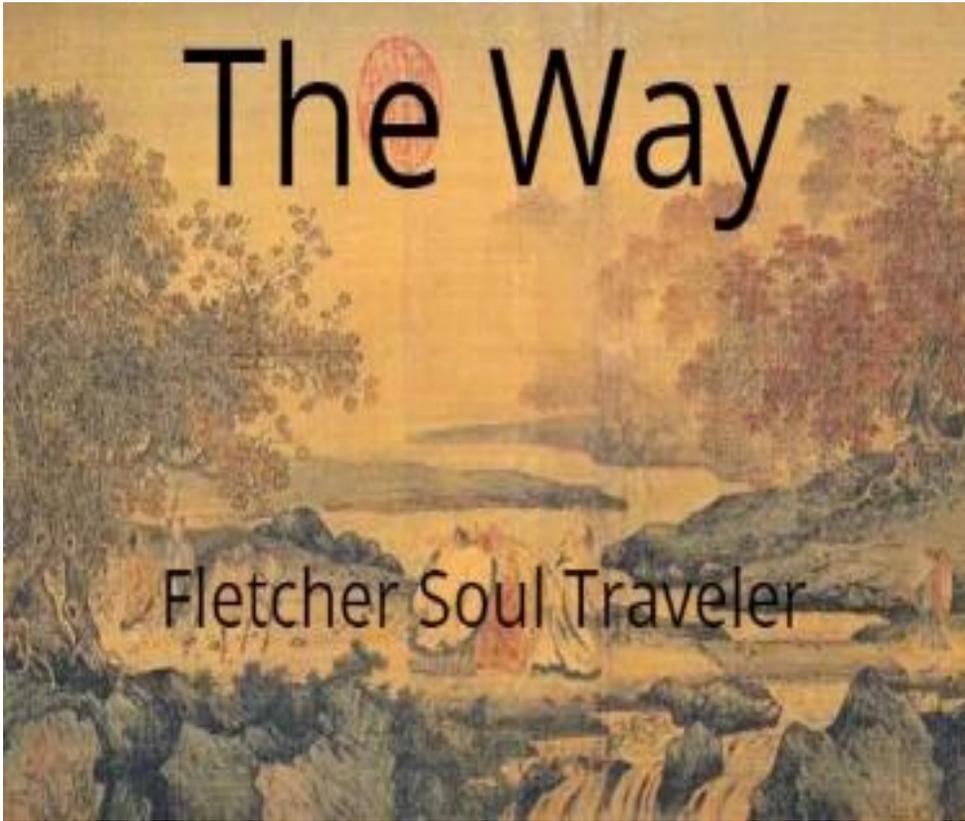


The Way

Fletcher Soul Traveler



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Intro



I have always been fascinated by the East. As a young child, my parents had a statue of the Buddha and a painting of Quan Yin. Sitting on my bookshelf lies a copy of the . It has been sitting there for many moons. Mind you many of you probably wTao Te Chingeren't born. It's been that long.

My favorite part is the opening.

The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao.

The name that can be named is not the eternal name.

The nameless is the beginning of heaven and Earth.

The named is the mother of the ten thousand things.

Ever desireless, one can see the mystery.

Ever desiring, one sees the manifestations.

These two spring from the same source but differ in name; this appears as darkness.

Darkness within darkness.

The gate to all mystery.

Whenever I read this it sends shivers down my spine. How eloquently said. This was written by Lao Tzu around 300 BC. I love good mysteries. My brother and I are extremely curious. Ever since I was a child I actively pursued the great mysteries. About 6 months ago I started to do a Chi gong practice. I love it. I've been practicing every day.

Recently with the world wide shut down, I have some time on my hands. In my morning meditation, I thought I would read the Tao Te Ching and absorbed it. I find scripture fascinating. There is a great mystery to be solved. Each sacred book talks about in their own subtle way how to discover the jewel within.

Lao Tzu was one of them. The most books ever sold except for the Bible was the Tao Te Ching. Here it was sitting on my bookshelf waiting patiently for me to open it up. The Tao is ever so patient. It took billions of years for man to appear on earth.

Modern-day scientists and Mystics are talking about the Tao using a different way of expressing it. Scientist calls the Tao the quantum field. This field exists beyond time and space. It was, is and will always be. It exists in all dimensions.

Yet centuries before Christ the sages discover the Tao or the Way. It wasn't a philosophy. They had first-hand experience of it. These teachings are more relevant today. This world is in chaos. The Tao Te Ching can help humanity to discover the jewel inside. Remember you can talk about a mango yet without trying a mango it's just book knowledge. The Tao is a practical path. At times I think humanity wants to give their offerings once a week and call it quits. Maybe this worldwide shutdown will be an opening call. Only time will tell.

There are 81 short quotes. I'm putting my commentary for each one. I use the word ponder a lot in my writings. I'm pondering deep inside myself to understand this precious wisdom. I don't want to skim the surface. Anybody can do that. I want to discover the pearls of wisdom for each one. I hope you enjoy this book.

One

道可道，非常道。
名可名，非常名。
無名天地之始；
有名萬物之母。
故常無，欲以觀其妙；
常有，欲以觀其微。
此兩者，同出而異名，同謂之玄。
玄之又玄，眾妙之門。

The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao.

The name that can be named is not the eternal name.

The nameless is the beginning of heaven and Earth.

The named is the mother of the ten thousand things.

Ever desireless, one can see the mystery.

Ever desiring, one sees the manifestations.

These two spring from the same source but differ in name; this appears as darkness.

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Commentary

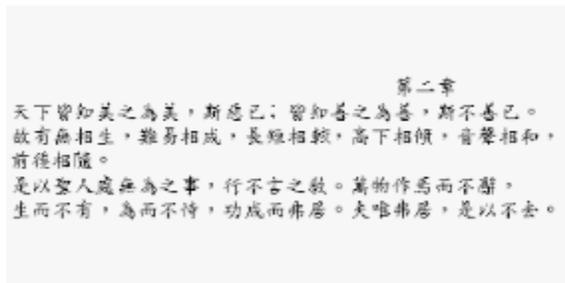
The modern-day scientist would call the Tao quantum energy. The quantum field exists beyond time and space. It exists in all dimensions. It is beyond the linear. It existed before the universe was created. It will exist when the universe dies. The Tao is eternal. It was never created nor will it be destroyed. By saying and describing the Tao is not the Tao. By describing a mango is not the mango.

The wise man is desireless consequently one can see the mysteries.

Mankind has been in a state of desires therefore he only sees the manifestations of the Tao. One can't see the forest from the trees.

One who discovers the internal jewel within open the gate to the mysteries of the Tao.

Two



Under heaven all can see beauty as beauty only because there is ugliness.

All can know good as good only because there is evil.

Therefore having and not having arise together.

Difficult and easy complement each other.

Long and short contrast each other:

High and low rest upon each other;

Voice and sound harmonize each other;

Front and back follow one another.

Therefore the sage goes about doing nothing, teaching no-talking.

The ten thousand things rise and fall without cease,

Creating, yet not possessing.

Working, yet not taking credit.

Work is done, then forgotten.

Therefore it lasts forever.

Commentary

Everything in the universe is a push pull energy.

Everything has a pair of opposites.

Good and evil.

Having and not having.

Difficult and easy.

High and low.

Front and back.

The wise man does nothing yet accomplish everything.

He teaches silence.

The entire universe is breathing.

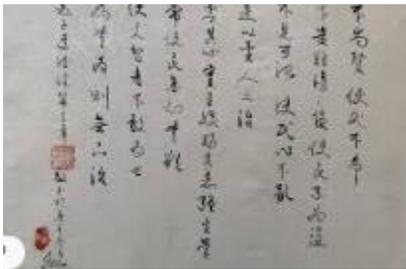
It creates yet never possesses.

The universe never takes credit.

When the work is done the universe just smiles.

This goes on for eternity.

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 synch with the Tao. As above so below.

Man desires 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 every 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 aspect 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.

Four



The Tao is an empty vessel; it is used, but never filled.

Oh, unfathomable source of ten thousand things!

Blunt the sharpness,

Untangle the knot,

Soften the glare,

Merge with dust.

Oh, hidden deep but ever present!

I do not know from whence it comes.

It is the forefather of the gods.

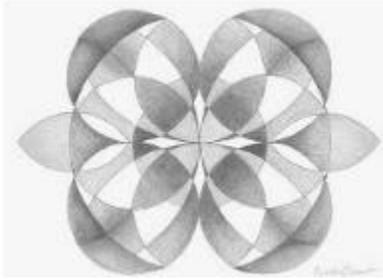
Commentary

There is an Indian song that says someone is holding a jewel in their hands and doesn't know how precious it is. This person throws the jewel on the ground.

You are the universe. You just don't know it. All creation of the seen and unseen stem from the Tao. Yet it remains a mystery to us. The divine elixir of life lies inside of us yet we are more interested in texting on the freeway of life. The universe is spinning right between our eyes while we watch the daily news hour. We were born from the dust of the earth and our bodies will return to dust.

The soul will return to the Tao. A wise man listens to the wind within and gets carried away to the source of all.

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.

