

Chapter 73

➤ 中文文本注释（陈鼓应）

(1) 勇于敢则杀，勇于不敢则活：勇于坚强就会死，勇于柔弱就可活。(2) 此两者，或利或害：指勇于柔弱则利，勇于坚强则害。(3) 是以圣人犹难之：这句是六十三章的文字，重出于此。(4) 天之道：自然的规律。(5) 繻(chǎn)然：坦然、安然、宽缓。(6) 天网：自然的范围。(7) 恢恢：宽大、广大。(8) 失：漏失。

➤ English Translation by James Legge

1. He whose boldness appears in his daring (to do wrong, in defiance of the laws) is put to death; he whose boldness appears in his not daring (to do so) lives on. Of these two cases the one appears to be advantageous, and the other to be injurious. But

When Heaven's anger smites a man,

Who the cause shall truly scan?.

On this account the sage feels a difficulty (as to what to do in the former case).

2. It is the way of Heaven not to strive, and yet it skilfully overcomes; not to speak, and yet it is skilful in (obtaining) a reply; does not call, and yet men come to it of themselves. Its demonstrations are quiet, and yet its plans are skilful and effective. The meshes of the net of Heaven are large; far apart, but letting nothing escape.

➤ English Translation by Robert G. Henricks

If you're brave in being daring, you'll be killed;
 If you're brave in not being daring, you'll live.
 With these two things, in one case there's profit, in the other there's harm.
 The things Heaven hates—who knows why?
 The Way of Heaven is not to fight yet to be good at winning—
 Not to speak yet skilfully respond—
 No one summons it, yet it comes on its own—
 To be at ease yet carefully plan.
 Heaven's net is large and vast;
 Its mesh may be coarse yet nothing slips through.

➤ English Translation by D. C. Lau

He who is fearless in being bold will meet with his death;
 He who is fearless in being timid will stay alive.
 Of the two, one leads to good, the other to harm.

Heaven hates what it hates,
 Who knows the reason why?

Therefore even the sage treats some things as difficult.

The way of heaven
 Excels in overcoming though it does not contend,
 In responding though it does not speak,
 In attracting though it does not summon,
 In laying plans though it appears slack.

The net of heaven is cast wide.
 Though the mesh is not fine, yet nothing ever slips through.

Chapter 74

➤ 中文文本注释 (陈鼓应)

(1) 奇：奇诡。为奇，指为邪作恶的行为。(2) 执：拘押。(3) 司杀者：专管杀人的。指天道。(4) 代司杀者：代替专管杀人的。(5) 斲(zhuó)：砍、削。

➤ English Translation by James Legge

1. The people do not fear death; to what purpose is it to (try to) frighten them with death? If the people were always in awe of death, and I could always seize those who do wrong, and put them to death, who would dare to do wrong?
2. There is always One who presides over the infliction of death. He who would inflict death in the room of him who so presides over it may be described as hewing wood instead of a great carpenter. Seldom is it that he who undertakes the hewing, instead of the great carpenter, does not cut his own hands!

➤ English Translation by Robert G. Henricks

If the people were constant [in their behavior] and yet did not fear death,
 How could you use execution to intimidate them?
 If you brought it about that the people were constant [in their behavior] and moreover
 feared, and [we] took those who behaved in abnormal ways and killed them—who would
 dare act in this way?!

If the people are constant and moreover necessarily fear death,
 then we constantly have the one in charge of executions.
 Now killing people in place of the one in charge of executions,
 this [is like] cutting wood in place of the head carpenter.
 And of those who cut wood in place of the head carpenter, very few do not hurt their hands!

➤ English Translation by D. C. Lau

When the people are not afraid of death, wherefore frighten them with death?

Were the people always afraid of death, and were I able to arrest and put to death those who innovate, then who would dare?

There is a regular executioner whose charge it is to kill.

To kill on behalf of the executioner is what is described as chopping wood on behalf of the master carpenter.

In chopping wood on behalf of the master carpenter, there are few who escape hurting their own hands instead.

Chapter 75

➤ 中文文本注释 (陈鼓应)

- (1) 有为：政令繁苛，强作妄为。(2) 以其上求生之厚：由于统治者奉养奢厚。
 (3) 无以生为：不把生活上的奉养弄得过分奢侈丰厚。即是不贵生，生活要能恬淡。
 (4) 贤：胜。(5) 贵生：厚养生命。

➤ English Translation by James Legge

1. The people suffer from famine because of the multitude of taxes consumed by their superiors. It is through this that they suffer famine.
2. The people are difficult to govern because of the (excessive) agency of their superiors (in governing them). It is through this that they are difficult to govern.
3. The people make light of dying because of the greatness of their labours in seeking for the means of living. It is this which makes them think light of dying. Thus it is that to leave the subject of living altogether out of view is better than to set a high value on it.

➤ English Translation by Robert G. Henricks

The reason why people starve,
 Is because they take so much in tax-grain.
 Therefore they starve.

The reason why the common people cannot be ruled,
 Is because their superiors have their reason for acting.
 Therefore they cannot be ruled.

The reason why people take death lightly,
 Is because they so avidly seek after life.
 Therefore they take death lightly.
 Only those who do not act for the purpose of living—
 Only these are superior to those who value life.

➤ English Translation by D. C. Lau

The people are hungry:
 It is because those in authority eat up too much in taxes
 That the people are hungry.

The people are difficult to govern.
It is because those in authority are too fond of action
That the people are difficult to govern.
The people treat death lightly:
It is because the people set too much store by life
That they treat death lightly.