

Tao Te Ching

(Translation from Derek Lin)

CHAPTER 1

The Tao that can be spoken is not the eternal Tao
The name that can be named is not the eternal name
The nameless is the origin of Heaven and Earth
The named is the mother of myriad things

Thus, constantly free of desire
One observes its wonders
Constantly filled with desire
One observes its manifestations

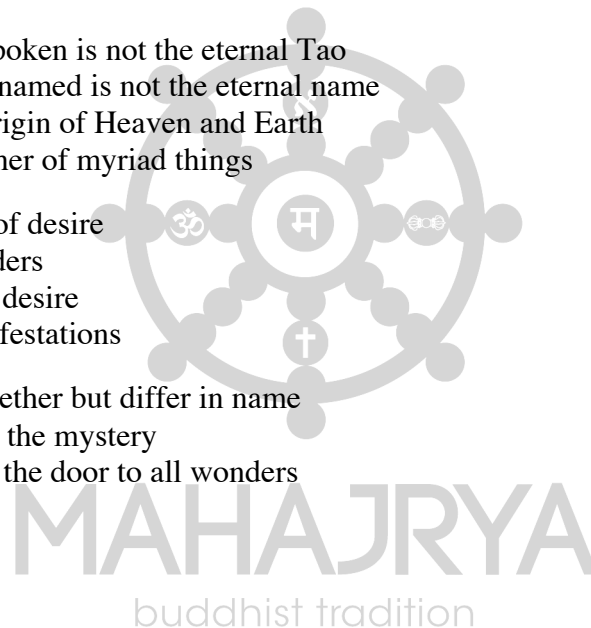
These two emerge together but differ in name
The unity is said to be the mystery
Mystery of mysteries, the door to all wonders

CHAPTER 2

When the world knows beauty as beauty, ugliness arises
When it knows good as good, evil arises

Thus being and non-being produce each other
Difficult and easy bring about each other
Long and short reveal each other
High and low support each other
Music and voice harmonize each other
Front and back follow each other

Therefore the sages:
Manage the work of detached actions
Conduct the teaching of no words



They work with myriad things but do not control
They create but do not possess
They act but do not presume

They succeed but do not dwell on success
It is because they do not dwell on success
That it never goes away

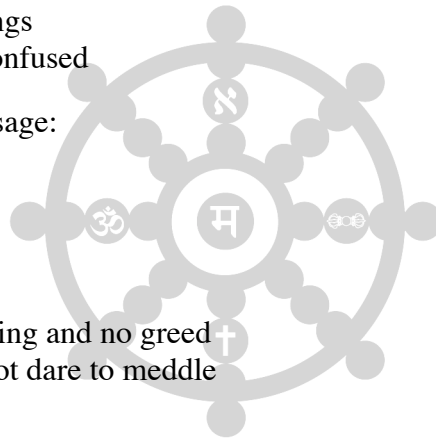
CHAPTER 3

Do not glorify the achievers
So the people will not squabble
Do not treasure goods that are hard to obtain
So the people will not become thieves
Do not show the desired things
So their hearts will not be confused

Thus the governance of the sage:
Empties their hearts
Fills their bellies
Weakens their ambitions
Strengthens their bones

Let the people have no cunning and no greed
So those who scheme will not dare to meddle

Act without contrivance
And nothing will be beyond control



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CHAPTER 4

The Tao is empty
Utilize it, it is not filled up
So deep! It seems to be the source of all things

It blunts the sharpness
Unravels the knots
Dims the glare
Mixes the dusts

So indistinct! It seems to exist
I do not know whose offspring it is
Its image is the predecessor of God

CHAPTER 5

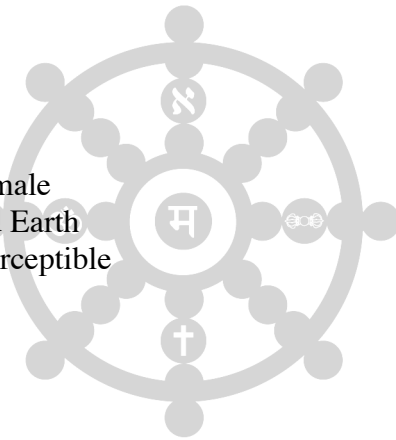
Heaven and Earth are impartial
And regard myriad things as straw dogs
The sage is impartial
And regards people as straw dogs

The space between Heaven and Earth
Is it not like a bellows?
Empty, and yet never exhausted
It moves, and produces more

Too many words hasten failure
Cannot compare to keeping quiet

CHAPTER 6

The valley spirit, undying
Is called the mystical female
The gateway of the mystical female
Is called the root of Heaven and Earth
It flows continuously, barely perceptible
Utilize it, it is never exhausted



CHAPTER 7

Heaven and Earth are everlasting
The reason Heaven and Earth can last forever
Is that they do not exist for themselves
Thus they can last forever

Therefore the sages:
Places themselves last but end up in front
Are outside of themselves and yet survive
Is it not all due to their selflessness?
That is how they can achieve their own goals

CHAPTER 8

The highest goodness resembles water
Water greatly benefits myriad things without contention
It stays in places that people dislike
Therefore it is similar to the Tao

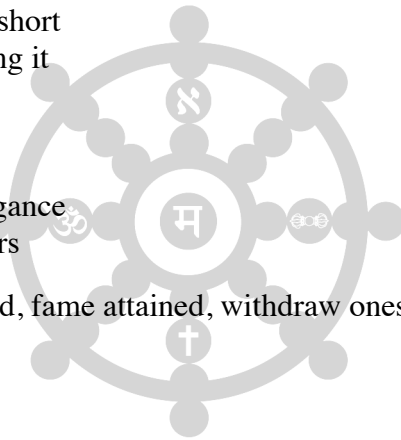
Dwelling at the right place
Heart with great depth
Giving with great kindness
Words with great integrity
Governing with great administration
Handling with great capability
Moving with great timing

Because it does not contend
It is therefore beyond reproach

CHAPTER 9

Holding a cup and overfilling it
Cannot be as good as stopping short
Pounding a blade and sharpening it
Cannot be kept for long
Gold and jade fill up the room
No one is able to protect them
Wealth and position bring arrogance
And leave upon oneself disasters

When achievement is completed, fame attained, withdraw oneself
This is the Tao of Heaven



CHAPTER 10

In holding the soul and embracing oneness
Can one be without straying?
In concentrating the energy and reaching relaxation
Can one be like an infant?
In cleaning away the worldly view
Can one be without imperfections?
In loving the people and ruling the nation
Can one be without manipulation?
In the heavenly gate's opening and closing
Can one hold to the feminine principle?
In understanding clearly all directions
Can one be without intellectuality?

