

In the name of GOD

I find this book is very useful and good for everyone

**Thank you
Mehdi Moosavian**

The Tao Te Ching

A Translation by Stan Rosenthal

Index to Stan Rosenthal's Translation

<u>1. The Embodiment of Tao</u>	<u>The Transformations of the Tao .42</u>
<u>2. Letting Go of Comparisons</u>	<u>At One with the Tao .43</u>
<u>3. Without Seeking Acclaim</u>	<u>Sufficiency .44</u>
<u>4. The Unfathomable Tao</u>	<u>Changes .45</u>
<u>5. Without Intention</u>	<u>Moderating Desire and Ambition .46</u>
<u>6. Completion</u>	<u>Discovering the Distant .47</u>
<u>7. Sheathing the Light</u>	<u>Forgetting Knowledge .48</u>
<u>8. The Way of Water</u>	<u>The Virtue of Receptivity .49</u>
<u>9. Without Extremes</u>	<u>The Value Set on Life .50</u>
<u>10. Cleaning the Dark Mirror</u>	<u>The Nourishment of the Tao .51</u>
<u>11. The Utility of Non-Existence</u>	<u>Returning to the Source .52</u>
<u>12. The Repression of Desires</u>	<u>Evidence .53</u>
<u>13. Unmoved and Unmoving</u>	<u>Cultivating Insight .54</u>
<u>14. Experiencing the Mystery</u>	<u>Mysterious Virtue .55</u>
<u>15. Manifesting of Tao in Man</u>	<u>Virtuous Passivity .56</u>
<u>16. Returning to the Root</u>	<u>Simplification .57</u>
<u>17. Leadership by Exception</u>	<u>Transformations according to</u>
<u>18. The Decay of Ethics</u>	<u>Circumstances .58</u>
<u>19. Returning to Naturalness</u>	<u>Guarding the Tao .59</u>
<u>20. Being Different from Ordinary Men</u>	<u>Ruling .60</u>
<u>21. Finding the Essence of Tao</u>	<u>Humility .61</u>
<u>22. Yielding to Maintain Integrity</u>	<u>Sharing the Treasure .62</u>
<u>23. Accepting the Irrevocable</u>	<u>Beginning and Completing .63</u>
<u>24. Excess</u>	<u>Staying with the Mystery .64</u>
<u>25. The Creative Principle of Tao</u>	<u>Virtuous Government .65</u>
<u>26. Centring</u>	<u>Leading from Behind .66</u>
<u>27. Following the Tao</u>	<u>The Three Precious Attributes .67</u>
<u>28. Retaining Integrity</u>	<u>Without Desire .68</u>
<u>29. Taking No Action</u>	<u>The Use of the Mysterious Tao .69</u>
<u>30. A Caveat against Violence</u>	<u>Hidden Identity .70</u>
<u>31. Maintaining Peace</u>	<u>Without Sickness .71</u>
<u>32. If the Tao were Observed</u>	<u>Loving the Self .72</u>
<u>33. Without Force, without Perishing</u>	<u>Acting with a Sufficiency .73</u>
<u>34. Without Contriving</u>	<u>Usurping the Tao .74</u>
<u>35. The Benevolent Host</u>	<u>Injuring through Greed .75</u>
<u>36. Overcoming</u>	<u>Against Trusting in Strength .76</u>
<u>37. The Exercise of Leadership</u>	<u>The Way of the Tao .77</u>
<u>38. The Concerns of the Great</u>	<u>Sincerity .78</u>
<u>39. Sufficiency and Quietness</u>	<u>Fulfilling One's Obligations .79</u>
<u>40. Being and Not Being</u>	<u>Standing Alone .80</u>
<u>41. Sameness and Difference</u>	<u>Manifesting Simplicity .81</u>
	<u>To the Introductory Notes</u>

1. THE EMBODIMENT OF TAO

**Even the finest teaching is not the Tao itself.
Even the finest name is insufficient to define it.
Without words, the Tao can be experienced,
and without a name, it can be known.**

**To conduct one's life according to the Tao,
is to conduct one's life without regrets;
to realize that potential within oneself
which is of benefit to all.**

**Though words or names are not required
to live one's life this way,
to describe it, words and names are used,
that we might better clarify
the way of which we speak,
without confusing it with other ways
in which an individual might choose to live.**

**Through knowledge, intellectual thought and words,
the manifestations of the Tao are known,
but without such intellectual intent
we might experience the Tao itself.**

**Both knowledge and experience are real,
but reality has many forms,
which seem to cause complexity.**

**By using the means appropriate,
we extend ourselves beyond
the barriers of such complexity,
and so experience the Tao.**

[Up to Index](#)

2. LETTING GO OF COMPARISONS

**We cannot know the Tao itself,
nor see its qualities direct,
but only see by differentiation,
that which it manifests.**

**Thus, that which is seen as beautiful
is beautiful compared with that**

which is seen as lacking beauty;
an action considered skilled
is so considered in comparison
with another, which seems unskilled.

That which a person knows he has
is known to him by that which he does not have,
and that which he considers difficult
seems so because of that which he can do with ease.
One thing seems long by comparison with that
which is, comparatively, short.
One thing is high because another thing is low;
only when sound ceases is quietness known,
and that which leads
is seen to lead only by being followed.
In comparison, the sage,
in harmony with the Tao,
needs no comparisons,
and when he makes them, knows
that comparisons are judgements,
and just as relative to he who makes them,
and to the situation,
as they are to that on which
the judgement has been made.

Through his experience,
the sage becomes aware that all things change,
and that he who seems to lead,
might also, in another situation, follow.
So he does nothing; he neither leads nor follows.
That which he does is neither big nor small;
without intent, it is neither difficult,
nor done with ease.
His task completed, he then lets go of it;
seeking no credit, he cannot be discredited.
Thus, his teaching lasts for ever,
and he is held in high esteem.

[Up to Index](#)

3. WITHOUT SEEKING ACCLAIM

By retaining his humility,
the talented person who is also wise,
reduces rivalry.

The person who possesses many things,
but does not boast of his possessions,
reduces temptation, and reduces stealing.

