is sacred vessel  
and it cannot be controlled.  
You will only it make it worse if you try.  
It may slip through your fingers and disappear.  
Some are meant to lead,  
and others are meant to follow;  
Some must always strain,  
and others have an easy time;  
Some are naturally big and strong,  
and others will always be small;  
Some will be protected and nurtured,  
and others will meet with destruction.  
The Master accepts things as they are,  
and out of compassion avoids extravagance  
, excess and the extremes."

"Whoever wishes to take over the world will not succeed.  
The world is a sacred vessel and nothing should be done to it.  
Whoever tries to tamper with it will mar it.  
Whoever tries to grab it will lose it.  
Hence, there is a time to go ahead and a time to stay behind.  
There is a time to breathe easy and a time to breathe hard.  
There is a time to be vigorous and a time to be gentle.  
There is a time to gather and a time to release.  
Therefore, the True Person avoids extremes,  
self-indulgence, and extravagance."

Line 401	以道佐人主者	The one who uses the Tao to advise the ruler
Line 402	不以兵強天下	Does not dominate the world with soldiers
Line 403	其事好還	Such methods tend to be returned
Line 404	師之所處	The place where the troops camp
Line 405	荊棘生焉	Thistles and thorns grow
Line 406	大軍之後	Following the great army
Line 407	必有凶年	There must be an inauspicious year
Line 408	善有果而已	A good commander achieves result, then stops
Line 409	不敢以取強	And does not dare to reach for domination
Line 410	果而勿矜	Achieves result but does not brag
Line 411	果而勿伐	Achieves result but does not flaunt
Line 412	果而勿驕	Achieves result but is not arrogant
Line 413	果而不得已	Achieves result but only out of necessity
Line 414	果而勿強	Achieves result but does not dominate
Line 415	物壯則老	Things become strong and then get old
Line 416	是謂不道	This is called contrary to the Tao
Line 417	不道早已	That which is contrary to the Tao soon ends

"Those who lead people by following the Tao  
 don't use weapons to enforce their will.  
 Using force always leads to unseen troubles.  
 In the places where armies march,  
 thorns and briars bloom and grow.  
 After armies take to war,  
 bad years must always follow.  
 The skillful commander  
 strikes a decisive blow then stops.  
 When victory is won over the enemy through war  
 it is not a thing of great pride.  
 When the battle is over,  
 arrogance is the new enemy.  
 War can result when no other alternative is given,  
 so the one who overcomes an enemy should not dominate them.  
 The strong always weakened with time.  
 This is not the way of the Tao.  
 That which is not of the Tao will soon end."

"If you would assist leaders of people by way of the Tao,  
 you will oppose the use of armed force to overpower the world.  
 Those who use weapons will be harmed by them.  
 Where troops have camped only thorn bushes grow.  
 Bad harvests follow in the wake of a great army.  
 The skilful person strikes the blow and stops,  
 without taking advantage of victory.  
 Bring it to a conclusion but do not be vain.  
 Bring it to a conclusion but do not be boastful.  
 Bring it to a conclusion but do not be arrogant.  
 Bring it to a conclusion but only when there is no choice.  
 Bring it to a conclusion but without violence.  
 When force is used, youthful strength decays.  
 This is not the way of Tao.  
 And that which goes against the Tao will quickly pass away."

Line 418	夫佳兵者 不祥之器	A strong military, a tool of misfortune
Line 419	物或惡之	All things detest it
Line 420	故有道者不處	Therefore, those who possess the Tao avoid it
Line 421	君子居則貴左	Honorable gentlemen, while at home, value the left
Line 422	用兵則貴右	When deploying the military, value the right
Line 423	兵者不祥之器	The military is a tool of misfortune
Line 424	非君子之器	Not the tool of honorable gentlemen
Line 425	不得已而用之	When using it out of necessity
Line 426	恬淡為上	Calm detachment should be above all
Line 427	勝而不美	Victorious but without glory
Line 428	而美之者	Those who glorify
Line 429	是樂殺人	Are delighting in the killing
Line 430	夫樂殺人者	Those who delight in killing
Line 431	則不可得志於天下矣	Cannot achieve their ambitions upon the world
Line 431	吉事尚左	Auspicious events favor the left
Line 432	凶事尚右	Inauspicious events favor the right
Line 433	偏將軍居左	The lieutenant general is positioned to the left
Line 434	上將軍居右	The major general is positioned to the right
Line 435	言以喪禮處之	We say that they are treated as if in a funeral
Line 436	殺人之眾	Those who have been killed
Line 437	以悲哀泣之	Should be mourned with sadness
Line 438	戰勝以喪禮處之	Victory in war should be treated as a funeral

"Weapons are the bearers of bad news;  
all people should detest them.

The wise man values the left side,  
and in time of war he values the right.

Weapons are meant for destruction,  
and thus are avoided by the wise.

Only as a last resort  
will a wise person use a deadly weapon.

If peace is her true objective  
how can she rejoice in the victory of war?

Those who rejoice in victory  
delight in the slaughter of humanity.

Those who resort to violence  
will never bring peace to the world.

The left side is a place of honor on happy occasions.

The right side is reserved for mourning at a funeral.

When the lieutenants take the left side to prepare for war,  
the general should be on the right side,  
because he knows the outcome will be death.

The death of many should be greeted with great sorrow,  
and the victory celebration should honor those who have died."

"Weapons are ill-omened things.

Among gentle people the left side is the place of honour when at home,  
but in war the right side is the place of honour.

Weapons are not proper instruments for gentle people;  
they use them only when they have no other choice.

Peace and quiet are what they value.

They do not glory in victory.

to glorify it is to delight in the slaughter of people.

Those who delight in the slaughter of people will  
never thrive among all that dwell under heaven.

The army that has killed people should be received with sorrow.  
Conquerors should be received with the rites of mourning."

Line 439	道常無名	The Tao, eternally nameless
Line 440	樸雖小	Its simplicity, although imperceptible
Line 441	天下莫能臣也	Cannot be treated by the world as subservient
Line 442	侯王若能守之	If the sovereign can hold on to it
Line 443	萬物將自賓	All will follow by themselves
Line 444	天地相合	Heaven and Earth, together in harmony
Line 445	以降甘露	Will rain sweet dew
Line 446	民莫之令而自均	People will not need to force it; it will adjust by itself
Line 447	始制有名	In the beginning, there were names
Line 448	名亦既有	Names came to exist everywhere
Line 449	夫亦將知止	One should know when to stop
Line 450	知止可以不殆	Knowing when to stop, thus avoiding danger
Line 451	譬道之在天下	The existence of the Tao in the world
Line 452	猶川谷之於江海	Is like streams in the valley into rivers and the ocean

"The Tao is nameless and unchanging.  
 Although it appears insignificant,  
 nothing in the world can contain it.  
 If a ruler abides by its principles,  
 then her people will willingly follow.  
 Heaven would then reign on earth,  
 like sweet rain falling on paradise.  
 People would have no need for laws,  
 because the law would be written on their hearts.  
 Naming is a necessity for order,  
 but naming cannot order all things.  
 Naming often makes things impersonal,  
 so we should know when naming should end.  
 Knowing when to stop naming,  
 you can avoid the pitfall it brings.  
 All things end in the Tao  
 just as the small streams and the largest rivers  
 flow through valleys to the sea."

"The Tao is forever nameless.  
 Though the Uncarved Block is small,  
 it is not inferior to anything under heaven.  
 If leaders could keep hold of it,  
 the ten thousand things would submit to them freely.  
 Heaven and earth would unite and sweet dew would fall.  
 The people would live in harmony without any law or decree.  
 Only when the Block is carved are there names.  
 As soon as there are names it is time to stop.  
 Knowing when to stop prevents trouble. All under heaven will return to the Tao  
 as brooks and streams flow home to the sea."

Line 453	知人者智	Those who understand others are intelligent
Line 454	自知者明	Those who understand themselves are enlightened
Line 455	勝人者有力	Those who overcome others have strength
Line 456	自勝者強	Those who overcome themselves are powerful
Line 457	知足者富	Those who know contentment are wealthy
Line 458	強行者有志	Those who proceed vigorously have willpower
Line 459	不失其所者久	Those who do not lose their base endure
Line 460	死而不亡者壽	Those who die but do not perish have longevity

"Those who know others are intelligent;  
those who know themselves are truly wise.  
Those who master others are strong;  
those who master themselves have true power.  
Those who know they have enough are truly wealthy.  
Those who persist will reach their goal.  
Those who keep their course have a strong will.  
Those who embrace death will not perish,  
but have life everlasting."

"Knowing others is to be clever.  
Knowing yourself is to be enlightened.  
Overcoming others requires force.  
Overcoming yourself requires strength.  
To know that you have enough is to be rich.  
Push through and you may get your way,  
but return home and you will endure.  
Live out your days and you have had a long life."

Line 461	大道汎兮	The great Tao is like a flood
Line 462	其可左右	It can flow to the left or to the right
Line 463	萬物恃之以生而不辭	The myriad things depend on it for life, but it never stops
Line 464	功成而不名有	It achieves its work, but does not take credit
Line 465	衣養萬物而不為主	It clothes and feeds myriad things, but does not rule over them
Line 466	常無欲	Ever desiring nothing
Line 467	可名於小	It can be named insignificant
Line 468	萬物歸焉而不為主	Myriad things return to it but it does not rule over them
Line 469	可名為大	It can be named great
Line 470	以其終不自為大	Even in the end, it does not regard itself as great
Line 471	故能成其大	That is how it can achieve its greatness

"The great Tao flows unobstructed in every direction.  
 All things rely on it to conceive and be born,  
 and it does not deny even the smallest of creation.  
 When it has accomplished great wonders,  
 it does not claim them for itself.  
 It nourishes infinite worlds,  
 yet it doesn't seek to master the smallest creature.  
 Since it is without wants and desires,  
 it can be considered humble.  
 All of creation seeks it for refuge  
 yet it does not seek to master or control.  
 Because it does not seek greatness;  
 it is able to accomplish truly great things."

"The great Tao covers everything like a flood.  
 It flows to the left and to the right.  
 The ten thousand things depend upon it  
 and it denies none of them.  
 It accomplishes its task yet claims no reward.  
 It clothes and feeds the ten thousand things  
 yet it does not attempt to control them.  
 Therefore, it may be called "the little."  
 The ten thousand things return to it,  
 even though it does not control them.  
 Therefore, it may be called "the great."  
 So it is that the True Person does not wish to be great  
 and therefore becomes truly great."

Line 472 執大象	Hold the great image
Line 473 天下往	All under heaven will come
Line 474 往而不害 安平太	They come without harm, in harmonious peace
Line 475 樂與餌 過客止	Music and food, passing travelers stop
Line 476 道之出口	The Tao that is spoken out of the mouth
Line 477 淡乎其無味	Is bland and without flavor
Line 478 視之不足見	Look at it, it cannot be seen
Line 479 聽之不足聞	Listen to it, it cannot be heard
Line 480 用之不足既	Use it, it cannot be exhausted

"She who follows the way of the Tao  
will draw the world to her steps.  
She can go without fear of being injured,  
because she has found peace and tranquility in her heart.  
Where there is music and good food,  
people will stop to enjoy it.  
But words spoken of the Tao  
seem to them boring and stale.  
When looked at, there is nothing for them to see.  
When listen for, there is nothing for them to hear.  
Yet if they put it to use, it would never be exhausted."