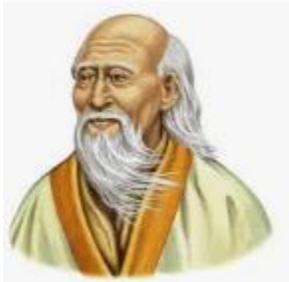
Commentary

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 breaths 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.

Six



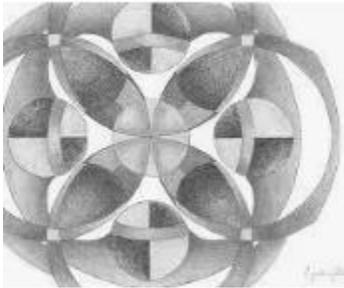
The valley spirit never dies;
It is the woman, primal mother.
Her gateway is the root of heaven and Earth.
It is like a veil barely seen.
Use it; it will never fail.

Commentary

The gateway of all creation comes through a Mother. Even the universe itself is birthed from the divine mother. This divine mother births all. A thin veil is preventing us to see the mysteries of the Tao.

A wise man spends his entire life consciously unlocking the keys to life. The veil will be lifted.

Seven



Heaven and Earth last forever.

Why do heaven and Earth last forever?

They are unborn,

So ever living.

The sage stays behind, thus he is ahead.

He is detached, thus at one with all.

Through selfless action, he attains fulfillment.

Commentary

The quantum field lasts forever.

This field is unborn.

The entire universe was born from it.

The wise man is detached from the mental trappings of the mind. Therefore he is one with all.

By being one with all selfless action takes place. He attains complete fulfillment.

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.

Nine



Better to stop short than fill to the brim.

Oversharpen the blade, and the edge will soon blunt.

Amass a store of gold and jade, and no one can protect it.

Claim wealth and titles, and disaster will follow.

Retire when the work is done.

This is the way of heaven

Commentary

The Tao is the road to moderation. If you fill your cup to the brim you could very easily spill your drink when sitting down. If it's hot coffee you won't like the experience. Unfortunately, in our society, everything is in excess. The United States is a work-alcoholic society. We are walking on this treadmill and not going anywhere. Our whole existence is neurotic.

We oversharpen the blade of life. Because we overreact and work too hard our sense becomes blunt. Overstimulation leads to a stressful lifestyle. A wise man slows down in life. Everything is in moderation. He enjoys every moment he is alive. He lives in accordance with nature and the tao.

A rich man becomes neurotic with holding on to his gold. The stock market goes up and down. It has its emotional states of mind. At times the rich man can hardly

sleep at night. A man of moderation sleeps like a newborn puppy at night. He doesn't have a care in the world. Chaos may be all around him yet he lives in the center of the hurricane.

A wise man does not want fame or titles. Very few people can handle it. The rich and famous always strive to maintain it yet others try to take them down. Being famous is not what you think it is. A Pandora box gets opened. Once the box is opened you can never close it. Our present-day world worships people who have fame and fortune. Rock stars and movie stars walk around like they are Kings and Queens on earth.

A wise man just smiles at life. He doesn't have anything to prove. He may be rich or poor. It doesn't matter. His mind is absorbed with the Tao.

In quantum physics, the tiniest of particles are the most powerful yet they don't shout look at me. They are hidden and behind the scenes. A wise man doesn't shout to the world. He is humble and follows the laws of the Tao.

This is the inner workings of the Tao. The Tao doesn't have to shout to this world look at me. For time immemorial the Tao has existed. Yet today mankind still can't see the forest from the trees. Fortunately millions of people are waking up from their slumber.

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 the Tao nature is modesty. How far off the track have we come?

Our current state of politics is driven by anger and holding on to one's power. The people are mere pawns. A true leader lives in accordance with 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 which 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. As a matter of fact, he doesn't even know the gates exist inside.

The Taoist 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 in accordance with 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.

Eleven



Thirty spokes share the wheel's hub;
It is the center hole that makes it useful.
Shape clay into a vessel;
It is the space within that makes it useful.
Cut doors and windows for a room;
It is the holes which make it useful.
Therefore benefit comes from what is there;
Usefulness from what is not there.

Commentary

The center of the Tao is emptiness. All spokes derive from it. Without the center, the wheel would not exist. A wise man understands emptiness and silence. This entire universe is like a clay vessel. Inside of this vessel lies emptiness.

The ignorant man never tries to discover this meaning. The wise man understands the Tao and the nature of all things.

The modern-day scientist is discovering the quantum field which exists everywhere. It is beyond time and space. The Tao support all life. It is contained within the vessel of creation.

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. The center of the stomach lies the dantian. This is the storage house 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 each and every situation. The wise man lives in the center of the hurricanes. The Tao becomes a part of his life.

Thirteen



Accept disgrace willingly.

Accept misfortune as the human condition.

What do you mean by "Accept disgrace willingly"?

Accept being unimportant.

Do not be concerned with loss or gain.

This is called "accepting disgrace willingly."

What do you mean by "Accept misfortune as the human condition"?

Misfortune comes from having a body.

Without a body, how could there be misfortune?

Surrender yourself humbly; then you can be trusted to care for all things.

Love the world as your own self; then you can truly care for all things.

Commentary

The wise man learns how to let go of fear and misfortune. Anybody alive will face misfortune one day or the other. Even at our death bed, there is a thin thread holding a dagger over our head. The wise man learns to accept whatever comes

his way. He simply smiles. He has nothing to prove. He realizes the push-pull energy of opposites and harmonizes them. He is in perfect balance.

The wise man does not yearn for fortune and fame. These will someday disappear like a thief in the night. He realizes that the true treasure exists within. A wise man is humble like a newborn child yet wise as a sage. This is the divine paradox.

When one loves humanity as much as himself a lotus flower blooms. A man then completes his piece of the puzzle of life.

Fourteen



Look, it cannot be seen - it is beyond form.

Listen, it cannot be heard - it is beyond sound.

Grasp, it cannot be held - it is intangible.

These three are indefinable;

Therefore they are joined in one.

From above it is not bright;

From below it is not dark:

An unbroken thread beyond description.

It returns to nothingness.

The form of the formless,

The image of the imageless,

It is called indefinable and beyond imagination.

Stand before it and there is no beginning.

Follow it and there is no end.

Stay with the ancient Tao,

Move with the present.

Knowing the ancient beginning is the essence of Tao.

Commentary

Wow. This sounds like a modern-day scientist. The quantum field can't be seen, heard, or grasped. It is indivisible yet exists between time and space. It exists beyond all dimensions. Before the universe was created the great Tao existed.

There is a thread of love tying us all together. There are natural laws born from the Tao. The sages of the past lived by these laws. They could tune into these laws much like a radio can tune a frequency to a particular channel.

The past and future don't exist. The wise sages learned how to be in the present moment. In that space lies, the secrets of the universe. This treasure can never be taken away.

Common man whether rich or poor leave their treasures behind. Nothing can be taken with them.

The sages say know the ancient beginning of the Tao while you are alive. You are eternal. You are the universe and just don't know it.

Fifteen



The ancient masters were subtle, mysterious, profound, responsive.

The depth of their knowledge is unfathomable.

Because it is unfathomable,

All we can do is describe their appearance.

Watchful, like men crossing a winter stream.

Alert, like men aware of danger.

Courteous, like visiting guests.

Yielding like ice about to melt.

Simple, like uncarved blocks of wood.

Hollow, like caves.

Opaque, like muddy pools.

Who can wait quietly while the mud settles?

Who can remain still until the moment of action?

Observers of the Tao do not seek fulfillment.

Not seeking fulfillment, they are not swayed by desire for change.

Commentary

The ancient sages who lived by the doctrine live in this world but are beyond this world. In other words feet on the ground and your head in heaven. Be a human being. That is your true nature. Currently, man is human doers. When you met someone the first thing you say is what do you do?

We are impressed by someone who places more value on being than doing. This is the paradox of life. The Tao teaches one to be in the presence of the Way. By being in tune with the Tao one discover the secrets of the universe. In this state, he has nothing to prove. He will just smile at adversity.

The sage is not swayed by world desires. They are just empty trinkets. They sparkle yet are worthless in value. The common man strives for these empty trinkets all their lives. They are like a ghost drinking a bottle of whiskey and not being able to absorb it.

The sage can be rich or poor and be satisfied with it. He has discovered the inner treasures. This man advances quite quickly in the video game of life. The Tao teaches him how to master each level. One is patient and learns how to act following these supreme laws. The goal of the video game is to become one with the Tao while you are alive.

Sixteen



Empty yourself of everything.

Let the mind become still.

The ten thousand things rise and fall while the Self watches their return.

They grow and flourish and then return to the source.

Returning to the source is stillness, which is the way of nature.

The way of nature is unchanging.

Knowing constancy is insight.

Not knowing constancy leads to disaster.

Knowing constancy, the mind is open.

With an open mind, you will be openhearted.

Being openhearted, you will act royally.

Being royal, you will attain the divine.

Being divine, you will be at one with the Tao.

Being at one with the Tao is eternal.

And though the body dies, the Tao will never pass away.

Commentary

Throw away all of your baggage. They are weighing you down. You are crawling at a snail's pace and the journey is arduous.