**Those who are jealous of the skills or things
possessed by others,
most easily themselves become possessed by envy.**

**Satisfied with his possessions,
the sage eliminates the need to steal;
at one with the Tao,
he remains free of envy,
and has no need of titles.**

**By being supple, he retains his energy.
He minimizes his desires,
and does not train himself in guile,
nor subtle words of praise.
By not contriving, he retains
the harmony of his inner world,
and so remains at peace within himself.**

**It is for reasons such as these,
that an administration
which is concerned
with the welfare of those it serves,
does not encourage status
and titles to be sought,
nor encourage rivalry.**

**Ensuring a sufficiency for all,
helps in reducing discontent.**

**Administrators who are wise
do not seek honours for themselves,
nor act with guile
towards the ones they serve.**

[Up to Index](#)

4. THE UNFATHOMABLE TAO

**It is the nature of the Tao,
that even though used continuously,
it is replenished naturally,
never being emptied,
and never being over-filled,
as is a goblet
which spills its contents
upon the ground.**

The Tao therefore cannot be said

to waste its charge,
but constantly remains
a source of nourishment
for those who are not so full of self
as to be unable to partake of it.
When tempered beyond its natural state,
the finest blade will lose its edge.
Even the hardest tempered sword,
against water, is of no avail,
and will shatter if struck against a rock.
When untangled by a cutting edge,
the cord in little pieces lies,
and is of little use.

Just as the finest swordsmith
tempers the finest blade
with his experience,
so the sage, with wisdom, tempers intellect.
With patience, tangled cord may be undone,
and problems which seem insoluble, resolved.

With wise administrators, all can exist in unity,
each with the other,
because no man need feel that he exists,
only as the shadow of his brilliant brother.

Through conduct not contrived for gain,
awareness of the Tao may be maintained.
This is how its mysteries may be found.

[Up to Index](#)

5. WITHOUT INTENTION

Nature acts without intent,
so cannot be described
as acting with benevolence,
nor malevolence to any thing.

In this respect, the Tao is just the same,
though in reality it should be said
that nature follows the rule of Tao.

Therefore, even when he seems to act
in manner kind or benevolent,
the sage is not acting with such intent,
for in conscious matters such as these,
he is amoral and indifferent.

**The sage retains tranquility,
and is not by speech or thought disturbed,
and even less by action which is contrived.**

**His actions are spontaneous,
as are his deeds towards his fellow men.**

**By this means he is empty of desire,
and his energy is not drained from him.**

[Up to Index](#)

6. COMPLETION

**Like the sheltered, fertile valley,
the meditative mind is still,
yet retains its energy.**

**Since both energy and stillness,
of themselves, do not have form,
it is not through the senses
that they may be found,
nor understood by intellect alone,
although, in nature, both abound.**

**In the meditative state,
the mind ceases to differentiate
between existences,
and that which may or may not be.
It leaves them well alone,
for they exist,
not differentiated, but as one,
within the meditative mind.**

[Up to Index](#)

7. SHEATHING THE LIGHT

**When living by the Tao,
awareness of self is not required,
for in this way of life, the self exists,
and is also non-existent,
being conceived of, not as an existentiality,
nor as non-existent.**

**The sage does not contrive to find his self,
for he knows that all which may be found of it,
is that which it manifests to sense and thought,
which side by side with self itself, is nought.**

**It is by sheathing intellect's bright light
that the sage remains at one with his own self,
ceasing to be aware of it, by placing it behind.**

**Detached, he is unified with his external world,
by being selfless he is fulfilled;
thus his selfhood is assured.**

[Up to Index](#)

8. THE WAY OF WATER

**Great good is said to be like water,
sustaining life with no conscious striving,
flowing naturally, providing nourishment,
found even in places
which desiring man rejects.**

**In this way
it is like the Tao itself.**

**Like water, the sage abides in a humble place;
in meditation, without desire;
in thoughtfulness, he is profound,
and in his dealings, kind.
In speech, sincerity guides the man of Tao,
and as a leader, he is just.
In management, competence is his aim,
and he ensures the pacing is correct.**

**Because he does not act for his own ends,
nor cause unnecessary conflict,
he is held to be correct
in his actions towards his fellow man.**

[Up to Index](#)

9. WITHOUT EXTREMES

**The cup is easier to hold
when not filled to overflowing.**

**The blade is more effective
if not tempered beyond its mettle.**

**Gold and jade are easier to protect
if possessed in moderation.**

**He who seeks titles,
invites his own downfall.**

**The sage works quietly,
seeking neither praise nor fame;
completing what he does with natural ease,
and then retiring.
This is the way and nature of Tao.**

[Up to Index](#)

10. CLEANING THE DARK MIRROR

**Maintaining unity is virtuous,
for the inner world of thought is one
with the external world
of action and of things.**

**The sage avoids their separation,
by breathing as the sleeping babe,
and thus maintaining harmony.**

**He cleans the dark mirror of his mind,
so that it reflects without intent.
He conducts himself without contriving,
loving the people, and not interfering.**

**He cultivates without possessing,
thus providing nourishment,
he remains receptive
to changing needs,
and creates without desire.**

**By leading from behind,
attending to that
which must be done,
he is said to have attained
the mystic state.**

[Up to Index](#)

11. THE UTILITY OF NON-EXISTENCE

**Though thirty spokes may form the wheel,
it is the hole within the hub
which gives the wheel utility.**

It is not the clay the potter throws,

**which gives the pot its usefulness,
but the space within the shape,
from which the pot is made.**

**Without a door, the room cannot be entered,
and without windows it is dark.**

Such is the utility of non-existence.

