



Harmony

Fletcher Soul Traveler

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Harmony

The definition of harmony is as follows.

- a. An orderly or pleasing combination of elements in a whole: color harmony; the order and harmony of the universe.
- b. A relationship in which various components exist together without destroying one another: different kinds of fish living in harmony.
- c. A relationship characterized by a lack of conflict or by agreement, as of opinion or interest: family harmony.

We need harmony in our lives.

Think it over.

How much in harmony is your mind, body, and soul connected?

Do you ever think about it?

Are you consciously trying to fine-tune the guitar of life?

Do you think before you speak?

Or

Do you just rattle what comes to your mind?

A wise man strives for harmony in every moment.

Harmony is a state of being.

Harmony is a state of mind.

We live our lives in chaos yet we think everything is fine.

A wise man understands the world may be in chaos.

Yet he can live in the center of the hurricane.

The older I get I see the importance of harmony in my life.

Our lifestyles directly relate to the state of harmony we are in.

If you have a chaotic lifestyle your life will be chaotic.

The disease will be coming knocking on your door.

Even if you consciously try to be in harmony events will happen to you.

But because of consciously trying to be in harmony they will be small hiccups in life.

Even if it is a major bump you hit on the road in life.

Harmony acts as a shock absorber.

Someday death will be knocking on your door.

A man of harmony knows that he is eternal.

It's time to change our clothes.

This state of mind exists inside of you.

Tao Te Ching



I have been fascinated by the timelessness of Tao Te Ching. It describes the nature of man with all his goodness and his foibles.

It seems like we haven't progressed much in the area of being in harmony. We still fight and bicker with one another. The United States is divided.

The Truth is considered lies. Lies are considered truth. If you say lies long enough they become true to others. We even have media that declares lies as truth.

The current administration even calls all media fake news if they don't print his point of view.

For four years this has been going on. Where did this ultimately lead us? A massive riot at the Capital Building was instigated by the President.

This is from Reuters news.

1

"Statistically impossible to have lost the 2020 Election," Trump, a Republican, tweeted on Dec. 20. "Big protest in DC on January 6th. Be there, will be wild!"

They turned out in the thousands and heard the president urge them to march on the Capitol building to express their anger at the voting process and to pressure their elected officials to reject the results.

"We're going to walk down to the Capitol and we're going to cheer on our brave senators and Congressmen and women," Trump told the crowd, speaking with the White House as a backdrop.

¹ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-election-protests/trump-summoned-supporters-to-wild-protest-and-told-them-to-fight-they-did-idUSKBN29B24S>

Appearing at what could be his last rally as the sitting president, Trump exhorted his supporters “to fight.”

“We will never give up, we will never concede,” Trump said, delighting the crowd by calling Democratic victories the product of what he called “explosions of bullshit.”

“Bullshit! Bullshit! Bullshit!” people chanted in reply.

Let’s review the Tao and see what it says about harmony and the state of affairs today.

Three

Not exalting the gifted prevents quarreling.

Not collecting treasures prevents stealing.

Not seeing desirable things prevents confusion of the heart.

The wise therefore rule by emptying hearts and stuffing bellies, by weakening ambitions and strengthening bones.

If men lack knowledge and desire, then clever people will not try to interfere.

If nothing is done, then all will be well.

Commentary

The Taoists of the old lived in the forest. Even back then they didn't want to live in civilizations. As in the past and present countries are built on producing and consuming. Just turn on the TV and you will be flooded with commercials telling you to buy this product. Mind you one does not need this product. The advertisers know how to program your subconscious even without you knowing it.

Imagine if you don't have any treasures nobody could steal from you.

A wise man just smiles. He has nothing to prove. Therefore he will never quarrel with you.

He does not strive for material possessions. He may be rich but confusion never enters his heart. His goal is inner treasures. All external treasures will someday go away. Can you take your riches when you leave this planet?

The wise man will offer you food if you're hungry. He will teach you about discovering the jewel within. To be in harmony with the Tao you must lose your worldly ambitions.

Your feet must be on the ground and your head is in heaven. The wise man teaches how to treasure this human body. He demonstrates how the body can be in sync with the Tao. As above so below.

Man desires to create inner clouds from discovering the Tao. When one is aligned with the Tao all desires disappear into the night. One can be rich or poor yet one is in harmony with the Tao.

In our hectic and moving lifestyle, one is ignorant of the Tao. We are like hamsters on a treadmill. We are going fast and furious yet going nowhere.

The Taoist believes in moderation in all aspects of life. They were true human beings, not human doers. Big difference. Common sense is uncommon. The Tao exists everywhere yet mankind is texting on the freeway of life. We are oblivious of the Way.

Five

Heaven and Earth are impartial;
They see the ten thousand things as straw dogs.
The wise are impartial;
They see the people as straw dogs.
The space between heaven and Earth is like a bellows.
The shape changes but not the form;
The more it moves, the more it yields.
More words count less.
Hold fast to the center.

Commentary

The Tao gives us free will. Heaven and earth won't stop you from your actions. Nature might stop you in its tracks. Currently, there is a worldwide shutdown. The wise men see humanity sleeping yet humanity thinks it is awake. What a paradox.

The Tao is infinite. Earth is the form while heaven exists within the bellows. The bellows breaths in and out to make the fire get hotter. Man breaths but is never aware. The wise man breathes and is aware of the fire of life. He learns how to be in tune with the Tao.

A wise man lives in the center of the hurricane. Most of mankind lives in the whirling winds of the mind. They are like leaves blowing in the wind. Silence is the key to being in harmony with the Tao. Only a wise man understands what I'm talking about.

Eight

The highest good is like water.

Water give life to the ten thousand things and does not strive.

It flows in places men reject and so is like the Tao.

In dwelling, be close to the land.

In meditation, go deep in the heart.

In dealing with others, be gentle and kind.

In speech, be true.

In ruling, be just.

In daily life, be competent.

In action, be aware of the time and the season.

No fight: No blame.

Commentary

As above. So below. Water comes from above and ultimately returns to the source. Water is the source of life. Without precious water, this would be a barren planet. Just look at the planet Mars. It once had water and now the planet has no life.

Water flows downhill. It is humble. It has a beautiful mind of its own. It even exists in swamps. It has total compassion just like the Tao. All of life comes from the primordial sea of life.

One is a wise man who lives in harmony with the land.

One is kind and just.

One's lives moment by moment being in contact with the Tao.

One only speaks from his heart.

One learns action in inaction.

One smiles at adversity. He has nothing to say.

Ten

Carrying body and soul and embracing the one,

Can you avoid separation?

Attending fully and becoming supple,

Can you be as a newborn babe?

Washing and cleansing the primal vision,

Can you be without stain?

Loving all men and ruling the country,

Can you be without cleverness?

Opening and closing the gates of heaven,

Can you play the role of woman?

Understanding and being open to all things,

Are you able to do nothing?

Giving birth and nourishing,

Bearing yet not possessing,

Working yet not taking credit,

Leading yet not dominating,

This is the Primal Virtue.

Commentary

The wise man understands by embracing the mind, body, and soul one embraces the Tao. One begins to follow the natural laws of the Tao. He is not driven by the neurotic tendencies of man.

Man has been separated from the Tao for ever so long. The wise man spends his life working to live following the Tao.

