

Tao Te Ching

1

The Tao that can be spoken is not the eternal Tao
The name that can be named is not the eternal name
The nameless is the origin of Heaven and Earth
The named is the mother of myriad things
Thus, constantly without desire, one observes its essence
Constantly with desire, one observes its manifestations
These two emerge together but differ in name
The unity is said to be the mystery
Mystery of mysteries, the door to all wonders

2

When the world knows beauty as beauty, ugliness arises
When it knows good as good, evil arises
Thus being and non-being produce each other
Difficult and easy bring about each other
Long and short reveal each other
High and low support each other
Music and voice harmonize each other
Front and back follow each other
Therefore the sages
Manage the work of detached actions
Conduct the teaching of no words
They work with myriad things but do not control
They create but do not possess
They act but do not presume
They succeed but do not dwell on success
It is because they do not dwell on success
That it never goes away

3

Do not glorify the achievers
So the people will not squabble
Do not treasure goods that are hard to obtain
So the people will not become thieves
Do not show the desired things
So their hearts will not be confused

from Lao Tzu, Tao Te Ching 1-3