Bearing it, rearing it
Bearing without possession
Achieving without arrogance
Raising without domination
This is called the Mystic Virtue

CHAPTER 11

Thirty spokes join in one hub
In its emptiness, there is the function of a vehicle
Mix clay to create a container
In its emptiness, there is the function of a container
Cut open doors and windows to create a room
In its emptiness, there is the function of a room

Therefore, that which exists is used to create benefit
That which is empty is used to create functionality

CHAPTER 12

The five colors make one blind in the eyes
The five sounds make one deaf in the ears
The five flavors make one tasteless in the mouth
Racing and hunting make one wild in the heart
Goods that are difficult to acquire make one cause damage

Therefore the sages care for the stomach and not the eyes
That is why they discard the other and take this

CHAPTER 13

Favor and disgrace make one fearful
The greatest misfortune is the self

What does "favor and disgrace make one fearful" mean?

Favor is high, disgrace is low

Having it makes one fearful

Losing it makes one fearful

This is "favor and disgrace make one fearful"

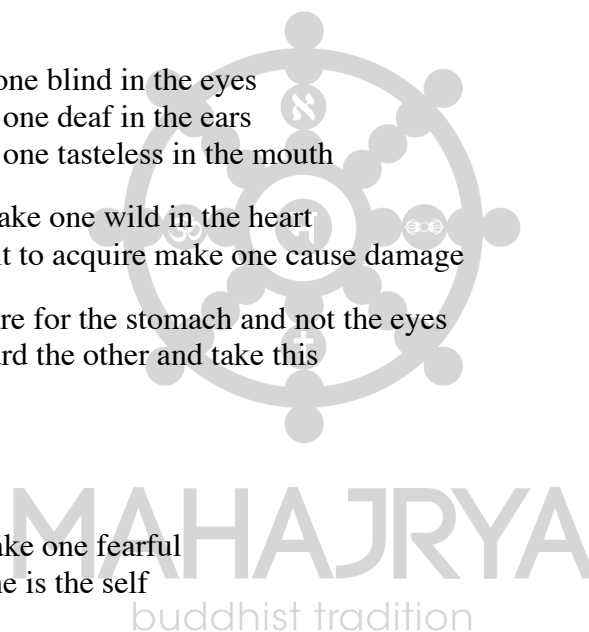
What does "the greatest misfortune is the self" mean?

The reason I have great misfortune

Is that I have the self

If I have no self

What misfortune do I have?



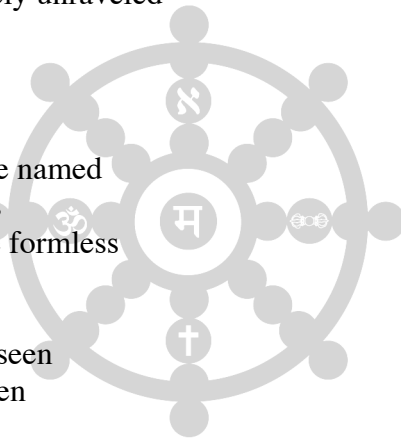
So one who values the self as the world
Can be given the world
One who loves the self as the world
Can be entrusted with the world

CHAPTER 14

Look at it, it cannot be seen
It is called colorless
Listen to it, it cannot be heard
It is called noiseless
Reach for it, it cannot be held
It is called formless
These three cannot be completely unraveled
So they are combined into one

Above it, not bright
Below it, not dark
Continuing endlessly, cannot be named
It returns back into nothingness
Thus it is called the form of the formless
The image of the imageless
This is called enigmatic
Confront it, its front cannot be seen
Follow it, its back cannot be seen

Wield the Tao of the ancients
To manage the existence of today
One can know the ancient beginning
It is called the Tao axiom



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CHAPTER 15

The Tao masters of antiquity
Subtle wonders through mystery
Depths that cannot be discerned
Because one cannot discern them
Therefore one is forced to describe the appearance

Hesitant, like crossing a wintry river
Cautious, like fearing four neighbors
Solemn, like a guest
Loose, like ice about to melt
Genuine, like plain wood
Open, like a valley
Opaque, like muddy water

Who can be muddled yet desist
In stillness gradually become clear?
Who can be serene yet persist
In motion gradually come alive?

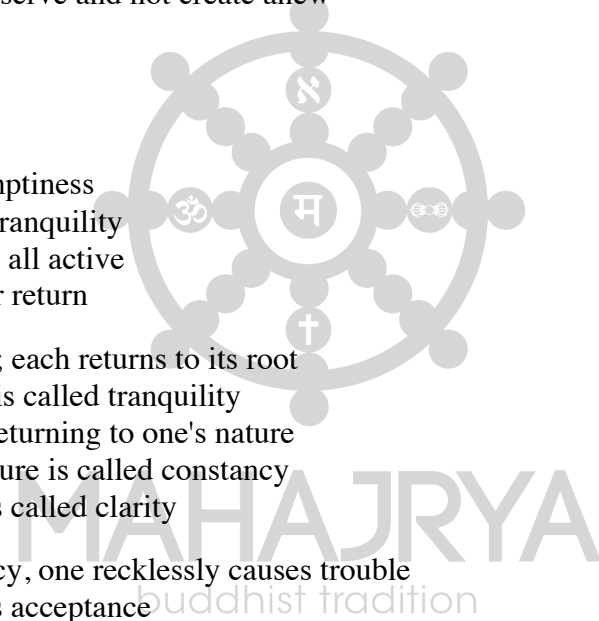
One who holds this Tao does not wish to be overfilled
Because one is not overfilled
Therefore one can preserve and not create anew

CHAPTER 16

Attain the ultimate emptiness
Hold on to the truest tranquility
The myriad things are all active
I therefore watch their return

Everything flourishes; each returns to its root
Returning to the root is called tranquility
Tranquility is called returning to one's nature
Returning to one's nature is called constancy
Knowing constancy is called clarity

Not knowing constancy, one recklessly causes trouble
Knowing constancy is acceptance
Acceptance is impartiality
Impartiality is sovereign
Sovereign is heaven
Heaven is Tao
Tao is eternal
The self is no more, without danger



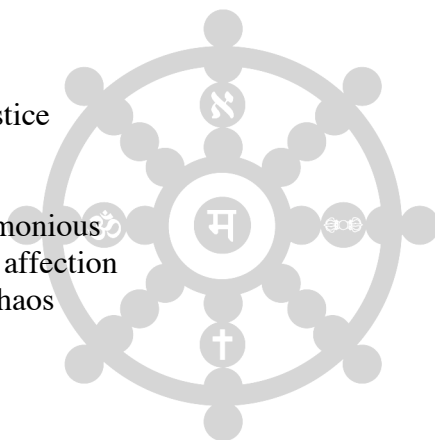
CHAPTER 17

The highest rulers, people do not know they have them
The next level, people love them and praise them
The next level, people fear them
The next level, people despise them
The rulers' trust is insufficient, have no trust in them