The wise man learns to bend with the wind. The winds of change blow constantly and the wise man flows with the wind. Mankind is like a huge tree with shallow roots.

A huge wind will blow the tree down. Unfortunately, mankind doesn't know the foundation they are sitting on. The Tao teaches how to be like reeds. Sweet music comes from the reeds.

In the New Testament Matthew 18:3 comes the following.

And he said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Become like an innocent child is the main key in most of the world's religions. To receive from the Tao one must be like the Tao. The Tao is innocent and pure. The Tao is modest. The Tao is love, mercy, and compassion. The Tao is patient.

An ordinary man has tons of baggage that are holding him down. He has lost the innocence of being a child. The child wakes up in the morning with incredible enthusiasm. Modern-day man dreads Monday morning.

The sage tidies up his house every day. He vacuum cleans his mind. An ordinary man sweeps the dust under the carpets. He doesn't live in the present moment. The sage cleans his house so the Tao may dwell there.

Many people think if they had ultimate power they would be happy. Yet the ultimate power is ever so humble and modest. Our society doesn't like modest people.

We love football players that score a touchdown and taunt their opponents. We don't see the value of being modest. Yet Tao nature is modesty. How far off the track have we come?

Our current state of politics is driven by anger and holding our own to one's power. The people are mere pawns. A true leader lives by the Tao. Kindness, love, and compassion for all. Laws are created for a kind society. The government isn't so the rich can get richer. We have a long way to go. Currently, clever laws are

made which have been packaged with other laws. The laws that citizens want to get passed but unfortunately other laws get passed that the common citizen doesn't know about. Clever packaging and politics.

The wise man understands by following the Tao the gates of heaven are wide open. The ignorant have no idea that the gates of heaven are closed. He doesn't even know the gates exist inside.

The Taoists and most ingenious people believe in the powerful force of the mother. Many western religions believe in an angry God. A God that is jealous and will condemn you for life.

The Tao is nature. The Tao is Motherly love. The Tao is humble and kind. The Tao is mercy and compassion. The Tao loves its creation. All Mothers come from the Tao.

To have heaven on earth modern-day men must embrace these feminine qualities. Man has been fighting for thousands of years with no end in sight. Fighting and bickering must be a thing of the past.

A wise man opens up to the Tao so he is consequently open up to new things. He can smile at adversity and he can see the viewpoint of the person. He doesn't judge or condemn.

The wise man loves to enter the silence. He can do nothing. During this global shutdown, he is content. The whole world has shut down and he takes advantage of the situation. He lives by the Tao.

A person of the Tao takes care of this human temple. Remember you only get one during this life. One is constantly rebirthing and discovering the inner workings of the Tao.

A parent, teacher, leader, or anyone who guides one another must be humble. Do not use power or force to guide. Be like water that flows for all. Our entire world would change if we all did this.

The Zen Buddhist has this saying "chop wood carry water". Perform your actions yet don't pat yourself on the back after you perform them.

Twelve

The five colors blind the eye.

The five tones deafen the ear.

The five flavors dull the taste.

Racing and hunting madden the mind.

Precious things lead one astray.

Therefore the sage is guided by what he feels and not by what he sees.

He lets go of that and chooses this

Commentary

The Tao is all about learning how to be in harmony was moderation. Moderation is the key to life. Many modern-day videos contain snippets of colors that overstimulate the brain.

They could cause seizures in people. They even have warnings before the movie. This movie could cause seizures to occur. Unfortunately, we have lost our way and are out of touch.

Even our music is not in sync with the Tao. Some music will put you in a high beta state which you don't want. Humanity is already living in that state and can't turn off the facet of adrenalin. Many people can't sleep at night.

If you have too many flavors in a dish you will overpower the dish and overstimulate it.

In the east, the stomach area is considered sacred and holy. In the center of the stomach lies the dantian.

This is the storage house of energy for the Tao. Much like a farmer cultivates his fields a wise man cultivates the elixirs of the Tao. This is the true treasure chest. It contains infinite wisdom and knowledge. The sage has an incredible intuition.

Intuition is at the seat of this sacred place. Most people are grasping at straws. The Tao contains our true nature yet man can't see it.

Our daily life is like a hamster on a treadmill. We are running in circles and not getting anywhere.

Many people are addicted to alcohol and drugs. Their minds and body need more and more. Overstimulating anything will dull the senses and the mind. You will not be clear.

Most of man is like leaves blowing in the wind. He reacts to every situation. The wise man lives in the center of the hurricanes. The Tao becomes a part of his life.

Eighteen

When the great Tao is forgotten,
Kindness and morality arise.
When wisdom and intelligence are born,
The great pretense begins.
When there is no peace within the family,
Filial piety and devotion arise.
When the country is confused and in chaos,
Loyal ministers appear.

Commentary

When the Tao is forgotten politics go astray. True politics comes when it comes from the Tao. Otherwise, wisdom and intelligence come to the forefront. Mind you, worldly wisdom and intelligence are finite.

It doesn't have the total picture of what is right or wrong. You can't see the forest from the trees.

Many of the world's conflict comes from a diluted mind. Unfortunately many times a person doesn't know he is drunk.

Orders get carried out which starts a chain reaction of events that can not be stopped. Once the Pandora's box is opened the genie is let loose.

Did you know that loyal ministers are loyal to you only when you are in power? Once you leave office their loyalty to you is gone forever.

A man of power and ego will mock you if they disagree with you. The loyal ministers will not say a thing. They know if they say anything their job is in jeopardy.

A true leader comes once upon a thousand years or so. Man is slowing learning to follow the laws of the Tao. When the time comes a golden age will appear.

Twenty-one

The greatest Virtue is to follow Tao and Tao alone.

The Tao is elusive and intangible.

Oh, it is intangible and elusive, and yet within is image.

Oh, it is elusive and intangible, and yet within is form.

Oh, it is dim and dark, and yet within is essence.

This essence is very real, and therein lies faith.

From the very beginning until now its name has never been forgotten.

Thus I perceive the creation.

How do I know the ways of creation?

Because of this.

Commentary

The wise man dedicates his life to the pursuit of the Tao. This is his only focus. For thousands of years, the Tao has been elusive and intangible.

Even today modern-day scientists are still trying to find out this great mystery. They know about the quantum field yet they haven't personally touched it yet.

Without one being in silence, it will always be elusive and intangible. Even in a billion years if man continues all external knowledge won't give you the experience of the Tao.

You see external lies form. Yet by entering silence one sees the unmanifest. One sees the essence of the Tao.

The greatest puzzle exists and the man tries to solve it. Yet by focusing on the creation one can't see the creator. Only by being in harmony with the Tao can one see the Tao.

When one enters the silence one sees the laws of the Tao is manifesting into creation.

Twenty-two

Yield and overcome;
Bend and be straight;
Empty and be full;
Wear out and be new;
Have little and gain;
Have much and be confused.
Therefore the wise embrace the one
And set an example to all.
Not putting on a display,
They shine forth.
Not justifying themselves,
They are distinguished.
Not boasting,
They receive recognition.
Not bragging,
They never falter.
They do not quarrel,
So no one quarrels with them.
Therefore the ancients say, "Yield and overcome."
Is that an empty saying?
Be really whole,
And all things will come to you.

Commentary

Humility is the essence of the Tao. Christ said, "Blessed are the meek for they will inherit the earth". You must be like a child to understand the Tao.