[Up to Index](#)

12. THE REPRESSION OF DESIRES

**Through sight, the colours may be seen,
but too much colour blinds us.
Apprehending the tones of sound,
too much sound might make us deaf,
and too much flavour deadens taste.
When hunting for sport, and chasing for pleasure,
the mind easily becomes perplexed.
He who collects treasures for himself
more easily becomes anxious.**

**The wise person fulfills his needs,
rather than sensory temptations.**

[Up to Index](#)

13. UNMOVED AND UNMOVING

**The ordinary man seeks honour, not dishonour,
cherishing success and abominating failure,
loving life, whilst fearing death.
The sage does not recognise these things,
so lives his life quite simply.**

**The ordinary man seeks to make himself
the centre of his universe;
the universe of the sage is at his centre.
He loves the world, and thus remains unmoved
by things with which others are concerned.
He acts with humility, is neither moved nor moving,
and can therefore be trusted in caring for all things.**

[Up to Index](#)

14. EXPERIENCING THE MYSTERY

The Tao is abstract,

and therefore has no form,
it is neither bright in rising,
nor dark in sinking,
cannot be grasped, and makes no sound.

Without form or image, without existence,
the form of the formless, is beyond defining,
cannot be described,
and is beyond our understanding.
It cannot be called by any name.

Standing before it, it has no beginning;
even when followed, it has no end.
In the now, it exists; to the present apply it,
follow it well, and reach its beginning.

[Up to Index](#)

15. THE MANIFESTATION OF THE TAO IN MAN

The sage of old was profound and wise;
like a man at a ford, he took great care,
alert, perceptive and aware.

Desiring nothing for himself,
and having no desire
for change for its own sake,
his actions were difficult to understand.

Being watchful, he had no fear of danger;
being responsive, he had no need of fear.

He was courteous like a visiting guest,
and as yielding as the springtime ice.
Having no desires, he was untouched by craving.

Receptive and mysterious,
his knowledge was unfathomable,
causing others to think him hesitant.

Pure in heart, like uncut jade,
he cleared the muddy water
by leaving it alone.

By remaining calm and active,
the need for renewing is reduced.

[Up to Index](#)

16. RETURNING TO THE ROOT

**It is only by means of being
that non-being may be found.**

**When society changes
from its natural state of flux,
to that which seems like chaos,
the inner world of the superior man
remains uncluttered and at peace.
By remaining still, his self detached,
he aids society in its return
to the way of nature and of peace.
The value of his insight may be clearly seen
when chaos ceases.**

**Being one with the Tao is to be at peace,
and to be in conflict with it,
leads to chaos and dysfunction.**

**When the consistency of the Tao is known,
the mind is receptive to its states of change.**

**It is by being at one with the Tao,
that the sage holds no prejudice
against his fellow man.
If accepted as a leader of men,
he is held in high esteem.**

**Throughout his life,
both being and non-being,
the Tao protects him.**

[Up to Index](#)

17. LEADERSHIP BY EXCEPTION

**Man cannot comprehend the infinite;
only knowing that the best exists,
the second best is seen and praised,
and the next, despised and feared.**

**The sage does not expect that others
use his criteria as their own.**

**The existence of the leader who is wise
is barely known to those he leads.
He acts without unnecessary speech,
so that the people say,**

"It happened of its own accord".

[Up to Index](#)

18. THE DECAY OF ETHICS

**When the way of the Tao is forgotten,
kindness and ethics need to be taught;
men learn to pretend to be wise and good.**

**All too often in the lives of men,
filial piety and devotion
arise only after conflict and strife,
just as loyal ministers all too often appear,
when the people are suppressed.**

[Up to Index](#)

19. RETURNING TO NATURALNESS

**It is better merely to live one's life,
realizing one's potential,
rather than wishing
for sanctification.**

**He who lives in filial piety and love
has no need of ethical teaching.**

**When cunning and profit are renounced,
stealing and fraud will disappear.
But ethics and kindness, and even wisdom,
are insufficient in themselves.**

**Better by far to see the simplicity
of raw silk's beauty
and the uncarved block;
to be one with oneself,
and with one's brother.
It is better by far
to be one with the Tao,
developing selflessness,
tempering desire,
removing the wish,
but being compassionate.**

[Up to Index](#)

20. BEING DIFFERENT FROM ORDINARY MEN

**The sage is often envied
because others do not know
that although he is nourished by the Tao,
like them, he too is mortal.**

**He who seeks wisdom is well advised
to give up academic ways,
and put an end to striving.
Then he will learn that yes and no
are distinguished only by distinction.**

**It is to the advantage of the sage
that he does not fear what others fear,
but it is to the advantage of others
that they can enjoy the feast,
or go walking, free of hindrance,
through the terraced park in spring.**

**The sage drifts like a cloud,
having no specific place.
Like a newborn babe before it smiles,
he does not seek to communicate.
In the eyes of those
who have more than they need,
the sage has nothing, and is a fool,
prizing only that which of the Tao is born.**

**The sage may seem to be perplexed,
being neither bright nor clear,
and to himself, sometimes he seems
both dull and weak, confused and shy.
Like the ocean at night,
he is serene and quiet,
but as penetrating as the winter wind.**

[Up to Index](#)

21. FINDING THE ESSENCE OF TAO

**The greatest virtue is to follow the Tao;
how it achieves ! without contriving.**

**The essence of Tao is dark and mysterious,
having, itself, no image or form.
Yet through its non-being,
are found image and form.
The essence of Tao is deep and unfathomable,
yet it may be known by not trying to know.**

[Up to Index](#)

22. YIELDING TO MAINTAIN INTEGRITY

**Yield, and maintain integrity.
To bend is to be upright;
to be empty is to be full.**

**Those who have little have much to gain,
but those who have much
may be confused by possessions.**

**The wise man embraces the all encompassing;
he is unaware of himself, and so has brilliance;
not defending himself, he gains distinction;
not seeking fame, he receives recognition;
not making false claims, he does not falter;
and not being quarrelsome,
is in conflict with no one.**

**This is why it was said by the sages of old, "Yield, and
maintain integrity; be whole, and all things come to
you".**

[Up to Index](#)

23. ACCEPTING THE IRREVOCABLE

**Nature's way is to say but little;
high winds are made still
with the turn of the tide,
and rarely last all morning,
nor heavy rain, all day.
Therefore, when talking,
remember also
to be silent and still.**

**He who follows the natural way
is always one with the Tao.
He who is virtuous may experience virtue,
whilst he who loses the natural way
is easily lost himself.**

**He who is at one with the Tao
is at one with nature,
and virtue always exists for he who has virtue.**

To accept the irrevocable

is to let go of desire.

