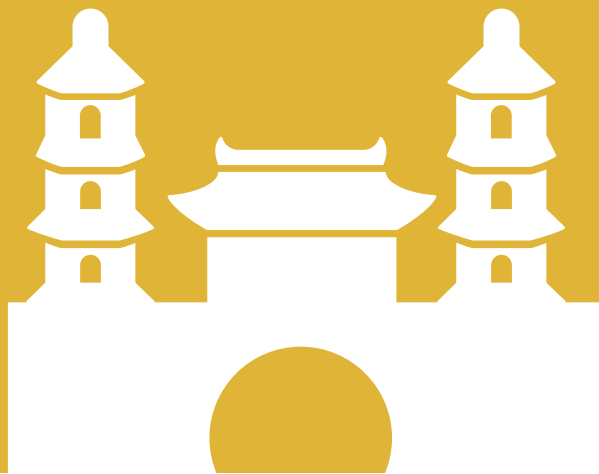




# Taoism

## 360



宗教經典三六〇

Taoism 360



# **Taoism**

360

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# Preface

When we first received the invitation to provide 360 Taoist Quotes in English we were a little apprehensive but realised the importance of having Taoist Quotes in English. As Taoism is indigenous to China, the works and teachings are in Chinese, and the outreach and propagation to the world is slow due to language and communication challenges. Hence, we could not turn away this uphill undertaking.

After reviewing the demographics of the readers and what would interest them, we decided to compile 360 quotes from academics, linguists and practitioners who have written in English on the Tao and Taoism covering Tao Te Ching, Taoism scriptures, liturgies and commentaries.

The selection of quotes provides the readers with fundamentals of Taoist spiritual



tradition which is a vast ocean, flowing into it are the indigenous beliefs of the early Chinese, the personal vision of the sages, the theories and findings of the mysterious Tao, its complementary relationship with universe, nature and civilisation. Virtue, the epitome to being one with the Tao, is the underlying foundation to peace and harmony for all myriad things.

This compilation of quotes is made possible with the resources from these books and scriptures:

*The Book of Laozi; The Book of Zhuangzi; The book of Lieh Tzu; The Scripture of Peace and Tranquillity; Treatise of the Supreme Venerable on Response and Retribution; The True Scripture of the Big Dipper, the Governor of Longevity and Destiny, as revealed the Supreme Venerable Lord Tai Shang and other Taoist Scriptures.*

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# Introduction to Taoism

Taoism is about learning, cultivation and practice, that is, learning about the TAO, self-cultivation to achieve TAO and practising the teachings of Taoism.

Traced to the time of the Yellow Emperor about 4713 years ago, promoted by the philosophical writing of Lao Zi, the Spring and Autumn Period and finally organised as a formal religion by Zhang Dao Ling, during the Eastern Han Dynasty (AD 25-220).

Taoism is the indigenous religion of China, it is polytheistic, worships many deities. It embodies beliefs and traditions of Chinese civilization and as the great Chinese writer Lu Xun puts it, "The root of the Chinese people is Taoism."

Taoism draws its philosophy and teachings





from Lao Zi's 'Tao Te Ching' a short text of five thousand characters. Taoism emphasizes the paramount importance of understanding the universe and all its manifestations as operating according to a set of unchanging natural laws.

Taoism's main precepts are 'loyalty' and 'filial piety'. In practices, it calls on its faithful to "respect Heaven and Earth, honour ancestors, and be compassionate to man and all things under the Heaven". In cultivation, it adheres to the principles of liberty, equality, peace and harmony.

Taoism symbol is called the Tai Ji meaning "Great Ultimate" and is a circle divided into two parts, one part is light the force of yang (positive) and the other is dark the force of yin (negative), which embody the TAO.

The yin and yang complement and counterbalance each other, they are opposites and co-exist but neither is good or bad in itself.



Taoists greet each other by cupping left hand in the right before one's chest. Similar to the common way of greeting in traditional Chinese culture, Taoists will cup the hand in a unique way to form the symbol of Tai Ji.

TAOIST DAY - Birthday of Dao Zu Tai Shang Lao Jun (Lao Zi),

Taoists worldwide celebrate the Supreme Revered Day - 15th Day of the 2nd Lunar Month.



# 道

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，欲以觀其徼。

此兩者同出而異名，同謂之玄。

玄之又玄，衆妙之門。



*TAO TE CHING Chapter One -*

*Tao, if articulable, is not the eternal Tao. The name, if can be named,*

*is not the eternal name.*

*Nothingness can be used to indicate the very origin of the Heaven and Earth.*

*Existence can be employed to designate the root of all things in the universe.*

*Thus one should observe the subtlety of Tao through the constant Nothingness*

*And should observe the subtlety of Tao through the constant Existence.*

*The two things, Nothingness and Existence  
Are from the same origin but only named differently.*

*Both are extremely mysterious and ineffable,  
They are the gateway to the mysterious and all secrets.*



# 360 Quotes of The Tao



# THE BOOK OF LAOZI



- 1 The adapt has no fixed heart/mind but uses the heart/mind of the people.

The adapt trusts the trustworthy, but also trusts the untrustworthy.

By this the nature of trust is understood.

Laozi

- 2 Profound virtue is deep and far-reaching;

It returns to the origins with all things,

And then leads to the great naturalness.