"Hold on to the Great Image and all under heaven will approach you.  
Coming to you and not being harmed, they will find rest, peace, and security.  
A passing guest will pause at the sound of music and the smell of fancy food.  
By comparison the Tao is mild and flavourless.  
It is not solid enough to be seen, nor loud enough to be heard.  
Yet, it lasts forever."

Line 481	將欲歛之	If one wishes to shrink it
Line 482	必固張之	One must first expand it
Line 483	將欲弱之	If one wishes to weaken it
Line 484	必固強之	One must first strengthen it
Line 485	將欲廢之	If one wishes to discard it
Line 486	必固興之	One must first promote it
Line 487	將欲奪之	If one wishes to seize it
Line 488	必固與之	One must first give it
Line 489	是謂微明	This is called subtle clarity
Line 490	柔弱勝剛強	The soft and weak overcomes the tough and strong
Line 491	魚不可脫於淵	Fish cannot leave the depths
Line 492	國之利器	The sharp instruments of the state
Line 493	不可以示人	Cannot be shown to the people

"If you want something to return to the source,  
you must first allow it to spread out.

If you want something to weaken,  
you must first allow it to become strong.

If you want something to be removed,  
you must first allow it to flourish.

If you want to possess something,  
you must first give it away.

This is called the subtle understanding  
of how things are meant to be.

The soft and pliable overcomes the hard and inflexible.  
Just as fish remain hidden in deep waters,  
it is best to keep weapons out of sight."

"That which is to be shrunk must first be stretched out.  
That which is to be weakened must first be strengthened.

That which is to be cast down must first be raised up.

That which is to be taken must first be given.

There is wisdom in dimming your light.

For the soft and gentle will overcome the hard and powerful.

Fish are best left in deep waters.

And, weapons are best kept out of sight."

Line 494	道常無為	The Tao is constant in non-action
Line 495	而無不為	Yet there is nothing it does not do
Line 496	侯王若能守之	If the sovereign can hold on to this
Line 497	萬物將自化	All things shall transform themselves
Line 498	化而欲作	Transformed, yet wishing to achieve
Line 499	吾將鎮之以無名之樸	I shall restrain them with the simplicity of the nameless
Line 500	無名之樸	The simplicity of the nameless
Line 501	夫亦將無欲	They shall be without desire
Line 502	不欲以靜	Without desire, using stillness
Line 503	天下將自定	The world shall steady itself

"The Tao never acts with force,  
yet there is nothing that it cannot do.  
If rulers could follow the way of the Tao,  
then all of creation would willingly follow their example.  
If selfish desires were to arise after their transformation,  
I would erase them with the power of the Uncarved Block.  
By the power of the Uncarved Block,  
future generations would loose their selfish desires.  
By loosing their selfish desires,  
the world would naturally settle into peace."

"The Tao never strives, yet nothing is left undone.  
If leaders were able to adhere to it  
the ten thousand things  
would develop of their own accord.  
If after they have developed  
they experience desires to strive,  
they can bury those desires  
under the nameless Uncarved Block.  
The nameless Uncarved Block can protect against desire.  
When desires are restrained there will be peace,  
and then all under heaven will be at rest."

Line 504 上德不德	High virtue is not virtuous
Line 505 是以有德	Therefore it has virtue
Line 506 下德不失德	Low virtue never loses virtue
Line 507 是以無德	Therefore it has no virtue
Line 508 上德無為	High virtue takes no contrived action
Line 509 而無以為	And acts without agenda
Line 510 下德為之	Low virtue takes contrived action
Line 511 而有以為	And acts with agenda
Line 512 上仁為之	High benevolence takes contrived action
Line 513 而無以為	And acts without agenda
Line 514 上義為之	High righteousness takes contrived action
Line 515 而有以為	And acts with agenda
Line 516 上禮為之	High etiquette takes contrived action
Line 517 而莫之應	And upon encountering no response
Line 518 則攘臂而扔之	Uses arms to pull others

"The highest good is not to seek to do good,  
but to allow yourself to become it.  
The ordinary person seeks to do good things,  
and finds that they cannot do them continually.  
The Master does not force virtue on others,  
thus she is able to accomplish her task.  
The ordinary person who uses force,  
will find that they accomplish nothing.  
The kind person acts from the heart,  
and accomplishes a multitude of things.  
The righteous person acts out of pity,  
yet leaves many things undone.  
The moral person will act out of duty,  
and when no one will respond  
will roll up his sleeves and uses force.

"A person of high virtue is not conscious of virtue  
and therefore possesses Virtue.  
A person of little virtue tries to be virtuous and therefore lacks Virtue.  
A person of high virtue does not make a fuss and is not seen.  
A person of little virtue always makes a fuss and is always seen.  
A truly good person functions without ulterior motive.  
A moralist acts out of private desires.  
A ritualist acts and, when no one responds,  
rolls up a sleeve and marches.

Line 519 故失道而後德	Therefore, the Tao is lost, and then virtue
Line 520 失德而後仁	Virtue is lost, and then benevolence
Line 521 失仁而後義	Benevolence is lost, and then righteousness
Line 522 失義而後禮	Righteousness is lost, and then etiquette
Line 523 夫禮者	Those who have etiquette
Line 524 忠信之薄	are a thin shell of loyalty and sincerity
Line 525 而亂之首	And the beginning of chaos
Line 526 前識者	Those with foreknowledge
Line 527 道之華	Are the flowers of the Tao
Line 528 而愚之始	And the beginning of ignorance
Line 529 是以大丈夫	Therefore the great person:
Line 530 處其厚 不居其薄	Abides in substance, and does not dwell on the thin shell
Line 531 處其實 不居其華	Abides in the real, and does not dwell on the flower
Line 532 故去彼取此	Thus they discard that and take this

When the Tao is forgotten, there is righteousness.  
When righteousness is forgotten, there is morality.  
When morality is forgotten, there is the law.  
The law is the husk of faith,  
and trust is the beginning of chaos.  
Our basic understandings are not from the Tao  
because they come from the depths of our misunderstanding.  
The master abides in the fruit and not in the husk.  
She dwells in the Tao,  
and not with the things that hide it.  
This is how she increases in wisdom."

When we lose the Tao, we turn to Virtue.  
When we lose Virtue, we turn to kindness.  
When we lose kindness, we turn to morality.  
When we lose morality, we turn to ritual.  
Ritual is the mere husk of good faith and  
loyalty and the beginning of disorder.  
Knowledge of what is to come may be a flower of the Tao,  
but it is the beginning of folly.  
Hence, the well-formed person relies on what is  
solid and not on what is flimsy,  
on the fruit and not the flower.  
Therefore, such a person lets go of that  
without and is content with this within."

Line 533	昔之得一者	Those that attained oneness since ancient times:
Line 534	天得一以清	The sky attained oneness and thus clarity
Line 535	地得一以寧	The earth attained oneness and thus tranquility
Line 536	神得一以靈	The gods attained oneness and thus divinity
Line 537	谷得一以盈	The valley attained oneness and thus abundance
Line 538	萬物得一以生	The myriad things attained oneness and thus life
Line 539	侯王得一以為天下貞	The rulers attained oneness and became the world's standard
Line 540	其致之一也	These all emerged from oneness
Line 541	天無以清將恐裂	The sky, lacking clarity, would break apart
Line 542	地無以寧將恐發	The earth, lacking tranquility, would erupt
Line 543	神無以靈將恐歇	The gods, lacking divinity, would vanish
Line 544	谷無以盈將恐竭	The valley, lacking abundance, would wither
Line 545	萬物無以生將恐滅	Myriad things, lacking life, would be extinct
Line 546	侯王無以貞而貴高將恐蹶	The rulers, lacking lofty standards, would be toppled
Line 547	故貴以賤為本	Therefore, the honored uses the lowly as basis
Line 548	高以下為基	The higher uses the lower as foundation
Line 549	是以侯王自稱孤寡不穀	Thus the rulers call themselves alone, bereft, and unworthy
Line 550	此非以賤為本耶 非乎	Is this not using the lowly as basis? Is it not so?
Line 551	故致數輿無輿	Therefore, the ultimate honor is no honor
Line 552	不欲琤琤如玉	Do not wish to be shiny like jade
Line 553	珞珞如石	Be dull like rocks

"The masters of old attained unity with the Tao.  
 Heaven attained unity and become pure.  
 The earth attained unity and found peace.  
 The spirits attained unity so they could minister.  
 The valleys attained unity that they might be full.  
 Humanity attained unity that they might flourish.  
 Their leaders attained unity that they might set the example.  
 This is the power of unity.  
 Without unity, the sky becomes filthy.  
 Without unity, the earth becomes unstable.  
 Without unity, the spirits become unresponsive and disappear.  
 Without unity, the valleys become dry as a desert.  
 Without unity, human kind can't reproduce and becomes extinct.  
 Without unity, our leaders become corrupt and fall.  
 The great view the small as their source,  
 and the high takes the low as their foundation.  
 Their greatest asset becomes their humility.  
 They speak of themselves as orphans and widows,  
 thus they truly seek humility.  
 Do not shine like the precious gem,  
 but be as dull as a common stone."

"From ancient times these things have arisen from the One:  
 Heaven is clear because of the One,  
 The earth is firm because of the One,  
 The Spirit is strong because of the One,  
 The valley is full because of the One,  
 The ten thousand things reproduce because of the One,  
 Leaders are able to lead because of the One.  
 All of this comes from the One.  
 If heaven were not clear it would soon split.  
 If the earth were not firm it would soon bend and break.  
 If the Spirit were not strong it would soon wear out.  
 If the valley were not full it would soon dry up.  
 If the ten thousand things did not reproduce they would soon die out.  
 If leaders could not lead they would soon fall.  
 Therefore, greatness has its source in the little.  
 The low is the foundation of the high.  
 Princes call themselves "alone," "helpless," "worthless."  
 Is this not acknowledging a humble root?  
 Enumerate the parts of a carriage and you have not defined a carriage.  
 Better to resound like stone chimes than to tinkle like jade bells."

Line 554 反者道之動      The returning is the movement of the Tao

Line 555 弱者道之用      The weak is the utilization of the Tao

Line 556 天下萬物生於有      The myriad things of the world are born of being

Line 557 有生於無      Being is born of non-being

"All movement returns to the Tao.  
Weakness is how the Tao works.  
All of creation is born from substance.  
Substance is born of nothing-ness."

"Returning is the direction of the Tao.  
Yielding is the way of the Tao.  
The ten thousand things are born of Being and Being is born of Nonbeing."

Line 558	上士聞道	Higher people hear of the Tao
Line 559	勤而行之	They diligently practice it
Line 560	中士聞道	Average people hear of the Tao
Line 561	若存若亡	They sometimes keep it and sometimes lose it
Line 562	下士聞道	Lower people hear of the Tao
Line 563	大笑之	They laugh loudly at it
Line 564	不笑不足以為道	If they do not laugh, it would not be the Tao
Line 565	故建言有之	Therefore a proverb has the following:
Line 566	明道若昧	The clear Tao appears unclear
Line 567	進道若退	The advancing Tao appears to retreat
Line 568	夷道若類	The smooth Tao appears uneven
Line 569	上德若谷	High virtue appears like a valley
Line 570	大白若辱	Great integrity appears like disgrace
Line 571	廣德若不足	Encompassing virtue appears insufficient
Line 572	建德若偷	Building virtue appears inactive
Line 573	質真若渝	True substance appears inconstant
Line 574	大方無隅	The great square has no corners
Line 575	大器晚成	The great vessel is late in completion
Line 576	大音希聲	The great music is imperceptible in sound
Line 577	大象無形	The great image has no form
Line 578	道隱無名	The Tao is hidden and nameless
Line 579	夫唯道	Yet it is only the Tao
Line 580	善貸且成	That excels in giving and completing everything

"When a superior person hears of the Tao,  
 She diligently puts it into practice.  
 When an average person hears of the Tao,  
 he believes half of it, and doubts the other half.  
 When a foolish person hears of the Tao,  
 he laughs out loud at the very idea.  
 If he didn't laugh,  
 it wouldn't be the Tao.  
 Thus it is said:  
 The brightness of the Tao seems like darkness,  
 the advancement of the Tao seems like retreat,  
 the level path seems rough,  
 the superior path seem empty,  
 the pure seems to be tarnished,  
 and true virtue doesn't seem to be enough.  
 The virtue of caution seems like cowardice,  
 the pure seems to be polluted,  
 the true square seems to have no corners,  
 the best vessels take the most time to finish,  
 the greatest sounds cannot be heard,  
 and the greatest image has no form.  
 The Tao hides in the unnamed,  
 Yet it alone nourishes and completes all things."