**He who does not have trust in others
should not himself be trusted.**

24. EXCESS

**He who stretches
beyond his natural reach,
does not stand firmly
upon the ground;
just as he
who travels at a speed
beyond his means,
cannot maintain his pace.**

**He who boasts
is not enlightened,
and he who is self-righteous
does not gain respect
from those who are meritorious;
thus, he gains nothing,
and will fall into disrepute.**

**Since striving,
boasting and self-righteousness,
are all unnecessary traits,
the sage considers them excesses,
and has no need of them.**

[Up to Index](#)

25. THE CREATIVE PRINCIPLE OF TAO

**The creative principle unifies
the inner and external worlds.
It does not depend on time or space,
is ever still and yet in motion;
thereby it creates all things,
and is therefore called
'the creative and the absolute';
its ebb and its flow extend to infinity.**

**We describe the Tao as being great;
we describe the universe as great;
nature too, we describe as great,
and man himself is great.**

**Man's laws should follow natural laws,
just as nature gives rise to physical laws,
whilst following from universal law,
which follows the Tao.**

[Up to Index](#)

26. CENTRING

**The natural way is the way of the sage,
serving as his dwelling,
providing his centre deep within,
whether in his home or journeying.**

**Even when he travels far,
he is not separate
from his own true nature.
Maintaining awareness of natural beauty,
he still does not forget his purpose.**

**Although he may dwell in a grand estate,
simplicity remains his guide,
for he is full aware, that losing it,
his roots as well would disappear.
So he is not restless,
lest he loses the natural way.**

**Similarly, the people's leader
is not flippant in his role, nor restless,
for these could cause the loss
of the roots of leadership.**

[Up to Index](#)

27. FOLLOWING THE TAO

**The sage follows the natural way,
doing what is required of him.**

**Like an experienced tracker,
he leaves no tracks;
like a good speaker, his speech is fluent;
He makes no error, so needs no tally;
like a good door, which needs no lock,
he is open when it is required of him,
and closed at other times;
like a good binding, he is secure,
without the need of borders.**

**Knowing that virtue may grow from example,
this is the way in which the sage teaches,
abandoning no one who stops to listen.
Thus, from experience of the sage,
all might learn, and so might gain.**

**There is mutual respect twixt teacher and pupil,
for, without respect, there would be confusion.**

[Up to Index](#)

28. RETAINING INTEGRITY

**Whilst developing creativity,
also cultivate receptivity.
Retain the mind like that of a child,
which flows like running water.**

**When considering any thing,
do not lose its opposite.
When thinking of the finite,
do not forget infinity;**

**Act with honour, but retain humility.
By acting according to the way of the Tao,
set others an example.**

**By retaining the integrity
of the inner and external worlds,
true selfhood is maintained,
and the inner world made fertile.**

[Up to Index](#)

29. TAKING NO ACTION

**The external world is fragile,
and he who meddles with its natural way,
risks causing damage to himself.
He who tries to grasp it,
thereby loses it.**

**It is natural for things to change,
sometimes being ahead, sometimes behind.**

**There are times when even breathing
may be difficult,
whereas its natural state is easy.**

**Sometimes one is strong,
and sometimes weak,
sometimes healthy,
and sometimes sick,
sometimes is first,
and at other times behind.**

**The sage does not try
to change the world by force,
for he knows that force results in force.
He avoids extremes and excesses,
and does not become complacent.**

[Up to Index](#)

30. A CAVEAT AGAINST VIOLENCE

**When leading by the way of the Tao,
abominate the use of force,
for it causes resistance, and loss of strength,
showing the Tao has not been followed well.
Achieve results but not through violence,
for it is against the natural way,
and damages both others' and one's own true self.**

**The harvest is destroyed in the wake of a great war,
and weeds grow in the fields in the wake of the army.**

**The wise leader achieves results,
but does not glory in them;
is not proud of his victories,
and does not boast of them.
He knows that boasting is not the natural way,
and that he who goes against that way,
will fail in his endeavours.**

[Up to Index](#)

31. MAINTAINING PEACE

**Weapons of war are instruments of fear,
and are abhorred by those who follow the Tao.
The leader who follows the natural way
does not abide them.**

**The warrior king leans to his right,
from whence there comes his generals' advice,
but the peaceful king looks to his left,**

where sits his counsellor of peace.
When he looks to his left, it is a time of peace,
and when to the right, a time for sorrow.

Weapons of war are instruments of fear,
and are not favoured by the wise,
who use them only when there is no choice,
for peace and stillness are dear to their hearts,
and victory causes them no rejoicing.

To rejoice in victory is to delight in killing;
to delight in killing is to have no self-being.

The conduct of war is that of a funeral;
when people are killed, it is a time of mourning.
This is why even victorious battle
should be observed without rejoicing.

[Up to Index](#)

32. IF THE TAO WERE OBSERVED

The Tao is eternal, but does not have fame;
like the uncarved block, its worth seems small,
though its value to man is beyond all measure.
Were it definable, it could then be used
to obviate conflict, and the need
to teach the way of the Tao;
all men would abide in the peace of the Tao;
sweet dew would descend to nourish the earth.

When the Tao is divided,
there is a need for names,
for, like the block which is carved,
its parts then are seen.

By stopping in time
from torment and conflict,
strife is defeated, and danger averted.
The people then seek the wisdom of Tao,
just as all rivers flow to the great sea.

[Up to Index](#)

33. WITHOUT FORCE: WITHOUT PERISHING

Knowledge frequently results
from knowing others,
but the man who is awakened,

has seen the uncarved block.