A wise man bends like the wind. He doesn't brag about his accomplishments. He smiles at adversity. He may or may not receive recognition.

It doesn't matter. The sun in the sky just shines. It doesn't get angry if you have no respect for it.

The entire universe is humble. The Tao is humble. It doesn't judge us. We judge each other. We get angry with each other. The Tao is silent.

A wise man yields to life. He understands the push-pull nature of things. He knows that being in harmony with the Tao is the key to life. The world can throw him curveballs yet it doesn't bother him in the slightest.

Twenty-three

To talk little is natural.

High winds do not last all morning.

Heavy rain does not last all day.

Why is this? Heaven and Earth!

If heaven and Earth cannot make things eternal,

How is it possible for man?

He who follows the Tao

Is at one with the Tao.

He who is virtuous

Experiences Virtue.

He who loses the way

Is lost.

When you are at one with the Tao,

The Tao welcomes you.

When you are at one with Virtue,

The Virtue is always there.

When you are at one with loss,

The loss is experienced willingly.

He who does not trust enough

Will not be trusted.

Commentary

When I was young I spent some time with a Mahatma. Mahatma means great soul. Well, he was a great soul.

One thing I noticed was that he didn't talk too much. Mind you he gave an incredible discourse. He just learned how to speak English yet you couldn't tell. He was very eloquent.

Over the years I saw the same thing myself. Dwelling in silence is the sweetest thing.

Carl Jung once said, "Solitude is for me a fountain of healing which makes my life worth living."

When I was young I couldn't relate to saints going into a silent retreat. I do now.

High winds do not last all morning.

Heavy rain does not last all day.

Why is this? Heaven and Earth!

If heaven and Earth cannot make things eternal,

How is it possible for man?

Heaven and earth are in complete harmony. Everything is in perfect balance. The high winds blow and disappear into calmness. A storm comes and violent rain drenches the earth. The facet is then turned off.

Yet even heaven and earth come from the Tao. The Tao created heaven and earth. Heaven and earth are not eternal.

If heaven and earth are not eternal how is it even possible for man? I say many times that the human body is wired to be in harmony with the Tao. It is built-in. You are the universe. You just don't know it.

A man who follows the Tao becomes the Tao.

A man who practices being virtuous becomes virtuous.

A man who has a closed door to the Tao is lost.

When you embrace the Tao the Tao will embrace you.

When you are at one with loss,

The loss is experienced willingly.

He who does not trust enough

Will not be trusted.

Greed and excess are not kindly treated by nature. From time immemorial man has told stories, fables, and historical events depicting greed and excess. We have seen the downfall of the Roman Empire.

Nature is not greedy and full of excess. Nature is in balance. Man isn't. I'm writing this amid a worldwide shutdown.

We have never witnessed this before. Most of the world is in isolation. People are dying. Maybe Mother Nature is telling humanity to slow down. You are moving too fast. You are placing trash in your living room.

In the past few weeks, nature is healing itself. Dolphins are swimming in Venice. In China, people are starting to see the precious sky instead of smog. In India, people can see the Himalayas for the first time in decades.

Lao Tzu ended this chapter with the following.

He who does not trust enough

Will not be trusted.

In the present world conditions, many leaders don't have trust as a foundation. Consequently, they will not be trusted.

One incredible spiritual teacher said that some leaders went out for lunch and aren't coming back. Such is the state of ignorance.

Twenty-eight

Know the strength of man,
But keep a woman's care!
Be the stream of the universe!
Being the stream of the universe,
Ever true and unswerving,
Become as a little child once more.
Know the white,
But keep the black!
Be an example to the world!
Being an example to the world,
Ever true and unwavering,
Return to the infinite.
Know honor,
Yet keep humility.
Be the valley of the universe!
Being the valley of the universe,
Ever true and resourceful,
Return to the state of the uncarved block.
When the block is carved, it becomes useful.
When the sage uses it, he becomes the ruler.
Thus, "A great tailor cuts little."

Commentary

Have the strength of courage yet have the heart of a woman.

Swim in the stream of the universe and you will become it.

A child is pure in heart. To understand the Tao, you must become a child again.

The Tao is all about paradoxes and polarties.

Know the white,

But keep the black!

In the west, we think about Christ as the light. We then say there is a prince of darkness. Yet the Taoists have a different train of thought.

Can a seed initially start growing from the light? No, it needs darkness. Darkness allows the seed to germinate and grow. We need a balance between light and darkness. The Tao is all about harmony and balance.

This quote came from Stefan Stenudd.

But the opposites mean something else to Lao Tzu. Darkness refers to the dim valley compared to the brightly lit mountain, the shady side, yin, instead of the sunny side yang.

Tao Te Ching keeps repeating the ideal of yielding, so the sage modestly steps out of the light, into the shadows, and never insists on attention.

There are so many different levels Lao Tzu is working on.

By embracing the Tao one is an example to this world. The wise man just smiles at life. He is humble and in harmony.

Know honor,

Yet keep humility.

By being humble people will honor you. Not the other way around. In politics, we have seen politicians who boast and brag, and perform actions that create scandals.

A humble man will ask for forgiveness while a pompous man will fight you with everything he has. He will never forgive his actions.

Be the valley of the universe!

Being the valley of the universe,

Ever true and resourceful,

Return to the state of the uncarved block.

You want to be the valley of the universe not the mountain of the universe. The Tao is ever so humble. It does not shout look at me.

It is not striving for attention. In the west, both the Christian Judeo religions at times believed in a God of jealousy and wrath. God needs our attention or all hell will break loose.

By being in the valley of the universe one returns to the source just like a raindrop merges back into the ocean. Remember the ocean is always at sea level. There are no oceans in the mountains.

A sage realizes the block of wood in its purest form. He realizes a great tailor cuts little. Consequently, his life is simple and humble. He becomes just like the Tao.

Thirty

Whenever you advise a ruler in the way of Tao,
Counsel him not to use force to conquer the universe.
For this would only cause resistance.
Thorn bushes spring up wherever the army has passed.
Lean years follow in the wake of a great war.
Just do what needs to be done.
Never take advantage of power.
Achieve results,
But never glory in them.
Achieve results,
But never boast.
Achieve results,
But never be proud.
Achieve results,
Because this is the natural way.
Achieve results,
But not through violence.
Force is followed by loss of strength.
This is not the way of Tao.
That which goes against the Tao comes to an early end.

Commentary

Mankind has been fighting for thousands of years. What a joke! A forest fire will bring regrowth back to a forest while war brings a young man back in a box. Yet we still fight and kill.

How many civilizations have fallen due to war? Nations have been bankrupted. In the United State around 60% of our budget is for defense. Yet during this global shutdown, we are scrambling for medical supplies. Common sense is uncommon.

Why do we elect leaders that are warmongers? Why do we elect a President who has no morals or virtues? Many people say they don't care the economy is the only thing that matters.

Look I'm not super smart or intelligent. Yet in early January when I first hear about this silent virus in China I got concerned. Maybe my intuition kicked in. I had a global concern.

We could have done something as soon as it broke out. Instead, we had direct flights from China to the rest of the world. We hum and haw all along the way. It was a disgrace. Thousands of people are dying from this.

Politics got in the way. Science was saying we had better do something fast while our politicians didn't believe in their advice.

As a world, we need to change for the better. We need drastic changes. Mankind needs to be shaken in its boots for true change to occur.