"The wise student on hearing the Tao diligently puts it into practice.  
 The average student on hearing the Tao  
 keeps it one minute and loses it the next.  
 The mediocre student on hearing the Tao laughs at it loudly.  
 If this student did not laugh it would not be the Tao.  
 Therefore, the ancient proverb says:  
 The bright path seems dull.  
 The path that goes toward seems to lead backward.  
 The even path seems up and down.  
 The greatest whiteness seems soiled.  
 High Virtue seems like a canyon.  
 Abundant Virtue seems deficient.  
 Vigorous Virtue seems limp.  
 Simple Virtue seems faded.  
 The greatest square has no corners.  
 The greatest vessel takes long to complete.  
 The greatest note is hard to hear.  
 The greatest image has no shape.  
 The Tao is hidden and nameless;  
 yet, it is the Tao alone that supports all things  
 and brings them to completion."

Line 581 道生一 Tao produces one  
 Line 582 一生二 One produces two  
 Line 583 二生三 Two produce three  
 Line 584 三生萬物 Three produce myriad things  
 Line 585 萬物負陰而抱陽 Myriad things, backed by yin and embracing yang  
 Line 586 沖氣以為和 Achieve harmony by integrating their energy  
 Line 587 人之所惡 What the people dislike  
 Line 588 唯孤寡不穀 Are alone, bereft, and unworthy  
 Line 589 而王公以為稱 But the rulers call themselves with these terms  
 Line 590 故物 So with all things  
 Line 591 或損之而益 Appear to take loss but benefit  
 Line 592 或益之而損 Or receive benefit but lose  
 Line 593 人之所教 What the ancients taught  
 Line 594 我亦教之 I will also teach  
 Line 595 強梁者不得其死 The violent one cannot have a natural death  
 Line 596 吾將以為教父 I will use this as the principal of all teachings

"The Tao gave birth to One.  
 The One gave birth to Two.  
 The Two gave birth to Three.  
 The Three gave birth to all of creation.  
 All things carry Yin  
 yet embrace Yang.  
 They blend their life breaths  
 in order to produce harmony.  
 People despise being orphaned, widowed and poor.  
 But the noble ones take these as their titles.  
 In losing, much is gained,  
 and in gaining, much is lost.  
 What others teach I too will teach:  
 ""The strong and violent will not die a natural death.""

"The Tao gives birth to the One.  
 The One gives birth to two.  
 Two gives birth to three.  
 And three gives birth to the ten thousand things.  
 The ten thousand things have their backs in the shadow  
 while they embrace the light.  
 Harmony is achieved by blending the breaths of these two forces.  
 People dislike the words "alone," "helpless," "worthless,"  
 yet this is how Princes describe themselves.  
 So it is that sometimes a thing is increased  
 by being diminished and diminished by being increased.  
 What others teach I also teach:  
 "A violent person will not die a natural death."  
 I shall make this the basis of my teaching."

Line 597	天下之至柔	The softest things of the world
Line 598	馳騁天下之至堅	Override the hardest things of the world
Line 599	無有	That which has no substance
Line 600	入於無間	Enters into that which has no openings
Line 601	吾是以知無為之有益	From this I know the benefits of unattached actions
Line 602	不言之教	The teaching without words
Line 603	無為之益	The benefits of actions without attachment
Line 604	天下希及之	Are rarely matched in the world

"That which offers no resistance,  
overcomes the hardest substances.  
That which offers no resistance  
can enter where there is no space.  
Few in the world can comprehend  
the teaching without words,  
or understand the value of non-action."

"The most yielding of all things overcomes the hardest of all things.  
That which has no substance enters where there is no crevice.  
Hence, I know the value of action without striving.  
Few things under heaven bring more benefit than  
the lessons learned from silence and  
the actions taken without striving."

Line 605	名與身孰親	Fame or the self, which is dearer?
Line 606	身與貨孰多	The self or wealth, which is greater?
Line 607	得與亡孰病	Gain or loss, which is more painful?
Line 608	是故甚愛必大費	Thus excessive love must lead to great spending
Line 609	多藏必厚亡	Excessive hoarding must lead to heavy loss
Line 610	知足不辱	Knowing contentment avoids disgrace
Line 611	知止不殆	Knowing when to stop avoids danger
Line 612	可以長久	Thus one can endure indefinitely

"Which is more important, your honor or your life?  
Which is more valuable, your possessions or your person?  
Which is more destructive, success or failure?  
Because of this, great love extracts a great cost  
and true wealth requires greater loss.  
Knowing when you have enough avoids dishonor,  
and knowing when to stop will keep you from danger  
and bring you a long, happy life."

"Your integrity or your body: Which is more important?  
Your body or your possessions: Which is worth more?  
Gain or loss: Which is more harmful?  
Thus it is that the miser will pay much.  
The hoarder will suffer great loss.  
Be content with what you have and you will not be disgraced.  
Know when to stop and you will be preserved from danger.  
Only in this way will you long endure."

Line 613	大成若缺	Great perfection seems flawed
Line 614	其用不弊	Its function is without failure
Line 615	大盈若冲	Great fullness seems empty
Line 616	其用不窮	Its function is without exhaustion
Line 617	大直若屈	Great straightness seems bent
Line 618	大巧若拙	Great skill seems unrefined
Line 619	大辯若訥	Great eloquence seems inarticulate
Line 620	躁勝寒	Movement overcomes cold
Line 621	靜勝熱	Stillness overcomes heat
Line 622	清靜為天下正	Clear quietness is the standard of the world

"The greatest accomplishments seem imperfect,  
yet their usefulness is not diminished.  
The greatest fullness seems empty,  
yet it will be inexhaustible.  
The greatest straightness seems crooked.  
The most valued skill seems like clumsiness.  
The greatest speech seems full of stammers.  
Movement overcomes the cold,  
and stillness overcomes the heat.  
That which is pure and still is the universal ideal."

"Great accomplishment seems incomplete, yet its use is not impaired.  
Great fullness seems empty, yet it will never be drained.  
Great straightness looks crooked.  
Great skill appears clumsy.  
Great eloquence sounds like stammering.  
Movement overcomes cold, stillness overcomes heat.  
The calm and quiet set right everything under heaven."

Line 623	天下有道	When the world has the Tao
Line 624	卻走馬以糞	Fast horses are retired to till the soil
Line 625	天下無道	When the world lacks the Tao
Line 626	戎馬生於郊	Warhorses give birth on the battlefield
Line 627	罪莫大於可欲	There is no crime greater than greed
Line 628	禍莫大於不知足	No disaster greater than discontentment
Line 629	咎莫大於欲得	No fault greater than avarice
Line 630	故知足之足	Thus the satisfaction of contentment
Line 631	常足矣	is the lasting satisfaction

"When the world follows the Tao,  
horses run free to fertilize the fields.  
When the world does not follow the Tao,  
war horses are bred outside the cities.

There is no greater transgression  
than condoning peoples selfish desires,  
no greater disaster than being discontent,  
and no greater retribution than for greed.

Whoever knows contentment will be at peace forever."

"When the Tao prevails in the world  
swift horses are used to fertilise the fields.

When the Tao is unheeded  
war horses are bred on the border lands.  
There is no greater offence than harbouring desires.

There is no greater disaster than discontent.  
There is no greater misfortune than wanting more.

Hence, if you are content  
You will always have enough."

Line 632	不出戶 知天下	Without going out the door, know the world
Line 633	不闚牖 見天道	Without peering out the window, see the Heavenly Tao
Line 634	其出彌遠	The further one goes
Line 635	其知彌少	The less one knows
Line 636	是以聖人	Therefore the sage
Line 637	不行而知	Knows without going
Line 638	不見而名	Names without seeing
Line 639	不為而成	Achieves without striving

"Without opening your door,  
you can know the whole world.  
Without looking out your window,  
you can understand the way of the Tao.  
The more knowledge you seek,  
the less you will understand.  
The Master understands without leaving,  
sees clearly without looking,  
accomplishes much without doing anything."

"Without going outside you can know the ways of the world.  
Without looking through the window you can see the way of heaven.  
The farther you go the less you know.  
Therefore, the True Person  
arrives without travelling,  
perceives without looking,  
and acts without striving."

Line 640 為學日益	Pursue knowledge, daily gain
Line 641 為道日損	Pursue Tao, daily loss
Line 642 損之又損	Loss and more loss
Line 643 以至於無為	Until one reaches unattached action
Line 644 無為而無不為	With unattached action, there is nothing one cannot do
Line 645 取天下常以無事	Take the world by constantly applying non-interference
Line 646 及其有事	The one who interferes
Line 647 不足以取天下	is not qualified to take the world

"One who seeks knowledge learns something new every day.  
One who seeks the Tao unlearns something new every day.  
Less and less remains until you arrive at non-action.  
When you arrive at non-action,  
nothing will be left undone.  
Mastery of the world is achieved  
by letting things take their natural course.  
You cannot master the world by changing the natural way."

"In the pursuit of learning, every day something is added.  
In the pursuit of the Tao, every day something is dropped.  
Less and less is done until you come to action without striving.  
When you follow this practice, nothing remains undone.  
All under heaven is won by letting things take their course.  
Nothing can be gained by interfering."

Line 648 聖人無常心	The sages have no constant mind
Line 649 以百姓心為心	They take the mind of the people as their mind
Line 650 善者 吾善之	Those who are good, I am good to them
Line 651 不善者 吾亦善之	Those who are not good, I am also good to them
Line 652 德善	Thus the virtue of goodness
Line 653 信者 吾信之	Those who believe, I believe them
Line 654 不信者 吾亦信之	Those who do not believe, I also believe them
Line 655 德信	Thus the virtue of belief
Line 656 聖人之在天下歛歛焉	The sages live in the world
Line 657 為天下渾其心	They cautiously merge their mind for the world
Line 658 百姓皆注其耳目	The people all pay attention with their ears and eyes
Line 659 聖人皆孩之	The sages care for them as children

"The Master has no mind of her own.  
She understands the mind of the people.  
To those who are good she treats as good.  
To those who aren't good she also treats as good.  
This is how she attains true goodness.  
She trusts people who are trustworthy.  
She also trusts people who aren't trustworthy.  
This is how she gains true trust.  
The Master's mind is shut off from the world.  
Only for the sake of the people does she muddle her mind.  
They look to her in anticipation.  
Yet she treats them all as her children."

"The True Person does not have an individual heart  
but uses the heart of the people. I am kind to those who are kind.  
I am also kind to those who are not kind.  
Thus, there is an increase in kindness.  
I keep faith with those who are in good faith.  
I also keep faith with those who lack good faith.  
Thus, there is an increase of good faith.  
The True Person is detached and humble  
and to the world appears confusing.  
The people all strain their eyes and ears,  
yet the True Person remains childlike."