**Others might be mastered by force,
but to master one's self
requires the Tao.**

**He who has many material things,
may be described as rich,
but he who knows he has enough,
and is at one with the Tao,
might have enough of material things,
and have self-being as well.**

**Will-power may bring perseverance;
but to have tranquility is to endure,
being protected for all his days.**

**He whose ideas remain in the world,
is present for all time.**

[Up to Index](#)

34. WITHOUT CONTRIVING

**All things may act, without exclusion,
according to the natural way,
which fulfills its purpose silently,
and with no claim.**

**Being an aspect of natural order,
it is not the ruler of any thing,
but remains the source of their nourishment.**

**It cannot be seen; it has no intention,
but all natural things rely on its presence.**

**When all things return to it,
it does not enslave them,
so unmanifested, its greatness prevails.**

**Modelling himself upon the Tao,
he who is wise, does not contrive,
but is content with what he achieves.**

[Up to Index](#)

35. THE BENEVOLENT HOST

**The wise man acts at one with the Tao,
for he knows it is here that peace is found.
It is for this reason that he is sought.**

**Whilst guests enjoy good music and food,
as these are supplied by a benevolent host,
a description of Tao seems without form,
for it cannot be heard and cannot be seen.
But when the music and food are all ended,
the taste of the Tao still remains.**

[Up to Index](#)

36. OVERCOMING

**It is the way of the Tao,
that things which expand might also shrink;
that he who is strong, will at some time be weak,
that he who is raised will then be cast down,
and that all men have a need to give,
and also have a need to receive.**

**The biggest fish stay deep in the pond,
and a country's best weapons
should be kept locked away.
That which is soft and supple,
may overcome the hard and strong.**

[Up to Index](#)

37. THE EXERCISE OF LEADERSHIP

**The way of nature is not contrived,
yet nothing which is required
is left undone.**

**Observing nature, the wise leader knows this,
and replaces desire with dispassion,
thus saving that energy, otherwise spent,
which has not been wasted away.**

**The wise leader knows
his actions must be
without the use of forced energy.**

**He knows that more
is still required,
for he also knows
that he must act
without deliberate intent,
of having no intention.**

To act without contrived intent
is to act without contriving,
and is the way of nature,
and so is the way of the Tao.

[Up to Index](#)

38. THE CONCERNS OF THE GREAT

A truly good man is unaware
of the good deeds he performs.
Conversely, a foolish man must try
continuously to be good.

A good man seems to do little or nought,
yet he leaves nothing undone.
A foolish man must always strive,
whilst leaving much undone.

The man who is truly wise and kind
leaves nothing to be done,
but he who only acts
according to his nation's law
leaves many things undone.

A disciplinarian wanting something done
rolls up his sleeves,
enforcing it with violence.

It may be that goodness still remains,
even when the natural way is lost,
and that kindness still exists
when goodness is forgotten.
It may be that justice still remains
when the people are no longer kind,
and when this is lost, that ritual still remains.
However, ritual may be performed
only as an act of faith,
and may be the beginning of confusion,
for even divination and the such
are but the flowery trappings of the Tao,
and are the beginning of great folly.

He who is truly great
does not upon the surface dwell,
but on what lies beneath.
It is said that the fruit is his concern,
rather than the flower.

**Each must decide what it might be he seeks,
the flowery trapping,
which comes to summer fullness first,
or the fruit which is beneath.**

[Up to Index](#)

39. SUFFICIENCY AND QUIETNESS

**From the principle which is called the Tao,
the sky, the earth, and creativity are one,
the sky is clear, the earth is firm,
and the spirit of the inner world is full.**

**When the ruler of the land is whole,
the nation too is strong, alive and well,
and the people have sufficient
to meet their earthly needs.**

**When the daytime sky is dark
and overcast like night,
the nation and its people
will surely suffer much.**

**The firmness of the dew filled earth
gives it its life;
the energy of the inner world
prevents its becoming drained of strength;
its fullness prevents it running dry.
The growth of all things
prevents their dying.**

**The work of the leader should ensure
the prosperity of the populace.
So it is said,**

"humility is the root

of great nobility;

the low forms a foundation

for the great;

and princes consider themselves

to be of little worth".

**Each depends on humility therefore;
it is of no advantage to have too much success,**

**so do not sound loudly like jade bells,
nor clatter like stone chimes.**

[Up to Index](#)

40. BEING AND NOT BEING

**The motion of nature
is cyclic and returning.
Its way is to yield,
for to yield is to become.
All things are born of being;
being is born of non-being.**

[Up to Index](#)

41. SAMENESS AND DIFFERENCE

**On hearing of the Tao,
the wise student's practice is with diligence;
the average student attends to his practice
when his memory reminds him so to do;
and the foolish student laughs.
But we do well to remember
that with no sudden laughter,
there would be no natural way.**

Thus it is said,

**"There are times when even brightness seems
dim;**

when progress seems like regression;

when the easy seems most difficult,

and virtue seems empty, inadequate and frail;

times when purity seems sullied;

when even reality seems unreal,

and when a square seems to have corners;

when even great talent is of no avail,

and the highest note cannot be heard;

when the formed seems formless,

**and when the way of nature is out of sight".
Even in such times as these,
the natural way still nourishes,
that all things may be fulfilled.**

[Up to Index](#)

42. THE TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE TAO

**The Tao existed before its name,
and from its name, the opposites evolved,
giving rise to three divisions,
and then to names abundant.**

**These things embrace receptively,
achieving inner harmony,
and by their unity create
the inner world of man.**

**No man wishes to be seen
as worthless in another's eyes,
but the wise leader describes himself this way,
for he knows that one may gain by losing,
and lose by gaining,
and that a violent man
will not die a natural death.**

[Up to Index](#)

43. AT ONE WITH TAO

**Only the soft overcomes the hard,
by yielding, bringing it to peace.
Even where there is no space,
that which has no substance enters in.**

**Through these things is shown
the value of the natural way.
The wise man understands full well,
that wordless teaching can take place,
and that actions should occur
without the wish for self-advancement.**

[Up to Index](#)

44. SUFFICIENCY

A contented man knows himself to be

**more precious even than fame,
and so, obscure, remains.**

**He who is more attached to wealth
than to himself,
suffers more heavily from loss.**

**He who knows when to stop, might lose,
but in safety stays.**

[Up to Index](#)

45. CHANGES

**In retrospect, even those accomplishments
which seemed perfect when accomplished,
may seem imperfect and ill formed,
but this does not mean that such accomplishments
have outlived their usefulness.**