Proceeding calmly, valuing their words
Task accomplished, matter settled
The people all say, "We did it naturally"

CHAPTER 18

The great Tao fades away
There is benevolence and justice
Intelligence comes forth
There is great deception
The six relations are not harmonious
There is filial piety and kind affection
The country is in confused chaos
There are loyal ministers



CHAPTER 19

Discontinue sagacity, abandon knowledge
The people benefit a hundred times

Discontinue benevolence, abandon righteousness
The people return to piety and charity

Discontinue cunning, discard profit
Bandits and thieves no longer exist

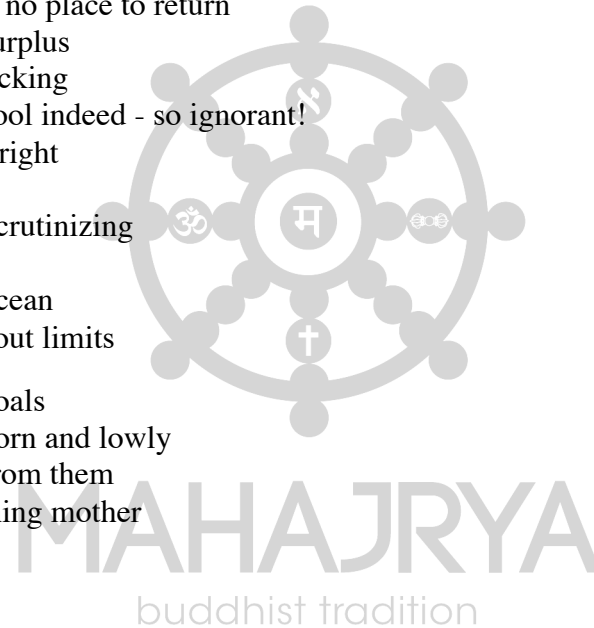
These three things are superficial and insufficient
Thus this teaching has its place:
Show plainness, hold simplicity
Reduce selfishness, decrease desires

CHAPTER 20

Cease learning, no more worries
Respectful response and scornful response
How much is the difference?
Goodness and evil
How much do they differ?
What the people fear, I cannot be unafraid

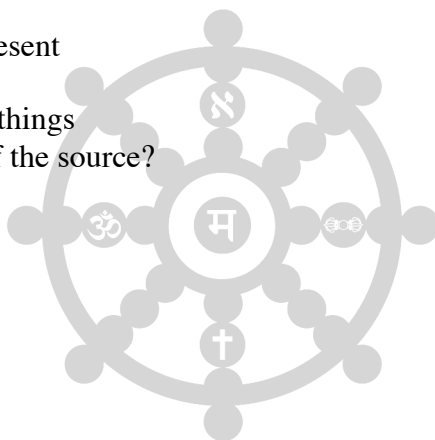
So desolate! How limitless it is!
The people are excited
As if enjoying a great feast
As if climbing up to the terrace in spring
I alone am quiet and uninvolved
Like an infant not yet smiling
So weary, like having no place to return
The people all have surplus
While I alone seem lacking
I have the heart of a fool indeed - so ignorant!
Ordinary people are bright
I alone am muddled
Ordinary people are scrutinizing
I alone am obtuse
So tranquil, like the ocean
So moving, as if without limits

The people all have goals
And I alone am stubborn and lowly
I alone am different from them
And value the nourishing mother



CHAPTER 21

The appearance of great virtue
Follows only the Tao
The Tao, as a thing
Seems indistinct, seems unclear
So unclear, so indistinct
Within it there is image
So indistinct, so unclear
Within it there is substance
So deep, so profound
Within it there is essence
Its essence is supremely real
Within it there is faith
From ancient times to the present
Its name never departs
To observe the source of all things
How do I know the nature of the source?
With this



CHAPTER 22

Yield and remain whole
Bend and remain straight
Be low and become filled
Be worn out and become renewed
Have little and receive
Have much and be confused

Therefore the sages hold to the one as an example for the world
Without flaunting oneself - and so is seen clearly
Without presuming oneself - and so is distinguished
Without praising oneself - and so has merit
Without boasting about oneself - and so is lasting

Because they do not contend, the world cannot contend with them
What the ancients called "the one who yields and remains whole"
Were they speaking empty words?
Sincerity becoming whole, and returning to oneself

CHAPTER 23

Sparse speech is natural
Thus strong wind does not last all morning
Sudden rain does not last all day
What makes this so? Heaven and earth
Even heaven and earth cannot make it last
How can humans?
Thus those who follow the Tao, are with the Tao
Those who follow virtue, are with virtue
Those who follow loss, are with loss
Those who are with the Tao, the Tao is also pleased to have them
Those who are with virtue, virtue is also pleased to have them
Those who are with loss, loss is also pleased to have them
Those who do not trust sufficiently, others have no trust in them

CHAPTER 24

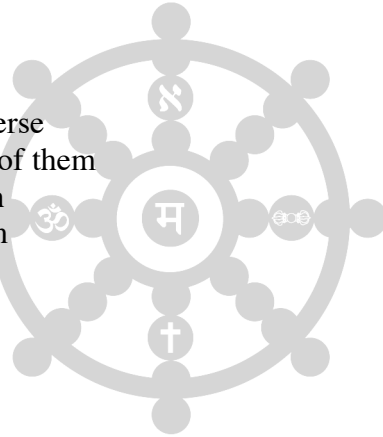
Those who are on tiptoes cannot stand
Those who straddle cannot walk
Those who flaunt themselves are not clear
Those who presume themselves are not distinguished
Those who praise themselves have no merit
Those who boast about themselves do not last

Those with the Tao call such things leftover food or tumors
They despise them
Thus, those who possess the Tao do not engage in them

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CHAPTER 25

There is something formlessly created
Born before Heaven and Earth
So silent! So ethereal!
Independent and changeless
Circulating and ceaseless
It can be regarded as the mother of the world
I do not know its name
Identifying it, I call it "Tao"
Forced to describe it, I call it great
Great means passing
Passing means receding
Receding means returning
Therefore the Tao is great
Heaven is great
Earth is great
The sovereign is also great
There are four greats in the universe
And the sovereign occupies one of them
Humans follow the laws of Earth
Earth follows the laws of Heaven
Heaven follows the laws of Tao
Tao follows the laws of nature