Maybe that won't even work. Bring back the good old days. The grass is not greener on the other side of the hill. It's burnt.

We must take responsibility for our piece of the puzzle. Just think Lao Tzu wrote this over 2,600 years ago. It is pertinent today.

Thirty-one

Good weapons are instruments of fear; all creatures hate them.

Therefore followers of Tao never use them.

The wise man prefers the left.

The man of war prefers the right.

Weapons are instruments of fear; they are not a wise man's tools.

He uses them only when he has no choice.

Peace and quiet are dear to his heart,

And victory no cause for rejoicing.

If you rejoice in victory, then you delight in killing;

If you delight in killing, you cannot fulfill yourself.

On happy occasions precedence is given to the left,

On sad occasions to the right.

In the army the general stands on the left,

The commander-in-chief on the right.

This means that war is conducted like a funeral.

When many people are being killed,

They should be mourned in heartfelt sorrow.

That is why a victory must be observed like a funeral.

Commentary

Lao Tzu continues with the horrors of war. War is not justified. One who follows the Tao will always find a solution or way out. We have been fighting for thousands of years. It is considered an honor to fight for your country. Yet the Tao

does not take sides. God does not take sides. We praise the new weapons being created. We honor them and rejoice in how many people could get killed by them.

Wars have been occurring for thousands of years. There has been very little time in history when there wasn't a war.

Where does war stem from? When one is not in harmony with the Tao and God there is an internal war within. This internal war will be manifested into an external war. It's as simple as that.

Yet still today we think war is justified. I'll teach you a lesson you will never forget. That's called ego and arrogance. We have leaders today that act that way.

According to the Tao, we need leaders who are in harmony with the Tao. We need honorable rulers. They need to have ethics and morals. Somehow in America, many people have overlooked that one.

I think Mother Nature is trying to teach us a lesson. The whole world is shut down. We must reflect and see what the next step is.

War is not the answer. It is obsolete. We have made war a proud event and a privilege to fight. Mankind is being brainwashed. The true jewel exists inside of you waiting to be discovered.

Thirty-three

Knowing others is wisdom;
Knowing the self is enlightenment.
Mastering others requires force;
Mastering the self needs strength.
He who knows he has enough is rich.
Perseverance is a sign of willpower.
He who stays where he is endures.
To die but not to perish is to be eternally present.

Commentary

The wise man is like a farmer. He tends to his inner crops. Daily he pulls out the weeds and boulders. He tills his soil and waters it. This is how a wise man becomes enlightened. He masters himself.

The ordinary man gathers wisdom by knowing others. He doesn't know about the inner garden of the great Tao. Consequently, his awareness is always on the external.

Mastering others requires force;
Mastering the self needs strength.
Ordinary men use force like going to war to master others.
The sage uses strength and perseverance to master oneself.
One is the external focus while the other is an internal focus.
He who knows he has enough is rich.

The sage doesn't yearn to be rich or poor. He knows that his plate is filled with the Tao. One who has this understanding is truly a rich man.

Perseverance is a sign of willpower.

It's by will alone that I set my mind in motion. Perseverance is the key. The goal is to align the will of the Tao and your will to be in harmony.

He who stays where he is endures.

The sage understands the grass is not greener on the other side. It's burnt. An ordinary man is grasping at straws. Happiness is fleeting. Pursuing the external world won't solve the mysteries of life. You will get tangled in the web.

To die but not to perish is to be eternally present.

There is some debate about what Lao Tzu said. Many Taoist say that he is talking about finding the elixir of immortality. Others say that his words are still alive today.

Therefore he has not perished. Maybe it's a mixture of the two. Some Taoists have been known to live for over two hundred years.

Thirty-six

That which shrinks
Must first expand.
That which fails
Must first be strong.
That which is cast down
Must first be raised.
Before receiving
There must be giving.
This is called perception of the nature of things.
Soft and weak overcome hard and strong.
Fish cannot leave deep waters,
And a country's weapons should not be displayed.

Commentary

Everything is push-pull energy. Everything has a pair of opposites.

Light and dark, high and low, hot and cold, life and death, good and bad. Behind all polarities lies the great Tao.

In the east for thousands of years, they believed that the universe is breathing just like us, or shall I see we are breathing just like the universe. We breathe in and breathe out.

You can try to hold your breath yet within minutes your body will be desperate for the next breath. This mechanism is built-in.

In the east, the breath of Brahma is 310 Trillion years.

The great sages strive to be in balance with the great Tao. This leads to being in harmony.

And a country's weapons should not be displayed.

Oddly, this was included. I remember that our current administration wanted to have a military parade on the fourth of July.

I think it is ironic that for years we frowned upon the Soviets, Chinese, and North Koreans would have a huge military parade. This wasn't in the consciousness of the American people. We didn't flaunt our egos and display our might.

Lao Tsu didn't believe in war. He said if you had to go to war do it as fast as possible. Get over it. Mourn both sides and quickly learn your lessons about why you went to war in the first place.

Why didn't your diplomats create a win-win situation for both parties? Don't celebrate your victory. You just caused a great funeral for both sides. Only because your egos got in the way.

Thirty-eight

A truly good man is not aware of his goodness,

And is therefore good.

A foolish man tries to be good,

And is therefore not good.

A truly good man does nothing,

Yet leaves nothing undone.

A foolish man is always doing,

Yet much remains to be done.

When a truly kind man does something, he leaves nothing undone.

When a just man does something, he leaves a great deal to be done.

When a disciplinarian does something and no one responds,

He rolls up his sleeves in an attempt to enforce order.

Therefore when Tao is lost, there is goodness.

When goodness is lost, there is kindness.

When kindness is lost, there is justice.

When justice is lost, there ritual.

Now ritual is the husk of faith and loyalty, the beginning of confusion.

Knowledge of the future is only a flowery trapping of Tao.

It is the beginning of folly.

Therefore the truly great man dwells on what is real and not what is on the surface,

On the fruit and not the flower.

Therefore accept the one and reject the other.

Commentary

We are human beings, not human doers. Unfortunately, our emphasis is on doing? What do you do is the question when you first meet someone? Our world is all about doing not being.

The Tao says this is why the world is in chaos today. We aren't living in harmony and balance.

The mind controls you and you don't control the mind. When this happens to the world at large chaos will exist.

A person may seem to live a normal life yet it's not in harmony with nature or the Tao.

A truly good man is not aware of his goodness,

And is therefore good.

A foolish man tries to be good,

And is therefore not good.

A wise man is in tune with the Tao so is therefore good.

An ordinary man tries to be good yet doesn't know that true goodness exists inside.

A truly good man does nothing,

Yet leaves nothing undone.

A foolish man is always doing,

Yet much remains to be done.

A wise man knows that acting in action is the goal. He becomes a human being while man is always doing things.

Even when he is not working his mind is thinking about what's on my to-do list.
He is never content and at peace.

When a truly kind man does something, he leaves nothing undone.

When a just man does something, he leaves a great deal to be done.

When a disciplinarian does something and no one responds,

He rolls up his sleeves in an attempt to enforce the order.

Such is the nature of society. A truly kind man leaves nothing undone. A just man acts but leaves a great deal to be done.

A disciplinarian does something and no one responds. The next moment a law is passed and the rule of law is enforced. If you don't follow it you pay a fine or go to prison.