**That which once seemed full,
may later empty seem,
yet still be unexhausted.
That which once seemed straight
may seem twisted when seen once more;
intelligence can seem stupid,
and eloquence seem awkward;
movement may overcome the cold,
and stillness, heat,
but stillness in movement
is the way of the Tao.**

[Up to Index](#)

46. MODERATING DESIRE AND AMBITION

**When the way of nature is observed,
all things serve their function;
horses drawing carts, and pulling at the plough.
But when the natural way is not observed,
horses are bred for battle and for war.**

**Desire and wanting cause discontent,
whilst he who knows sufficiency
more easily has what he requires.**

[Up to Index](#)

47. DISCOVERING THE DISTANT

**The Tao may be known and observed
without the need of travel;
the way of the heavens might be well seen
without looking through a window.**

**The further one travels,
the less one knows.
So, without looking, the sage sees all,
and by working without self-advancing thought,
he discovers the wholeness of the Tao.**

[Up to Index](#)

48. FORGETTING KNOWLEDGE

**When pursuing knowledge,
something new is acquired each day.
But when pursuing the way of the Tao,
something is subtracted;
less striving occurs,
until there is no striving.**

**When effort is uncontrived,
nothing is left undone;
the way of nature rules
by allowing things to take their course,
not by contriving to change.**

[Up to Index](#)

49. THE VIRTUE OF RECEPTIVITY

**The sage is not mindful for himself,
but is receptive to others' needs.
Knowing that virtue requires great faith,
he has that faith, and is good to all;
irrespective of others' deeds,
he treats them according to their needs.**

**He has humility and is shy,
thus confusing other men.
They see him as they might a child,
and sometimes listen to his words.**

[Up to Index](#)

50. THE VALUE SET ON LIFE

**In looking at the people, we might see
that in the space twixt birth and death,
one third follow life, and one third death,
and those who merely pass from birth to death,
are also one third of those we see.**

**He who lives by the way of the Tao,
travels without fear of ferocious beasts,
and will not be pierced in an affray,
for he offers no resistance.
The universe is the centre of his world,
so in the inner world
of he who lives within the Tao,
there is no place
where death can enter in.**

[Up to Index](#)

51. THE NOURISHMENT OF THE TAO

**All physical things arise
from the principle which is absolute;
the principle which is the natural way.**

**All living things are formed by being,
and shaped by their environment,
growing if nourished well by virtue;
the being from non-being.**

**All natural things respect the Tao,
giving honour to its virtue,
although the Tao does not expect,
nor look for honour or respect.**

**The virtue of the natural way
is that all things are born of it;
it nourishes and comforts them;
develops, shelters and cares for them,
protecting them from harm.**

**The Tao creates, not claiming credit,
and guides without interfering.**

[Up to Index](#)

52. RETURNING TO THE SOURCE

The virtue of Tao governs its natural way.

**Thus, he who is at one with it,
is one with everything which lives,
having freedom from the fear of death.**

**Boasting, and hurrying hither and thither,
destroy the enjoyment of a peace filled life.**

**Life is more fulfilled by far,
for he who does not have desire,
for he does not have desire,
has no need of boasting.**

**Learn to see the insignificant and small,
grow in wisdom and develop insight,
that which is irrevocable,
do not try to fight,
and so be saved from harm.**

[Up to Index](#)

53. EVIDENCE

**When temptation arises to leave the Tao,
banish temptation, stay with the Tao.**

**When the court has adornments in profusion,
the fields are full of weeds,
and the granaries are bare.**

**It is not the way of nature to carry a sword,
nor to over-adorn oneself,
nor to have more than a sufficiency
of fine food and drink.**

**He who has more possessions than he can use,
deprives someone who could use them well.**

[Up to Index](#)

54. CULTIVATING INSIGHT

**That which is firmly rooted,
is not easily torn from the ground;
just as that which is firmly grasped,
does not slip easily from the hand.**

**The virtue of the Tao is real,
if cultivated in oneself;
when loved in the family, it abounds;
when throughout the village, it will grow;**

**and in the nation, be abundant.
When it is real universally,
virtue is in all people.**

**All things are microcosms of the Tao;
the world a microcosmic universe,
the nation a microcosm of the world,
the village a microcosmic nation;
the family a village in microcosmic view,
and the body a microcosm of one's own family;
from single cell to galaxy.**

[Up to Index](#)

55. MYSTERIOUS VIRTUE

**He who has virtue is like a newborn child,
free from attack by those who dwell
in the way of nature, the way of the Tao.**

**The bones of the newborn child are soft,
his muscles supple, but his grip is firm;
he is whole, though not knowing he was born
of the creative and receptive way.
The way of nature is in the child,
so even when he shouts all day,
his throat does not grow hoarse or dry.**

**From constancy, there develops harmony,
and from harmony, enlightenment.**

**It is unwise to rush from here to there.
To hold one's breath causes the body strain;
exhaustion follows
when too much energy is used,
for this is not the natural way.**

**He who is in opposition to the Tao
does not live his natural years.**

[Up to Index](#)

56. VIRTUOUS PASSIVITY

**Those who know the natural way
have no need of boasting,
whilst those who know but little,
may be heard most frequently;
thus, the sage says little,**

if anything at all.