Laozi



3 The five colours blind the eyes.

The five notes deafen our ears.

The five flavours dull our taste.

Laozi

4 Sobriety, restraint, equanimity and moderation.

Laozi

5 He is cautious, reserved and eschews experiences, 'unhinge the mind' or 'disrupt the senses'.

Laozi





- 6 Which is nearer, name or self?  
Which is dearer, self or wealth?  
Which gives more pain, loss or gain?

Laozi

- 7 Contentment keeps disgrace away.

Laozi

- 8 Restraint keeps you out of danger.

Laozi

- 9 So you can go on for a long, long time.

Laozi



- 10 **R**eturn to being the uncarved block. Simplicity of life in an unadulterated natural state.

Laozi

- 11 **L**ife best accord with Tao, and hence manifest Te.

Endorses mindfulness, humility, impartiality, and respect for the integrity of all things.

This attunes to the natural world.

Laozi



- 12 Not to value and employ men of superior ability is the way to keep the people from rivalry among themselves.

Laozi

- 13 Not to prize articles which are difficult to procure is the way to keep the people from becoming thieves.

Laozi

- 14 Not to show the people what is likely to excite their desires is the way to keep their minds from disorder.

Laozi



- 15 Heaven and earth do not act from (the impulse of) any wish to be benevolent; they deal with all things as the sacrificial straw dogs are dealt with. The sages do not act from (any wish to be) benevolent; they deal with the people as the sacrificial straw dogs are dealt with. May not the space between heaven and earth be compared to a bellows?

Laozi

- 16 Heaven is long-enduring and earth continues long. The reason why heaven and earth are able to endure and continue thus long is because they do not live of, or for, themselves.

Laozi



- 17 The sage puts his own person last, and yet it is found in the foremost place; he treats his person as if it were foreign to him, and yet that person is preserved. Is it not because he has no personal and private ends, that therefore such ends are realised?

Laozi

- 18 The highest excellence is like (that of) water. The excellence of water appears in its benefiting all things, and in its occupying, without striving (to the contrary), the low place which all men dislike. Hence (its way) is near to (that of) the Dao.

Laozi



- 19 It is better to leave a vessel unfilled, than to attempt to carry it when it is full.

Laozi

- 20 When gold and jade fill the hall, their possessor cannot keep them safe. When wealth and honours lead to arrogance, this brings its evil on itself.

Laozi

- 21 When the work is done, and one's name is becoming distinguished, to withdraw into obscurity is the way of Heaven.

Laozi



- 22 Favour and disgrace would seem equally to be feared; honour and great calamity, to be regarded as personal conditions (of the same kind).

Laozi

- 23 When harmony no longer prevailed throughout the six kinships, filial sons found their manifestation; when the states and clans fell into disorder, loyal ministers appeared.

Laozi



- 24 If we could renounce our sageness and discard our wisdom, it would be better for the people a hundredfold. If we could renounce our benevolence and discard our righteousness, the people would again become filial and kindly. If we could renounce our artful contrivances and discard our (scheming for) gain, there would be no thieves or robbers.

Laozi

- 25 Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage.

Laozi





26 Simplicity, patience, compassion.

These three are your greatest treasures. Simple in actions and thoughts, you return to the source of being. Patient with both friends and enemies, you accord with the way things are.

Compassionate toward yourself, you reconcile all beings in the world.

Laozi

27 The partial becomes complete; the crooked, straight; the empty, full; the worn out, new. He whose (desires) are few gets them; he whose (desires) are many goes astray.

Laozi



- 28 The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.

Laozi

- 29 Knowing others is intelligence; knowing yourself is true wisdom. Mastering others is strength; mastering yourself is true power.

Laozi

- 30 A good traveller has no fixed plans and is not intent on arriving.

Laozi



- 31 Life is a series of natural and spontaneous changes. Don't resist them; that only creates sorrow. Let reality be reality. Let things flow naturally forward in whatever way they like.

Laozi

- 32 Those who know do not speak. Those who speak do not know.

Laozi

- 33 When you are content to be simply yourself and don't compare or compete, everyone will respect you.

Laozi



- 34 The truth is not always beautiful,  
nor beautiful words the truth.

Laozi

- 35 When I let go of what I am, I  
become what I might be.

Laozi

- 36 The best fighter is never angry.

Laozi

- 37 Time is a created thing. To say “I  
don’t have time,” is like saying, “I  
don’t want to”.

Laozi



- 38 Because one believes in oneself, one doesn't try to convince others. Because one is content with oneself, one doesn't need others' approval. Because one accepts oneself, the whole world accepts him or her.

Laozi

- 39 A man with outward courage dares to die; a man with inner courage dares to live.

Laozi

- 40 Care about what other people think and you will always be their prisoner.

Laozi



41 Be careful what you water your dreams with. Water them with worry and fear and you will produce weeds that choke the life from your dream. Water them with optimism and solutions and you will cultivate success. Always be on the lookout for ways to turn a problem into an opportunity for success. Always be on the lookout for ways to nurture your dream.

Laozi

42 Be content with what you have; rejoice in the way things are. When you realize there is nothing lacking, the whole world belongs to you.

Laozi



43 If you are depressed you are living in the past. If you are anxious you are living in the future. If you are at peace you are living in the present.

Laozi

44 Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished.

