## 老子 道德经 Laozi Tao Te Ching

第四章：道冲而用之，或不盈。渊兮，似万物之宗。（挫其锐，解其纷，和其光，同其尘。）湛兮，似或存。吾不知谁之子，象帝之先。

　　The Way is like an empty vessel That yet may be drawn from Without ever needing to be filled. It is bottomless；the very progenitor of all things in the world. In it all sharpness is blunted，All tangles untied，All glare tempered，All dust[1] smoothed. It is like a deep pool that never dries. Was it too the child of something else？We cannot tell. But as a substanceless image[2] it existed before the Ancestor.[3]

　　[1]Dust is the Taoist symbol for the noise and fuss of everyday life. [2]A hsiang，an image such as the mental images that float before us when we think. [3]The Ancestor in question is almost certainly the Yellow Ancestor who separated Earth from Heaven and so destroyed the Primal Unity，for which he is frequently censured is Chuang Tzu.

　　第五章：天地不仁，以万物为刍狗；圣人不仁，以百姓为刍狗。天地之间，其犹橐籥乎！虚而不屈，动而愈出。多言数穷，不如守中。   
　　Heaven and Earth are ruthless；To them the Ten Thousand Things are but as straw dogs. The Sage too is ruthless；To him the people are but as straw dogs. Yet[1] Heaven and Earth and all that lies between Is like a bellows In that it is empty，but gives a supply that never fails. Work it，and more comes out . Whereas the force of words[2] is soon spent. Far better is it to keep what is in the heart[3].

[1]Though ruthless nature is perpetually bounteous. [2]Laws and proclamations. [3]For chung as‘what is within the heart’，see Tso Chuan，Yin Kung 3rd year and Kuan Tzu，37，beginning. The comparison of Heaven and Earth to a bellows is also found in Kuan Tzu（P‘ien 11，beginning）。

第六章：谷神不死，是谓玄牝。玄牝之门，是谓天地根。绵绵若存，用之不勤。   
　　The Valley Spirit never dies. It is named the Mysterious Female. And the Doorway of the Mysterious Female Is the base from which Heaven and Earth sprang. It is there within us all the while；Draw upon it as you will，it never runs dry.

第七章：天长地久，天地所以能长且久者，以其不自生，故能长生。是以圣人后其身而身先，外其身而身存。非以其无私邪？故能成其私。   
　　Heaven is eternal，the Earth Everlasting. How come they to be so？Is it because they do not foster their own lives；That is why they live so long. Therefore the Sage Puts himself in the background；but is always to the fore. Remains outside；but is always there. Is it not just because he does not strive for any personal end That all his personal ends are fulfilled？

　　第八章：上善若水，水善利万物而不争。处众人之所恶，故几于道。居善地，心善渊，与善仁，言善信，正善治，事善能，动善时。夫唯不争，故无尤。   
　　The highest good is like that of water. The goodness of water is that it benefits the ten thousand creatures；yet itself does not scramble，but is content with the places that all men disdain. It is this that makes water so near to the Way. And if men think the ground the best place for building a house upon，If among thoughts they value those that are profound，If in friendship they value gentleness，In words，truth；in government，good order；In deeds，effectiveness；in actions，timeliness- In each case it is because they prefer what does not lead to strife，[1] And therefore does not go amiss.

[1]Even ordinary people realize the importance of the Taoist principle of‘water-like’behaviour，i.e. not striving to get on top or to the fore.

第九章：持而盈之，不如其已；揣而锐之，不可长保。金玉满堂，莫之能守。富贵而骄，自遗其咎。功遂身退，天之道也！   
　　Stretch a bow[1] to the very full，And you will wish you had stopped in time；Temper a sword-edge to its very sharpest，And you will find it soon grows dull When bronze and jade fill your hall It can no longer be guarded. Wealth and place breed insolence That brings ruin in its train. When your work is done，then withdraw！Such is Heaven‘s[2] Way.

