

Dao de jing

道德經

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Additional Translations
and Other Materials

58.

- a*> When the government is narrow and dull the people are simple and pure; when the government is clear and acute the people are sharp and crafty.
- b*> Disaster – good fortune adheres therein; good fortune – disaster lurks therein.
Who knows its limit? It possesses no settled norm. The norm turns into the anomaly, the good turns into the monstrous.
It has been long indeed that men have lost their way.
- c*> Hence the sage is like a square that does not cut, a corner that is not sharp, a straight line that cannot align, a light that does not shine.

59.

- a*> In governing people and serving Tian, there is nothing like parsimony. Parsimony may be called ‘submitting in advance’. Submitting in advance may be called piling up virtue (*de*). If you pile up virtue there is nothing you cannot overcome, and if there is nothing you cannot overcome, the limit of it cannot be known. When the limit cannot be known, you may possess the state. If you possess the mother of the state, you may long endure.
- b*> This is called the deep root and the solid trunk; it is the *dao* of long gazing upon enduring life.

60.

- a*> Governing a large state is like cooking a small fish.
- b*> When one approaches governing the world by means of the Dao, ghosts will have no potency. It is not that they have no potency, but that their potency will not harm people, It is not that their potency will not harm people, but that the sage too will not harm people. These two will do no mutual harm, and therein will virtue (*de*) commingle and return.

61.

A large state lies downstream; it is the female of the world. In intercourse, the female overcomes the male by means of stillness, because stillness lies below. Thus when the large state takes the lower position it

controls the small state. When a small state takes the lower position, it places itself under the control of the large state. In the one case the state takes the lower position to control, in the other it takes the lower position to place itself under control.

Large states wish no more than to annex and nurture people; small states wish no more than to enter into service. Both gain what they wish.

It is appropriate that the large dwell below.

62.

- a> The Dao is the altar of the things of the world. It is the treasure of the good person and the protection of the bad person.
Fine words can be marketed; honorable conduct can add to one's rank. As for the bad person, how can they be abandoned?**
- a> Hence when the Son of Tian assumes the throne, in appointing the three high ministers, he who bears the jade disk of court and presents a team of horses is not esteemed so much as he who sits in place and offers this *dao*.**
- a> Why was this *dao* so esteemed in the past? Is it not said that by means of it one will get what one seeks, and transgressors will evade punishment? Hence it was esteemed by the world.**

63.

- a> Engage in non-action, undertake having no undertakings, taste the tasteless.
Enlarge the small, increase the few, requite hostility with virtue (*de*).**
- b> Plan for the difficult on the basis of the simple, do great things on the basis of details – the difficult undertakings of the world are all arise from simple situations, and the greatest undertakings in the world all arise from small details.**
- c> Hence the sage never does a great act, and is thus able to complete his greatness.**
- d> Thoughtless assent always brings little trust; many easy acts always lead to many difficulties. Therefore the sage seems to treat them as difficult, and thus never has difficulties.**

64.

- a*> When things are at rest they are easy to maintain; when situations have not yet emerged they are easy to plan for. When brittle, things are easy to split; when minute things are easy to disperse.
Deal with things before they occur; order things before they are disordered.
- b*> A tree trunk several arm spans round was born of the tiniest seed. Towers nine stories high rise from foundations of piled earth. A journey of a thousand *li* begins with the first footfall.
- c*> He who acts, fails; he who grasps, loses.
Therefore the sage takes no action (*wuwei*) and hence has no failure, does no grasping and hence takes no loss.
- d*> When people pursue an undertaking, it is always at the point of success that they ruin it. Attend at the end as you did at the start and you will have no failures.
- e*> Therefore, the sage desires not to desire and does not value goods hard to come by; he learns not to learn and redeems the errors of the masses.
Assisting the things of the world to be as they are in themselves, he dares not act.

65.

- a*> Men of the past who were good at following the Dao did not use it to enlighten the people, they used it to make them ignorant. People are difficult to govern is when they have much knowledge.
- b*> Hence one who governs by means of knowledge plunders the state; one who does not govern by means of knowledge brings fortune to the state. Indeed, these two constitute the standard – to be always aware of the standard is called dark virtue (*de*).
- c*> Dark virtue is profound, far reaching; it revolves together with things. Only then does it attain great compliance.

66.

The reason that the Yangzi and the sea rule as kings over hundreds of river valleys is because they know well to take the lower position; that is why they rule as kings over hundreds of river valleys.
Hence if you wish to rule above the people you must employ words to take the lower position; if you wish to lead people you must place

yourself behind them.

Therefore, the sage dwells above and the people don't consider him heavy, he stands ahead of them and they do not consider it an injury to them. Hence the world delights in supporting him untiringly. Because he does not contend, no one in the world can contend with him.

67.

- a*> All in the world say my *dao* is huge, but appears to be worthless. It is indeed because it is huge that it appears worthless. If it were worthy would it not long since have become small?
- b*> I possess three treasures; I protect them in my grasp. One is compassion, the second is frugality, and third, I dare not take the lead in the world. Compassionate, thus I can have valor; frugal, thus I can extend my territory; unwilling to take the lead in the world, thus my works endure.
- c*> Now were I to discard compassion in favor of valor, frugality in favor of territory, taking my place behind in favor of leading, I would die.
- d*> He who goes to battle with compassion prevails; who defends his state with compassion will be impregnable. He whom Tian wishes to save it protects by means of compassion.

68.

A good warrior does not act fearsome; one good at battle does not become angry; one good at defeating the enemy does not contest; one good at directing people takes the lower position.

This is the virtue of not contending; this is called directing the strength of others; this is called companion to Tian – the utmost limit of the past.

69.

- a*> Military strategists have a saying: I dare not act as the host, but rather the guest; I dare not advance an inch, but rather retreat a foot. This is called walking where there is no road, rolling up the sleeve where there is no arm, grasping where there is no weapon, struggling where there is no enemy.
- b*> There is no calamity greater than having no enemy, without an enemy, I have almost lost my treasure. Thus when two matched armies contest, it is

the victor that mourns.

70.

- a> My words are so easy to understand and so easy to put in practice; none in the world can understand or practice them.**
- b> Words have a governing meaning, affairs have a ruling actor.**
- c> It is because they are have no knowledge that they do not understand me. Those who understand me are few; those who emulate me are esteemed.**
- d> Therefore, the sage wears coarse clothes and conceals in them a precious jade.**

71.

**To know you do not know is best; not to know that one does not know is to be flawed.
One who sees his flaws as flaws is therefore not flawed.
The sage is flawless. He sees his flaws as flaws, therefore he is flawless.**

72.

- a> When the people do not hold the awesome in awe, awful events occur.**
- b> Do not narrow their living space nor crush their means of livelihood. Because you do not crush them, they will not view you as a crushing burden.**
- c> Therefore the sage knows himself but does not display himself, cherishes himself but does not honor himself.
Thus he discards the one and takes the other.**

73.

- a> One who is valiant in being daring will be killed. One who is valiant in being timid will live. Of these two, one is profitable and one is harmful.**
- b> Who knows why Tian hates what it hates? Even the sage takes this to be difficult.**
- c> The *dao* of Tian excels at prevailing though it does not contend; it excels at**