Line 660 出生入死                    Coming into life, entering death  
 Line 661 生之徒 十有三            The followers of life, three in ten  
 Line 662 死之徒 十有三            The followers of death, three in ten  
 Line 663 人之生 動之於死地       Those whose lives are moved toward death  
 Line 664 亦十有三                    Also three in ten  
 Line 665 夫何故                      Why?  
 Line 666 以其生生之厚               Because they live lives of excess  
 Line 667 蓋聞善攝生者               I've heard of those who are good at cultivating life  
 Line 668 陸行不遇兕虎               Traveling on the road, they do not encounter rhinos or tigers  
 Line 669 入軍不被甲兵               Entering into an army, they are not harmed by weapons  
 Line 670 兕無所投其角               Rhinos have nowhere to thrust their horns  
 Line 671 虎無所措其爪               Tigers have nowhere to clasp their claws  
 Line 672 兵無所容其刃               Soldiers have nowhere to lodge their blades  
 Line 673 夫何故                      Why?  
 Line 674 以其無死地                 Because they have no place for death

"Those who leave the womb at birth  
 and those who enter their source at death,  
 of these; three out of ten celebrate life,  
 three out of ten celebrate death,  
 and three out of ten simply go from life to death.  
 What is the reason for this?  
 Because they are afraid of dying,  
 therefore they cannot live.  
 I have heard that those who celebrate life  
 walk safely among the wild animals.  
 When they go into battle, they remain unharmed.  
 The animals find no place to attack them  
 and the weapons are unable to harm them.  
 Why? Because they can find no place for death in them."

"When going off one way means living  
 and going off the other way means dying,  
 three in ten are companions of Life,  
 three in ten are companions of Death, and  
 three in ten value Life but drift toward Death.  
 Why is all this so?  
 Because, these people are too greedy about living.  
 It is said:  
 People who are skilful in caring  
 for the life that has been given to them  
 travel abroad without fear of wild ox or tiger,  
 and enter a battle without concern for sharp weapons.  
 There is no place for the wild ox to thrust its horns,  
 there is no place for the tiger to put its claws,  
 there is no place for a weapon to lodge.  
 How is this so?  
 Because, there is no place for Death to enter in!"

Line 675	道生之	Tao produces them
Line 676	德畜之	Virtue raises them
Line 677	物形之	Things shape them
Line 678	勢成之	Forces perfect them
Line 679	是以萬物	Therefore the myriad things
Line 680	莫不尊道而貴德	all respect the Tao and value virtue
Line 681	道之尊 德之貴	The respect for Tao, the value of virtue
Line 682	夫莫之命	Not due to command
Line 683	而常自然	but to constant nature
Line 684	故道生之	Thus Tao produces them
Line 685	德畜之	Virtue raises them
Line 686	長之育之	Grows them, educates them
Line 687	成之熟之	Perfects them, matures them
Line 688	養之覆之	Nurtures them, protects them
Line 689	生而不有	Produces but does not possess
Line 690	為而不恃	Acts but does not flaunt
Line 691	長而不宰	Nurtures but does not dominate
Line 692	是謂玄德	This is called Mystic Virtue

"The Tao gives birth to all of creation.  
 The virtue of Tao in nature nurtures them,  
 and their family give them their form.  
 Their environment then shapes them into completion.  
 That is why every creature honors the Tao and its virtue.  
 No one tells them to honor the Tao and its virtue,  
 it happens all by itself.  
 So the Tao gives them birth,  
 and its virtue cultivates them,  
 cares for them,  
 nurtures them,  
 gives them a place of refuge and peace,  
 helps them to grow and shelters them.  
 It gives them life without wanting to possess them,  
 and cares for them expecting nothing in return.  
 It is their master, but it does not seek to dominate them.  
 This is called the dark and mysterious virtue."

"The Tao gives life to all things,  
 and its Virtue nourishes them,  
 forms each according to its nature  
 and gives to each its inner strength. Therefore,  
 the ten thousand things all venerate the Tao and honour its Virtue.  
 It has never been decreed that the Tao  
 be venerated and its Virtue be honoured;  
 they have always been so treated spontaneously.  
 Thus, the Tao gives life to all things;  
 and its Virtue raises them, nourishes them,  
 brings them to their full growth,  
 feeds, shelters, and protects them.  
 Giving life without claiming authority,  
 benefiting without demanding gratitude,  
 guiding without control.  
 This is called hidden Virtue."

Line 693	天下有始	The world has a beginning
Line 694	以為天下母	We regard it as the mother of the world
Line 695	既得其母	Having its mother
Line 696	以知其子	We can know her children
Line 697	既知其子	Knowing her children
Line 698	復守其母	Still holding on to the mother
Line 699	沒身不殆	Live without danger all through life
Line 700	塞其兌	Close the mouth
Line 701	閉其門	Shut the doors
Line 702	終身不勤	Live without toil all through life
Line 703	開其兌	Open the mouth
Line 704	濟其事	Meddle in the affairs
Line 705	終身不救	Live without salvation all through life
Line 706	見小曰明	Seeing details is called clarity
Line 707	守柔曰強	Holding on to the soft is called strength
Line 708	用其光	Utilize the light
Line 709	復歸其明	Return to the clarity
Line 710	無遺身殃	Leaving no disasters for the self
Line 711	是為習常	This is called practicing constancy

"The world had a beginning  
which we call the Great Mother.  
Once we have found the Mother,  
we begin to know what Her children should be.  
When we know we are the Mother's child,  
we begin to guard the qualities of the Mother in us.  
She will protect us from all danger  
even if we lose our life.  
Keep your mouth closed  
and embrace a simple life,  
and you will live care-free until the end of your days.  
If you try to talk your way into a better life  
there will be no end to your trouble.  
To understand the small is called clarity.  
Knowing how to yield is called strength.  
To use your inner light for understanding  
regardless of the danger  
is called depending on the Constant."

"All things under heaven had a common beginning,  
and that beginning could be considered  
the Mother of all things.  
When you know the Mother  
you will also know the children.  
Know the children, yet hold fast to the Mother,  
and to the end of your days  
you will be free from danger.  
Block the passages!  
Shut the doors!  
And, to the end of your days  
your strength will not fail you.  
Open the passages!  
Increase your activities!  
And, to the end of your days  
you will be beyond help.  
See the small and develop clear vision.  
Practise yielding and develop strength.  
Use the outer light to return to the inner light,  
and save yourself from harm.  
This is known as following the Always-so."

Line 712 使我介然有知 If I have a little knowledge  
 Line 713 行於大道 Walking on the great Tao  
 Line 714 唯施是畏 I fear only to deviate from it  
 Line 715 大道甚夷 The great Tao is broad and plain  
 Line 716 而民好徑 But people like the side paths  
 Line 717 朝甚除 The courts are corrupt  
 Line 718 田甚蕪 The fields are barren  
 Line 719 倉甚虛 The warehouses are empty  
 Line 720 服文綵 Officials wear fineries  
 Line 721 帶利劍 Carry sharp swords  
 Line 722 厭飲食 Fill up on drinks and food  
 Line 723 財貨有餘 Acquire excessive wealth  
 Line 724 是謂盜夸 This is called robbery  
 Line 725 非道也哉 It is not the Tao!

"If I understood only one thing,  
 I would want to use it to follow the Tao.  
 My only fear would be one of pride.  
 The Tao goes in the level places,  
 but people prefer to take the short cuts.  
 If too much time is spent cleaning the house  
 the land will become neglected and full of weeds,  
 and the granaries will soon become empty  
 because there is no one out working the fields.  
 To wear fancy clothes and ornaments,  
 to have your fill of food and drink  
 and to waste all of your money buying possessions  
 is called the crime of excess.  
 Oh, how these things go against the way of the Tao!"

"If I have even little sense,  
 I will walk upon the great path of Tao  
 and only fear straying from it.  
 This Great Way is straight and smooth  
 yet people often prefer the side roads.  
 The courtyard is well kept  
 but the fields are full of weeds,  
 and the granaries stand empty.  
 Still, there are those of us  
 who wear elegant clothes, carry sharp swords,  
 pamper ourselves with food and drink  
 and have more possessions than we can use.  
 These are the actions of robbers.  
 This is certainly far from the Tao."

Line 726	善建者不拔	That which is well established cannot be uprooted
Line 727	善抱者不脫	That which is strongly held cannot be taken
Line 728	子孫以祭祀不輟	The descendants will commemorate it forever
Line 729	修之於身 其德乃真	Cultivate it in yourself; its virtue shall be true
Line 730	修之於家 其德乃餘	Cultivate it in the family; its virtue shall be abundant
Line 731	修之於鄉 其德乃長	Cultivate it in the community; its virtue shall be lasting
Line 732	修之於國 其德乃豐	Cultivate it in the country; its virtue shall be prosperous
Line 733	修之於天下 其德乃普	Cultivate it in the world; its virtue shall be widespread
Line 734	故	Therefore:
Line 735	以身觀身	Observe others with yourself
Line 736	以家觀家	Observe other families with your family
Line 737	以鄉觀鄉	Observe other communities with your community
Line 738	以國觀國	Observe other countries with your country
Line 739	以天下觀天下	Observe the world with the world
Line 740	吾何以知天下然哉	With what do I know the world?
Line 741	以此	With this

"That which is well built  
will never be torn down.  
That which is well latched  
cannot slip away.

Those who do things well  
will be honored from generation to generation.

If this idea is cultivated in the individual,  
then his virtue will become genuine.

If this idea is cultivated in your family,  
then virtue in your family will be great.

If this idea is cultivated in your community,  
then virtue will go a long way.

If this idea is cultivated in your country,  
then virtue will be in many places.

If this idea is cultivated in the world,  
then virtue will be with everyone.

Then observe the person for what the person does,  
and observe the family for what it does,  
and observe the community for what it does,  
and observe the country for what it does,  
and observe the world for what it does.

How do I know this saying is true?  
I observe these things and see."

"What is well rooted cannot be pulled up.

What is firmly grasped will not slip loose.

It will be honoured from generation to generation.

When cultivated in your person, Virtue will be real.

When cultivated in your household, Virtue will be plentiful.

When cultivated in your village, Virtue will endure.

When cultivated in your country, Virtue will abound.

When cultivated in your world, Virtue will be universal.

Hence, through yourself look at Self.

Through your household look at Household.

Through your community look at Community.

Through your country look at Country.

Through your world look at World.

How do I know that the world is like this?

Because of what is within me."

Line 742 含德之厚	Those who hold an abundance of virtue
Line 743 比於赤子	Are similar to newborn infants
Line 744 毒蟲不螫	Poisonous insects do not sting them
Line 745 猛獸不據	Wild beasts do not claw them
Line 746 攫鳥不搏	Birds of prey do not attack them
Line 747 骨弱筋柔	Their bones are weak, tendons are soft
Line 748 而握固	But their grasp is firm
Line 749 未知牝牡之合而全作	They do not know of sexual union but can manifest arousal
Line 750 精之至也	Due to the optimum of essence
Line 751 終日號而不嘎	They can cry the whole day and yet not be hoarse
Line 752 和之至也	Due to the optimum of harmony
Line 753 知和曰常	Knowing harmony is said to be constancy
Line 754 知常曰明	Knowing constancy is said to be clarity
Line 755 益生曰祥	Excessive vitality is said to be inauspicious
Line 756 心使氣曰強	Mind overusing energy is said to be aggressive
Line 757 物壯則老	Things become strong and then grow old
Line 758 謂之天道	This is called contrary to the Tao
Line 759 不道早已	That which is contrary to the Tao will soon perish

"One who is filled with the Tao  
is like a newborn child.