[1] the expression used can also apply to filling a vessel to the brim；but’stretching a bow‘makes a better parallel to’sharpening a sword‘。   
　　[2] as opposed to the Way of man

第十章   
　　载营魄抱一，能无离乎。专气致柔，能如婴儿乎。   
　　涤除玄鉴，能如疵乎。爱国治民，能无为乎。   
　　天门开阖，能为雌乎。明白四达，能无知乎。

　　Chapter 10　　When the intelligent and animal souls are held together in one embrace，they can be kept from separating. When one gives undivided attention to the（vital）breath，and brings it to the utmost degree of pliancy，he can become as a（tender）babe. When he has cleansed away the most mysterious sights（of his imagination），he can become without a flaw.   
　　In loving the people and ruling the state，cannot he proceed without any（purpose of）action？In the opening and shutting of his gates of heaven，cannot he do so as a female bird？While his intelligence reaches in every direction，cannot he（appear to）be without knowledge？   
　　（The Tao）produces（all things）and nourishes them；it produces them and does not claim them as its own；it does all，and yet does not boast of it；it presides over all，and yet does not control them. This is what is called‘The mysterious Quality’（of the Tao）。

第十二章　　五色令人目盲﹔五音令人耳聋﹔五味令人口爽﹔   
　　驰骋畋猎，令人心发狂﹔难得之货，令人行妨。   
　　是以圣人为腹不为目，故去彼取此   
Chapter 12　　Colour‘s five hues from th’eyes their sight will take；   
　　Music‘s five notes the ears as deaf can make；   
　　The flavours five deprive the mouth of taste；   
　　The chariot course，and the wild hunting waste Make mad the mind；and objects rare and strange，Sought for，men‘s conduct will to evil change.   
　　Therefore the sage seeks to satisfy（the craving of）the belly，and not the（insatiable longing of the）eyes. He puts from him the latter，and prefers to seek the former.

第十五章　　古之善为道者，微妙玄通，深不可识。   
　　夫唯不可识，故强为之容：豫兮若冬涉川﹔犹兮若畏四邻﹔俨兮其若客﹔涣兮其若凌释﹔敦兮其若朴﹔旷兮其若谷﹔混兮其若浊﹔澹兮其若海﹔飂兮若无止。   
　　孰能浊以静之徐清。孰能安以动之徐生。   
　　保此道者，不欲盈。夫唯不盈，故能蔽而新成。

　　Chapter 15　　The skilful masters（of the Tao）in old times，with a subtle and exquisite penetration，comprehended its mysteries，and were deep（also）so as to elude men‘s knowledge. As they were thus beyond men’s knowledge，I will make an effort to describe of what sort they appeared to be.   
　　Shrinking looked they like those who wade through a stream in winter；irresolute like those who are afraid of all around them；grave like a guest（in awe of his host）；evanescent like ice that is melting away；unpretentious like wood that has not been fashioned into anything；vacant like a valley，and dull like muddy water.   
　　Who can（make）the muddy water（clear）？Let it be still，and it will gradually become clear. Who can secure the condition of rest？   
　　Let movement go on，and the condition of rest will gradually arise.   
　　They who preserve this method of the Tao do not wish to be full（of themselves）。It is through their not being full of themselves that they can afford to seem worn and not appear new and complete.

第十六章　　致虚极，守静笃。万物并作，吾以观复。   
　　夫物芸芸，各复归其根。归根曰静，静曰复命。复命曰常，知常曰明。不知常，妄作凶。   
　　知常容，容乃公，公乃全，全乃天，天乃道，道乃久，没身不殆。

　　Chapter 16　　The（state of）vacancy should be brought to the utmost degree，and that of stillness guarded with unwearying vigour. All things alike go through their processes of activity，and（then）we see them return（to their original state）。When things（in the vegetable world）have displayed their luxuriant growth，we see each of them return to its root. This returning to their root is what we call the state of stillness；and that stillness may be called a reporting that they have fulfilled their appointed end.   
　　The report of that fulfilment is the regular，unchanging rule. To know that unchanging rule is to be intelligent；not to know it leads to wild movements and evil issues. The knowledge of that unchanging rule produces a（grand）capacity and forbearance，and that capacity and forbearance lead to a community（of feeling with all things）。   
　　From this community of feeling comes a kingliness of character；and he who is king-like goes on to be heaven-like. In that likeness to heaven he possesses the Tao. Possessed of the Tao，he endures long；   
　　and to the end of his bodily life，is exempt from all danger of decay.