CHAPTER 26

Heaviness is the root of lightness.
Quietness is the master of restlessness
Therefore the sage travels the entire day
Without leaving the heavy supplies
Even though there are luxurious sights
He is composed and transcends beyond
How can the lord of ten thousand chariots
Applies himself lightly to the world?
To be light is to lose one's root
To be restless is to lose one's mastery

CHAPTER 27

Good traveling does not leave tracks
Good speech does not seek faults
Good reckoning does not use counters

Good closure needs no bar and yet cannot be opened
Good knot needs no rope and yet cannot be untied

Therefore sages often save others
And so do not abandon anyone
They often save things
And so do not abandon anything
This is called following enlightenment

Therefore the good person is the teacher of the bad person
The bad person is the resource of the good person
The one who does not value his teachers
And does not love his resources
Although intelligent, he is greatly confused
This is called the essential wonder

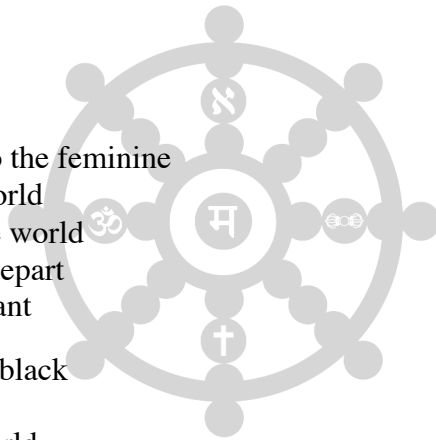
CHAPTER 28

Know the masculine, hold to the feminine
Be the watercourse of the world
Being the watercourse of the world
The eternal virtue does not depart
Return to the state of the infant

Know the white, hold to the black
Be the standard of the world
Being the standard of the world
The eternal virtue does not deviate
Return to the state of the boundless

Know the honor, hold to the humility
Be the valley of the world
Being the valley of the world
The eternal virtue shall be sufficient
Return to the state of plain wood

Plain wood splits, then becomes tools
The sages utilize them
And then become leaders
Thus the greater whole is undivided



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CHAPTER 29

Those who wish to take the world and control it
I see that they cannot succeed
The world is a sacred instrument
One cannot control it
The one who controls it will fail
The one who grasps it will lose
Because all things:
Either lead or follow
Either blow hot or cold
Either have strength or weakness
Either have ownership or take by force
Therefore the sage:
Eliminates extremes
Eliminates excess
Eliminates arrogance

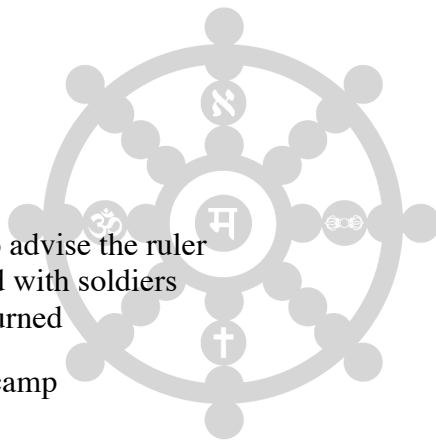
CHAPTER 30

The one who uses the Tao to advise the ruler
Does not dominate the world with soldiers
Such methods tend to be returned

The place where the troops camp
Thistles and thorns grow
Following the great army
There must be an inauspicious year

A good commander achieves result, then stops
And does not dare reaching for domination
Achieves result but does not brag
Achieves result but does not flaunt
Achieves result but is not arrogant
Achieves result but only out of necessity
Achieves result but does not dominate

Things become strong and then get old
This is called contrary to the Tao
That which is contrary to the Tao soon ends



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CHAPTER 31

Those who glorify
Are delighting in the killing
Those who delight in killing
Cannot achieve their ambitions upon the world
Auspicious events favor the left
Inauspicious events favor the right
The lieutenant general is positioned to the left
The major general is positioned to the right
We say that they are treated as if in a funeral
The multitude who have been killed
Should be mourned with sadness
Victory in war should be treated as a funeral

CHAPTER 32

The Tao, eternally nameless
Its simplicity, although imperceptible
Cannot be treated by the world as subservient
If the sovereign can hold on to it
All will follow by themselves
Heaven and Earth, together in harmony
Will rain sweet dew
People won't need to force it, it will adjust by itself

In the beginning, there were names
Names came to exist everywhere
One should know when to stop
Knowing when to stop, thus avoiding danger
The existence of the Tao in the world
Is like streams in the valley into rivers and the ocean

CHAPTER 33

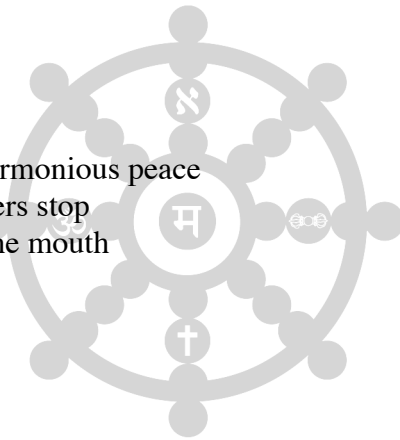
Those who understand others are intelligent
Those who understand themselves are enlightened
Those who overcome others have strength
Those who overcome themselves are powerful
Those who know contentment are wealthy
Those who proceed vigorously have willpower
Those who do not lose their base endure
Those who die but do not perish have longevity

CHAPTER 34

The great Tao is like a flood
It can flow to the left or to the right
The myriad things depend on it for life, but it never stops
It achieves its work, but does not take credit
It clothes and feeds myriad things, but does not rule over them
Ever desiring nothing
It can be named insignificant
Myriad things return to it but it does not rule over them
It can be named great
Even in the end, it does not regard itself as great
That is how it can achieve its greatness

CHAPTER 35

Hold the great image
The world will come
They come without harm, in harmonious peace
Music and food, passing travelers stop
The Tao that is spoken out of the mouth
Is bland and without flavor
Look at it, it cannot be seen
Listen to it, it cannot be heard
Use it, it cannot be exhausted



CHAPTER 36

If one wishes to shrink it
One must first expand it
If one wishes to weaken it
One must first strengthen it
If one wishes to discard it
One must first promote it
If one wishes to seize it
One must first give it
This is called subtle clarity
The soft and weak overcomes the tough and strong
Fish cannot leave the depths
The sharp instruments of the state
Cannot be shown to the people

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CHAPTER 37

The Tao is constant in non-action
Yet there is nothing it does not do
If the sovereign can hold on to this
All things shall transform themselves
Transformed, yet wishing to achieve
I shall restrain them with the simplicity of the nameless
The simplicity of the nameless
They shall be without desire
Without desire, using stillness
The world shall steady itself