Therefore when Tao is lost, there is goodness.

When goodness is lost, there is kindness.

When kindness is lost, there is justice.

When justice is lost, their ritual.

Now ritual is the husk of faith and loyalty, the beginning of confusion.

Lao Tzu is explaining what happens when the Tao is lost. It slowly descends down the drain.

Ritual is current-day politics. Both sides of the political party have people who have faith and loyalty solely towards their own political party. Consequently, there is constant bickering and fighting much like spoiled children.

I'm writing this during the global shutdown. Common sense is uncommon. Need I say more?

Therefore the truly great man dwells on what is real and not what is on the surface,

On the fruit and not the flower.

Therefore accept the one and reject the other.

The wise man lives in the center of the hurricane while the man lives in the whirling winds of the mind.

He is like leaves blowing in the wind. The Tao teaches one to have your feet on the ground and your head in heaven. This is the way of the Tao. Confusion can't touch you.

Common sense is uncommon. Only a wise man has this. Unfortunately, common sense lies inside but clouds are covering it up.

Thirty-nine

These things from ancient times arise from one:

The sky is whole and clear.

The earth is whole and firm.

The spirit is whole and strong.

The valley is whole and full.

The ten thousand things are whole and alive.

Kings and lords are whole, and the country is upright.

All these are in virtue of wholeness.

The clarity of the sky prevents its falling.

The firmness of the earth prevents its splitting.

The strength of the spirit prevents its being used up.

The fullness of the valley prevents its running dry.

The growth of the ten thousand things prevents their drying out.

The leadership of kings and lords prevents the downfall of the country.

Therefore the humble is the root of the noble.

The low is the foundation of the high.

Princes and lords consider themselves "orphaned", "widowed" and "worthless".

Do they not depend on being humble?

Too much success is not an advantage.

Do not tinkle like jade

Or clatter like stone chimes.

Commentary

The entire universe and creation come from the Tao. Everything in the universe is united. The push-pull of gravity is the thread that ties the universe together. With gravity, the galaxies wouldn't exist.

The stars wouldn't exist. The planet earth wouldn't exist. This is the true magic of life. The Tao creates all. Someday our universe will disappear like a thief into the night yet the Tao will still be there.

Everything is in harmony except man.

Lao Tzu said the following.

Kings and lords are whole, and the country is upright.

All these are in virtue of wholeness.

This is the true state of man. We are all kings and Lords yet we have forgotten. This is a cosmic play being acted out for time immemorial. We contain these virtues yet they have been covered up by dark clouds.

The clarity of the sky prevents its falling.

The firmness of the earth prevents its splitting.

The strength of the spirit prevents it's being used up.

The fullness of the valley prevents it from running dry.

The growth of the ten thousand things prevents their drying out.

The leadership of kings and lords prevents the downfall of the country.

Once again Lao Tzu describes the magnificence of creation. The Tao in all its unsung glory sustains all. Yet there is something that Lao Tzu said exists only when a man discovers and embraces the Tao.

This is the following.

The leadership of kings and lords prevents the downfall of the country.

To be honest we don't have that currently in the United States. It seems to me we are on a teeter-totter. We are totally off balance.

We can't get anything done. During this global shutdown, we don't have leaders that will guide us and reassure the citizens much like Winston Churchill.

Jacinda Ardern the Prime Minister of New Zealand is at the forefront of new leadership. She is ruling with kindness as her foundation. She is trying to rule with the basic laws of the universe, love, mercy, and compassion. I call these conscious politics and wrote a book on this.

Therefore the humble is the root of the noble.

The low is the foundation of the high.

Princes and lords consider themselves "orphaned", "widowed" and "worthless".

Do they not depend on being humble?

Too much success is not an advantage.

Do not tinkle like jade

Or clatter like stone chimes.

The very foundation of the Tao is humility. In our egocentric world of people who rule with bragging, boasting, finger calling, degrading, mocking, and firing people who call you out.

This has been the norm for a while. We have a leader that has lied constantly. As of January of this year, the current President has told 16,421 lies. Yet half the nation still supports him.

The founding fathers are probably crying in their graves. How far away have we come from our founding fathers? Look I'm talking about morals and ethics here. We are amid a global shutdown and many leaders are placing more emphasis on the economy than the welfare of our citizens.

Leaders must act as the following to be in harmony with the Tao.

Princes and lords consider themselves "orphaned", "widowed" and "worthless".

Yet currently in the United States they think they are beyond the common man. Many serve big corporations and give huge tax breaks to them and the one percent. They are anything but humble.

Today this book is more relevant than ever before. Our politicians strive for trinkets that will go to the grave when they die. All their selfish power will be taken away.

Lao Tzu describes the world as common sense is uncommon. The creation as it stands is magnificent and glorious. Currently, man is struggling to find his true nature. Fortunately, millions of people are waking up from their slumber.

Forty-two

The Tao begot one.
One begot two.
Two begot three.
And three begot the ten thousand things.
The ten thousand things carry yin and embrace yang.
They achieve harmony by combining these forces.
Men hate to be "orphaned," "widowed," or "worthless,"
But this is how kings and lords describe themselves.
For one gains by losing
And loses by gaining.
What others teach, I also teach; that is:
"A violent man will die a violent death!"
This will be the essence of my teaching.

Commentary

The Tao created the essence of all. One created the Yin Yang the polar opposites.
Light and dark. Male and female. High and low.

Furthermore, Lao Tzu said the following.

And three begot the ten thousand things.

This sounds to me like the Trinity the father, son, and Holy Ghost. Maybe the Holy Ghost represents the breath of life or what the Taoist call chi the life force energy of the universe.

The ten thousand things carry yin and embrace yang.

They achieve harmony by combining these forces.

The entire universe embraces harmony. The entire universe is in yin-yang balance.

Men hate to be "orphaned," "widowed," or "worthless,"

But this is how kings and lords describe themselves.

Man's ambition is not to be orphaned," "widowed," or "worthless," Yet a wise man understands this divine paradox. If the universe is orphaned," "widowed," or "worthless," then so shall I be. Humility is the foundation of life.

Furthermore, Lao Tzu says.

For one gains by losing

And loses by gaining.

This is once again a paradox. With our mindset as human doers, we don't have the wisdom to understand this. One must have the mind of the Tao to understand this.

What others teach, I also teach; that is:

"A violent man will die a violent death!"

This will be the essence of my teaching.

Violence begets violence. War. War. War. Mindless endless wars mankind has fought.

Forty-six

When the Tao is present in the universe,
The horses haul manure.
When the Tao is absent from the universe,
War horses are bred outside the city.
There is no greater sin than desire,
No greater curse than discontent,
No greater misfortune than wanting something for oneself.
Therefore he who knows that enough is enough will always have enough.

Commentary

When a man is in tune with the Tao the horses carry manure to make fertilizer.
When the Tao is absent war is about ready to happen. The enemy is standing at your gates.

War has been on this planet for thousands of years. The warhorses have been both external and internal. You see to go to war the battle first starts inside of you.

You are the one that pulls the trigger. You are the one if someone says something that makes you angry you react and put gasoline on the fire.

This is how major wars occur on your planet. It first stems from a simple conflict but without proper wisdom, it accelerates beyond control.

There is no greater sin than desire,
No greater curse than discontent,
No greater misfortune than wanting something for oneself.
Therefore he who knows that enough is enough will always have enough.

