

第五十五章

含德之厚，比于赤子。
毒蟲不螫，猛獸不據，攫鳥不搏。
骨弱筋柔而握固。
未知牝牡之合而媵作，精之至也。
終日號而不嘎，和之至也。
知和曰常，知常曰明，
益生曰祥，心使氣曰強。
物壯則老，謂之不道，不道早已。

Chapter 55
The mysterious charm

He who has in himself abundantly the attributes (of the Tao) is like an infant.
Poisonous insects will not sting him;
fierce beasts will not seize him;
birds of prey will not strike him.
(The infant's) bones are weak and its sinews soft, but yet its grasp is firm.
It knows not yet the union of male and female,
and yet its virile member may be excited;
—showing the perfection of its physical essence.
All day long it will cry without its throat becoming hoarse;
—showing the harmony (in its constitution).
To him by whom this harmony is known,
(The secret of) the unchanging (Tao) is shown,
And in the knowledge wisdom finds its throne.
All life-increasing arts to evil turn;
Where the mind makes the vital breath to burn,
(False) is the strength, (and o'er it we should mourn.)
When things have become strong, they (then) become old,
which may be said to be contrary to the Tao.
Whatever is contrary to the Tao soon ends.

第五十六章

知者不言，言者不知。
塞其兌，閉其門，
挫其銳，解其紛，
和其光，同其塵，
是謂玄同。
故不可得而親，不可得而疏；
不可得而利，不可得而害，
不可得而貴，不可得而賤。
故爲天下貴。

Chapter 56
The mysterious excellence

He who knows (the Tao) does not (care to) speak (about it);
he who is (ever ready to) speak about it does not know it.
He (who knows it) will keep his mouth shut and close the portals (of his nostrils).
He will blunt his sharp points and unravel the complications of things;
he will attemper his brightness, and bring himself into agreement with the obscurity (of others).
This is called 'the Mysterious Agreement.'
(Such an one) cannot be treated familiarly or distantly;
he is beyond all consideration of profit or injury;
of nobility or meanness:
—he is the noblest man under heaven.

第五十七章

以正治國，以奇用兵，
以無事取天下。
吾何以知其然哉？以此；
天下多忌諱，而民彌貧；
民多利器，國家滋昏；
人多伎巧，奇物滋起；
法令滋彰，盜賊多有。
故聖人雲：
我無爲，而民自化；
我好靜，而民自正；
我無事，而民自富；
我無欲，而民自樸。

Chapter 57
The genuine influence

A state may be ruled by (measures of) correction;
weapons of war may be used with crafty dexterity;
(but) the kingdom is made one's own (only) by freedom from action and purpose.
How do I know that it is so? By these facts:
—In the kingdom the multiplication of prohibitive enactments increases the poverty of the people;
the more implements to add to their profit that the people have,
the greater disorder is there in the state and clan;
the more acts of crafty dexterity that men possess,
the more do strange contrivances appear;
the more display there is of legislation,
the more thieves and robbers there are.
Therefore a sage has said,
'I will do nothing (of purpose), and the people will be transformed of themselves;
I will be fond of keeping still, and the people will of themselves become correct.
I will take no trouble about it, and the people will of themselves become rich;
I will manifest no ambition, and the people will of themselves attain to the primitive simplicity.'

第五十八章

其政悶悶，其民淳淳；
其政察察，其民缺缺。
禍兮，福之所倚；
福兮，禍之所伏。
孰知其極？其無正也。
正復爲奇，善復爲妖。
人之迷，其日固久！
是以聖人方而不割，廉而不剝，
直而不肆，光而不耀。

Chapter 58

Transformation according to circumstances

The government that seems the most unwise,
Oft goodness to the people best supplies;
That which is meddling, touching everything,
Will work but ill, and disappointment bring.
Misery!—happiness is to be found by its side!
Happiness!—misery lurks beneath it!
Who knows what either will come to in the end?
Shall we then dispense with correction?
The (method of) correction shall by a turn become distortion,
and the good in it shall by a turn become evil.
The delusion of the people (on this point) has indeed subsisted for a long time.
Therefore the sage is (like) a square which cuts no one (with its angles);
(like) a corner which injures no one (with its sharpness).
He is straightforward, but allows himself no license;
he is bright, but does not dazzle.