CHAPTER 38

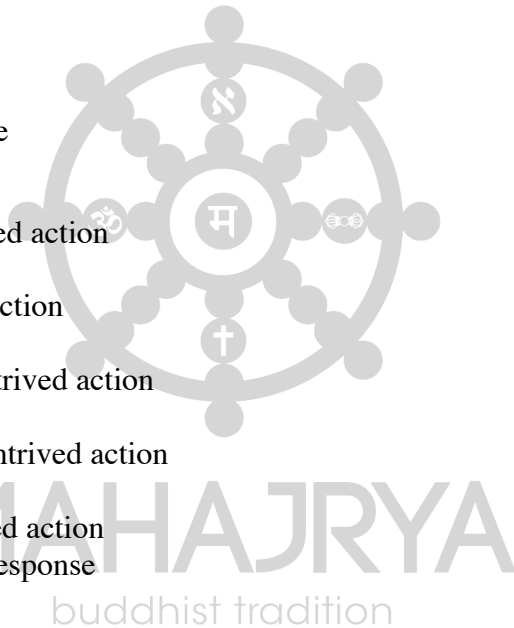
High virtue is not virtuous
Therefore it has virtue
Low virtue never loses virtue
Therefore it has no virtue

High virtue takes no contrived action
And acts without agenda
Low virtue takes contrived action
And acts with agenda
High benevolence takes contrived action
And acts without agenda
High righteousness takes contrived action
And acts with agenda
High etiquette takes contrived action
And upon encountering no response
Uses arms to pull others

Therefore, the Tao is lost, and then virtue
Virtue is lost, and then benevolence
Benevolence is lost, and then righteousness
Righteousness is lost, and then etiquette

Those who have etiquette
Are a thin shell of loyalty and sincerity
And the beginning of chaos

Those with foreknowledge
Are the flowers of the Tao
And the beginning of ignorance



Therefore the great person:
Abides in substance, and does not dwell on the thin shell
Abides in the real, and does not dwell on the flower
Thus they discard that and take this

CHAPTER 39

Those that attained oneness since ancient times:
The sky attained oneness and thus clarity
The earth attained oneness and thus tranquility
The gods attained oneness and thus divinity
The valley attained oneness and thus abundance
The myriad things attained oneness and thus life
The rulers attained oneness and became the standard for the world
These are all from oneness

The sky, lacking clarity, would break apart
The earth, lacking tranquility, would erupt
The gods, lacking divinity, would vanish
The valley, lacking abundance, would wither
Myriad things, lacking life, would be extinct
The rulers, lacking standard, would be toppled

Therefore, the honored uses the lowly as basis
The higher uses the lower as foundation
Thus the rulers call themselves alone, bereft, and unworthy
Is this not using the lowly as basis? Is it not so?
Therefore, the ultimate honor is no honor
Do not wish to be shiny like jade
Be dull like rocks

CHAPTER 40

The returning is the movement of the Tao
The weak is the utilization of the Tao
The myriad things of the world are born of being
Being is born of non-being

CHAPTER 41

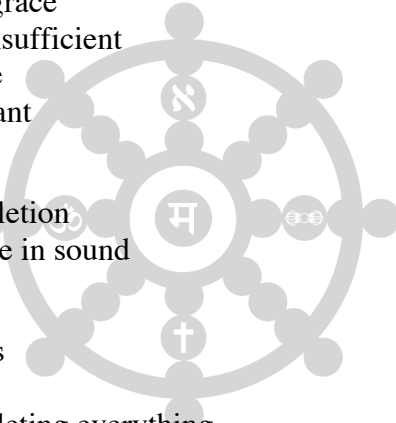
Higher people hear of the Tao
They diligently practice it
Average people hear of the Tao
They sometimes keep it and sometimes lose it
Lower people hear of the Tao
They laugh loudly at it
If they do not laugh, it would not be the Tao

Therefore a proverb has the following:

The clear Tao appears unclear
The advancing Tao appears to retreat
The smooth Tao appears uneven
High virtue appears like a valley
Great integrity appears like disgrace
Encompassing virtue appears insufficient
Building virtue appears inactive
True substance appears inconstant

The great square has no corners
The great vessel is late in completion
The great music is imperceptible in sound
The great image has no form

The Tao is hidden and nameless
Yet it is only the Tao
That excels in giving and completing everything



CHAPTER 42

Tao produces one
One produces two
Two produce three
Three produce myriad things
Myriad things, backed by yin and embracing yang
Achieve harmony by integrating their energy
What the people dislike
Are alone, bereft, and unworthy
But the rulers call themselves with these terms
So with all things
Appear to take loss but benefit
Or receive benefit but lose
What the ancients taught
I will also teach
The violent one cannot have a natural death
I will use this as the principal of teachings

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CHAPTER 43

The softest things of the world
Override the hardest things of the world
That which has no substance
Enters into that which has no openings
From this I know the benefits of non-attached actions

The teaching without words
The benefits of actions without attachment
Are rarely matched in the world

CHAPTER 44

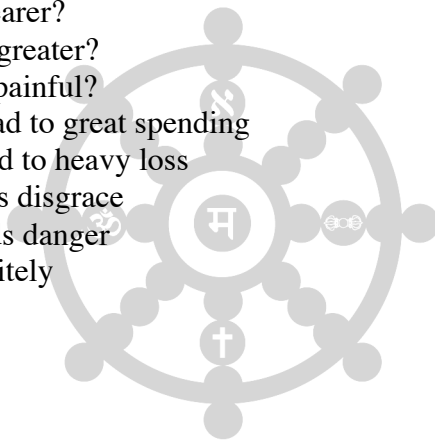
Fame or the self, which is dearer?
The self or wealth, which is greater?
Gain or loss, which is more painful?
Thus excessive love must lead to great spending
Excessive hoarding must lead to heavy loss
Knowing contentment avoids disgrace
Knowing when to stop avoids danger
Thus one can endure indefinitely

CHAPTER 45

Great perfection seems flawed
Its function is without failure
Great fullness seems empty
Its function is without exhaustion
Great straightness seems bent
Great skill seems unrefined
Great eloquence seems inarticulate
Movement overcomes cold
Stillness overcomes heat
Clear quietness is the standard of the world

CHAPTER 46

When the world has the Tao
Fast horses are retired to fertilize the grounds
When the world lacks the Tao
Warhorses must give birth on the battlefield



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There is no crime greater than greed
No disaster greater than discontentment
No fault greater than avarice