Desire is the root of all evil. Look at the current politics today. Imagine one percent has more money than the 99 percent.

Last year a tax bill got passed where the one percent taxes were reduced by around 15 percent. You see desire is out of control. They want the entire piece of the pie.

There is no end to desire.

Being discontent is an even greater curse. It's like a ghost trying to get drunk on a bottle of whiskey. The alcohol just goes through them.

They perform the action of drinking but no results occur. Look at how many rock stars die. They have everything yet they are still discontent.

Yet even if we acquire everything we will experience misfortune. True satisfaction only comes when one is in harmony with the Tao. Humanity has yet to acknowledge this precious fact.

The wise man understands that if he is rich or poor he has enough. He is in tune with the Tao. The Tao always provides enough.

Fifty-five

He who is filled with Virtue is like a newborn child.
Wasps and serpents will not sting him;
Wild beasts will not pounce upon him;
He will not be attacked by birds of prey.
His bones are soft, his muscles weak,
But his grip is firm.
He has not experienced the union of man and woman, but is whole.
His manhood is strong.
He screams all day without becoming hoarse.
This is perfect harmony.
Knowing harmony is constancy.
Knowing constancy is enlightenment.
It is not wise to rush about.
Controlling the breath causes strain.
If too much energy is used, exhaustion follows.
This is not the way of Tao.
Whatever is contrary to Tao will not last long.

Commentary

Lao Tzu compares a person with virtue to a newborn child. Just think a newborn child just got born from the Tao. That's as pure as you can get. It knows its true nature. It is pure, humble, and full of love.

I'm sure each mother and father can relate to this. For parents, this is probably one of their highlights in life. The baby is in perfect harmony. Christ said, "Blessed

are the meek for they will inherit the earth". You must be like a child to understand the Tao.

True strength lies in weakness and being humble. The world at large does not believe this. Being a humble person is considered a weakness. Such is the paradox of life.

Lao Tzu says.

It is not wise to rush about.

Controlling the breath causes strain.

If too much energy is used, exhaustion follows.

This is not the way of Tao.

Whatever is contrary to Tao will not last long.

This may seem like a broken record yet it is the truth. Mankind is rushing around and yet is going nowhere. This has been going on for thousands of years. Our workplace is insane.

People are working countless hours and wasting precious energy. No wonder exhaustion is on our land. We put these precious hours to get a paycheck.

Unfortunately, many companies could care less even if you died. Otherwise, there would be harmony in the workplace. Harmony must come from all especially the leaders. If the leaders don't care about themselves they won't care about you.

This is not the way of Tao.

Whatever is contrary to Tao will not last long.

We are in a global shutdown. I mean a global shutdown. One more time a global shutdown. Is this getting through to us? A global shutdown. Is humanity going to learn a lesson or will the same old same old occur?

Whatever is contrary to Tao will not last long. That is an incredible message written many moons ago.

Fifty-eight

When the country is ruled with a light hand

The people are simple.

When the country is ruled with severity,

The people are cunning.

Happiness is rooted in misery.

Misery lurks beneath happiness.

Who knows what the future holds?

There is no honesty.

Honesty becomes dishonest.

Goodness becomes witchcraft.

Man's bewitchment lasts for a long time.

Therefore the sage is sharp but not cutting,

Pointed but not piercing,

Straightforward but not unrestrained,

Brilliant but not blinding.

Commentary

The United States is totally divided. Politicians spin the truth. What they said yesterday they say today 'I never said that'. Without the harmony of the Tao, happiness leads to misery.

It's a two-edged sword. You can't have one without the other. Your happiness may lead to misery. Your misery may lead to happiness. The road of life contains the lanes of happiness and misery. Mind you it's the same road. At times you have

to change lanes because of some unforsaken circumstances. You then go from happiness to misery or misery to happiness.

The wise man doesn't react to either lane changing. Good or bad cards may be dealt to you. It's how you react that makes all the difference in the world. A wise man follows the laws of the Tao and smiles at adversity.

Dishonesty is rampant in the world today. We have leaders who have lied over 16,000 times since taking office. Just think if I was lying a few times. At some point, you wouldn't believe me.

Yet half the population still does. Mankind is sinking. Without ethics and morals, the ship will sink. I believe in the goodness of man. I have high hopes. I pray that this shutdown will bring us to our senses.

Sixty

Ruling the country is like cooking a small fish.
Approach the universe with Tao,
And evil is not powerful,
But its power will not be used to harm others.
Not only will it do no harm to others,
But the sage himself will also be protected.
They do not hurt each other,
And the Virtue in each one refreshes both.

Commentary

When rulers rule with ignorance and the absence of the Tao chaos exists. Just ask Jesus the Christ. No sage is protected. Currently, in the United States, chaos is prevalent.

During this global shutdown, there is no true leadership. People need this during a crisis. There is finger-pointing. The American people aren't getting encouragement from their leaders.

It takes great insight to rule. If the leaders aren't aware of silence they will rule with uncertainty. They will be biased.

They will vote upon the party line. The leaders will forget about morals and ethics the cornerstone of politics. Both sides of the aisle will bicker and get angry with one another. Moderating and compromise will go out the door. Nothing will get done.

When one is in tune with the Tao one has great intuition. One could see how a small event in China that occurred in China last December could cause a

worldwide shutdown. It's like the theory that a butterfly could flap its wings at right the precise time to create a cyclone in China.

A wise leader listens to his advisors way before events get out of control. Nobody has such great wisdom that they don't need advisors. This worldwide shutdown could have been nipped in the bud months ago.

We don't need leaders who said some party is blowing this out of proportion and didn't do anything about it.

I could go on and on. Personally, I think we should drastically reduce the military budget. This money can be used to overcome so many current problems. War is obsolete.

If you don't think so then currently we have a silent virus that can cross any borders. It has literally shut down the entire world. Mother nature is saying stop all this nonsense.

You are sawing the branch you are sitting on. This is a warning. You may not take it seriously but it is a warning. Someday you may not survive but I will. My hands are open to you but you have to change for the better.

Don't think when this is over you can go on with your old stupid ways. This shutdown could occur again. What will it take to change your ways? All the precious answers exist inside of you.

Sixty-one

A great country is like low land.
It is the meeting ground of the universe,
The mother of the universe.
The female overcomes the male with stillness,
Lying low in stillness.
Therefore if a great country gives way to a smaller country,
It will conquer the smaller country.
And if a small country submits to a great country,
It can conquer the great country.
Therefore those who would conquer must yield,
And those who conquer do so because they yield.
A great nation needs more people;
A small country needs to serve.
Each gets what it wants.
It is fitting for a great nation to yield.

Commentary

The United States was built upon the principles of the Tao. Mind you they didn't call it the Tao. Yet freedom from tyranny was our foundation. The pursuit of happiness was written into our constitution.

For over two hundred years the United States was the lighthouse of the world. Countries look up to us. Countries respected us. We were a shining example to the world.

Currently, we have fallen from our greatness. The world at large no longer trusts us. We have treaties that we signed and a short time later we renege on our promises. We mock our allies and praise our foes.

When the slogan “make America great again” is the start of a downfall for a country. It is not us versus them. This entire world is in bed with each other. Isolation will never work this way.