Laozi

45 At the centre of your being, you have the answer; you know who you are and you know what you want.

Laozi



46 Silence is a source of Great Strength.

Laozi

47 Stop thinking, and end your problems.

Laozi





- 48 If you understand others you are smart. If you understand yourself you are illuminated. If you overcome others you are powerful. If you overcome yourself you have strength. If you know how to be satisfied you are rich. If you can act with vigor, you have a will. If you don't lose your objectives you can be long-lasting. If you die without loss, you are eternal.

Laozi

- 49 Do you have the patience to wait until your mud settles and the water is clear?

Laozi



- 50 Kindness in words creates confidence. Kindness in thinking creates profoundness. Kindness in giving creates love.

Laozi

- 51 Manifest plainness, Embrace simplicity, Reduce selfishness, Have few desires.

Laozi

- 52 The flame that burns twice as bright burns half as long.

Laozi



53 Music in the soul can be heard by the universe.

Laozi

54 Act without expectation.

Laozi

55 Respond intelligently even to un-intelligent treatment.

Laozi



- 56 A leader is best when people barely know he exists. Of a good leader, who talks little, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say, We did these ourselves.

Laozi

- 57 To attain worldly knowledge, add things every day. To attain wisdom in Tao, remove things every day.

Laozi

- 58 The snow goose need not bathe to make it white. Neither need you do anything but be yourself.

Laozi



59 To know that you do not know is the best. To think you know when you do not is a disease. Recognizing this disease as a disease is to be free of it.

Laozi

60 If you do not change direction, you may end up where you are heading.

Laozi

61 Water is the softest thing, yet it can penetrate mountains and earth. This shows clearly the principle of softness overcoming hardness.

Laozi



62 By letting go it all gets done.

Laozi

63 Accomplish but do not boast, accomplish without show, accomplish without arrogance, accomplish without grabbing, accomplish without forcing.

Laozi

64 Knowledge is a treasure, but practice is the key to it.

Laozi



- 65 If a person seems wicked, do not cast him away. Awaken him with your words, elevate him with your deeds, repay his injury with your kindness. Do not cast him away; cast away his wickedness.

Laozi

- 66 If you try to change it, you will ruin it. Try to hold it, and you will lose it.

Laozi

- 67 Doing nothing is better than being busy doing nothing.

Laozi



68 To a mind that is still the whole universe surrenders.

Laozi

69 Men are born soft and supple; dead they are stiff and hard. Plants are born tender and pliant; dead, they are brittle and dry. Thus whoever is stiff and inflexible is a disciple of death. Whoever is soft and yielding is a disciple of life. The hard and stiff will be broken. The soft and supple will prevail.

Laozi





**70** In dwelling, live close to the ground. In thinking, keep to the simple. In conflict, be fair and generous. In governing, don't try to control. In work, do what you enjoy. In family life, be completely present.

Laozi

**71** To understand the limitation of things, desire them.

Laozi



- 72 She does not show herself, and therefore is apparent. She does not affirm herself, and therefore is acknowledged. She does not boast and therefore has merit. She does not strive and therefore is successful. It is exactly because she does not contend, that nobody can contend with her.

Laozi

- 73 Loss is not as bad as wanting more.

Laozi



- 74 Your own positive future begins in this moment. All you have is right now. Every goal is possible from here.

Laozi

- 75 What the caterpillar calls the end, the rest of the world calls a butterfly.

Laozi

- 76 Stop leaving and you will arrive. Stop searching and you will see. Stop running away and you will be found.

Laozi



77 There is no greater danger than underestimating your opponent.

Laozi

78 Give evil nothing to oppose and it will disappear by itself.

Laozi

79 All streams flow to the sea because it is lower than they are. Humility gives it its power. If you want to govern the people, you must place yourself below them. If you want to lead the people, you must learn how to follow them.

Laozi



80 **B**ecause of compassion, one is courageous.

Laozi

81 **S**o the unwanting soul sees what's hidden, and the ever-wanting soul sees only what it wants.

Laozi



- 82 Love - Embracing Tao, you become embraced. Supple, breathing gently, you become reborn. Clearing your vision, you become clear. Nurturing your beloved, you become impartial. Opening your heart, you become accepted. Accepting the World, you embrace Tao. Bearing and nurturing, creating but not owning, giving without demanding, controlling without authority, this is love.

Laozi

- 83 He who knows others is wise; he who knows himself is enlightened.

Laozi



84 The further one goes (astray), the less one knows.

Laozi

85 We join 30 spokes together in a wheel, but it is the centre hole that makes the wagon move. We shape clay into a pot, but it is the emptiness inside that holds whatever we want. We hammer wood for a house, but it is the inner space that makes it liveable. We work with being, but non-being is what we use.

Laozi



- 86 Those who flow as life flows know they need no other force.

Laozi

- 87 Close your mouth, block off your senses, blunt your sharpness, untie your knots, soften your glare, settle your dust. This is the primal identity.

Laozi

- 88 If you realize that all things change, there is nothing you will try to hold on to. If you are not afraid of dying, there is nothing you cannot achieve.

Laozi





- 89 The reason why the universe is eternal is that it does not live for itself; it gives life to others as it transforms.

Laozi

- 90 If you correct your mind, the rest of your life will fall into place.

Laozi

- 91 Do you imagine the universe is agitated? Go into the desert at night and look at the stars. This practice should answer the question.

