

Dao de jing

道德經

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2010
Version 1.2

Additional Translations
and Other Materials

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**

responding, though it does not speak; things come of themselves though it does not summon; it excels at planning though it is flexible.

- d*> The net of Tian is vast; though the mesh is broadly spaced, nothing gets through.

74.

- a*> If the people do not fear death, what good is threatening them with death? If you make the people ever fearful of death and threaten to execute any who innovate new things, who will dare to do so?
- b*> Always have an executioner whose charge it is to kill. One who takes the place of an executioner is like one who takes the carpenter's place in hewing wood. Few who take the carpenter's place fail to wound their hands.

75.

When the people starve it is because their ruler extracts too much in taxes, that is why they starve. When the people are hard to govern it is because their ruler takes action, that is why they are hard to govern. When the people regard death as unimportant it is because they seek life too assiduously, that is why they regard death as unimportant. It is precisely doing nothing for the sake of life that makes one worthier than those who value life.

76.

- a*> When born, people are pliant and weak; when they die they are stiff and strong. The things of the world, such as trees and grasses, are born pliant and fragile; they die shriveled and dry.
- b*> Thus the hard and strong are followers of death; the pliant and weak are followers of life.
- c*> Therefore, when a weapon is strong it cannot conquer; when a tree is strong it is put to the axe. The strong and great dwell below; the pliant and weak dwell above.

77.

- a> **The *dao* of Tian is like the stretching of a bow: the high is brought down and the low is raised up; it takes from what has abundance and supplies what is wanting. The *dao* of Tian takes from what has abundance and supplies what is wanting, but the *dao* of man is not thus. It takes from what is wanting in order to supply what has abundance.**
- b> **Who can serve Heaven by means of abundance? Only one who possesses the Dao.**
- c> **Hence the sage acts but relies on nothing. His task accomplished, he does not take the credit: he does not wish to manifest his worth.**

78.

- a> **Nothing in the world is more weak and soft than water, yet nothing surpasses it in conquering the hard and strong – there is nothing that can compare.
All know that the weak conquers the strong and the soft conquers the hard.
But none are able to act on this.**
- b> **Thus the sage says that he who receives the derision of the state is the lord of the state altars; he who receives the misfortune of the state is the king of the world.**
- c> **Straight words seem to reverse themselves.**

79.

- a> **When making peace between disputants, there is always some remaining sense of dispute – how can this constitute a good act?**
- b> **Therefore, the sage keeps hold of the creditor's tally but never calls in the debts others owe him.**
- c> **One with virtue (*de*) oversees the tally, one without virtue oversees the payment.**
- d> **The *dao* of Tian has no favorites; it always shifts to the good person.**

80.

Make the state small and the people few. Let there be arms for troops in tens and hundreds, but unused. Make the people treat death seriously and not move to distant places.

Though there be boats and carriages, they shall not be ridden. Though there be armor and weaponry, they shall not be deployed.

Let the people return to keeping records by knotted rope.

Their food sweet to them, their clothes beautiful to them, their homes comfortable to them, their customs joyful to them.

Though neighboring states be in sight of one another and the sounds of the cocks and dogs heard from one to the other, the people of one will never visit the other, even as they grow old and die.

81.

- a*> **Trustworthy words are not beautiful; beautiful words are not trustworthy. Good words are not eloquent; eloquent words are not good.**
- b*> **The wise are not broadly learned; the broadly learned are not wise.**
- c*> **The sage does not hoard. Having used what he has for others, his possessions increase; having given what he has to others, he has more and more.**
- d*> **The *dao* of Tian benefits and does not harm. The *dao* of the sage is for others and does not contend.**