Thus the satisfaction of contentment
Is the lasting satisfaction

CHAPTER 47

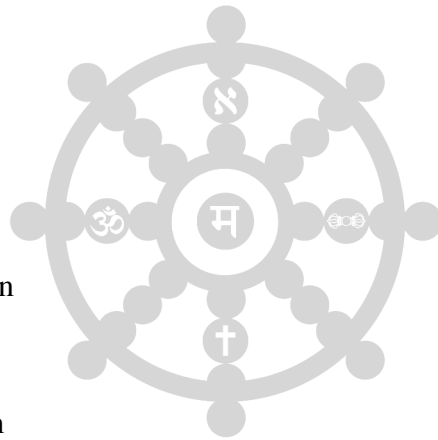
Without going out the door, know the world
Without peering out the window, see the Heavenly Tao
The further one goes
The less one knows
Therefore the sage
Knows without going
Names without seeing
Achieves without striving

CHAPTER 48

Pursue knowledge, daily gain
Pursue Tao, daily loss

Loss and more loss
Until one reaches non-action
With non-action, there is nothing one cannot do

Take the world by constantly applying non-interference
The one who interferes is not qualified to take the world



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CHAPTER 49

The sages have no constant mind
They take the mind of the people as their mind
Those who are good, I am good to them
Those who are not good, I am also good to them
Thus the virtue of goodness
Those who believe, I believe them
Those who do not believe, I also believe them
Thus the virtue of belief
The sages live in the world
They cautiously merge their mind for the world
The people all pay attention with their ears and eyes
The sages care for them as children

CHAPTER 50

Coming into life, entering death
The followers of life, three in ten
The followers of death, three in ten
Those whose lives are moved toward death
Also three in ten
Why? Because they live lives of excess

I've heard of those who are good at cultivating life
Traveling on the road, they do not encounter rhinos or tigers
Entering into an army, they are not harmed by weapons
Rhinos have nowhere to thrust their horns
Tigers have nowhere to clasp their claws
Soldiers have nowhere to lodge their blades
Why? Because they have no place for death

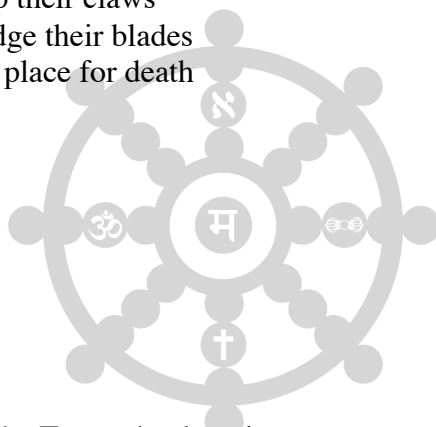
CHAPTER 51

Tao produces them
Virtue raises them
Things shape them
Forces perfect them

Therefore all things respect the Tao and value virtue
The respect for Tao, the value of virtue
Not due to command but to constant nature

Thus Tao produces them
Virtue raises them
Grows them, educates them
Perfects them, matures them
Nurtures them, protects them

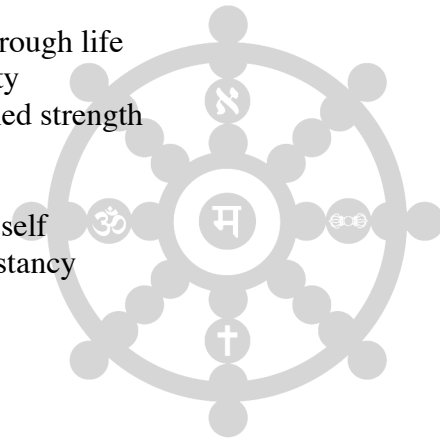
Produces but does not possess
Acts but does not flaunt
Nurtures but does not dominate
This is called Mystic Virtue



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CHAPTER 52

The world has a beginning
We regard it as the mother of the world
Having its mother
We can know her children
Knowing her children
Still holding on to the mother
Live without danger all through life
Close the mouth
Shut the doors
Live without toil all through life
Open the mouth
Meddle in the affairs
Live without salvation all through life
Seeing details is called clarity
Holding on to the soft is called strength
Utilize the light
Return to the clarity
Leaving no disasters for the self
This is called following constancy



CHAPTER 53

If I have a little knowledge
Walking on the great Tao
I fear only to deviate from it
The great Tao is broad and plain
But people like the side paths

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The courts are corrupt
The fields are barren
The warehouses are empty

Officials wear fineries
Carry sharp swords
Fill up on drinks and food
Acquire excessive wealth

This is called robbery
It is not the Tao!

CHAPTER 54

That which is well established cannot be uprooted
That which is strongly held cannot be taken
The descendants will commemorate it forever

Cultivate it in yourself, its virtue shall be true
Cultivate it in the family, its virtue shall be abundant
Cultivate it in the community, its virtue shall be lasting
Cultivate it in the country, its virtue shall be prosperous
Cultivate it in the world, its virtue shall be widespread

Therefore observe others with yourself
Observe other families with your family
Observe other communities with your community
Observe other countries with your country
Observe the world with the world
With what do I know the world?
With this

CHAPTER 55

Those who hold an abundance of virtue
Are similar to newborn infants
Poisonous insects do not sting them
Wild beasts do not claw them
Birds of prey do not attack them
Their bones are weak, tendons are soft
But their grasp is firm
They do not know of sexual union but can manifest arousal
Due to the optimum of essence
They can cry the whole day and yet not be hoarse
Due to the optimum of harmony
Knowing harmony is said to be constancy
Knowing constancy is said to be clarity

Excessive vitality is said to be inauspicious
Mind overusing energy is said to be aggressive
Things become strong and then grow old
This is called contrary to the Tao
That which is contrary to the Tao will soon perish



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CHAPTER 56

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

Close the mouth
Shut the doors
Blunt the sharpness
Unravel the knots
Dim the glare
Mix the dust
This is called mystic oneness

Thus, they cannot have it and be closer
They cannot have it and be distant
They cannot have it and be benefited
They cannot have it and be harmed
They cannot have it and be valued
They cannot have it and be degraded
Thus, they become honored by the world

CHAPTER 57

Govern a country with upright integrity
Deploy the military with surprise tactics
Take the world with non-interference
How do I know this is so?
With the following:

When there are many restrictions in the world
The people become more impoverished
When people have many sharp weapons
The country becomes more chaotic
When people have many clever tricks
More strange things occur
The more laws are posted
The more robbers and thieves there are