Still your mind. That my friend is the most difficult thing to do in the universe.

The entire universe is alive. The entire universe is breathing. Stars are being created and stars die never to return. They go back to the Tao.

Constancy is the quality of being enduring and unchanging. One who knows the Tao has great insight. The Tao is his best friend. The sage's mind is open. When the mind is open the heart is open. The heart is open to love, mercy, and compassion.

One whose life doesn't know the unchanging lives his life like a leaf blowing in the wind.

The Tao contains complete stillness. Can you hear stillness in nature? The essence of nature is unchanging. Yet man is oblivious of this fact.

One who is openhearted will act like royalty. They may be rich or poor but their character is like a King. They are wearing a golden crown yet it is hidden from man. This being has nothing to prove or hide. They simply smile at life. They have great divine humor.

In this state, they are one with the Tao.

And though the body dies, the Tao will never pass away.

Seventeen



The very highest if barely known.

Then comes that which people know and love.

Then that which is feared,

Then that which is despised.

Who does not trust enough will not be trusted.

When actions are performed

Without unnecessary speech,

People say, "We did it!"

Commentary

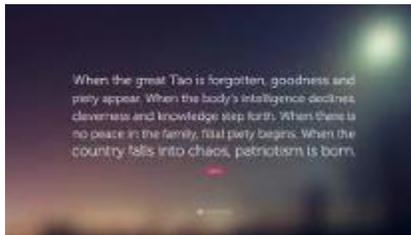
A great leader rules in the background. He is not in it for fame or power. Unfortunately, this is extremely rare. The person rules for the laws of the Tao. Love and compassion are the staff he holds in his hand.

Many rulers preach only to their followers. They cause division between men. A man who does not trust will not be trusted. He will be despised by many and yet his followers will have the utmost trust in him. This scenario has been played out for thousands of years.

A wise leader understands the laws of the Tao. He doesn't say much but the people rejoice in his actions. The people know that he is on their side. He has no hidden agendas. Unfortunately, this is a rare leader, especially during our current time.

Actions speak louder than words. A wise ruler understands the true meaning behind these words. The Tao contains great wisdom that the world desperately needs.

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 nor 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 start a chain reaction of events that can not be stopped. Once Pandora's box is opened the genie is let loose.

Did you know those 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 slowly learning to follow the laws of the Tao. When the time comes a golden age will appear.

Nineteen



Give up sainthood, renounce wisdom,
And it will be a hundred times better for everyone.

Give up kindness, renounce morality,
And men will rediscover filial piety and love.

Give up ingenuity, renounce profit,
And bandits and thieves will disappear.

These three are outward forms alone; they are not sufficient in themselves.

It is more important
To see the simplicity,
To realize one's true nature,
To cast off selfishness
And temper desire.

Commentary

We are flooded with daily wisdom. The average person in just one day is bombarded by more information than a person living in the 1700s. All that

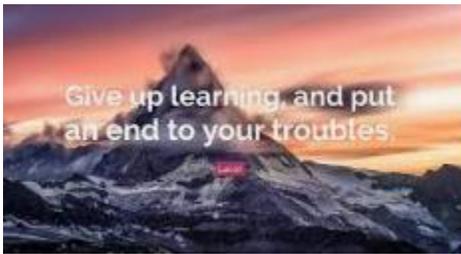
information they have for their entire lifetime is contained in one daily newspaper. Yet has this knowledge truly served us. We are still fighting and bickering.

I say common sense is uncommon. The Tao place the understanding of feet on the ground and head in heaven.

Unfortunately, mankind is human doers, not human beings. Big difference.

Lao Tzu saw that simplicity is the key to life. We have thousands of laws yet we still go to war. Has it made our lives any better? What if mankind would be a kind man. That would revolutionize the world. Following the Tao, a man becomes simple and pure. He becomes a vessel of the Tao. In this state, the ego and selfishness disappear like a thief into the night. Man's temper is melted and pure love rise to the surface. The clouds have disappeared which displays the inner sun.

Twenty



Give up learning, and put an end to your troubles.

Is there a difference between yes and no?

Is there a difference between good and evil?

Must I fear what others fear? What nonsense!

Other people are contented, enjoying the sacrificial feast of the ox.

In spring some go to the park, and climb the terrace,

But I alone am drifting, not knowing where I am.

Like a newborn babe before it learns to smile,

I am alone, without a place to go.

Others have more than they need, but I alone have nothing.

I am a fool. Oh, yes! I am confused.

Others are clear and bright,

But I alone am dim and weak.

Others are sharp and clever,

But I alone am dull and stupid.

Oh, I drift like the waves of the sea,

Without direction, like the restless wind.

Everyone else is busy,
But I alone am aimless and depressed.
I am different.
I am nourished by the great mother.

[Commentary](#)

All the wise men have talked about the great Tao. Yet most of the time it has fallen on deaf ears. Just think Lao Tzu left China never to return. This book was written right before the border crossings. He was urged and pleaded to write about the great Tao.

Mankind is slow to evolve. We are still in the same state of awareness thousands of years ago. Sure our technology is advance but we still fight with one another. We are still emotionally stunted in growth.

The wise man learns patience from the Tao. But even still they see that humanity is sailing off course with no intention of listening to anyone. How sad must they become when they see that man is caught in the web and not seeing the predicament they are in.

Yet patience is a virtue. The Tao teaches the wise to have patience. It took billions of years for man to appear on earth. The Tao has its own timetable.

Humanity is busy and partying. Lao Tzu is nourished by the great mother. He may at times feel aimless and depressed after all he is still a human. Yet the silence teaches him he is never alone. His wisdom is still alive today. It's like a lighthouse beaming light to the lost ships at sea.

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

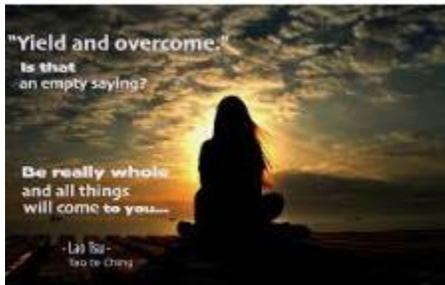
The wise man dedicates his life to the pursuit of the Tao. This is his only focus. For thousands of years, the Tao has been elusive and intangible. Even today modern-day scientists are still trying to find out this great mystery. They know about the quantum field yet they haven't personally touched it 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 externally lies form. Yet by entering silence one sees the unmanifest. One sees the essence of the Tao.

The greatest puzzle exists and 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 really 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 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 in the midst of 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 into 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 of the 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-four



He who stands on tiptoe is not steady.

He who strides cannot maintain the pace.

He who makes a show is not enlightened.

He who is self-righteous is not respected.

He who boasts achieves nothing.

He who brags will not endure.

According to followers of the Tao, "These are extra food and unnecessary luggage."

They do not bring happiness.

Therefore followers of the Tao avoid them.

Commentary

Our world is in chaos. We are standing on our tiptoes, therefore, we will lose our balance. It just a matter of time. Mankind is like a rat on a treadmill. It's going faster and faster and going nowhere. People are working insane hours for companies who have no interest in you. You are replaceable.

Our politicians run the country as a reality TV show. Shock and awe. Enlightened they are not.

Mind you these are words written over 2,600 years ago. They probably have more importance today.

One who is ego-centric and self-righteous is not respected. A person who boasts about everything should not run a country.

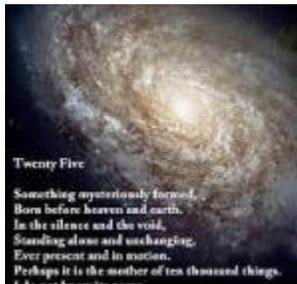
Some who brags about everything are insincere. You can only brag for so long before people see you as being naked.

One's deeds and actions will someday catch up with you. This is the law of the Tao. Nothing is truly hidden.

During this worldwide shutdown, a laser focus is on the truth. Falsehood and darkness will be revealed.

The followers of the Tao get nourished from the Tao. They consciously let go of their baggage. This message has been told for thousands of years. This worldwide shut down might be a great opportunity to let go of your excess baggage.

Twenty-five



Something mysteriously formed,
Born before heaven and Earth.
In the silence and the void,
Standing alone and unchanging,
Ever present and in motion.
Perhaps it is the mother of ten thousand things.
I do not know its name
Call it Tao.
For lack of a better word, I call it great.

Being great, it flows
I flows far away.
Having gone far, it returns.

Therefore, "Tao is great;
Heaven is great;
Earth is great;
The king is also great."

These are the four great powers of the universe,
And the king is one of them.

Man follows Earth.

Earth follows heaven.

Heaven follows the Tao.

Tao follows what is natural.

[Commentary](#)

In the beginning, was the word?

The word was with God.

And the Word was God.

The Taoists called this the Tao. The way. Modern-day scientist calls it a quantum field. Imagine a cosmic soup that exists beyond time and space. It exists in the known and unknown. It exists in all dimensions and universes.

Heaven and earth were born from the Tao. From stillness and silence, the universe was born. The Divine Mother creates all.

Therefore, "Tao is great;

Heaven is great;

Earth is great;

The king is also great."