**Not demanding stimuli,
he tempers his sharpness well,
reduces the complex to simplicity,
hiding his brilliance, seemingly dull;
he settles the dust,
whilst in union with all natural things.**

**He who has attained enlightenment
(without contriving so to do)
is not concerned with making friends,
nor with making enemies;
with good or harm, with praise or blame.
Such detachment is the highest state of man.**

[Up to Index](#)

57. SIMPLIFICATION

**With natural justice, people must be ruled,
and if war be waged, strategy and tactics used.
To master one's self,
one must act without cunning.**

**The greater the number of laws and restrictions,
the poorer the people who inhabit the land.
The sharper the weapons of battle and war,
the greater the troubles besetting the land.
The greater the cunning with which people are ruled,
the stranger the things which occur in the land.
The harder the rules and regulations,
the greater the number of those who will steal.**

**The sage therefore does not contrive,
in order to bring about reform,
but teaches the people peace of mind,
in order that they might enjoy their lives.
Having no desires, all he does is natural.
Since he teaches self-sufficiency,
the people who follow him return
to a good, uncomplicated life.**

[Up to Index](#)

58. TRANSFORMATIONS ACCORDING TO CIRCUMSTANCES

When the hand of the ruler is light,

**the people do not contrive,
but when the country is severely ruled,
the people grow in cunning.**

**The actions of the sage are sharp,
but they are never cutting,
they are pointed, though never piercing,
they are straightforward, not contrived,
and not without restraint,
brilliant but not blinding.
This is the action of the sage,
because he is aware
that where happiness exists,
there is also misery and strife;
that where honesty may be found,
there is occasion for dishonesty,
and that men may be beguiled.**

**The sage knows that no-one can foretell
just what the future holds.**

[Up to Index](#)

59. GUARDING THE TAO

**By acting with no thought of self-advancement,
but with self-restraint,
it is possible to lead,
and genuinely care for others.
This happens by acting virtuously,
and leaving nothing to be done.**

**A foundation virtuous and firm,
rooted in receptivity,
is a prerequisite of good leadership,
and for a life both long and strong.
He whose virtue knows no limit,
is most fitting to lead.
His roots are deep,
and his life protected
by his meditative practice,
as the bark protects the tree.**

[Up to Index](#)

60. RULING

**To rule a country,
one must act with care,**

as when frying the smallest fish.

**If actions are approached,
and carried out in the natural way,
the power of evil is reduced,
and so the ruler and the ruled
are equally protected.
They will not contrive to harm each other,
for the virtue of one refreshes the other.**

[Up to Index](#)

61. HUMILITY

**A great country remains receptive and still,
as does a rich and fertile land.
The gentle overcomes the strong
with stillness and receptivity.**

**By giving way to the other,
one country may conquer another;
a small country may submit to a large,
and conquer it, though having no arms.**

**Those who conquer must be willing to yield;
to yield may be to overcome.**

**A fertile nation may require a greater population,
to use its resources to the full,
whilst the country without such natural wealth
may require them to meet its people's needs.
By acting in unity, each may achieve
that which it requires.**

[Up to Index](#)

62. SHARING THE TREASURE

**The source of all things is in the Tao.
It is a treasure for the good,
and a refuge for all in need.**

**Whilst praise can buy titles,
good deeds gain respect.**

**No man should be abandoned
because he has not found the Tao.**

On auspicious occasions, when gifts are sent,

rather than sending horses or jade,
send the teaching of Tao.

When we first discover the natural way,
we are happy to know that our misdeeds
are in the past, where they belong,
and so are happy to realize
that we have found a treasure.

[Up to Index](#)

63. BEGINNING AND COMPLETING

Act without contriving;
work naturally, and taste the tasteless;
magnify the small; increase the few,
and reward bitterness with care.
Seek the simple in the complex,
and achieve greatness in small things.

It is the way of nature
that even difficult things are done with ease,
and great acts made up of smaller deeds.
The sage achieves greatness by small deeds multiplied.

Promises easily made are most easily broken,
and acting with insufficient care
causes subsequent trouble.
The sage confronts problems as they arise,
so that they do not trouble him.

[Up to Index](#)

64. STAYING WITH THE MYSTERY

If problems are accepted,
and dealt with before they arise,
they might even be prevented before confusion begins,
In this way peace may be maintained.

The brittle is easily shattered,
and the small is easily scattered.
Great trees grow from the smallest shoots;
a terraced garden, from a pile of earth,
and a journey of a thousand miles
begins by taking the initial step.

He who contrives, defeats his purpose;
and he who is grasping, loses.

**The sage does not contrive to win,
and therefore is not defeated;
he is not grasping, so does not lose.**

**It is easy to fail when nearing completion,
therefore, take care right to the end,
not only in the beginning.**

**The sage seeks freedom from desire,
not grasping at ideas.
He brings men back when they are lost,
and helps them find the Tao.**

[Up to Index](#)

65. VIRTUOUS GOVERNMENT

**Knowing it is against the Tao
to try to enforce learning,
the early sages did not contrive
to teach the way of the Tao.**

**There are two ways of government.
One is to be cunning, to act with guile,
and to contrive to cheat the people.
When this way is used to rule,
the people grow in cunning,
and contrive to cheat the ruler.**

**The second way to govern the land,
is to do so without contriving.
People so governed are truly blessed,
for they are governed with virtue,
and virtuous government is fair to all,
thus leading to unity.**

[Up to Index](#)

66. LEADING FROM BEHIND

**The sea is the ruler of river and stream,
because it rules from well beneath.**

**The teacher guides his students best,
by allowing them to lead.**

**When the ruler is a sage,
the people do not feel oppressed;
they support the one who rules them well,**

and never tire of him.

**He who is non-competitive
invites no competition.**

[Up to Index](#)

67. THE THREE PRECIOUS ATTRIBUTES

**Those who follow the natural way
are different from others in three respects.
They have great mercy and economy,
and the courage not to compete.
From mercy there comes courage;
from economy, generosity;
and from humility, willingness to lead from behind.**

**It is the way of sickness to shun the merciful,
and to acclaim only heroic deeds,
to abandon economy, and to be selfish.**

**They are sick, who are not humble,
but try always to be first.**

**Only he who is compassionate
can show true bravery,
and in defending, show great strength.
Compassion is the means by which
mankind may be guarded and saved,
for heaven arms with compassion,
those whom it would not see destroyed.**

[Up to Index](#)

68. WITHOUT DESIRE

**An effective warrior acts
not from nihilistic anger,
nor from desire to kill.**

**He who wins should not be vengeful.
An employer should have humility.**

**If we wish for peace and unity,
our dealings with our fellow man
must be without desire for self-advantage,
and carried out without contention.**

[Up to Index](#)

69. THE USE OF THE MYSTERIOUS TAO

Arguments may be won by waiting,
rather than making an aggressive move;
by withdrawing rather than advancing.