Laozi



92 As soon as you have made a thought, laugh at it.

Laozi

93 There is a time to live and a time to die but never to reject the moment.

Laozi

94 To hold, you must first open your hand. Let go.

Laozi



- 95 The past has no power to stop you from being present now. Only your grievance about the past can do that. What is grievance? The baggage of old thought and emotion.

Laozi

- 96 When people see some things as beautiful, other things become ugly. When people see some things as good, other things become bad.

Laozi

- 97 Great acts are made up of small deeds.

Laozi



- 98 Hope and fear are both phantoms that arise from thinking of the self. When we don't see the self as self, what do we have to fear?

Laozi

- 99 Countless words count less than the silent balance between Yin and Yang.

Laozi

- 100 One who is too insistent on his own views finds few to agree with him.

Laozi



**101** Perfection is the willingness to be imperfect.

Laozi

**102** Health is the greatest possession. Contentment is the greatest treasure. Confidence is the greatest friend.

Laozi

**103** When there is no desire, all things are at peace.

Laozi



- 104 If you want to know me, look inside your heart.

Laozi

- 105 True words aren't eloquent; eloquent words aren't true. Wise men don't need to prove their point; men who need to prove their point aren't wise.

Laozi

- 106 The Master has no possessions. The more he does for others, the happier he is. The more he gives to others, the wealthier he is.

Laozi



- 107** Fill your bowl to the brim and it will spill. Keep sharpening your knife and it will blunt.

Laozi

- 108** He who knows that enough is enough will always have enough.

Laozi

- 109** To see things in the seed, that is genius.

Laozi



110 My teachings are easy to understand and easy to put into practice.

Yet your intellect will never grasp them, and if you try to practice them, you'll fail.

Laozi

111 My teachings are older than the world. How can you grasp their meaning?

If you want to know me, look inside your heart.

Laozi





- 112 When nothing is done, nothing is left undone.

Laozi

- 113 Become totally empty. Quiet the restlessness of the mind. Only then will you witness everything unfolding from emptiness.

Laozi

- 114 He who acts, spoils; he who grasps, lets slip.

Laozi



- 115 Success is as dangerous as failure.  
Hope is as hollow as fear.

Laozi

- 116 Water is fluid, soft, and yielding.  
But water will wear away rock,  
which is rigid and cannot yield. As  
a rule, whatever is fluid, soft, and  
yielding will overcome whatever is  
rigid and hard. This is another para-  
dox: what is soft is strong.

Laozi



- 117 Do your work, and then step back.  
The only path to serenity.

Laozi

- 118 If you show yourself, you will not be seen. If you affirm yourself, you will not shine. If you boast, you will have no merit. If you promote yourself, you will have no success.

Laozi

- 119 Respond to anger with virtue. Deal with difficulties while they are still easy. Handle the great while it is still small.

Laozi



- 120 Be still. Stillness reveals the secrets of eternity.

Laozi

- 121 Trying to understand is like straining through muddy water. Have the patience to wait! Be still and allow the mud to settle.

Laozi



122 He who stands on tiptoe doesn't stand firm.

He who rushes ahead doesn't go far.

He who tries to shine dims his own light.

He who defines himself can't know who he really is.

He who has power over others can't empower himself.

He who clings to his work will create nothing that endures.

If you want to accord with the Tao, just do your job, then let go.

Laozi



**123** Not-knowing is true knowledge.  
Presuming to know is a disease.

First realize that you are sick; then  
you can move toward health.

Laozi

**124** To realize that you do not understand is a virtue; not to realize that  
you do not understand is a defect.

Laozi



125 **A** good traveller has no fixed plans and is not intent upon arriving.

A good artist lets his intuition lead him wherever it wants. A good scientist has freed himself of concepts and keeps his mind open to what is. Thus the Master is available to all people and doesn't reject anyone. He is ready to use all situations and doesn't waste anything.

This is called embodying the light.

Laozi



- 126 What is a good man but a bad man's teacher? What is a bad man but a good man's job? If you don't understand this, you will get lost however intelligent you are.

It is the great secret.

Laozi

- 127 When pure sincerity forms within, it is outwardly realized in other people's hearts.

Laozi

- 128 Love is of all the passions the strongest, for it attacks simultaneously the head, the heart, and the senses.

Laozi





**129** If there is to be peace in the world,  
There must be peace in the nations.

If there is to be peace in the nations,  
There must be peace in the cities.

If there is to be peace in the cities,  
There must be peace between  
neighbours.

If there is to be peace between  
neighbours,  
There must be peace in the home.

If there is to be peace in the home,  
There must be peace in the heart.

Laozi

**130** Not seeking, not expecting, she is  
present, and can welcome all things.

Laozi



- 131 Would you like to save the world from the degradation and destruction it seems destined for? Then step away from shallow mass movements and quietly go to work on your own self-awareness. If you want to awaken all of humanity, then awaken all of yourself. If you want to eliminate the suffering in the world, then eliminate all that is dark and negative in yourself. Truly, the greatest gift you have to give is that of your own self-transformation.

Laozi



132 Do you want to improve the world?

I don't think it can be done.

The world is sacred. It can't be improved.

If you tamper with it, you'll ruin it. If you treat it like an object, you'll lose it.