These are the four great powers of the universe,

And the king is one of them.

I find it interesting the Lao Tzu included the king. Mind your history has shown us many kings who ruled with an iron fist. They had no interest in their subjects. They were tyrants.

So why is a king included? Have you ever seen geese flying in the sky or fish swimming as one? I live in Kansas. Many people don't like geese. I love them. My wife and I love to see them flying as one in the sky. They are united and one. They follow the laws of nature while most humans don't.

My personal feelings are that man is going from me to we. From a state of doing to a state of being. Granted this will take millions of years. Each one of us is a king. You are the universe. You just don't know it. A wise man who understands the Tao sees the king in each and every human being.

These are the four powers of the universe. Can we have a country without rulers? Lao Tzu is asking that question. Does a tyrant have any meaning or purpose?

One who understands the Tao will understand these meanings.

Twenty-six



The heavy is the root of the light.

The still is the master of unrest.

Therefore the sage, traveling all day,

Does not lose sight of his baggage.

Though there are beautiful things to be seen,

He remains unattached and calm.

Why should the lord of ten thousand chariots act lightly in public?

To be light is to lose one's root.

To be restless is to lose one's control.

Commentary

A sage has his feet on the ground and his head in heaven. He is dwelling in silence. You may think he is not aware. Yet he is totally aware and conscious. He doesn't lose sight of his baggage. He is in a state of being unattached and calm. Yet the wise man sees clearly in his external environment.

This quote came from Stefan Stenudd.

Being heavy and still, a ruler does not eagerly spring into action, but waits until it is time, and then does just what is called for. Nothing more. Eagerness to act tends to create more problems than it solves.

Twenty-seven



A good walker leaves no tracks;

A good speaker makes no slips;

A good reckoner needs no tally.

A good door needs no lock,

Yet no one can open it.

Good binding requires no knots,

Yet no one can loosen it.

Therefore the sage takes care of all men

And abandons no one.

He takes care of all things

And abandons nothing.

This is called "following the light."

What is a good man?

A teacher of a bad man.

What is a bad man?

A good man's charge.

If the teacher is not respected,

And the student not cared for,

Confusion will arise, however clever one is.

This is the crux of mystery.

[Commentary](#)

In the East, they firmly believe in the passing of knowledge from one generation to another. You may have a generation of people mastering their trades. Whether it's a tofu maker in Japan whose family have been making tofu for thousands of years. It is an art and science.

The Taoists have their long lineage. Many of this is passed down from father to son. Civilizations should grow in time. Knowledge and wisdom should be learned. Mind you this is not rote memory. I remember in school when the teacher said class please turn to page 51 in your textbook. Richard could you read that page. It was dry as toast.

Lao Tzu is saying we should put our hearts and soul into our livelihood. Each action we take can be a conscious action. Mankind can live in complete harmony with the Tao.

To gather wisdom should be a joy. Most schools are damping the joy of learning. We made a mockery of it. It's so bad that kids bring their guns to school. This is

called a sin which means to miss the mark. Our entire school system needs to change for the better.

Following the light means to follow the Tao. The Tao teaches the sage how to be and act. The Tao has patience like water. It can smooth out the rough edges of man's ego.

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 polarities.

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.

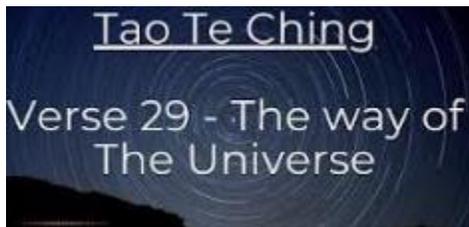
Be the valley of the universe!
Being the valley of the universe,
Ever true and resourceful,
Return to the state of the uncarved block.

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 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.

Twenty-nine



Do you think you can take over the universe and improve it?

I do not believe it can be done.

The universe is sacred.

You cannot improve it.

If you try to change it, you will ruin it.

If you try to hold it, you will lose it.

So sometimes things are ahead and sometimes they are behind;

Sometimes breathing is hard, sometimes it comes easily;

Sometimes there is strength and sometimes weakness;

Sometimes one is up and sometimes down.

Therefore the sage avoids extremes, excesses, and complacency.

Commentary

Lao Tzu believed in preserving nature. Nature is a reflection of the Tao. It has been rumored that Lao Tzu was alive when the Great Wall of China was being built. What a monstrosity. The emperor built this for his own ego yet we call it a great wonder today.

Lao Tzu was probably one of the first ecologists.

I'm writing this during the global shutdown. In just three weeks the planet is showing signs of healing. Yet when this is over are we going to go back to our old ways?

We think we have created a modern world yet we still fight one another. We throw garbage in our own living rooms. We mock ingenious people who want to preserve this precious planet. We mock tree huggers and call them silly. Materialism is the name of the game. A great spiritual teacher said many moons ago we are sawing the branch that we are sitting on. I never forgot that saying.

We think we can make this world a better place by raping the land and taking precious resources along the way. Many people believe that global warming is a hoax.

Yet nature has shut down the entire world. Many people are shaking in their boots and they have every right to do so. Maybe just maybe nature is telling us something. Maybe we needed to stop in our tracks. Maybe nature is kind and saying if you continue to act this way someday you will not live on this planet. I will be here but you won't.

Our entire way of thinking and acting must change. Every human being is a piece of the puzzle. It's time to take responsibility for our actions.

The wise sage lives in accordance with the laws of the Tao. He shows humanity the way.

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 their 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 pieces 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.

Personally, 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-two



The Tao is forever undefined.

Small though it is in the unformed state, it cannot be grasped.

If kings and lords could harness it,

The ten thousand things would come together

And gentle rain fall.

Men would need no more instruction and all things would take their course.

Once the whole is divided, the parts need names.

There are already enough names.

One must know when to stop.

Knowing when to stop averts trouble.

Tao in the world is like a river flowing home to the sea.

Commentary

As Lao Tzu said in the first chapter

The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao.

The name that can be named is not the eternal name.

One cannot truly define the Tao. It is beyond human comprehension. Even something as simple as gravity cannot truly be explained. Our scientific theories are always changing and evolving. Even in a billion years, we will not have a full understanding of the Tao.

We are all grasping at straws with the Tao. At least a wise man understands that. He is humble. The Tao is humble. They both just smile at life.

The sage is swimming down the river of life and rejoicing to be alive. He doesn't have a care in the world. He does his duty and smiles at his fellow man. The world doesn't understand him but he doesn't ruffle their feather with his words. The word idiot comes from the Latin word idoata. This means feet on the ground and head in heaven. This is the essence of the Tao. There is not greater wisdom than this. He becomes a kind man. He becomes a human being, not a human doer.

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. Pursing the external world won't solve the mysteries of life. You will get tangled in the web.

To die but not 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 over two hundred years.

Thirty-four



The great Tao flows everywhere, both to the left and to the right.
The ten thousand things depend upon it; it holds nothing back.
It fulfills its purpose silently and makes no claim.

It nourishes the ten thousand things,
And yet is not their lord.
It has no aim; it is very small.

The ten thousand things return to it,
Yet it is not their lord.
It is very great.

It does not show greatness,
And is therefore truly great.

[Commentary](#)

The modern-day scientist would call the Tao the quantum field. It exists everywhere. It is beyond time and space. All creation comes from it. It is humble, silent, and makes no claims.

It nourishes all but doesn't say I'm the Lord over you. It has no aim. It's the tiniest of the tiny. Modern-day physicists are using an instrument in Cern to try to find the tiniest particles. This will go on forever.

Everything returns to the source. A raindrop someday returns to the ocean of the Tao.

The Tao is hidden behind the scenes. It doesn't display greatness so consequently, it is truly great. The Tao is ever so humble. It creates all yet does not rule with an iron fist. In fact, it doesn't rule at all.

Thirty-five



All men will come to him who keeps to the one,
For there lie rest and happiness and peace.

Passersby may stop for music and good food,
But a description of the Tao
Seems without substance or flavor.
It cannot be seen, it cannot be heard,
And yet it cannot be exhausted.

Commentary

All wise men who follow the Tao discover the jewel that lies within. True rest, happiness, and peace lie there.

Many people hear about the Tao. They stop for good food and music and have a grand party. But for the majority of people, the Tao doesn't have the substance or flavor. It is very subtle. It's like a wine connoisseur who partakes in a glass of fine wine. He will take the wine and spend time assimilating all the subtle flavors. The ordinary man will just gulp the wine down.

It's a paradox that man only believes in the external. We all breathe yet we aren't aware that behind the breath lies the great Tao. Even the life-giving breath doesn't shout hey look at me.

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 say 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 on 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-seven



Tao abides in non-action,
Yet nothing is left undone.
If kings and lords observed this,
The ten thousand things would develop naturally.
If they still desired to act,
They would return to the simplicity of formless substance.
Without form there is no desire.
Without desire there is tranquility.
And in this way all things would be at peace.