The infant is protected from  
the stinging insects, wild beasts, and birds of prey.

Its bones are soft, its muscles are weak,  
but its grip is firm and strong.

It doesn't know about the union  
of male and female,

yet his penis can stand erect,

because of the power of life within him.

It can cry all day and never become hoarse.

This is perfect harmony.

To understand harmony is to understand the Constant.

To know the Constant is to be called 'enlightened'.

To unnaturally try to extend life is not appropriate.

To try and alter the life-breath is unnatural.

The master understands that when something reaches its prime  
it will soon begin to decline.

Changing the natural is against the way of the Tao.

Those who do it will come to an early end."

"A person who is filled with Virtue is like a newborn child.  
Poisonous insects will not sting, wild animals will not pounce,  
birds of prey will not swoop down.

Although bones are soft and sinews weak,  
a child's grip is firm.

The union of man and woman is not known,  
yet there is completeness,

because a child's vital force is at its height.

Crying all day will not produce hoarseness,  
because there is perfect harmony.

To know harmony is to know the Always-so.

To know the Always-so is to be awakened.

Trying to fill life to the brim invites a curse.

For the mind to make demands upon  
the breath of life brings strain.

Whatever has been forced to a peak  
of vigour approaches its decay.

This is not the way of Tao.

And that which goes against the Tao will quickly pass away."

Line 760	知者不言	Those who know do not talk
Line 761	言者不知	Those who talk do not know
Line 762	塞其	Close the mouth
Line 763	閉其門	Shut the doors
Line 764	挫其銳	Blunt the sharpness
Line 765	解其紛	Unravel the knots
Line 766	和其光	Dim the glare
Line 767	同其塵	Mix the dust
Line 768	是謂玄同	This is called Mystic Oneness
Line 769	故不可得而親	They cannot obtain this and be closer
Line 770	不可得而疏	They cannot obtain this and be distant
Line 771	不可得而利	They cannot obtain this and be benefited
Line 772	不可得而害	They cannot obtain this and be harmed
Line 773	不可得而貴	They cannot obtain this and be valued
Line 774	不可得而賤	They cannot obtain this and be degraded
Line 775	故為天下貴	Therefore, they become honored by the world

"Those who know do not talk.  
 Those who talk do not know.  
 Stop talking,  
 meditate in silence,  
 blunt your sharpness,  
 release your worries,  
 harmonize your inner light,  
 and become one with the dust.

Doing this is the called the dark and mysterious identity.  
 Those who have achieved the mysterious identity  
 cannot be approached, and they cannot be alienated.  
 They cannot be benefited nor harmed.  
 They cannot be made noble nor to suffer disgrace.  
 This makes them the most noble of all under the heavens."

"Those who know do not speak.  
 Those who speak do not know.  
 Block the passages!  
 Shut the doors!  
 Blunt the sharpness!  
 Untangle the knots!  
 Soften the glare!  
 Settle with the dust!

This is the Mystery of Evenness.  
 Those who have achieved this cannot be enclosed  
 nor kept at a distance;  
 they cannot be benefited nor harmed,  
 honoured nor disgraced.  
 Therefore, this is the noblest state under heaven."

Line 776	以正治國	Govern a country with upright integrity
Line 777	以奇用兵	Deploy the military with surprise tactics
Line 778	以無事取天下	Take the world with non-interference
Line 779	吾何以知其然哉	How do I know this is so?
Line 780	以此	With the following:
Line 781	天下多忌諱	When there are many restrictions in the world
Line 782	而民彌貧	The people become more impoverished
Line 783	民多利器	When people have many sharp weapons
Line 784	國家滋昏	The country becomes more chaotic
Line 785	人多伎巧	When people have many clever tricks
Line 786	奇物滋起	More strange things occur
Line 787	法令滋彰	The more laws are posted
Line 788	盜賊多有	The more robbers and thieves there are
Line 789	故聖人云	Therefore the sage says:
Line 790	我無為而民自化	I take unattached action, and the people transform themselves
Line 791	我好靜而民自正	I prefer quiet, and the people right themselves
Line 792	我無事而民自富	I do not interfere, and the people enrich themselves
Line 793	我無欲而民自樸	I have no desires, and the people simplify themselves

"Govern your country with integrity,  
 Weapons of war can be used with great cunning,  
 but loyalty is only won by not-doing.  
 How do I know the way things are?  
 By these:  
 The more prohibitions you make,  
 the poorer people will be.  
 The more weapons you possess,  
 the greater the chaos in your country.  
 The more knowledge that is acquired,  
 the stranger the world will become.  
 The more laws that you make,  
 the greater the number of criminals.  
 Therefore the Master says:  
 I do nothing,  
 and people become good by themselves.  
 I seek peace,  
 and people take care of their own problems.  
 I do not meddle in their personal lives,  
 and the people become prosperous.  
 I let go of all my desires,  
 and the people return to the Uncarved Block."

"Govern the country by being straightforward.  
 Wage war by being crafty.  
 Win all under heaven by not meddling.  
 How do I know that this is so?  
 By what is within me.  
 The more restrictions there are, the poorer are the people.  
 The more pointed the people's weapons, the more disorder there is in the country.  
 The more ingenious and clever the people,  
 the more strange the contrivances that appear.  
 The more laws and edicts that are posted, the more thieves and robbers that arise.  
 Hence an Old One has said:  
 I act without striving and the people transform themselves.  
 I love stillness and the people straighten themselves.  
 I do not meddle and the people prosper by themselves.  
 I am free from desires and the people themselves  
 return to the simplicity of the Uncarved Block."

Line 794	其政悶悶	When governing is lackluster
Line 795	其民淳淳	The people are simple and honest
Line 796	其政察察	When governing is scrutinizing
Line 797	其民缺缺	The people are shrewd and crafty
Line 798	禍兮福之所倚	Misfortune is what fortune depends upon
Line 799	福兮禍之所伏	Fortune is where misfortune hides beneath
Line 800	孰知其極	Who knows their ultimate end
Line 801	其無正耶	Or if they have no determined outcome?
Line 802	正復為奇	Rightness reverts to become strange
Line 803	善復為妖	Goodness reverts to become wicked
Line 804	人之迷	The confusion of people
Line 805	其日固久	has lasted many long days
Line 806	是以聖人	Therefore the sages are:
Line 807	方而不割	Righteous without being scathing
Line 808	廉而不劌	Incorruptible without being piercing
Line 809	直而不肆	Straightforward without being ruthless
Line 810	光而不耀	Illuminated without being flashy

"If a government is unobtrusive,  
 the people become whole.  
 If a government is repressive,  
 the people become treacherous.  
 Good fortune has its roots in disaster,  
 and disaster lurks with good fortune.  
 Who knows why these things happen,  
 or when this cycle will end?  
 Good things seem to change into bad,  
 and bad things often turn out for good.  
 These things have always been hard to comprehend.  
 Thus the Master makes things change  
 without interfering.  
 She is probing yet causes no harm.  
 Straightforward, yet does not impose her will.  
 Radiant, and easy on the eye."

"When the government is unseen the people are simple and happy.  
 When the government is lively the people are cunning and discontented.  
 On misery perches happiness.  
 Beneath happiness crouches misery.  
 Who knows when this will cease?  
 The straight changes into the crooked.  
 The good becomes the ominous.  
 Surely the people have been confused for a long time.  
 Therefore, the True Person squares without cutting,  
 carves without hacking,  
 straightens without dislocating,  
 gives forth light without blinding."

Line 811	治人事天	In governing people and serving Heaven
Line 812	莫若嗇	There is nothing like conservation
Line 813	夫唯嗇是謂早服	Only with conservation is it called submitting early
Line 814	早服謂之重積德	Submitting early is called emphasis on accumulating virtues
Line 815	重積德則無不克	Accumulating virtues means there is nothing one cannot overcome
Line 816	無不克	When there is nothing that one cannot overcome
Line 817	則莫知其極	One's limits are unknown
Line 818	莫知其極 可以有國	The limitations being unknown, one can possess sovereignty
Line 819	有國之母 可以長久	With this mother principle of power, one can be everlasting
Line 820	是謂深根固柢	This is called deep roots and firm foundation
Line 821	長生久視之道	The Tao of longevity and lasting vision

"There is nothing better than moderation  
for teaching people or serving Heaven.

Those who use moderation  
are already on the path to the Tao.

Those who follow the Tao early  
will have an abundance of virtue.

When there is an abundance of virtue,  
there is nothing that cannot be done.

Where there is limitless ability,  
then the kingdom is within your grasp.

When you know the Mother of the kingdom,  
then you will be long enduring.

This is spoken of as the deep root and the firm trunk,  
the Way to a long life and great spiritual vision."

"For governing others and serving heaven  
there is nothing better than moderation.

A person who is moderate returns to the path.

Returning to the path brings an abundance of Virtue.

This good store of Virtue cannot be conquered.

Virtue that cannot be conquered knows no limit.

Only a person who has limitless Virtue is fit to lead.

Only the leader who possesses the Mother  
of the country will long endure.

This is called making the roots go deep by restraining the trunk.

Learn to focus your life and you will see many days."

Line 822 治大國若烹小鮮

Line 823 以道蒞天下

Line 824 其鬼不神

Line 825 非其鬼不神

Line 826 其神不傷人

Line 827 非其神不傷人

Line 828 聖人亦不傷人

Line 829 夫兩不相傷

Line 830 故德交歸焉

Ruling a large country is like cooking a small fish

Using the Tao to manage the world

Its demons have no power

Not only do its demons have no power

Its gods do not harm people

Not only do its gods not harm people

The sages also do not harm people

They both do no harm to one another

So virtue merges and returns

"Governing a large country  
is like frying small fish.  
Too much poking spoils the meat.  
When the Tao is used to govern the world  
then evil will loose its power to harm the people.  
Not that evil will no longer exist,  
but only because it has lost its power.  
Just as evil can loose its ability to harm,  
the Master shuns the use of violence.  
If you give evil nothing to oppose,  
then virtue will return by itself."

"Governing a big country is like cooking a small fish.  
Let all under heaven be governed in accordance with the Tao,  
and demons will not manifest their power.  
It is not that they lack power  
but rather they will not use their power  
to harm the people.  
They are not the only ones who have power  
and do not use it to harm the people.  
The True Person does not harm the people.  
Whenever there is no harm done,  
that power flows into the common Virtue."

Line 831 大國者下流	The large country is like the lowest river
Line 832 天下之交	The converging point of the world
Line 833 天下之牝	The receptive female of the world
Line 834 牝常以靜勝牡	The female always overcomes the male with serenity
Line 835 以靜為下	Using serenity as the lower position
Line 836 故大國以下小國	Thus if the large country is lower than the small country
Line 837 則取小國	Then it can take the small country
Line 838 小國以下大國	If the small country is lower than the large country
Line 839 則取大國	Then it can be taken by the large country
Line 840 故或下以取	Thus one uses the lower position to take
Line 841 或下而取。	The other uses the lower position to be taken
Line 842 大國不過欲兼畜人	The large country only wishes to gather and protect people
Line 843 小國不過欲入事人	The small country only wishes to join and serve people
Line 844 夫兩者各得其所欲	So that both obtain what they wish
Line 845 大者宜為下	The larger one should assume the lower position

"A large country should take the low place like a great watershed,  
 which from its low position assumes the female role.  
 The female overcomes the male by the power of her position.  
 Her tranquility gives rise to her humility.  
 If a large country takes the low position,  
 it will be able to influence smaller countries.  
 If smaller countries take the lower position,  
 then they can allow themselves to be influenced.  
 So both seek to take the lower position  
 in order to influence the other, or be influenced.  
 Large countries should desire to protect and help the people,  
 and small countries should desire to serve others.  
 Both large and small countries benefit greatly from humility."