Laozi



**133** There is a time for being ahead,  
a time for being behind; a time for  
being in motion,

a time for being at rest; a time for  
being vigorous, a time for being  
exhausted;

a time for being safe, a time for  
being in danger. The Master sees  
things as they are, without trying to  
control them. He lets them go their  
own way, and resides at the centre  
of the circle.

Laozi

**134** If you are untrustworthy, people  
will not trust you.

Laozi



**135** The person of superior integrity does not insist upon his integrity.

For this reason, he has integrity. The person of inferior integrity never loses sight of his integrity; For this reason, he lacks integrity.

Laozi

**136** Some lose yet gain, others gain and yet lose.

Laozi

**137** The difficult problems in life always start off being simple. Great affairs always start off being small.

Laozi



- 138** If you look to others for fulfilment, you will never truly be fulfilled. If your happiness depends on money, you will never be happy with yourself. Be content with what you have; rejoice in the way things are. When you realize there is nothing lacking, the whole world belongs to you.

Laozi

- 139** Take care with the end as you do with the beginning.

Laozi

- 140** New Beginnings are often disguised as painful endings.

Laozi



- 141 In the end, the treasure of life is missed by those who hold on and gained by those who let go.

Laozi

- 142 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.

Laozi



- 143 Immersed in the wonder of the Tao, you can deal with whatever life brings you,  
and when death comes, you are ready.

Laozi

- 144 Rushing into action, you fail. Trying to grasp things, you lose them.  
Forcing a project to completion, you ruin what was almost ripe.

Laozi





**145** The Master takes action by letting things take their course.

He remains as calm at the end as at the beginning.

He has nothing, thus has nothing to lose.

What he desires is non-desire; what he learns is to unlearn.

He simply reminds people of who they have always been.

He cares about nothing but the Tao. Thus he can care for all things.

Laozi

**146** Spring comes, and the grass grows by itself.

Laozi



147 **A** man who knows how little he knows is well, a man who knows how much he knows is sick. If, when you see the symptoms, you can tell, your cure is quick.

A sound man knows that sickness makes him sick and before he catches it his cure is quick.

Laozi

148 **I**f you wish to be out front, then act as if you were behind.

Laozi

149 **B**e like water.

Laozi



- 150** Do not conquer the world with force, for force only causes resistance. Thorns spring up when an army passes. Years of misery follow a great victory. Do only what needs to be done without using violence.

Laozi

- 151** To bear and not to own; to act and not lay claim; to do the work and let it go: for just letting it go is what makes it stay.

Laozi

- 152** Love is a decision - not an emotion!

Laozi



- 153** Let it be still, and it will gradually become clear.

Laozi

- 154** He who defends with love will be secure; Heaven will save him, and protect him with love.

Laozi

- 155** The wise man does not lay up his own treasures. The more he gives to others, the more he has for his own.

Laozi



**156** True words are not fancy. Fancy words are not true. The good do not debate. Debaters are not good.

Laozi

**157** Just remain in the centre; watching. And then forget that you are there.

Laozi

**158** A good traveller leaves no tracks. Good speech lacks fault-finding.

Laozi



- 159** The master observes the world but trusts his inner vision. He allows things to come and go. He prefers what is within to what is without.

Laozi

- 160** If you want to lead them you must place yourself behind them.

Laozi

- 161** The hard and mighty lie beneath the ground whiles the tender and weak dance on the breeze above.

Laozi



**162** When goodness is lost there is morality.

Laozi

**163** Ugliness arises, when everybody knows what is beautiful.

Laozi

**164** Outstanding achievement seems imperfect, yet its function is not compromised.

Laozi



**165** Jogging overcomes cold; Quietude overcomes heat.

Laozi

**166** No evil act is worse than an inordinate desire.

Laozi





# THE BOOK OF ZHUANGZI



- 167** The fish trap exists because of the fish. Once you've gotten the fish you can forget the trap. The rabbit snare exists because of the rabbit. Once you've gotten the rabbit, you can forget the snare. Words exist because of meaning. Once you've gotten the meaning, you can forget the words. Where can I find a man who has forgotten words so I can talk with him?

Zhuangzi

- 168** Flow with whatever may happen, and let your mind be free: Stay centred by accepting whatever you are doing. This is the ultimate.

Zhuangzi



- 169 Once upon a time, I dreamt I was a butterfly, fluttering hither and thither, to all intents and purposes a butterfly. I was conscious only of my happiness as a butterfly, unaware that I was myself. Soon I awaked, and there I was, veritably myself again. Now I do not know whether I was then a man dreaming I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly, dreaming I am a man.

Zhuangzi

- 170 A path is made by walking on it.

Zhuangzi



- 171 Rewards and punishment is the lowest form of education.

Zhuangzi

- 172 The wise man knows that it is better to sit on the banks of a remote mountain stream than to be emperor of the whole world.

Zhuangzi

- 173 Happiness is the absence of the striving for happiness.

Zhuangzi



**174** Let your heart be at peace. Watch the turmoil of beings, but contemplate their return...

Immersed in the wonder of the Tao, you can deal with whatever life brings you, and when death comes, you are ready.

Zhuangzi



175 I cannot tell if what the world considers 'happiness' is happiness or not. All I know is that when I consider the way they go about attaining it, I see them carried away headlong, grim and obsessed, in the general onrush of the human herd, unable to stop themselves or to change their direction. All the while they claim to be just on the point of attaining happiness.