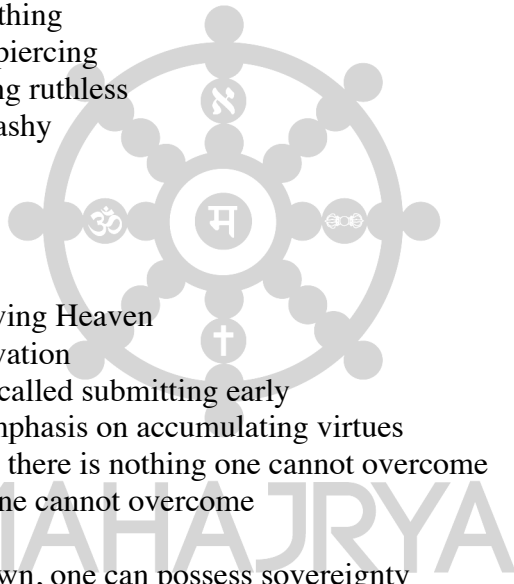
Therefore the sage says:
I take minimal action, and the people transform themselves
I prefer quiet, and the people right themselves
I do not interfere, and the people enrich themselves
I have no desires, and the people simplify themselves

CHAPTER 58

When governing is lackluster
The people are simple and honest
When governing is scrutinizing
The people are shrewd and crafty
Misfortune is what fortune depends upon
Fortune is where misfortune hides beneath
Who knows their ultimate end?
They have no determined outcome
Rightness reverts to become strange
Goodness reverts to become wicked
The confusion of people
Has lasted many long days
Therefore the sages are:
Righteous without being scathing
Incorruptible without being piercing
Straightforward without being ruthless
Illuminated without being flashy

CHAPTER 59

In governing people and serving Heaven
There is nothing like conservation
Only with conservation is it called submitting early
Submitting early is called emphasis on accumulating virtues
Accumulating virtues means there is nothing one cannot overcome
When there is nothing that one cannot overcome
One's limits are unknown
The limitations being unknown, one can possess sovereignty
With this mother principle of power, one can be everlasting
This is called deep roots and firm foundation
The Tao of longevity and lasting vision



CHAPTER 60

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

CHAPTER 61

The large country is like the lowest river
The converging point of the world
The receptive female of the world
The female always overcomes the male with serenity
Using serenity as the lower position
Thus if the large country is lower than the small country
Then it can take the small country
If the small country is lower than the large country
Then it can be taken by the large country
Thus one uses the lower position to take
The other uses the lower position to be taken
The large country only wishes to gather and protect people
The small country only wishes to join and serve people
So that both obtain what they wish
The larger one should assume the lower position

CHAPTER 62

The Tao is the wonder of all things
The treasure of the kind person
The protection of the unkind person

Admirable words can win the public's respect
Admirable actions can improve people
Those who are unkind
How can they be abandoned?

Therefore, when crowning the Emperor
And install the three ministers
Although there is the offering of jade before four horses
None of it can compare to being seated in this Tao

Why did the ancients value this Tao so much?
Is it not said that those who seek will find,
And those with guilt will not be faulted?
Therefore, it is the greatest value in the world

CHAPTER 63

Act without action
Manage without meddling
Taste without tasting
Great, small, many, few
Respond to hatred with virtue

Plan difficult tasks through the simplest tasks
Achieve large tasks through the smallest tasks
The difficult tasks of the world
Must be handled through the simple tasks
The large tasks of the world
Must be handled through the small tasks
Therefore, sages never attempt great deeds all through life
Thus they can achieve greatness

One who makes promises lightly must deserve little trust
One who sees many easy tasks must encounter much difficulty
Therefore, sages regard things as difficult
So they never encounter difficulties all through life

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

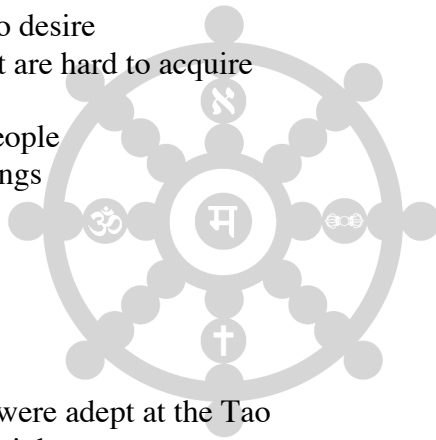
A tree thick enough to embrace
Grows from the tiny sapling

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
They 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
They do not value goods that are hard to acquire
They learn to unlearn
To redeem the fault of the people
To assist the nature of all things
Without daring to meddle



CHAPTER 65

Those of ancient times who were adept at the Tao
Used it not to make people brighter
But to keep them simple
The difficulty in governing people
Is due their excessive cleverness

Therefore, using cleverness to govern the state
Is being a thief of the state
Not using cleverness to govern the state
Is being a blessing of the state

Know that these two are both standards
Always knowing these standards
Is called Mystic Virtue
Mystic Virtue is so profound, so far-reaching
It goes opposite to material things
Then it reaches great congruence

CHAPTER 66

Rivers and oceans can be the kings of a hundred valleys
Because of their goodness in staying low
So they can be the kings of a hundred valleys
Thus if sages wish to be over people
They must speak humbly to them
If they wish to be in front of people
They must place themselves behind them
Thus the sages are positioned above
But the people do not feel burdened
They are positioned in front
But the people do not feel harmed
Thus the world is glad to push them forward without resentment
Because they do not contend
So the world cannot contend with them

CHAPTER 67

Everyone in the world calls my Tao great
As if it is beyond compare
It is only because of its greatness
That it seems beyond compare
If it can be compared
It would already be insignificant long ago
I have three treasures
I hold on to them and protect them
The first is called compassion
The second is called conservation
The third is called not daring to be ahead in the world
Compassionate, thus able to have courage
Conserving, thus able to reach widely
Not daring to be ahead in the world
Thus able to assume leadership
Now if one has courage but discards compassion
Reaches widely but discards conservation
Goes ahead but discards being behind
Then death!
If one fights with compassion, then victory
With defense, then security
Heaven shall save them
And with compassion guard them

CHAPTER 68

The great generals are not warlike
The great warriors do not get angry
Those who are good at defeating enemies do not engage them
Those who are good at managing people lower themselves
It is called the virtue of non-contention
It is called the power of managing people
It is called being harmonious with heaven
The ultimate principle of the ancients

CHAPTER 69

In using the military, there is a saying:
I dare not be the host, but prefer to be the guest
I dare not advance an inch, but prefer to withdraw a foot
This is called marching in formation without formation
Raising arms without arms
Grappling enemies without enemies
Holding weapons without weapons
There is no greater disaster than to underestimate the enemy
Underestimating the enemy almost made me lose my treasures
So when evenly matched armies meet
The side that is compassionate shall win

CHAPTER 70

My words are easy to understand, easy to practice
The world cannot understand, cannot practice
My words have basis
My actions have principle
People do not understand this
Therefore they do not understand me
Those who understand me are few
Thus I am highly valued
Therefore the sage wears plain clothes but holds jade