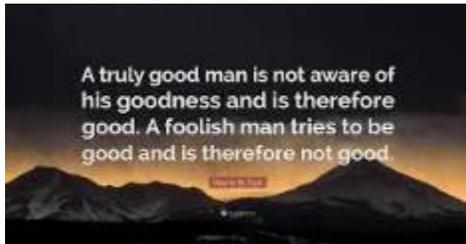
Commentary

Behind every action lies non-action. Mankind is not in tune with the Tao. Consequently, our world is in chaos. The world has almost infinite desires. Some are good. Some are bad. Going to war and rape women is bad. Feed the poor and training them so they can fish on their own is good.

The wise man follows the Tao and his mind is tamed. He still might have desires yet his will is to be in tune with the Tao. The mind is either your enemy or your friend.

A sage that truly enters the silence won't have any desire. In this state one acquires tranquility. The mind, body, and soul are at perfect peace.

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 performing actions 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, there is 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 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.

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 that 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 in the midst of 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



Returning is the motion of the Tao.

Yielding is the way of the Tao.

The ten thousand things are born of being.

Being is born of not being.

Commentary

We all come from the Tao. We are born and ultimately we die. It's like a raindrop return to the source of the ocean. One famous mystic said everyone knows that a raindrop return to the ocean. But how many people know that the ocean is contained in the raindrop. The wise men of the past knew this.

Everything has a cycle. There are four seasons. There are high tides and low tides. It takes one year for the planet earth to go around the sun. The moon in the sky goes through different phases. There is a planting of seeds and harvesting. There is an endless example of this. The universe is created and someday will disappear like a thief in the night.

Everything in the universe comes from the Tao.

Forty-one



The wise student hears of the Tao and practices it diligently.

The average student hears of the Tao and gives it thought now and again.

The foolish student hears of the Tao and laughs aloud.

If there were no laughter, the Tao would not be what it is.

Hence it is said:

The bright path seems dim;

Going forward seems like retreat;

The easy way seems hard;

The highest Virtue seems empty;

Great purity seems sullied;

A wealth of Virtue seems inadequate;

The strength of Virtue seems frail;

Real Virtue seems unreal;

The perfect square has no corners;

Great talents ripen late;

The highest notes are hard to hear;

The greatest form has no shape;

The Tao is hidden and without name.

The Tao alone nourishes and brings everything to fulfillment.

Commentary

The wise student hears of the Tao and practices it diligently.

The average student hears of the Tao and gives it thought now and again.

The foolish student hears of the Tao and laughs aloud.

If there were no laughter, the Tao would not be what it is.

The Tao must chuckle and laugh when he hears this. Just think behind the foolish student's laugh lies the Tao. It is closer than your breath. Yet one doesn't have the eyes to see. Some people are on a teeter-totter of the Tao. They don't put their mind, body, and soul into it. They are simply sitting on the fence.

This wise student practices the Tao in each and every moment. He advances in the video game of life. The average and foolish student don't even realize there is a video game of life.

The Tao is quite an elusive path. The path is not clear yet it is clear. The path is easy yet arduous. At times living in this world, these virtues don't seem necessary. Be humble in this world is a weakness. Everything is turned backward. Currently, the world embraces the darkness. The word Guru means one who takes you from darkness into light. A Rugu takes you from light into darkness. This is the current condition in the world today.

Hence it is said:

The bright path seems dim;

Going forward seems like retreat;

The easy way seems hard;

The highest Virtue seems empty;

Great purity seems sullied;

A wealth of Virtue seems inadequate;

The strength of Virtue seems frail;

Real Virtue seems unreal;

The perfect square has no corners;

The Tao to most people is simply words or a belief. Who would believe in such nonsense? We can't imagine something like this because of whole life is spent in doing not being. Without entering daily into the silence this is all mumbo jumbo.

When I was young I couldn't make any sense whatsoever what they were talking about. Yet today my life is spent in understanding and experiencing the jewel within.

In the past, I tried to understand the mango without ever tasting the mango.

Lao Tzu continues.

Great talents ripen late;

The highest notes are hard to hear;

The greatest form has no shape;

The Tao is hidden and without name.

The Tao alone nourishes and brings everything to fulfillment.

Wine improves in quality with age. A wise man gathers wisdom along the journey of life. You never know how far you have walked. Each step is precious. Each step one must be conscious and aware. Many people are wondering aimlessly on this journey of life.

Just think the unstruck music is everywhere but we have deaf ears. The Tao has no form so you can't see it with your two eyes. Yet man is hardwired to see and hear the Tao. We have five senses and at the same time, we have five internal senses. Only a wise man understands what I'm talking about.

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 one 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-three



The softest thing in the universe

Overcomes the hardest thing in the universe.

That without substance can enter where there is no room.

Hence I know the value of non-action.

Teaching without words and work without doing

Are understood by very few.

Commentary

The softest thing in the universe

Overcomes the hardest thing in the universe.

Love will melt an angry man.

It will bring him to his knees.

Running water will create over time a beautiful canyon.

The web of life exists everywhere but it has no substance.

A wise man understands the value of non-action. He only acts in accordance with the Tao.

Teaching without words and work without doing

Are understood by very few.

Mankind is operating as human doers, not human beings. Without learning about how to be silent and to be in a state of being then mankind will never understand these words.

Forty-four



Fame or self: Which matters more?

Self or wealth: Which is more precious?

Gain or loss: Which is more painful?

He who is attached to things will suffer much.

He who saves will suffer heavy loss.

A contented man is never disappointed.

He who knows when to stop does not find himself in trouble.

He will stay forever safe.

Commentary

Life is a hidden treasure. It exists inside of us. Yet we clamor for riches and fame. We spend so much time working yet millions of people can't sleep at night. A wise man puts his head on the pillow of life and falls asleep like a newborn puppy. He doesn't have a care in the world.

Currently, the worldwide shutdown is occurring.

These words from Lao Tzu are extremely relevant today.

He who is attached to things will suffer much.

He who saves will suffer heavy loss.

A contented man is never disappointed.

He who knows when to stop does not find himself in trouble.

He will stay forever safe.

One who embraces the Tao ultimately becomes the Tao. In the face of adversity, a wise man simply smiles. That is his true nature and yours.

Forty-five



Great accomplishment seems imperfect,
Yet it does not outlive its usefulness.
Great fullness seems empty,
Yet cannot be exhausted.

Great straightness seems twisted.
Great intelligence seems stupid.
Great eloquence seems awkward.

Movement overcomes cold.
Stillness overcomes heat.
Stillness and tranquillity set things in order in the universe.

Commentary

Things aren't what they seem. Imagine we see only around one percent of the light spectrum. Yet we think we see the entire picture. Life is like going to the movies. We watch the movie of life and get sucked into all the drama. We think the drama is real. Yet the sages were smart enough to turn around and see light projecting from the projector onto the screen thereby making a picture frame by frame. Sages called this entering into silence or meditation.

Many times what we perceive is the opposite.

For example, Lao Tzu said the following.

Great accomplishment seems imperfect,

Yet it does not outlive its usefulness.

Great fullness seems empty,

Yet cannot be exhausted.

Great straightness seems twisted.

Great intelligence seems stupid.

Great eloquence seems awkward.

We perceive these as the opposite. Because we are human doers we never stop to smell the roses. Many people don't know that roses even exist. We live such a fast-track lifestyle we ignore the precious jewel within. Once again many people aren't even aware of the jewel.

So we have lost a sense of awareness and consciousness. This is why we can't see or perceive correctly.

We can't see that the entire universe is still yet everything is in motion. Only a wise man understands what I'm talking about.

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 as a simple conflict but without proper wisdom is 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 actions 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.

Forty-seven



Without going outside, you may know the whole world.

Without looking through the window, you may see the ways of heaven.

The farther you go, the less you know.

Thus the sage knows without traveling;

He sees without looking;

He works without doing.

Commentary

It seems like mediation to me. You are the universe. You just don't know it. The sages have known this for thousands of years. Here's the paradox you can travel all around the world and stay in fancy hotels yet your knowledge is limited. A wise man closes his eyes and is in tune with the Tao.

Thus the sage travels within. He sees without looking; He works without doing. This is the divine paradox. This may seem like mumbo jumbo. Unfortunately, we are human doers. Our true state is human beings. Therefore we can't see the forest from the trees.

Forty-eight



In the pursuit of learning, every day something is acquired.

In the pursuit of Tao, every day something is dropped.

Less and less is done

Until non-action is achieved.

When nothing is done, nothing is left undone.

The world is ruled by letting things take their course.

It cannot be ruled by interfering.

Commentary

As human doers, we are in the pursuit of learning. Many people stop at a certain point. One who is in the pursuit of the Tao drops his internal baggage every day? The load of life gets lighter and lighter. As human doers, the load gets heavier and heavier.

A wise man realizes that by transforming from a doer to a state of being less action is required. One gets off the treadmill of running in circles. One has his feet on the ground and his head in heaven.

A wise sage has complete trust in the Tao. He does not interfere with his ego which thinks it knows all the answers.

Forty-nine



The sage has no mind of his own.
He is aware of the needs of others.

I am good to people who are good.
I am also good to people who are not good.
Because Virtue is goodness.
I have faith in people who are faithful.
I also have faith in people who are not faithful.
Because Virtue is faithfulness.

The sage is shy and humble - to the world he seems confusing.
Others look to him and listen.
He behaves like a little child.