Zhuangzi

176 To a mind that is still, the entire universe surrenders.

Zhuangzi



177 Forget the years, forget distinctions. Leap into the boundless and make it your home!

Zhuangzi

178 To be truly ignorant, be content with your own knowledge.

Zhuangzi

179 The sound of water says what I think.

Zhuangzi



- 180 If you have insight, you use your inner eye, your inner ear, to pierce to the heart of things, and have no need of intellectual knowledge.

Zhuangzi

- 181 The baby looks at things all day without winking; that is because his eyes are not focused on any particular object. He goes without knowing where he is going, and stops without knowing what he is doing. He merges himself within the surroundings and moves along with it. These are the principles of mental hygiene.

Zhuangzi





182 We are born from a quiet sleep,  
and we die to a calm awakening

Zhuangzi

183 When the heart is right, “for” and  
“against” are forgotten.

Zhuangzi

184 Great wisdom is generous; petty  
wisdom is contentious.

Zhuangzi



- 185 And how do I know that the hate of death is not like a man who has lost his home when young and does not know where his home is to return to?

Zhuangzi

- 186 Words are not just wind. Words have something to say. But if what they have to say is not fixed, then do they really say something? Or do they say nothing?

Zhuangzi



- 187 What one calls right the other calls wrong; what one calls wrong the other calls right. But if we want to right their wrongs and wrong their rights, then the best to use is clarity.

Zhuangzi

- 188 Cherish that which is in you and shut out that which is without, for much knowledge is a curse.

Zhuangzi



189 Yet the stupid believe they are awake, busily and brightly assuming they understand things, calling this man ruler, that one herdsman – how dense! Confucius and you are both dreaming! And when I say you are dreaming, I am dreaming, too. Words like these will be labelled the Supreme Swindle.

Zhuangzi

190 Men honour what lies within the sphere of their knowledge, but do not realize how dependent they are on what lies beyond it.

Zhuangzi



- 191 When affirmation and negation came into being, Tao faded. After Tao faded, then came one-sided attachments.

Zhuangzi

- 192 A frog in a well cannot discuss the ocean, because he is limited by the size of his well. A narrow-minded scholar cannot discuss the Tao, because he is constrained by his teachings.

Zhuangzi



- 193 The one-legged creature is envious of the millipede; the millipede is envious of the snake; the snake is envious of the wind; the wind is envious of the eye; the eye is envious of the heart.

Zhuangzi

- 194 Only he who has no use for the empire is fit to be entrusted with it.

Zhuangzi

- 195 Cease striving. Then there will be transformation.

Zhuangzi



- 196 So it is said, for him who understands Heavenly joy, life is the working of Heaven; death is the transformation of things. In stillness, he and the Yin share a single Virtue; in motion, he and the Yang share a single flow.

Zhuangzi

- 197 Great truths do not take hold of the hearts of the masses.

Zhuangzi



- 198 There is the globe, the foundation of my bodily existence. It wears me out with work and duties, It gives me rest in old age, It gives me peace in death. For the one (Tao) who supplied me with what I needed in life will also give me what I need in death.

Zhuangzi

- 199 The time of the autumn floods came and the hundred streams poured into the Yellow River. ... Then the Lord of the River was beside himself with Joy, believing that all the beauty in the world belonged to him alone.

Zhuangzi





- 200 You have only to rest in inaction and things will transform themselves. Smash your form and body, spit out hearing and eyesight, forget you are a thing among other things, and you may join in great unity with the deep and boundless (Tao).

Zhuangzi

- 201 He who knows he is a fool is not the biggest fool; he who knows he is confused is not in the worst confusion. The man in the worst confusion will end his life without ever getting straightened out; the biggest fool will end his life without ever seeing the light.

Zhuangzi



**202** It (Tao) can be passed on, but not received. It can be obtained, but not seen.

Zhuangzi

**203** All men know the use of the useful, but nobody knows the use of the useless!

Zhuangzi



**204** If you'd called me an ox, I'd have said I was an ox; if you'd called me a horse, I'd have said I was a horse. If the reality is there and you refuse to accept the name men give it, you'll only lay yourself open to double harassment.

Zhuangzi

**205** The True Man of ancient times knew nothing of loving life, knew nothing of hating death. He emerged without delight; went back in without a fuss. He came briskly, he went briskly, and that was all. He didn't forget where he began; he didn't try to find out where he would end.

Zhuangzi



- 206 All attempts to create something admirable are the weapons of evil. You may think you are practising benevolence and righteousness, but in effect you will be creating a kind of artificiality.

Zhuangzi

- 207 Where a model exists, copies will be made of it; where success has been gained, boasting follows; where debate exists, there will be outbreaks of hostility.

Zhuangzi



**208** The sage is still not because he takes stillness to be good and therefore is still. The ten thousand things are insufficient to distract his mind - that is the reason he is still.

Zhuangzi

**209** Words have value; what is of value in words is meaning. Meaning has something it is pursuing, but the thing that it is pursuing cannot be put into words and handed down.

Zhuangzi



210 To forget the whole world is easy;  
to make the whole world forget you  
is hard.

Zhuangzi

211 Eventually there comes the day of  
reckoning and awakening, and then  
we shall know that it was all a great  
dream. Only fools think that they  
are now awake and that they really  
know what is going on, playing the  
prince and then playing the servant.  
What fools!