By moving without appearing to move,
by not making a show of strength,
but by conserving it well;
by capturing without attacking,
by being armed, but with no weapons,
great battles may be won.

Do not underestimate
those you enjoin in battle,
for this can result in losing
what is of greatest value.
When a battle is enjoined,
by remembering this,
the weaker may still win.

[Up to Index](#)

70. HIDDEN IDENTITY

Though the words of the sage are simple,
and his actions easily performed,
they are few among many,
who can speak or act as a sage.

For the ordinary man it is difficult
to know the way of a sage,
perhaps because his words
are from the distant past,
and his actions naturally disposed.

Those who know the way of the sage
are few and far between,
but those who treat him with honesty,
will be honoured by him and the Tao.

He knows he makes no fine display,
and wears rough clothes, not finery.

It is not in his expectancy of men
that they should understand his ways,
for he carries his jade within his heart.

[Up to Index](#)

71. WITHOUT SICKNESS

To acknowledge one's ignorance
shows strength of personality,
but to ignore wisdom is a sign of weakness.

To be sick of sickness is a sign of good health,
therefore the wise man grows sick of sickness,
and sick of being sick of sickness,
'til he is sick no more.

[Up to Index](#)

72. LOVING THE SELF

The sage retains a sense of awe, and of propriety.
He does not intrude into others' homes;
does not harass them,
nor interfere without request,
unless they damage others.
So it is that they return to him.

'Though the sage knows himself
he makes no show of it;
he has self-respect, but is not arrogant,
for he develops the ability to let go of that
which he no longer needs.

[Up to Index](#)

73. ACTING WITH A SUFFICIENCY

A brave man who is passionate
will either kill or be killed,
but a man who is both brave and still
might preserve his own and others' lives.
No one can say with certainty,
why it is better to preserve a life.

The virtuous way is a way to act
without contriving effort,
yet, without contriving it overcomes.
It seldom speaks, and never asks,
but is answered without a question.
It is supplied with all its needs
and is constantly at ease
because it follows its own plan
which cannot be understood by man.
It casts its net both deep and wide,

and 'though coarse meshed, it misses nothing in the
tide.

[Up to Index](#)

74. USURPING THE TAO

If the people are not afraid of death,
they have no fear of threats of death.

If early death is common in the land,
and if death is meted out as punishment,
the people do not fear to break the law.

To be the executioner in such a land as this,
is to be as an unskilled carpenter
who cuts his hand
when trying to cut wood.

[Up to Index](#)

75. INJURING THROUGH GREED

When taxes are too heavy,
hunger lays the people low.
When those who govern interfere too much,
the people become rebellious.

When those who govern demand too much
of people's lives, death is taken lightly.
When the people are starving in the land,
life is of little value,
and so is more easily sacrificed by them
in overthrowing government.

[Up to Index](#)

76. AGAINST TRUSTING IN STRENGTH

Man is born gentle and supple.
At death, his body is brittle and hard.
Living plants are tender,
and filled with life-giving sap,
but at their death they are withered and dry.

The stiff, the hard, and brittle
are harbingers of death,
and gentleness and yielding
are the signs of that which lives.

**The warrior who is inflexible
condemns himself to death,
and the tree is easily broken,
which ever refuses to yield.
Thus the hard and brittle will surely fall,
and the soft and supple will overcome.**

[Up to Index](#)

77. THE WAY OF THE TAO

**The Tao is as supple as a bow;
the high made lower, and the lowly raised.
It shortens the string which has been stretched,
and lengthens that which has become too short.**

**It is the way of the Tao to take from those
who have a surplus to what they need,
providing for those without enough.
The way of the ordinary person,
is not the way of the Tao,
for such people take from those who are poor
and give to those who are rich.**

**The sage knows that his possessions are none,
therefore he gives to the world;
without recognition, doing his work.
In this way he accomplishes
that which is required of him;
without dwelling upon it in any way,
he gives of his wisdom without display.**

[Up to Index](#)

78. SINCERITY

**There is nothing more yielding than water,
yet when acting on the solid and strong,
its gentleness and fluidity
have no equal in any thing.**

**The weak can overcome the strong,
and the supple overcome the hard.
Although this is known far and wide,
few put it into practice in their lives.**

**Although seemingly paradoxical,
the person who takes upon himself,
the people's humiliation,**

**is fit to rule;
and he is fit to lead,
who takes the country's disasters upon himself.**

[Up to Index](#)

79. FULFILLING ONE'S OBLIGATIONS

**When covenants and bonds are drawn
between the people of the land,
that they might know their obligations,
it is commonplace for many
to fail to meet their dues.**

**The sage ensures his dues are met,
'though not expecting others to do the same;
in this way he is virtuous.**

**He is without virtue of his own,
who asks of others that they fulfil
his obligations on his behalf.**

**The way of nature does not impose
on matters such as these
but stays with the good for ever,
and acts as their reward.**

[Up to Index](#)

80. STANDING ALONE

**A small country may have many machines,
but the people will have no use for them;
they will have boats and carriages
which they do not use;
their armour and weapons
are not displayed,
for they are serious when regarding death.
They do not travel far from home,
and make knots in ropes,
rather than do much writing.**

**The food they eat is plain and good,
and their clothes are simple;
their homes are secure,
without the need of bolts and bars,
and they are happy in their ways.**

'Though the cockerels and dogs

of their neighbours
can be heard not far away,
the people of the villages
grow old and die in peace.

[Up to Index](#)

81. MANIFESTING SIMPLICITY

The truth is not always beautiful,
nor beautiful words the truth.

Those who have virtue,
have no need of argument for its own sake,
for they know that argument is of no avail.

Those who have knowledge of the natural way
do not train themselves in cunning,
whilst those who use cunning to rule their lives,
and the lives of others,
are not knowledgeable of the Tao,
nor of natural happiness.

The sage seeks not to have a store
of things or knowledge, for he knows,
the less of these he has, the more he has,
and that the more he gives,
the greater his abundance.

The way of the sage is pointed
but does not harm.

The way of the sage
is to work without cunning.

[Up to Index](#)



[Return to Taoism](#)

[Information Page](#)