"A great country is like the low lands  
 where all the streams unite.  
 In all things under heaven  
 the female overcomes the male by her stillness,  
 and because she is still she lies below.  
 Hence, if the great country will take the low place  
 it will win over the little country.  
 If the little country will take the low place  
 it will win over the great country.  
 Thus, the one gets below and prospers  
 and the other remains below and prospers.  
 All that the great country wants is more people  
 All that the little country wants is a place  
 for its people to go and to be employed.  
 If each is to get what it wants  
 it is necessary for the great country  
 to take the low place."

Line 846	道者萬物之奧	The Tao is the wonder of all things
Line 847	善人之寶	The treasure of the kind person
Line 848	不善人之所保	The protection of the unkind person
Line 849	美言可以市尊	Admirable words can win the public's respect
Line 850	美行可以加人	Admirable actions can improve people
Line 851	人之不善	Those who are unkind
Line 852	何棄之有	How can they be abandoned?
Line 853	故立天子	Therefore, when crowning the Emperor
Line 854	置三公	And installing the three ministers
Line 855	雖有拱璧以先駟馬	Although there is the offering of jade before four horses
Line 856	不如坐進此道	None of it can compare to being seated in this Tao
Line 857	古之所以貴此道者何	Why did the ancients value this Tao so much?
Line 858	不曰求以得	Is it not said that those who seek will find,
Line 859	有罪以免耶	And those with guilt will not be faulted?
Line 860	故為天下貴	Therefore, it is the greatest value in the world

"The Tao is the tabernacle of creation;  
it is a treasure for those who are good,  
and a place of refuge for those who are not.  
How can those who are not good be abandoned?  
Words that are beautiful are worth much,  
but good behavior can only be learned by example.  
When a new leader takes office,  
don't give him gifts and offerings.  
These things are not as valuable  
as teaching him about the Tao.  
Why was the Tao esteemed by the ancient Masters?  
Is it not said: ""With it we find without looking.  
With it we find forgiveness for our transgressions.""  
That is why the world cannot understand it."

"The Tao is to the ten thousand things  
what the shrine is in the home.  
It is the treasure of the virtuous  
and the protection of the wrongdoer.  
Good words are appreciated.  
Good deeds are accepted as gifts.  
Even the wrongdoers are not abandoned.  
Hence, on the day an Emperor is installed  
and appoints the three ducal ministers,  
remain where you are and make an offering of the Tao.  
It will be preferable to a gift of jade discs  
followed by a team of four horses.  
Why did the ancients value the Tao?  
Was it not because through it  
you can find what you seek,  
and because of it  
you can escape what is hounding you?  
Therefore, it is the most valuable thing under heaven."

Line 861	為無為	Act without action
Line 862	事無事	Manage without meddling
Line 863	味無味	Taste without tasting
Line 864	大小多少	Great, small, many, few
Line 865	報怨以德	Respond to hatred with virtue
Line 866	圖難於其易	Plan difficult tasks through the simplest tasks
Line 867	為大於其細	Achieve large tasks through the smallest tasks
Line 868	天下難事	The difficult tasks of the world
Line 869	必作於易	Must be handled through the simple tasks
Line 870	天下大事	The large tasks of the world
Line 871	必作於細	Must be handled through the small tasks
Line 872	是以聖人終不為大	Therefore, sages never attempt great deeds all through life
Line 873	故能成其大	Thus they can achieve greatness
Line 874	夫輕諾必寡信	One who makes promises lightly must deserve little trust
Line 875	多易必多難	One who sees many easy tasks must encounter much difficulty
Line 876	是以聖人猶難之	Therefore, sages regard things as difficult
Line 877	故終無難矣	So they never encounter difficulties all through life

"Act by not acting;  
do by not doing.

Enjoy the plain and simple.

Find that greatness in the small.

Take care of difficult problems  
while they are still easy;

Do easy things before they become too hard.

Difficult problems are best solved while they are easy.

Great projects are best started while they are small.

The Master never takes on more than she can handle,  
which means that she leaves nothing undone.

When an affirmation is given too lightly,  
keep your eyes open for trouble ahead.

When something seems too easy,  
difficulty is hiding in the details.

The master expects great difficulty,  
so the task is always easier than planned."

"Act without striving.

Work without interfering.

Find the flavour in what is flavourless.

Enlarge the small, increase the few.

Heal injury with goodness.

Handle the difficult while it is still easy.

Cultivate the great while it is still small.

All difficult things begin as easy things.

All great things begin as small things.

Therefore, the True Person never attempts anything great,  
and accomplishes great things.

Lightly made promises inspire little faith.

Trying to make things easy results in great difficulties.

Therefore, the True Person regards everything as difficult,  
and is never overcome by difficulties."

## Chapter 64 第六十四章

Line 878 其安易持  
 Line 879 其未兆易謀  
 Line 880 其脆易破  
 Line 881 其微易散  
 Line 882 為之於未有  
 Line 883 治之於未亂  
 Line 884 合抱之木  
 Line 885 生於毫末  
 Line 886 九層之台  
 Line 887 起於累土  
 Line 888 千里之行  
 Line 889 始於足下  
 Line 890 為者敗之  
 Line 891 執者失之  
 Line 892 是以聖人  
 Line 893 無為故無敗  
 Line 894 無執故無失  
 Line 895 民之從事  
 Line 896 常於幾成而敗之  
 Line 897 慎終如始  
 Line 898 則無敗事  
 Line 899 是以聖人欲不欲  
 Line 900 不貴難得之貨  
 Line 901 學不學  
 Line 902 復眾人之所過  
 Line 903 以輔萬物之自然  
 Line 904 而不敢為

## Chapter 64

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

"Things are easier to control while things are quiet.  
 Things are easier to plan far in advance.  
 Things break easier while they are still brittle.  
 Things are easier hid while they are still small.  
 Prevent problems before they arise.  
 Take action before things get out of hand.  
 The tallest tree  
 begins as a tiny sprout.  
 The tallest building  
 starts with one shovel of dirt.  
 A journey of a thousand miles  
 starts with a single foot step.  
 If you rush into action, you will fail.  
 If you hold on too tight, you will loose your grip.  
 Therefore the Master lets things take their course  
 and thus never fails.  
 She doesn't hold on to things  
 and never looses them.  
 By pursing your goals too relentlessly,  
 you let them slip away.  
 If you are as concerned about the outcome  
 as you are about the beginning,  
 then it is hard to do things wrong.  
 The master seeks no possessions.  
 She learns by unlearning,  
 thus she is able to understand all things.  
 This gives her the ability to help all of creation."

"Peace is easily maintained while things are still at rest.  
 Trouble is easily handled before it starts.  
 What is brittle is easily broken.  
 What is minute is easily scattered.  
 Handle a problem before it appears.  
 Secure order before confusion begins.  
 A tree as big as a person's embrace begins as a tiny shoot.  
 A terrace nine stories high rises from a shovelful of earth.  
 A journey of a thousand miles begins under your feet.  
 A person who interferes does harm,  
 and those who grasp lose their hold.  
 Therefore, the True Person acts without striving and does no harm,  
 avoids grabbing and never loses hold.  
 People often ruin their ventures when they are on the verge of success.  
 So, be as careful at the end as at the beginning, and your work will not be ruined.  
 Therefore, the True Person seeks freedom from desire,  
 does not value things that are hard to come by,  
 learns without scholarship,  
 brings people back to what they have passed by,  
 and assists the ten thousand things to find their own natures;  
 all without daring to interfere.  
 Tao"

Line 905	古之善為道者	Those of ancient times who were adept at the Tao
Line 906	非以明民	Used it not to make people brighter
Line 907	將以愚之	But to keep them simple
Line 908	民之難治	The difficulty in governing people
Line 909	以其智多	Is due their excessive cleverness
Line 910	故以智治國	Therefore, using cleverness to govern the state
Line 911	國之賊	Is being a thief of the state
Line 912	不以智治國	Not using cleverness to govern the state
Line 913	國之福	Is being a blessing of the state
Line 914	知此兩者亦稽式	Know that these two are both standards
Line 915	常知稽式	Always knowing these standards
Line 916	是謂玄德	Is called Mystic Virtue
Line 917	玄德 深矣 遠矣	Mystic Virtue: Profound! Far-reaching!
Line 918	與物反矣	It goes opposite to material things
Line 919	然後乃至大順	Then it reaches great congruence

"The ancient Masters  
 who understood the way of the Tao,  
 did not educate people, but made them forget.  
 Smart people are difficult to guide,  
 because they think they are too clever.  
 To use cleverness to rule a country,  
 is to lead the country to ruin.  
 To avoid cleverness in ruling a country,  
 is to lead the country to prosperity.  
 Knowing the two alternatives is a pattern.  
 Remaining aware of the pattern is a virtue.  
 This dark and mysterious virtue is profound.  
 It is opposite our natural inclination,  
 but leads to harmony with the heavens."

"The ancients who practised the Tao  
 did not use it to enlighten the people,  
 but rather to assist them in gaining simplicity.  
 The reason people are difficult to govern  
 is because they are too clever.  
 Hence, a person who attempts to govern a country by cleverness will injure it.  
 Those who govern without cleverness will be a blessing to the land.  
 These are the two models.  
 Knowing these models is called the Mystic Virtue.  
 The Mystic Virtue is deep and so far-reaching  
 that it can lead all things back toward great harmony."

Line 920	江海之所以能為百谷王者	Rivers and oceans can be the kings of a hundred valleys
Line 921	以其善下之	Because of their goodness in staying low
Line 922	故能為百谷王	So they can be the kings of a hundred valleys
Line 923	是以聖人欲上民	Thus if sages wish to be over people
Line 924	必以言下之	They must speak humbly to them
Line 925	欲先民	If they wish to be in front of people
Line 926	必以身後之	They must place themselves behind them
Line 927	是以聖人處上	Thus the sages are positioned above
Line 928	而民不重	But the people do not feel burdened
Line 929	處前	They are positioned in front
Line 930	而民不害	But the people do not feel harmed
Line 931	是以天下樂推而不厭	Thus the world is glad to push them forward without resentment
Line 932	以其不爭	Because they do not contend
Line 933	故天下莫能與之爭	So the world cannot contend with them

"Rivers and seas are rulers  
of the streams of hundreds of valleys  
because of the power of their low position.  
If you want to be the ruler of people,  
you must speak to them like you are their servant.  
If you want to lead other people,  
you must put their interest ahead of your own.  
The people will not feel burdened,  
if a wise person is in a position of power.  
The people will not feel like they are being manipulated,  
if a wise person is in front as their leader.  
The whole world will ask for her guidance,  
and will never get tired of her.  
Because she does not like to compete,  
no one can compete with the things she accomplishes."

"How did the sea gain kingship of a hundred streams?  
Because it takes the lower position.  
Hence, it is king of a hundred streams.  
Therefore, when True Persons are over the people  
they put themselves below the people by their speech.  
When they lead the people they stand behind the people.  
When True Persons are given places above the people  
they do not crush the people with their weight.  
When they take their place ahead of the people  
they do not obstruct the people's progress.  
That is why everything under heaven supports them gladly  
and does not tire of them.  
Because they strive with no one,  
no one can ever strive with them."