Zhuangzi



**212** When I say a dream, I am also dreaming. This very saying is a deception. If after ten thousand years we could once meet a truly great sage, one who understands, it would seem as if it had only been a morning.

Zhuangzi

**213** Let your mind wander in simplicity, blend your spirit with the vastness, follow along with things the way they are, and make no room for personal views - then the world will be governed.

Zhuangzi



- 214 The Perfect Man uses his mind like a mirror - going after nothing, welcoming nothing, responding but not storing.

Zhuangzi

- 215 Your life has a limit, but knowledge has none. If you use what is limited to pursue what has no limit, you will be in danger.

Zhuangzi





- 216 A beam or pillar can be used to batter down a city wall, but it is no good for stopping up a little hole - this refers to a difference in function.

Zhuangzi

- 217 Thoroughbred horses could gallop a thousand Li in one day, but when it came to catching rats they were no match for the wildcat or the weasel - this refers to a difference in skill.

Zhuangzi



218 The horned owl catches fleas at night and can spot the tip of a hair, but when daylight comes, no matter how wide it opens its eyes, it cannot see a mound or a hill - this refers to a difference in nature.

Zhuangzi



219 Now do you say, that you are going to make Right your master and do away with Wrong, or make Order your master and do away with Disorder? If you do, then you have not understood the principle of heaven and earth or the nature of the ten thousand things. This is like saying that you are going to make Heaven your master and do away with Earth, or make Yin your master and do away with Yang. Obviously it is impossible.

Zhuangzi



220 Life, death, preservation, loss, failure, success, poverty, riches, worthiness, unworthiness, slander, fame, hunger, thirst, cold, heat - these are the alternations of the world, the workings of fate. Day and night they change place before us, and wisdom cannot spy out their source. Therefore, they should not be enough to destroy your harmony; they should not be allowed to enter the storehouse of the spirit. If you can harmonize and delight in them, master them and never be at a loss for joy... - this is what I call being whole in power.

Zhuangzi



**221** The little child learns to speak,  
though it has no learned teachers  
- because it lives with those who  
know how to speak.

Zhuangzi

**222** Not to understand is profound;  
to understand is shallow. Not to  
understand is to be on the inside; to  
understand is to be on the outside.

Zhuangzi



223 Right is not right; so is not so. If right were really right, it would differ so clearly from not right that there would be no need for argument. If so were really so, it would differ so clearly from not so that there would be no need for argument.

Zhuangzi



224 When Zhuangzi was about to die, his disciples expressed a desire to give him a sumptuous burial. Zhuangzi said, I will have heaven and earth for my coffin and coffin shell, the sun and moon for my pair of jade discs, the stars and constellations for my pearls and beads, and the ten thousand things for my parting gifts. The furnishings for my funeral are already prepared - what is there to add?

Zhuangzi



225 But a gentleman may embrace a doctrine without necessarily wearing the garb that goes with it, and he may wear the garb without necessarily comprehending the doctrine.

Zhuangzi

226 He who has mastered the true nature of life does not labour over what life cannot do. He who has mastered the true nature of fate does not labour over what knowledge cannot change.

Zhuangzi





- 227 When a man does not dwell in self, then things will of themselves reveal their forms to him. His movement is like that of water, his stillness like that of a mirror, his responses like those of an echo.

Zhuangzi

- 228 Don't go in and hide; don't come out and shine; stand stock-still in the middle.

Zhuangzi



229 You forget your feet when the shoes are comfortable. You forget your waist when the belt is comfortable. Understanding forgets right and wrong when the mind is comfortable. There is no change in what is inside, no following what is outside, when the adjustment to events is comfortable. You begin with what is comfortable and never experience what is uncomfortable when you know the comfort of forgetting what is comfortable.

Zhuangzi



- 230** People who excuse their faults and claim they didn't deserve to be punished - there are lots of them. But those who don't excuse their faults and admit they didn't deserve to be spared - they are few.

Zhuangzi

- 231** When men do not forget what can be forgotten but forget what cannot be forgotten - that may be called true forgetting.

Zhuangzi



232 I have heard that those who are fond of praising men to their faces are also fond of damning them behind their backs.

Zhuangzi

233 Eyes that are blind have no way to tell the loveliness of faces and features; eyes with no pupils have no way to tell the beauty of coloured and embroidered silks.

Zhuangzi



234 Things joined by profit, when pressed by misfortune and danger, will cast each other aside.

Zhuangzi

235 Can you be a little baby? The baby howls all day, yet its throat never gets hoarse - harmony at its height! The baby makes fists all day, yet its fingers never get cramped - virtue is all it holds to. The baby stares all day without blinking its eyes - it has no preferences in the world of externals.

Zhuangzi



236 When I speak of good hearing, I do not mean listening to others; I mean simply listening to yourself. When I speak of good eyesight, I do not mean looking at others; I mean simply looking at yourself. He who does not look at himself but looks at others, who does not get hold of himself but gets hold of others, is getting what other men have got and failing to get what he himself has got. He finds joy in what brings joy to other men, but finds no joy in what would bring joy to him.

Zhuangzi



**237** A man like this will not go where he has no will to go, will not do what he has no mind to do. Though the world might praise him and say he had really found something, he would look unconcerned and never turn his head; though the world might condemn him and say he had lost something, he would look serene and pay no heed. The praise and blame of the world are no loss or gain to him.