Once again without being in a state of being a country loses its wisdom. The founding fathers had a vision and fought for it. You could say they combined doing and being. Untimely this leads to greatness.

Presently the United State lost the sense of being an only is doing. This state of mind leads to chaos. Just think in the last forty years one percent gained over 20 trillion dollars while the other lost hundreds of billions of dollars. Yet we are still giving tax breaks to the rich.

The United States rules for corporations and the rich not for the common man. The Tao has been completely forgotten except for the common man.

The unsung heroes of this worldwide shutdown are the immigrant farmers, the people working in restaurants, and grocery workers. All of the great medical workers. These are the heroes.

In the meantime, Congress is still trying to pass bills.

Lao Tzu said.

The female overcomes the male with stillness,

Lying low in stillness.

We need to embrace the female to solve our problems. The female exists inside of silence. In silence lies the wisdom of the Tao. The Tao is humble. It lies low. It doesn't point fingers and mocks you. It created the entire universe. It exists inside of you.

The world at large must embrace kindness and the softness of water.

Sixty-two

Tao is source of the ten thousand things.

It is the treasure of the good man, and the refuge of the bad.

Sweet words can buy honor;

Good deeds can gain respect.

If a man is bad, do not abandon him.

Therefore on the day the emperor is crowned,

Or the three officers of state installed,

Do not send a gift of jade and a team of four horses,

But remain still and offer the Tao.

Why does everyone like the Tao so much at first?

Isn't it because you find what you seek and are forgiven when you sin?

Therefore this is the greatest treasure of the universe.

Commentary

The day is like the prodigal son in the bible. The father accepts with open arms the one who wonder away a long time ago and the other son who never left home. You see the father does not judge you or criticize you. He accepts you as you are.

This chapter deals with forgiveness. Forgive your fellow man. Give love and compassion to all. Be tolerant of others.

The Tao is humble so be humble.

Lao Tzu said.

If a man is bad, do not abandon him.

Point him to the freeway of life. He is lost on a lonely dark road filled with potholes. Give him directions to the freeway. He will be ever so grateful.

Caring for the bad as well as the good is not only the compassionate thing to do. It's also the most practical. Make your enemies your friends. Christ talked about this. We are going from me to we. We are going from doing to being.

Sixty-five

In the beginning those who knew the Tao did not try to enlighten others,

But kept it hidden.

Why is it so hard to rule?

Because people are so clever.

Rulers who try to use cleverness

Cheat the country.

Those who rule without cleverness

Are a blessing to the land.

These are the two alternatives.

Understanding these is Primal Virtue.

Primal Virtue is deep and far.

It leads all things back

Toward the great oneness.

Commentary

In the beginning, those who knew the Tao did not try to enlighten others,

But kept it hidden.

This still probably exists today. Most people are not simply interested.

Lao Tzu asks why is it so hard to rule.

Unfortunately, most rulers want power and control over others. Look at our politics today. In our egocentric world of people who rule with bragging, boasting, finger calling, degrading, mocking, and firing people who call you out. Morals and ethics are thrown out the door.

No wonder the world is in chaos. We are in a global shutdown and our leaders are acting like kindergartners. People are dying still and they want people to go back to work. That's their priority.

Sixty-six

Why is the sea king of a hundred streams?

Because it lies below them.

Therefore it is the king of a hundred streams.

If the sage would guide the people, he must serve with humility.

If he would lead them, he must follow behind.

In this way when the sage rules, the people will not feel oppressed;

When he stands before them, they will not be harmed.

The whole world will support him and will not tire of him.

Because he does not compete,

He does not meet competition.

Commentary

To truly rule one must be humble. The Tao is humble. He does not shout and ask for recognition. The sage is humble.

He leads them by following behind them. This way the people don't think they are being oppressed. By a sage being in harmony with the Tao there will be harmony throughout the land.

Sixty-seven

Everyone under heaven says that my Tao is great and beyond compare.

Because it is great, it seems different.

If it were not different, it would have vanished long ago.

I have three treasures which I hold and keep.

The first is mercy; the second is economy;

The third is daring not to be ahead of others.

From mercy comes courage; from economy comes generosity;

From humility comes leadership.

Nowadays men shun mercy, but try to be brave;

They abandon economy, but try to be generous;

They do not believe in humility, but always try to be first.

This is certain death.

Mercy brings victory in battle and strength in defense.

It is the means by which heaven saves and guards.

Commentary

Lao Tzu embraces the three treasures of mercy, economy or moderation, and daring not to be ahead of others

We see today that our leaders shun mercy and bully people around. Look at our politics today. In our egocentric world of people who rule with bragging, boasting, finger calling, degrading, mocking, and firing people who call you out. Morals and ethics are thrown out the door.

We have leaders who are always right and will never back down. They say something and in the next moment say something opposite.

When they are called on it they will lie. Such is the condition today. During this global shutdown, we need leaders who embrace these virtues.

Seventy-one

Knowing ignorance is strength.

Ignoring knowledge is sickness.

If one is sick of sickness, then one is not sick.

The sage is not sick because he is sick of sickness.

Therefore he is not sick.

Commentary

Common sense is uncommon. When I was in my teens I believed in preventive medicine. My train of thought was this is the only body you get so you might as well take care of it.

I have been sick a few times in my life and I didn't like it. I have been drunk a few times and didn't like it.

Being in harmony with your mind, body, and soul brings contentment to an individual. It is like one is surfing with the wave of life and having a grand time. Mankind has been stuck in the riptides.

Many people drown in the process. Look at how addictions can cause sudden death or over time will lead to your death. A wise man yearns to learn from his mistakes.

He knows that learning is two steps forward and one step backward. He learns to fine-tune the guitar of life.

The ignorant man laughs at the wise man. How stupid are you? Only a fool would lead a life like yours. This wise man just smiles. He has nothing to say or prove.

Seventy-two

When men lack a sense of awe, there will be disaster.

Do not intrude in their homes.

Do not harass them at work.

If you do not interfere, they will not weary of you.

Therefore the sage knows himself but makes no show,

Has self-respect but is not arrogant.

He lets go of that and chooses this.

Commentary

When a man doesn't discover the sense of awe inside of himself there will be a disaster. This worldwide shutdown is a practical experience of this. Chaos resides throughout the land.

Do not intrude in their homes.

Do not harass them at work.

If you do not interfere, they will not weary of you.

Lao Tzu is giving guidance on how to rule. Rule with kindness and benevolence. Rule with humility. Be like water.

If you do this the world will love you. Don't mock others. If you do many people will despise you. Rule with ethics and morals.

Be in harmony with the Tao. Don't be arrogant. Unfortunately this has gone from the current landscape.

When a nation loses morals and ethics it is a sign that the ship is sinking.

Seventy-three

A brave and passionate man will kill or be killed.

A brave and calm man will always preserve life.

Of these two which is good and which is harmful?

Some things are not favored by heaven. Who knows why?

Even the sage is unsure of this.

The Tao of heaven does not strive, and yet it overcomes.

It does not speak, and yet is answered.

It does not ask, yet is supplied with all its needs.

It seems to have no aim and yet its purpose is fulfilled.

Heaven's net casts wide.

Though its meshes are coarse, nothing slips through.

Commentary

A brave and passionate man will kill or be killed.

A brave and calm man will always preserve life.

Of these two which is good and which is harmful?

Some things are not favored by heaven. Who knows why?