CHAPTER 71

To know that you do not know is highest
To not know but think you know is flawed
Only when one recognizes the fault as a fault
Can one be without fault

The sages are without fault
Because they recognize the fault as a fault
That is why they are without fault

CHAPTER 72

When people no longer fear force
They bring about greater force
Do not limit their place
Do not reject their livelihood
Because the ruler does not reject them
Therefore they do not reject the ruler
Therefore the sages:
Know themselves but do not glorify themselves
Respect themselves but do not praise themselves
Thus they discard that and take this

CHAPTER 73

The bold in daring will be killed
The bold in not daring will survive
Of these two, one may benefit, the other may harm
The one hated by heaven - who knows the reason?
Even the sages still find this difficult
The Tao of heaven:
Does not contend and yet excels in winning
Does not speak and yet excels in responding
Is not summoned and yet comes on its own
Is unhurried and yet excels in planning
The heavenly net is vast
Loose, and yet does not let anything slip through

CHAPTER 74

People do not fear death
How can they be threatened with death?
If people are made to constantly fear death
Then those who act unlawfully
I can capture and kill them
Who would dare?

There exists a master executioner that kills
If we substitute for the master executioner to kill
It is like substituting for the great carpenter to cut
Those who substitute for the great carpenter to cut
It is rare that they do not hurt their own hands

CHAPTER 75

The people's hunger
Is due to the excess of their ruler's taxation
So they starve

The people's difficulty in being governed
Is due to the meddling of their ruler
So they are difficult to govern

The people's disregard for death
Is due to the glut in their ruler's pursuit of life
So they disregard death

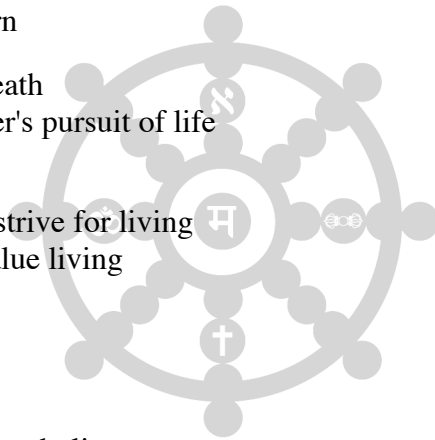
Therefore those who do not strive for living
Are better than those who value living

CHAPTER 76

While alive, the body is soft and pliant
When dead, it is hard and rigid
All living things, grass and trees,
While alive, are soft and supple
When dead, become dry and brittle

Thus that which is hard and stiff
Is the follower of death
That which is soft and yielding
Is the follower of life

Therefore, an inflexible army will not win
A strong tree will be cut down
The big and forceful occupy a lowly position
While the soft and pliant occupy a higher place



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CHAPTER 77

The Tao of heaven
Is like drawing a bow
Lower that which is high
Raise that which is low
Reduce that which is excessive
Add to that which is insufficient
The Tao of heaven
Reduces the excessive
And adds to the insufficient

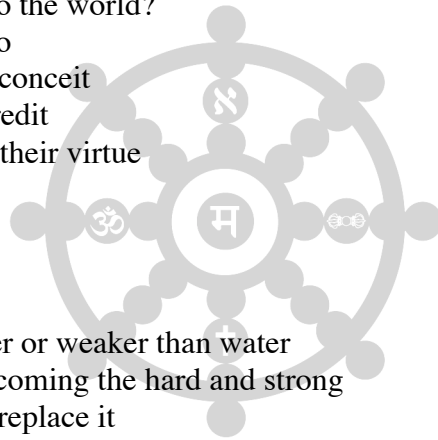
The Tao of people is not so
Reducing the insufficient
In order to offer to the excessive
Who can offer their excess to the world?
Only those who have the Tao
Therefore sages act without conceit
Achieve without claiming credit
They do not wish to display their virtue

CHAPTER 78

Nothing in the world is softer or weaker than water
Yet nothing is better at overcoming the hard and strong
This is because nothing can replace it

That the weak overcomes the strong
And the soft overcomes the hard
Everybody in the world knows
But cannot put into practice

Therefore sages say:
The one who accepts the humiliation of the state
Is called its master
The one who accepts the misfortune of the state
Becomes king of the world
The truth seems like the opposite



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CHAPTER 79

After settling a great dispute
There must be remaining resentments
How can this be considered good?
Therefore the sage holds the left part of the contract
But does not demand payment from the other person

Those who have virtue hold the contract
Those without virtue hold the collections

The Heavenly Tao has no favorites
It constantly gives to the kind people

CHAPTER 80

Small country, few people
Let them have many weapons but not use them
Let the people regard death seriously
And not migrate far away

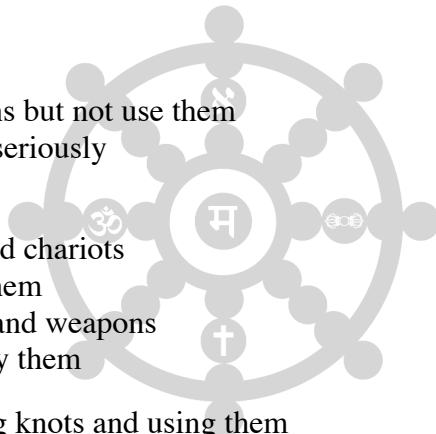
Although they have boats and chariots
They have no need to take them
Although they have armors and weapons
They have no need to display them

Let the people return to tying knots and using them
Savor their food, admire their clothes
Content in their homes, happy in their customs

Neighboring countries see one another
Hear the sounds of roosters and dogs from one another
The people, until they grow old and die
Do not go back and forth with one another

CHAPTER 81

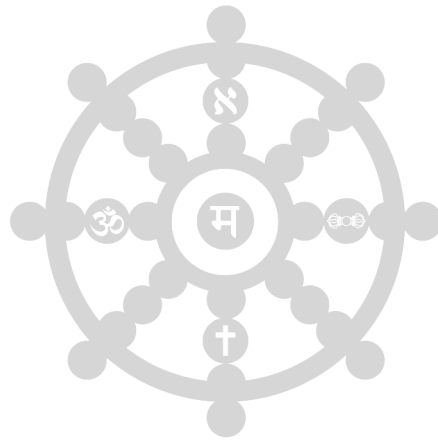
True words are not beautiful
Beautiful words are not true
Those who are good do not debate
Those who debate are not good.
Those who know are not broad of knowledge
Those who are broad of knowledge do not know



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Sages do not accumulate
The more they assist others, the more they possess
The more they give to others, the more they gain

The Tao of heaven
Benefits and does not harm
The Tao of sages
Assists and does not contend



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