Line 934	天下皆謂我道大	Everyone in the world calls my Tao great
Line 935	似不肖	As if it is beyond compare
Line 936	夫唯大	It is only because of its greatness
Line 937	故似不肖	That it seems beyond compare
Line 938	若肖	If it can be compared
Line 939	久矣其細也夫	It would already be insignificant long ago!
Line 940	我有三寶	I have three treasures
Line 941	持而保之	I hold on to them and protect them
Line 942	一曰慈	The first is called compassion
Line 943	二曰儉	The second is called conservation
Line 944	三曰不敢為天下先	The third is called not daring to be ahead in the world
Line 945	慈故能勇	Compassionate, thus able to have courage
Line 946	儉故能廣	Conserving, thus able to reach widely
Line 947	不敢為天下先	Not daring to be ahead in the world
Line 948	故能成器長	Thus able to assume leadership
Line 949	今捨慈且勇	Now if one has courage but discards compassion
Line 950	捨儉且廣	Reaches widely but discards conservation
Line 951	捨後且先	Goes ahead but discards being behind
Line 952	死矣	Then death!
Line 953	夫慈以戰則勝	If one fights with compassion, then victory
Line 954	以守則固	With defense, then security
Line 955	天將救之	Heaven shall save them
Line 956	以慈衛之	And with compassion guard them

"The world talks about honoring the Tao,  
but you can't tell it from their actions.  
Because it is thought of as great,  
the world makes light of it.  
It seems too easy for anyone to use.  
There are three jewels that I cherish:  
compassion, moderation, and humility.  
With compassion, you will be able to be brave,  
With moderation, you will be able to give to others,  
With humility, you will be able to become a great leader.  
To abandon compassion while seeking to be brave,  
or abandoning moderation while being benevolent,  
or abandoning humility while seeking to lead  
will only lead to greater trouble.  
The compassionate warrior will be the winner,  
and if compassion is your defense you will be secure.  
Compassion is the protect"

"Everyone under heaven says my Tao is great  
and resembles nothing else.  
It is because it is great that it seems different.  
I have three treasures that I cherish and hold fast.  
The first is gentleness,  
the second is simplicity,  
the third is daring not to be first  
among all things under heaven.  
Because of gentleness I am able to be courageous.  
Because of simplicity I am able to be generous.  
Because of daring not to be first  
I am able to lead.  
If people forsake gentleness and attempt to be courageous,  
forsake simplicity and attempt to be generous,  
forsake the last place and attempt to get the first place,  
this is certain death.  
Gentleness conquers in battle and protects in defence.  
What heaven guards, it arms with the gift of gentleness.  
If it were like anything on earth  
it would have been small from the beginning."

Line 957 善為士者不武	The great generals are not warlike
Line 958 善戰者不怒	The great warriors do not get angry
Line 959 善勝敵者不與	Those who are good at defeating enemies do not engage them
Line 960 善用人者為之下	Those who are good at managing people lower themselves
Line 961 是謂不爭之德	It is called the virtue of non-contention
Line 962 是謂用人之力	It is called the power of managing people
Line 963 是謂配天	It is called being harmonious with Heaven
Line 964 古之極	The ultimate principle of the ancients

"The best warriors  
do not use violence.  
The best generals  
do not destroy indiscriminately.  
The best tacticians  
try to avoid confrontation.  
The best leaders  
becomes servants of their people.  
This is called the virtue of non-competition.  
This is called the power to manage others.  
This is called attaining harmony with the heavens."

"A skilled warrior does not rush ahead of others  
A skilled fighter does not make a show of anger.  
A skilled victor does not seek revenge.  
A skilled employer does not act superior.  
This is known as the virtue of not competing.  
This is known as making use of the abilities of others.  
This is known as being united with heaven as it was in ancient times."

Line 965	用兵有言	In using the military, there is a saying:
Line 966	吾不敢為主而為客	I dare not be the host, but prefer to be the guest
Line 967	不敢進寸而退尺	I dare not advance an inch, but prefer to withdraw a foot
Line 968	是謂	This is called:
Line 969	行無行	Marching in formation without formation
Line 970	攘無臂	Raising arms without arms
Line 971	扔無敵	Grappling enemies without enemies
Line 972	執無兵	Holding weapons without weapons
Line 973	禍莫大於輕敵	There is no greater disaster than to underestimate the enemy
Line 974	輕敵幾喪吾寶	Underestimating the enemy almost made me lose my treasures
Line 975	故抗兵相加	So when evenly matched armies meet
Line 976	哀者勝矣	The side that is compassionate shall win

"There is an old saying:

""It is better to become the passive  
in order to see what will happen.  
It is better to retreat a foot  
than to advance only an inch.""

This is called  
being flexible while advancing,  
pushing back without using force,  
and destroying the enemy without engaging him.

There is no greater disaster  
than underestimating your enemy.  
Underestimating your enemy  
means losing your greatest assets.  
When equal forces meet in battle,  
victory will go to the one  
that enters with the greatest sorrow."

"The master soldiers have a saying:

I dare not be the host but prefer to be the guest.  
I dare not advance an inch but prefer to retreat a foot.  
This is called marching without moving,  
rolling up a sleeve without baring an arm,  
capturing a foe without a battlefield,  
arming yourself without weapons.

There is no disaster greater than attacking and finding no enemy.  
Doing so will cost you your treasure.  
Thus it is that when opposing forces meet,  
victory will go to those who take no delight in the situation."

Line 977 吾言甚易知 甚易行    My words are easy to understand, easy to practice  
Line 978 天下莫能知 莫能行    The world cannot understand, cannot practice  
Line 979 言有宗            My words have basis  
Line 980 事有君            My actions have principle  
Line 981 夫唯無知          People do not understand this  
Line 982 是以不我知        Therefore they do not understand me  
Line 983 知我者希          Those who understand me are few  
Line 984 則我者貴          Thus I am highly valued  
Line 985 是以聖人被褐懷玉    Therefore the sage wears plain clothes but holds jade

"My words are easy to understand  
and easier to put into practice.  
Yet no one in the world seem to understand them,  
and are not able to apply what I teach.  
My teachings come from the ancients,  
the things I do are done for a reason.  
Because you do not know me,  
you are not able to understand my teachings.  
Because those who know me are few,  
my teachings become even more precious."

"My words are easy to understand and  
easy to put into practice.  
Yet no one under heaven understands  
them or puts them into practice.  
My words have an ancestor. My actions are governed.  
Because people do not understand this  
they do not understand me.  
Those who understand me are few.  
Those who follow me should be respected.  
Therefore, the True Person wears homespun clothes  
and carries jade in the heart."

Line 986 知不知上      To know that you do not know is highest  
Line 987 不知知病      To not know but think you know is flawed  
Line 988 夫唯病病      Only when one recognizes the fault as a fault  
Line 989 是以不病      can one be without fault  
Line 990 聖人不病      The sages are without fault  
Line 991 以其病病      Because they recognize the fault as a fault  
Line 992 是以不病      That is why they are without fault

"Knowing you don't know is wholeness.  
Thinking you know is a disease.  
Only by recognizing that you have an illness  
can you move to seek a cure.  
The Master is whole because  
she sees her illnesses and treats them,  
and thus is able to remain whole."

"It is well to know that you do not know.  
To think you know when you do not is sickness.  
When you are sick of sickness you will no longer be sick.  
True Persons are not sick because they are sick of sickness;  
this is the way to health."

Line 993 民不畏威	When people no longer fear force
Line 994 則大威至	They bring about greater force
Line 995 無狎其所居	Do not limit their place
Line 996 無厭其所生	Do not reject their livelihood
Line 997 夫唯不厭	Because the ruler does not reject them
Line 998 是以不厭	Therefore they do not reject the ruler
Line 999 是以聖人	Therefore the sages:
Line 1000 自知不自見	Know themselves but do not glorify themselves
Line 1001 自愛不自貴	Respect themselves but do not praise themselves
Line 1002 故去彼取此	Thus they discard that and take this

"When people become overly bold,  
then disaster will soon arrive.  
Do not meddle with peoples livelihood;  
by respecting them they will in turn respect you.  
Therefore, the Master knows herself but is not arrogant.  
She loves herself but also loves others.  
This is how she is able to make appropriate choices."

"When the people lack a sense of awe  
disaster will descend upon them.  
Do not constrict their living space.  
Do not harass them in their work.  
If you do not oppress them, they will not weary of you.  
Therefore, True Persons know themselves  
but make no show of themselves.  
They know their value  
but do not exalt themselves.  
They prefer this within to that without."

Line 1003	勇於敢則殺	The bold in daring will be killed
Line 1004	勇於不敢則活	The bold in not daring will survive
Line 1005	此兩者或利或害	Of these two, one may benefit, the other may harm
Line 1006	天之所惡 孰知其故	The one hated by Heaven – who knows the reason?
Line 1007	是以聖人猶難之	Even the sages still find this difficult
Line 1008	天之道	The Tao of Heaven:
Line 1009	不爭而善勝	Does not contend and yet excels in winning
Line 1010	不言而善應	Does not speak and yet excels in responding
Line 1011	不召而自來	Is not summoned and yet comes on its own
Line 1012	繹然而善謀	Is unhurried and yet excels in planning
Line 1013	天網恢恢	The heavenly net is vast
Line 1014	疏而不失	Loose, and yet does not let anything slip through

"Being over bold and confident is deadly.  
The wise use of caution will keep you alive.  
One is the way to death,  
and the other is the way to preserve your life.  
Who can understand the workings of Heaven?  
The Tao of the universe  
does not compete, yet wins;  
does not speak, yet responds;  
does not command, yet is obeyed;  
and does act, but is good at directing.  
The nets of Heaven are wide,  
but nothing escapes its grasp."

"A person whose courage lies in daring will meet death.  
A person whose courage lies in not daring will encounter life.  
Of the two courses, either may be beneficial or harmful.  
Heaven dislikes what it dislikes.  
Who knows the reason why?  
Even the True Person has difficulty with such a question.  
The Tao of Heaven  
does not strive and yet it overcomes,  
does not speak and yet it gets responses,  
does not beckon and yet it attracts,  
is at ease and yet it follows a plan.  
The net of heaven is cast wide.  
Though the mesh is coarse, nothing ever slips through."

Line 1015 民不畏死	People do not fear death
Line 1016 奈何以死懼之	How can they be threatened with death?
Line 1017 若使民常畏死	If people are made to constantly fear death
Line 1018 而為奇者	Then those who act unlawfully
Line 1019 吾得執而殺之	I can capture and kill them
Line 1020 孰敢	Who would dare?
Line 1021 常有司殺者殺	There exists a master executioner that kills
Line 1022 夫代司殺者殺	If we substitute for the master executioner to kill
Line 1023 是謂代大匠斲	It is like substituting for the great carpenter to cut
Line 1024 夫代大匠斲者	Those who substitute for the great carpenter to cut
Line 1025 希有不傷其手矣	It is rare that they do not hurt their own hands

"If you do not fear death,  
then how can it intimidate you?  
If you aren't afraid of dying,  
there is nothing you cannot do.  
Those who harm others  
are like inexperienced boys  
trying to take the place of a great lumberjack.  
Trying to fill his shoes will only get them seriously hurt."

"When the people do not fear death,  
of what use is it to threaten them with death?  
If the people were always afraid of death  
and if those who did wrong  
would always be arrested and put to death,  
who would do wrong?  
There is always a Lord of Execution whose duty it is to kill.  
If you try to fill that function it is like trying to hew wood  
in place of a master carpenter.  
You will probably injure your own hands."