Commentary

The sage has no mind of his own. He is in tune with the Tao. Being in tune one is aware of others. He has gone from me to we, therefore, he understands the essence of life.

One is good to all regardless of people being good or bad towards him. Because a sage has virtue he displays virtue to ones who have it and ones who don't.

The sage becomes like water. He is humble and shy. He just smiles at diversity. He has nothing to prove. To the world, they might call him an idiot. To the sage, it's a compliment. Feet on the ground and head in heaven. To the world, it's a derogatory word. Such is the paradox of life.

Still, some listen to his words and get changed by them. There are only a few of them.

Fifty

$$Life = \int_{\text{birth}}^{\text{death}} \frac{\text{happiness}}{\text{time}} \Delta \text{time}$$

Between birth and death,
Three in ten are followers of life,
Three in ten are followers of death,
And men just passing from birth to death also number three in ten.
Why is this so?
Because they live their lives on the gross level.

He who knows how to live can walk abroad
Without fear of rhinoceros or tiger.
He will not be wounded in battle.
For in him rhinoceroses can find no place to thrust their horn,
Tigers no place to use their claws,
And weapons no place to pierce.
Why is this so?
Because he has no place for death to enter.

Commentary

I remember when I was you I was afraid of death. Mind you I don't want to die today.

Three out of ten are followers of life which means they reach old age. In China that was quite rare.

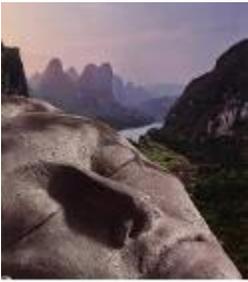
Three in ten are followers of death. Unfortunately, the child death rate was quite high.

And men just passing from birth to death also number three in ten. These are men who are running on the treadmill of life. Maybe today it's someone texting on the freeway of life. They are like leaves blowing in the wind. They react to each and every situation.

Unfortunately, 9 out of ten are human doers, not human beings. We have been trained by society to do, do, and do.

Lao Tzu says that if a person embraces the Tao the world problems won't affect you. Currently, there is a worldwide shutdown. We can't stop the events around us. Yet a wise man makes lemonade with sour lemons. One can live in the center of the hurricane. Most people live in the howling winds of the mind. Big difference. The Tao says the center of the hurricane exists inside of you.

Fifty-one



All things arise from Tao.

They are nourished by Virtue.

They are formed from matter.

They are shaped by environment.

Thus the ten thousand things all respect Tao and honor Virtue.

Respect of Tao and honor of Virtue are not demanded,

But they are in the nature of things.

Therefore all things arise from Tao.

By Virtue they are nourished,

Developed, cared for,

Sheltered, comforted,

Grown, and protected.

Creating without claiming,

Doing without taking credit,

Guiding without interfering,

This is Primal Virtue.

[Commentary](#)

Imagine the entire universe is alive and conscious. Sages have been saying that for thousands of years. The entire universe was created and someday it will die. Yet the essence never dies. All things in the seen and unseen come from the Tao. All creation is nourished by virtue. Love is the essence of all.

Everything created i.e. matter is born from the Tao. Therefore it has great virtue. The Tao does not shout or yell hey look at me I am the source of virtue. It doesn't demand anything. It simple shines love like the sun shining light in the sky. Yet the entire universe contains the virtues of the Tao. That included you and me. It even includes your enemies.

The Tao will never interfere with your life. You are breathing in each and every moment. Behind your breath lie the Tao which is keeping you alive. The Tao doesn't shout hey look at me. Because of me, you are alive. It remains silent.

When you pay attention to the Tao it will start paying attention to you. It's as simple as that. You have free will. Remember the Tao is humble. It is not arrogant or angry. Many people put these labels on God.

From the moment you are born to the moment you die the Tao is present in your life. It will comfort us yet never interfere in our affairs. Even when we die we go back to the Tao.

The precious jewel lies inside of you.

Fifty-two



The beginning of the universe

Is the mother of all things.

Knowing the mother, one also knows the sons.

Knowing the sons, yet remaining in touch with the mother,

Brings freedom from the fear of death.

Keep your mouth shut,

Guard the senses,

And life is ever full.

Open your mouth,

Always be busy,

And life is beyond hope.

Seeing the small is insight;

Yielding to force is strength.

Using the outer light, return to insight,

And in this way be saved from harm.

This is learning constancy.

Commentary

The entire universe was birthed through the Mother. It is the source of all things. One who knows the Creator Mother will know the sons the creation. Both the Mother and sons are intertwined together. There is a thread of love tying it all together.

Lao Tzu said the following.

Keep your mouth shut,

Guard the senses,

And life is ever full.

This is a human being one that loves to live in the silence. Not I said being.

Open your mouth,

Always be busy,

And life is beyond hope.

This is human doers. We are walking on a treadmill and never going anywhere.

Seeing the small is insight;

Meditation reveals a light of the smallest of the small.

Yielding to force is strength.

In some of the eastern martial arts, they use the opposing forces against the opponent. A wise man understands that water is the greatest force yet it is soft, humble, and fluid.

Using the outer light, return to insight,

And in this way be saved from harm.

This is learning constancy.

Light brings clarity. The sages entered silence and see the light behind all creation. This brings supreme wisdom and clarity.

Fifty-three

IF I HAVE EVEN JUST A LITTLE SENSE, I
WILL WALK ON THE MAIN ROAD AND MY
ONLY FEAR WILL BE OF STRAYING FROM IT.
KEEPING TO THE MAIN ROAD IS EASY, BUT
PEOPLE LOVE TO BE SIDETRACKED.

- LAO TZU -

If I have even just a little sense,
I will walk on the main road and my only fear
will be of straying from it.
Keeping to the main road is easy,
But people love to be sidetracked.

When the court is arrayed in splendor,
The fields are full of weeds,
And the granaries are bare.
Some wear gorgeous clothes,
Carry sharp swords,
And indulge themselves with food and drink;
They have more possessions than they can use.
They are robber barons.
This is certainly not the way of Tao.

[Commentary](#)

If I have even just a little sense,
I will walk on the main road and my only fear

will be of straying from it.

Keeping to the main road is easy,
But people love to be sidetracked.

The wise man takes these words to heart. His entire goal is to remain driving on this precious road. He doesn't want to get sidetracked and take a detour. Many people have done that and have spent lifetimes trying to find the precious road. Most of humanity took a detour a long time ago. They came into this world and eventually, society told them to grow up. They then took a detour and are lost. Yet they think they are found. Such is the paradox of life.

When the court is arrayed in splendor,
The fields are full of weeds,
And the granaries are bare.
Some wear gorgeous clothes,
Carry sharp swords,
And indulge themselves with food and drink;
They have more possessions than they can use.
They are robber barons.
This is certainly not the way of Tao.

Wow, I'm amazed that Lao Tzu wrote this. Granted he wrote this as he was leaving China. The rich only cared for themselves. They did not care for the common man. He would have been executed if he stayed around. Yet these words are still alive today. Unfortunately, this truth is still alive today. We have the one percent who have more money than ninety-nine percent. Yet we make major laws to give them major tax breaks. I mean major. Who is paying this bill? The rest of us. There are the robbers yet humanity still allows them to carry on

their ways. I'm writing this during the global shutdown and still, the ones who are in power want the workers to go back to work. They don't care how many people die. It's just a number to them.

Fifty-four



What is firmly established cannot be uprooted.

What is firmly grasped cannot slip away.

It will be honored from generation to generation.

Cultivate Virtue in your self,

And Virtue will be real.

Cultivate it in the family,

And Virtue will abound.

Cultivate it in the village,

And Virtue will grow.

Cultivate it in the nation,

And Virtue will be abundant.

Cultivate it in the universe,

And Virtue will be everywhere.

Therefore look at the body as body;

Look at the family as family;

Look at the village as village;

Look at the nation as nation;

Look at the universe as universe.

How do I know the universe is like this?

By looking!

[Commentary](#)

The Tao is the tree of life. Its roots are infinitely deep. It can't be moved or shaken. It can't be cut down. This tree will be honored for time immemorial.

The only way to obtain virtue is by being a human being. Note I said being. A person who cultivates virtue will give fruit to this world. This spreads to a family, a village, a nation, the world, and finally the universe. You are the missing piece of the puzzle.

Unfortunately, we are human doers. We are on the treadmill of life going nowhere. Only when humanity understands that the jewel lies within can we change this world. Otherwise, humanity will always take the detour on the freeway of life and get lost.

In Lao Tzu's parting words he says.

How do I know the universe is like this?

By looking!

You are the universe. You just don't know it. The wise men have discovered that only by entering the silence within can you understand these words.

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.

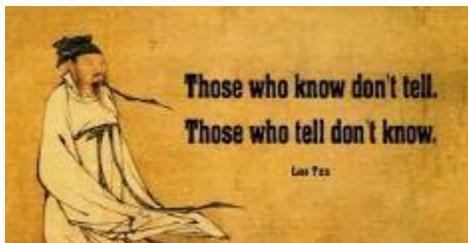
This is not the way of Tao.

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-six



Those who know do not talk.

Those who talk do not know.

Keep your mouth closed.

Guard your senses.