Even the sage is unsure of this.

War is obsolete and will always be yet man has been fighting for thousands of years. Mind you God does not take sides. Yet some things are not favored by heaven.

When a man is a doer and hasn't discovered the jewel within chaos exists. We then have leaders who have no sense of morals or ethics. They will send their young to fight their own battles.

The Tao doesn't judge it simply is. In my personal opinion, it might be slightly biased towards the one whose life is spent being in harmony with the Tao. This is our true nature.

Life is like a video game. We either advance or stay at our mundane level of being doers. We just strive through life aimlessly without a purpose.

A wise man finds that this game is the most entertaining video game in the universe. Life will throw you curveballs both internally and externally. It is an exciting game.

The Tao wants to see how you will react. You can talk about a great story but the Tao will give you challenging events for you. Mind you we are in a worldwide shutdown.

The Tao of heaven does not strive, and yet it overcomes.

It does not speak, and yet is answered.

It does not ask, yet is supplied with all its needs.

It seems to have no aim and yet its purpose is fulfilled.

Heaven's net casts wide.

Though its meshes are coarse, nothing slips through.

To a doer these words make no sense. To a wise man these words might seem to be a paradox yet from his heart they make perfect sense.

Seventy-six

A man is born gentle and weak.
At his death he is hard and stiff.
Green plants are tender and filled with sap.
At their death they are withered and dry.
Therefore the stiff and unbending is the disciple of death.
The gentle and yielding is the disciple of life.
Thus an army without flexibility never wins a battle.
A tree that is unbending is easily broken.
The hard and strong will fall.
The soft and weak will overcome.

Commentary

We all come from the Tao. When we are born we are gentle and weak. The common man thinks this is a weakness. We have leaders who would consider this to be pushovers.

Yet over time society teaches you to live inside of the box. We become stuff and our thinking is limited. Consequently, by being out of touch with the Tao we get hardened in life.

Society gets hardened. Politics gets hardened. Common sense is uncommon. The leaders rule with political power and along party lines. Ethics and morals have long gone left the picture.

Someday this will change. Remember how powerful water is? Water is soft and weak but it can erode any rock.

Seventy-seven

The Tao of heaven is like the bending of a bow.

The high is lowered, and the low is raised.

If the string is too long, it is shortened;

If there is not enough, it is made longer.

The Tao of heaven is to take from those who have too much and give to those who do not have enough.

Man's way is different.

He takes from those who do not have enough and give to those who already have too much.

What man has more than enough and gives it to the world?

Only the man of Tao.

Therefore the sage works without recognition.

He achieves what has to be done without dwelling on it.

He does not try to show his knowledge.

Commentary

The Tao's principles are of infinite virtue. There is a thread of love tying the whole universe together. The same problems they had in China during Lao Tzu's time we still have around today.

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How true this is? Laws are passed to make the rich richer and the poor poorer. No wonder America is in just a downward spiral. We spend over 60 percent of our budget on defense. The defense industry is making trillions of dollars.

During this global shutdown, we need true leaders that can once again embrace ethics and morals.

Seventy-eight

Under heaven nothing is more soft and yielding than water.

Yet for attacking the solid and strong, nothing is better;

It has no equal.

The weak can overcome the strong;

The supple can overcome the stiff.

Under heaven everyone knows this,

Yet no one puts it into practice.

Therefore the sage says:

He who takes upon himself the humiliation of the people is fit to rule them.

He who takes upon himself the country's disasters deserves to be king of the universe.

The truth often sounds paradoxical.

Commentary

Life is a grand paradox. What man thinks and what the Tao thinks are on two different wavelengths.

Our current administration rules with bragging, boasting, finger calling, degrading, mocking, and firing people who call you out. This is considered the new norm.

The Tao rules like a newborn baby. It is soft and tender. It is like water. Water can erode any rock over time. During this global shutdown, nature is sending mankind to their rooms to think things over.

Note not a bullet was shot. What we think is normal and what the Tao is is the difference between night and day. We need Mother Earth. Mother Earth does not need us.

Seventy-nine

After a bitter quarrel, some resentment must remain.

What can one do about it?

Therefore the sage keeps his half of the bargain

But does not exact his due.

A man of Virtue performs his part,

But a man without Virtue requires others to fulfill their obligations.

The Tao of heaven is impartial.

It stays with good men all the time.

Commentary

How true this is? Many people say many wars are started by previous wars. The Germans lost in WWI. Consequently, much hardness occurred to them. There remained bitterness. This bitterness was the door through which Adolf Hitler could come in.

We see this all the time in our politics. Both parties quarrel so much that the only fruits are bitterness. Nothing can get done. They can't compromise.

In the last few years, the United States backed out of two treaties. The Iran deal and the Paris accord. The Iran deal took five years to reach an agreement. Ten countries around the world ratified the treaty.

Yet our administration backed out of them. Our word is not worth anything anymore. When a treaty is signed it means countries should follow it. We have lost face with the world.

Our current admiration admonishes our allies and praises our enemies. To be quite frank the United States has lost its virtues. The President demonstrates to the world the current state of American thinking. A wise leader does not Twitter

to the world at 3:00 in the morning. Whatever comes to his mind goes into his tweet. True communication is deep thinking. A tweet is shallow thinking. No wonder we are in such a mess.

Eighty

A small country has fewer people.

Though there are machines that can work ten to a hundred times faster than man, they are not needed.

The people take death seriously and do not travel far.

Though they have boats and carriages, no one uses them.

Though they have armor and weapons, no one displays them.

Men return to the knotting of rope in place of writing.

Their food is plain and good, their clothes fine but simple, their homes secure;

They are happy in their ways.

Though they live within sight of their neighbors,

And crowing cocks and barking dogs are heard across the way,

Yet they leave each other in peace while they grow old and die.

Commentary

Probably the most advanced nations today are the Scandinavian countries. They rule with what is good for the common man. Many of them work 32 hours a week.

They have at least one and a half months of vacation time. Many have a year and a half of parental leave. This includes both parents.

Nobody has to worry about paying thousands in medical bills. They are at the top of learning around the world. Universities are free. They are closing down prisons because they don't need them.

I find it a paradox that our leaders mock this system. It seems to me this is what America stands for. They proclaim that many of their guiding principles came from the United States.

America is in chaos yet our leaders are still fighting with one another. A global shutdown is occurring yet we are in a downward spiral.

Eighty-one

Truthful words are not beautiful.

Beautiful words are not truthful.

Good men do not argue.

Those who argue are not good.

Those who know are not learned.

The learned do not know.

The sage never tries to store things up.

The more he does for others, the more he has.

The more he gives to others, the greater his abundance.

The Tao of heaven is pointed but does no harm.

The Tao of the sage is work without effort.

Commentary

In Luke 6:31 “Do to others as you would have them do to you.” This golden rule was also in China around 500 years before Christ. A man who is in harmony with the Tao is in complete alignment with the golden rule.

Day by day he learns how to be in greater harmony with the Tao. He understands that worldly knowledge is limited. The wisdom of the Tao is infinite. The more he gives the more he receives.

Closing

The Tao Te Ching still contains incredible wisdom. It is probably more relevant today. We still have the same problems that existed 4000 years ago. Man is stubborn.

Hopefully, this book will give you some insight on where to look to find out your true nature. It's been there all the time. We can change this world. It's up to each one of us.