Line 1026 民之饑	The people's hunger
Line 1027 以其上食稅之多	Is due to the excess of their ruler's taxation
Line 1028 是以饑	So they starve
Line 1029 民之難治	The people's difficulty in being governed
Line 1030 以其上之有為	Is due to the meddling of their ruler
Line 1031 是以難治	So they are difficult to govern
Line 1032 民之輕死	The people's disregard for death
Line 1033 以其求生之厚	Is due to the glut in their ruler's pursuit of life
Line 1034 是以輕死	So they disregard death
Line 1035 夫唯無以生為者	Therefore those who do not strive for living
Line 1036 是賢於貴生	Are better than those who value living

"When people go hungry,  
the governments taxes are too high.  
When people become rebellious,  
the government has become too intrusive.  
When people begin to view death lightly,  
wealthy people have too much  
which causes others to starve.  
Only those who do not cling to their life can save it."

"Why are the people starving?  
Because their leaders eat up too much of the tax-grain;  
that is why the people are starving.  
Why are the people difficult to govern?  
Because their leaders interfere;  
that is why the people are difficult to govern.  
Why do the people treat death lightly.  
Because their leaders are so grossly absorbed in the pursuit of living;  
that is why the people treat death lightly.  
Indeed, it is wiser to ignore life altogether  
than to place too high a value on it."

Line 1037 人之生也柔弱	While alive, the body is soft and pliant
Line 1038 其死也堅強	When dead, it is hard and rigid
Line 1039 萬物草木	All living things, grass and trees,
Line 1040 之生也柔脆	While alive, are soft and supple
Line 1041 其死也枯槁	When dead, become dry and brittle
Line 1042 故堅強者	Thus that which is hard and stiff
Line 1043 死之徒	is the follower of death
Line 1044 柔弱者	That which is soft and yielding
Line 1045 生之徒	is the follower of life
Line 1046 是以兵強則不勝	Therefore, an inflexible army will not win
Line 1047 木強則共	A strong tree will be cut down
Line 1048 強大處下	The big and forceful occupy a lowly position
Line 1049 柔弱處上	While the soft and pliant occupy a higher place

"The living are soft and yielding;  
the dead are rigid and stiff.  
Living plants are flexible and tender;  
the dead are brittle and dry.  
Those who are stiff and rigid  
are the disciples of death.  
Those who are soft and yielding  
are the disciples of life.  
The rigid and stiff will be broken.  
The soft and yielding will overcome."

"At birth you are supple and soft.  
At death you are stiff and hard.  
Grass and trees are pliant and tender when living,  
but they are dry and brittle when dead.  
Therefore, the stiff and hard are attendants of death,  
the supple and soft are attendants of life.  
Thus, the hard weapon will be broken.  
The mighty tree will invite the axe.  
Therefore, the hard and mighty belong below;  
the yielding and gentle belong above."

Line 1050 天之道	The Tao of Heaven
Line 1051 其猶張弓乎	Is like drawing a bow
Line 1052 高者抑之	Lower that which is high
Line 1053 下者舉之	Raise that which is low
Line 1054 有餘者損之	Reduce that which has excess
Line 1055 不足者補之	Add to that which is lacking
Line 1056 天之道	The Tao of heaven
Line 1057 損有餘	Reduces the excessive
Line 1058 而補不足	And adds to the lacking
Line 1059 人之道則不然	The Tao of people is not so
Line 1060 損不足	It reduces the lacking
Line 1061 以奉有餘	In order to offer to the excessive
Line 1062 孰能有餘以奉天下	Who can offer their excess to the world?
Line 1063 唯有道者	Only those who have the Tao
Line 1064 是以聖人為而不恃	Therefore sages act without conceit
Line 1065 功成而不處	Achieve without claiming credit
Line 1066 其不欲見賢	They do not wish to display their virtue!

"The Tao of Heaven works in the world  
like the drawing of a bow.  
The top is bent downward;  
the bottom is bent up.  
The excess is taken from,  
and the deficient is given to.  
The Tao works to use the excess,  
and gives to that which is depleted.  
The way of people is to take from the depleted,  
and give to those who already have an excess.  
Who is able to give to the needy from their excess?  
Only someone who is following the way of the Tao.  
This is why the Master gives  
expecting nothing in return.  
She does not dwell on her past accomplishments,  
and does not glory in any praise."

"The way of heaven is like the bending of a bow.  
The high end is pulled down and the low end is raised up.  
The excessive is diminished and the deficient is supplemented.  
It is the way of heaven to take where there is too much  
in order to give where there is not enough.  
The way of people is otherwise.  
They take where there is not enough  
in order to increase where there is already too much.  
Who will take from their own excesses  
and give to all under heaven?  
Only those who hold to the Tao.  
Therefore, the True Person benefits yet expects no reward,  
does the work and moves on.  
There is no desire to be considered better than others."

Line 1067 天下莫柔弱於水	Nothing in the world is softer or weaker than water
Line 1068 而攻堅強者莫之能勝	Yet nothing is better at overcoming the hard and strong
Line 1069 以其無以易之	This is because nothing can replace it
Line 1070 弱之勝強	That the weak overcomes the strong
Line 1071 柔之勝剛	And the soft overcomes the hard
Line 1073 天下莫不知	Everybody in the world knows
Line 1074 莫能行	But cannot put into practice
Line 1075 是以聖人云	Therefore sages say:
Line 1076 受國之垢	The one who accepts the humiliation of the state
Line 1077 是謂社稷主	Is called its master
Line 1078 受國不祥	The one who accepts the misfortune of the state
Line 1079 是為天下王	Becomes king of the world
Line 1080 正言若反	The truth seems like the opposite

"Water is the softest and most yielding substance.  
Yet nothing is better than water,  
for overcoming the hard and rigid,  
because nothing can compete with it.  
Everyone knows that the soft and yielding  
overcomes the rigid and hard,  
but few can put this knowledge into practice.  
Therefore the Master says:  
""Only he who is the lowest servant of the kingdom,  
is worthy to become its ruler.  
He who is willing tackle the most unpleasant tasks,  
is the best ruler in the world.""  
True sayings seem contradictory."

"Nothing under heaven is  
softer or more yielding than water.  
Yet it has no equal for attacking things  
that are hard and stiff.  
Nothing can withstand it.  
Everyone knows that the yielding overcomes the stiff,  
and the soft overcomes the hard.  
Yet no one applies this knowledge.  
Therefore, an Old One said:  
Only a person who has accepted the country's dirt  
is a leader worthy to offer sacrifice  
at its shrines of earth and grain.  
Only a person who takes up the country's burdens  
deserves to be a leader  
among those who dwell under heaven.  
Straightforward words seem crooked."

Line 1081 和大怨	After settling a great dispute
Line 1082 必有餘怨	There must be remaining resentments
Line 1083 安可以為善	How can this be considered good?
Line 1084 是以聖人執左契	Therefore the sage holds the left part of the contract
Line 1085 而不責於人	But does not demand payment from the other person
Line 1086 有德司契	Those who have virtue hold the contract
Line 1087 無德司徹	Those without virtue hold the collections
Line 1088 天道無親	The Heavenly Tao has no favorites
Line 1089 常與善人	It constantly gives to the kind people

"Difficulties remain, even after solving a problem.  
How then can we consider that as good?  
Therefore the Master  
does what she knows is right,  
and makes no demands of others.  
A virtuous person will do the right thing,  
and persons with no virtue will take advantage of others.  
The Tao does not choose sides;  
the good person receives from the Tao  
because she is on its side."

"Even though a truce is made between great enemies,  
some enmity is bound to remain.  
How can this be beneficial?  
Therefore, the True Person  
undertakes the obligations of the agreement  
but makes no claim upon others.  
The person who has Virtue shares with others.  
The person who lacks Virtue takes from others.  
The way of heaven has no favourites;  
it always remains with what is good."

Line 1090 小國寡民	Small country, few people
Line 1091 使有什伯之器	Let them have many weapons
Line 1092 而不用	But not use them
Line 1093 使民重死	Let the people regard death seriously
Line 1094 而不遠徙	And not migrate far away
Line 1095 雖有舟輿	Although they have boats and chariots
Line 1096 無所乘之	They have no need to take them
Line 1097 雖有甲兵	Although they have armors and weapons
Line 1098 無所陳之	They have no need to display them
Line 1099 使民復結繩而用之	Let the people return to tying knots and using them
Line 1100 甘其食 美其服	Savor their food, admire their clothes
Line 1101 安其居 樂其俗	Content in their homes, happy in their customs
Line 1102 鄰國相望	Neighboring countries see one another
Line 1103 雞犬之聲相聞	Hear the sounds of roosters and dogs from one another
Line 1104 民至老死	The people, until they grow old and die
Line 1105 不相往來	Do not go back and forth with one another

"Small countries with few people are best.  
 Give them all of the things they want,  
 and they will see that they do not need them.  
 Teach them that death is a serious thing,  
 and to be content to never leave their homes.  
 Even though they have plenty  
 of horses, wagons and boats,  
 they won't feel that they need to use them.  
 Even if they have weapons and shields,  
 they will keep them out of sight.  
 Let people enjoy the simple technologies,  
 let them enjoy their food,  
 let them make their own clothes,  
 let them be content with their own homes,  
 and delight in the customs that they cherish.  
 Although the next country is close enough  
 that they can hear their roosters  
 crowing and dogs barking,  
 they are content never to visit each other  
 all of the days of their life."

"In a small country with few people:  
 Though there are machines that would increase  
 production ten to a hundred miles they are not used.  
 The people take death seriously and do not travel about.  
 Though they have boats and carriages no one uses them.  
 Though they have armour and weapons,  
 there is no occasion to display them.  
 The people give up writing  
 and return to the knotting of cords.  
 They are satisfied with their food.  
 They are pleased with their clothes.  
 They are content with their homes.  
 They are happy in their simple ways.  
 Even though they live within sight of another country  
 and can hear dogs barking and cocks crowing in it,  
 still the people grow old and die  
 without ever coming into conflict."

Line 1106	信言不美	True words are not beautiful
Line 1107	美言不信	Beautiful words are not true
Line 1108	善者不辯	Those who are good do not debate
Line 1109	辯者不善	Those who debate are not good
Line 1110	知者不博	Those who know are not broad of knowledge
Line 1111	博者不知	Those who are broad of knowledge do not know
Line 1112	聖人不積	Sages do not accumulate
Line 1113	既以為人已愈有	The more they assist others, the more they possess
Line 1114	既以與人已愈多	The more they give to others, the more they gain
Line 1115	天之道	The Tao of heaven
Line 1116	利而不害	Benefits and does not harm
Line 1117	聖人之道	The Tao of sages
Line 1118	為而不爭	Assists and does not contend

"True words do not sound beautiful;  
beautiful sounding words are not true.

Wise men don't need to debate;  
men who need to debate are not wise.

Wise men are not scholars,  
and scholars are not wise.

The Master desires no possessions.

Since the things she does are for the people,  
she has more than she needs.

The more she gives to others,  
the more she has for herself.

The Tao of Heaven nourishes by not forcing.

The Tao of the Wise person acts by not competing."

"Sincere words are not elegant; elegant words are not sincere.

The good person does not argue; the person who argues is not good.

The wise do not have great learning; those with great learning are not wise.

True Persons do not hoard.

Using all they have for others, they still have more.

Giving all they have to others, they are richer than before.

The way of heaven is to benefit and not to harm.

The way of the True Reason is to assist without striving  
in the unfolding of the story of the earth."