Temper your sharpness.

Simplify your problems.

Mask your brightness.

Be at one with the dust of the Earth.

This is primal union.

He who has achieved this state

Is unconcerned with friends and enemies,

With good and harm, with honor and disgrace.

This therefore is the highest state of man.

Commentary

I heard this many moons ago and I still love it today. He who says doesn't know. He who knows doesn't say. This directly reflects the words of Lao Tzu.

Keep your mouth closed.

Guard your senses.

Temper your sharpness.

Simplify your problems.

Mask your brightness.

Be at one with the dust of the Earth.

This is primal union.

A wise man puts these principles into his life. He becomes cosmic dust. The world can sweep it under their carpets. The wise man just smiles. He has nothing to prove.

He who has achieved this state

Is unconcerned with friends and enemies,

With good and harm, with honor and disgrace.

This therefore is the highest state of man.

A person who has reached this state could care less about what humanity thinks about him. He dropped his ego a long time ago. This is the highest state man can reach.

Fifty-seven



Rule a nation with justice.

Wage war with surprise moves.

Become master of the universe without striving.

How do I know that this is so?

Because of this!

The more laws and restrictions there are,

The poorer people become.

The sharper men's weapons,

The more trouble in the land.

The more ingenious and clever men are,

The more strange things happen.

The more rules and regulations,

The more thieves and robbers.

Therefore the sage says:

I take no action and people are reformed.

I enjoy peace and people become honest.

I do nothing and people become rich.

I have no desires and people return to the good and simple life.

Commentary

This is so true today. The average American is struggling to pay his bills. The one percent has more money than the 99 percent. Our military budget is over sixty percent of our budget. We are in midst of a global shutdown and medical supplies are running out. There are no leaders like Winston Churchill who provide hope to humanity. The media isn't presenting a ray of hope more like rays of despair. Our country and the world currently is in chaos.

We are so far off the mark. We hate tree huggers and mock the young who have deep concerns for this planet.

Billions of people are dying of hunger. So many children in America don't have enough food to eat for the day. I could go on and on. We have lost the way. Maybe we were never aware of the Tao. Yet we were born from the Tao. The Tao is sustaining us. When we die we go back to the Tao. What happened? Why the disconnect.

When the world doesn't follow the Tao chaos emerges. When the world doesn't follow the laws of nature chaos happens.

During this shutdown, nature has pressed the reset button. Stories are being told all around the world where people are witnessing this. I pray that when this is over we can have serious discussions and breakthroughs on the lessons that we have learned. Never before do we need to embrace nature and the Tao like never before.

Nature has shown us by a worldwide shutdown it can repair itself. We just have to get out of the way. We need a balance between being human doers and human beings. Without ethics and morals, we throw garbage into our living rooms. We place more importance on the economy than the environment. The rich get richer. The poor get poorer. People are working harder yet get paid less. Everyone

is struggling in life. Can you see the world is in chaos? There is a better way to live. Yet we are so stubborn.

They say it takes a million years for a civilization to grow and become emotionally mature. I think this is where the problems stem from. We have stunted growth. We live in an awareness of me. This global shutdown has demonstrated that we are going from me to we. Social distancing won't work if each and every individual doesn't follow it.

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 differences 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.

Fifty-nine



In caring for others and serving heaven,
There is nothing like using restraint.
Restraint begins with giving up one's own ideas.
This depends on Virtue gathered in the past.
If there is a good store of Virtue, then nothing is impossible.
If nothing is impossible, then there are no limits.
If a man knows no limits, then he is fit to be a ruler.
The mother principle of ruling holds good for a long time.
This is called having deep roots and a firm foundation,
The Tao of long life and eternal vision.

Commentary

In caring for others and serving heaven,
There is nothing like using restraint.
Restraint begins with giving up one's own ideas.
Moderation is the key to life. When a person is in tune with the Tao one is aware of moderation and restraint. There is a time to act and a time to be. Our current leaders act on impulse and deliver policies via Twitter. In the past, the leaders

would ponder it over and dialogue with advisors before making a public statement.

A nation's psyche is built on the ethics and morals of its leaders. If the leaders don't possess them the nation will be divided. Look at our nation today. 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.

This is ruling against the laws of nature and the Tao. This is more relevant than ever before.

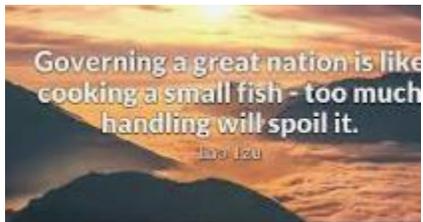
A true leader leads like a Mother not like an egocentric person. A mother processes all the virtues of the Tao. She rules with tenderness and softness. You may think these qualities are a sign of weakness. Many macho men would say so. Then I would say try getting in between a baby tiger and its Mother. Then tell me that these qualities are weak.

Man in his egotistic mindset thinks he knows what is weak and what is strong. He has it all backward. Anger, war, bickering, fighting, blaming others, criticizing your opponents, mocking one another are signs of weakness. Yet at this point, many Americans love this and approve of this conduct.

It's like we are going more from the light into darkness. Yet we don't have the eyes to see.

We are in midst of a global shutdown. Nature is telling us something yet do we have the eyes to see. Can we hear the precious message?

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.

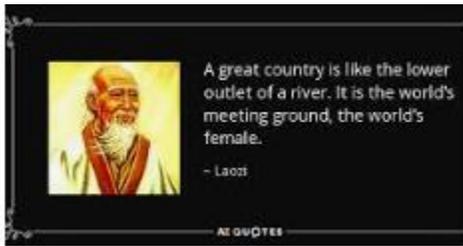
It takes great insight to rule. If the leaders aren't aware of silence they will rule with uncertainty. They will be biased. They will vote upon the party line. The leaders will forget about morals and ethics the cornerstone of politics. Both sides of the aisle will bicker and get angry with one another. 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 what 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 and only is doing. In this state of mind, it leads to chaos. Just think in the last forty years the 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-three



Practice non-action.

Work without doing.

Taste the tasteless.

Magnify the small, increase the few.

Reward bitterness with care.

See simplicity in the complicated.

Achieve greatness in little things.

In the universe the difficult things are done as if they are easy.

In the universe great acts are made up of small deeds.

The sage does not attempt anything very big,

And thus achieved greatness.

Easy promises make for little trust.

Taking things lightly results in great difficulty.

Because the sage always confronts difficulties,

He never experiences them.

Commentary

Practice non-action.

Work without doing.

Taste the tasteless.

Magnify the small, increase the few.

Reward bitterness with care.

For most of the man, these are paradoxes and don't make any sense at all. Yet a sage realizes the truth behind these precious statements. When a person is a doer only one's awareness is lacking. Remember we only see one percent of the light spectrum. The Tao contains all of creation.

These traits are embraced by the great sages. You see it's an entirely different view in life. You can see the forest from the trees.

See simplicity in the complicated.

Achieve greatness in little things.

The sages being in tune with the Tao is in alignment with the Tao. The Tao is simple so they are simple. Simplicity can be quite complicated. Imagine the inner workings of the universe. Simplicity is tying it all together.

In the universe, the difficult things are done as if they are easy.

In the universe, great acts are made up of small deeds.

The sage does not attempt anything very big,

And thus achieved greatness.

Once again simplicity is the key. A human being who is a doer overthinks and makes life more complicated than he should. Most people's lives are like leaves blowing in the wind. The wise man lives in the center of the hurricane. In this state he achieves greatness.

Easy promises make for little trust.

Taking things lightly results in great difficulty.

Because the sage always confronts difficulties,

He never experiences them.

To conquer the mind is the most difficult thing to do. The sage mission is to be still therefore his life is not difficult. He can sail through difficulties.

The average man makes promises without truly pondering them over. This leads to mistrust. Consequently, one's life is difficult.

Sixty-four



Peace is easily maintained;

Trouble is easily overcome before it starts.

The brittle is easily shattered;

The small is easily scattered.

Deal with it before it happens.

Set things in order before there is confusion.

A tree as great as a man's embrace springs up from a small shoot;

A terrace nine stories high begins with a pile of earth;

A journey of a thousand miles starts under one's feet.

He who acts defeats his own purpose;

He who grasps loses.

The sage does not act, and so is not defeated.

He does not grasp and therefore does not lose.

People usually fail when they are on the verge of success.

So give as much care to the end as to the beginning;

Then there will be no failure.

Therefore the sage seeks freedom from desire.

He does not collect precious things.

He learns not to hold on to ideas.

He brings men back to what they have lost.

He help the ten thousand things find their own nature,

But refrains from action.

[Commentary](#)

Peace is easily maintained;

Trouble is easily overcome before it starts.

The brittle is easily shattered;

The small is easily scattered.

Deal with it before it happens.

Set things in order before there is confusion.

One who lives is in a state of being, easily maintains peace in his life. This is his true state.

One who is a doer peace can be shattered at any time. One's peace is dependent upon the external environment which always changes.

A tree as great as a man's embrace springs up from a small shoot;

A terrace nine stories high begins with a pile of earth;

A journey of a thousand miles starts under one's feet.

A doer never plants the seed of life inside of him

A wise man plants the seeds and takes precious care of it. He takes conscious steps in each and every moment. When he falls he dusts himself off and continues walking.

He who acts defeats his own purpose;

He who grasps loses.

The sage does not act, and so is not defeated.

He does not grasp and therefore does not lose.

A doer is grasping at straws. One lives in a reactive state of mind. One who grasps at life loses. A sage lives in the present moment so he does not grasp at anything. Therefore he is always contented.

People usually fail when they are on the verge of success.

So give as much care to the end as to the beginning;

Then there will be no failure.

The greatest doubt on your journey comes when you are inches away from the finishing line. The mind will give you all sorts of reasons why you should quit. It's only a wise man that understands when the mind does this to complexly ignore and tell the mind to shut up.

He learns not to hold on to ideas.

He brings men back to what they have lost.

He helps the ten thousand things find their own nature,

But refrains from action.

A wise man just smiles at life. This is how he helps humanity. Kindness and love can move mountains.

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 treasure 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.

Sixty-eight



A good soldier is not violent.

A good fighter is not angry.

A good winner is not vengeful

A good employer is humble.

This is known as the Virtue of not striving.

This is known as ability to deal with people.

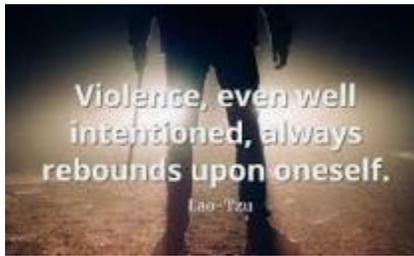
This since ancient times has been known as the ultimate unity with heaven.

Commentary

When humanity embraces the Tao human nature will change for the better. These negative traits such violence, anger, and being vengeful will someday disappear in the night.

The Tao will rule with kindness and humility.

Sixty-nine



There is a saying among soldiers:

I dare not make the first move but would rather play the guest;

I dare not advance an inch but would rather withdraw a foot.

This is called marching without appearing to move,

Rolling up your sleeves without showing your arm,

Capturing the enemy without attacking,

Being armed without weapons.

There is no greater catastrophe than underestimating the enemy.

By underestimating the enemy, I almost lost what I value.

Therefore when the battle is joined,

The underdog will win.

Commentary

There is a saying among soldiers:

I dare not make the first move but would rather play the guest;

I dare not advance an inch but would rather withdraw a foot.

This is called marching without appearing to move,

Rolling up your sleeves without showing your arm,

Capturing the enemy without attacking,

Being armed without weapons.

War is insane. Even soldiers know that. I used to work for the Navy Seals in Coronado. You would think that they like to go to war. To be quite frank they would prefer to have a bottle of corona in their hands and tending the barbeque. War is the absolute last resort. Unfortunately, the United States almost loves to go to war. Soldiers would love to retreat from the front lines.

I love what Stefan Stenudd says about this passage.

Also, the warrior who is eager to advance is the one who nurtures the illusion that war brings good things to the winner. There are no winners in war. Those who know this neither invite to it nor hurry to advance in it.

The hesitant warrior marches without marching, which is to say that he tries as much as he can to win the war without doing battle. If prepared properly, a war can be won before the battle begins.

To charge without an enemy is to arm the country so well in times of peace that war is avoided, or swiftly won. It's arming to avoid war, not to wage it. The same can be said for seizing without weapons.

There is no greater catastrophe than underestimating the enemy.

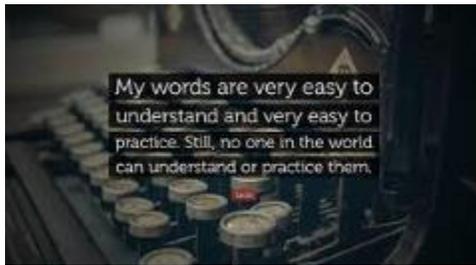
By underestimating the enemy, I almost lost what I value.

Therefore when the battle is joined,

The underdog will win.

This passage brings to mind the American Revolution war with Great Britain. Here you had a world-class military that was highly trained. The British forces thought this would be an easy war to win. You had this ragtag army many of them barefoot and not trained at all. Yet they had the wit and tenacity to carry on. They were fighting for freedom. Never underestimate your enemy. Especially when you are the tyrant.

Seventy



My words are easy to understand and easy to perform,
Yet no man under heaven knows them or practices them.

My words have ancient beginnings.

My actions are disciplined.

Because men do not understand, they have no knowledge of me.

Those that know me are few;

Those that abuse me are honored.

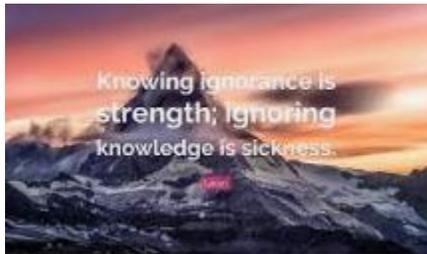
Therefore the sage wears rough clothing and holds the jewel in his heart.

Commentary

What is it in man that we are so stubborn? Everyone knows the world is in chaos. We are in the midst of a worldwide shutdown. The entire world is forced to be in isolation. Yet when we come out of this will we change our ways. Just think Lao Tzu left China because of the rat race that existed in China at that time. The whole vast areas of human stupidity were rapid upon the land. Nobody was the slightest interested in the vast mysteries of the Tao. Only a few people grasped that wisdom. Looks like it got to a boiling point for Lao Tzu and he got so frustrated he left the country to never come back again.

The world has been forced into isolation. Mother Nature has told us to go to our rooms and close the door. Think about what you are doing. What can you do to change? I'll tell you when you can leave the room.

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

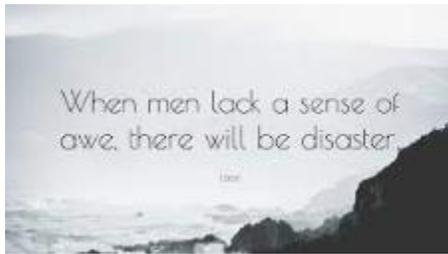
Common sense is uncommon. When I was in my teens I believed in preventive medicine. My train of thought was this is the only body you get so you might as well take care of it.

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 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.

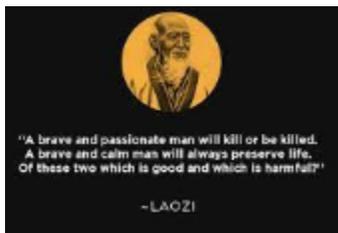
Do not harass them at work.

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. Unforetunately 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. By 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 a doer. 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 a great story but the Tao will give you challenging events. Mind you we are in the 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-four



If men are not afraid to die,
It is no avail to threaten them with death.

If men live in constant fear of dying,
And if breaking the law means that a man will be killed,
Who will dare to break the law?

There is always an official executioner.
If you try to take his place,
It is like trying to be a master carpenter and cutting wood.
If you try to cut wood like a master carpenter, you will only hurt your hand.

Commentary

We come into this world and we leave this world. Everything is created and destroyed. Even the universe.

There is always an official executioner.
If you try to take his place,
It is like trying to be a master carpenter and cutting wood.
If you try to cut wood like a master carpenter, you will only hurt your hand.

Don't try to be a master executioner. It is not your job. One of the laws is thy shall not kill. Some countries still have laws for the death penalty. Yet people in those countries still commit murder. Even if they are afraid of dying they commit brutal crimes. Somewhere there is a disconnect. In the US prisons are for profit. If that is the case they don't want to rehabilitate anyone. They make money while you are in prison. In Sweden, they are closing prisons because inmates are treated with care and brought back into society as healthy individuals.

Seventy-five



Why are the people starving?

Because the rulers eat up the money in taxes.

Therefore the people are starving.

Why are the people rebellious?

Because the rulers interfere too much.

Therefore they are rebellious.

Why do the people think so little of death?

Because the rulers demand too much of life.

Therefore the people take death lightly.

Having little to live on, one knows better than to value life too much.

Commentary

This sounds like today. Last year a major bill was passed that allowed the one percent of the people who have more money than the 99 percent passed. This gave them, even more, trillions of dollars. One out of every five kids doesn't have enough food for the day. The United States is turning into a third-world country. I'm writing this during the worldwide shutdown. True leadership is missing except

governor Como from New York. He is governing with ethics and morals and at the same time is level-headed.

The supposedly common man got tax breaks but in actuality, many people had to pay more taxes. It is the old switch and baits routine.

Why do the people think so little of death?

Because the rulers demand too much of life.

Therefore the people take death lightly.

Having little to live on, one knows better than to value life too much.

For many people, life is arduous and extremely difficult. How many Americans get bankrupt due to highly inflated medical bills? If you need surgery it could cost you hundreds of thousands of dollars. Most people are living paycheck to paycheck. Even your 401 plans are a joke. I just got my statement yesterday and I lost 18% of my portfolio. Congressman gets around 180,000 dollars a year when they leave congress.

How can we think so little of death when you just trying to survive. The same conditions occurred when Lao Tzu was alive. The ruler can lead humanity to either heaven or hell.

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 stiff 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 principals 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 them around today.

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.

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 shut-down 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 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 where 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 leaning 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.