Zhuangzi



238 In the world everyone knows enough to pursue what he does not know, but no one knows enough to pursue what he already knows. Everyone knows enough to condemn what he takes to be no good, but no one knows enough to condemn what he has already taken to be good.

Zhuangzi

239 We can't expect a blind man to appreciate beautiful patterns or a deaf man to listen to bells and drums. And blindness and deafness are not confined to the body alone - the understanding has them, too.

Zhuangzi





**240** But where there is birth there must be death; where there is death there must be birth.

Zhuangzi

**241** Where there is acceptability there must be unacceptability; where there is unacceptability there must be acceptability.

Zhuangzi



242 Where there is recognition of right there must be recognition of wrong; where there is recognition of wrong there must be recognition of right. Therefore the sage does not proceed in such a way, but illuminates all in the light of Heaven.

Zhuangzi

243 A state in which “this” and “that” no longer find their opposites is called the hinge of the Tao. When the hinge is fitted into the socket, it can respond endlessly. Its right then is a single endlessness and its wrong too is a single endlessness. So, I say, the best thing to use is clarity.

Zhuangzi



- 244** You should find the same joy in one condition as in the other and thereby be free of care, that is all. But now, when the things that happened along take their leave, you cease to be joyful. From this point of view, though you have joy, it will always be fated for destruction.

Zhuangzi

- 245** Suppose I try saying something. What way do I have of knowing that if I say I know something I don't really not know it? Or what way do I have of knowing that if I say I don't know something I don't really in fact know it?

Zhuangzi



246 In the midst of darkness, he alone  
sees the dawn; in the midst of the  
soundless, he alone hears harmony.

Zhuangzi

247 Men all pay homage to what  
understanding understands, but  
no one understands enough to rely  
upon what understanding does not  
understand and thereby come to  
understand.

Zhuangzi



248 When you're betting for tiles in an archery contest, you shoot with skill. When you're betting for fancy belt buckles, you worry about your aim. And when you're betting for real gold, you're a nervous wreck. Your skill is the same in all three cases - but because one prize means more to you than another, you let outside considerations weigh on your mind. He who looks too hard at the outside gets clumsy on the inside.

Zhuangzi



- 249 The Spirit Tower has its guardian, but unless it understands who its guardian is, it cannot be guarded.

Zhuangzi

- 250 To use a horse to show that a horse is not a horse is not as good as using a non-horse to show that a horse is not a horse...

Zhuangzi

- 251 The man who has forgotten self may be said to have entered Heaven.

Zhuangzi



252 With all the confusion in the world these days, no matter how often I point the way, what good does it do? And if I know it does no good and still make myself do it, this too is a kind of confusion. So it is best to leave things alone and not force them. If I don't force things, at least I won't cause anyone any worry.

Zhuangzi



**253** In all affairs, whether large or small, there are few men who reach a happy conclusion except through Tao. If you do not succeed, you are bound to suffer from the judgment of men. If you do succeed, you are bound to suffer from the yin and yang. To suffer no harm whether or not you succeed - only the man who has virtue can do that.

Zhuangzi





- 254 **T**he Heavenly Gate is nonbeing. The ten thousand things come forth from nonbeing. Being cannot create being out of being; inevitably it must come forth from nonbeing. Nonbeing is absolute nonbeing, and it is here that the sage hides himself.

Zhuangzi

- 255 **H**e who steals a belt buckle pays with his life; he who steals a state gets to be a feudal lord.

Zhuangzi



256 Master Dongguo asked Zhuangzi, "This thing called the Tao - where does it exist?"

Zhuangzi said, "There's no place it doesn't exist."

"Come," said Master Dongguo, "you must be more specific!"

"It is in the ant."

"As low a thing as that?"

"It is in the panic grass."

"But that's lower still!"

"It is in the tiles and shards."

"How can it be so low?"

"It is in the piss and shit!"

Zhuangzi



**257** Those who seek to satisfy the mind of man by hampering it with ceremonies and music and affecting charity and devotion have lost their original nature.

Zhuangzi

**258** Now you, Sir, have a large tree, and you don't know how to use it, so why not plant it in the middle of nowhere, where you can go to wander or fall asleep under its shade? No axe under Heaven will attack it, nor shorten its days, for something which is useless will never be disturbed.

Zhuangzi



259 Zhuangzi was walking on a mountain, when he saw a great tree with huge branches and luxuriant foliage. A wood-cutter was resting by its side, but he would not touch it, and, when asked the reason, said, that it was of no use for anything, Zhuangzi then said to his disciples, "This tree, because its wood is good for nothing, will succeed in living out its natural term of years." Having left the mountain, the Master lodged in the house of an old friend, who was glad to see him, and ordered his waiting-lad to kill a goose and boil it. The lad said, "One of our geese can cackle, and the other cannot - which of them shall I kill?" The host said, "Kill the one that cannot cackle."

Zhuangzi



**260** Union brings on separation; success, overthrow; sharp corners, the use of the file; honour, critical remarks; active exertion, failure; wisdom, scheming; inferiority, being despised: where is the possibility of unchangeable in any of these conditions? Remember this, my disciples. Let your abode be here - in the Tao and its Attributes.

Zhuangzi



261 Think of the close-furred fox and of the elegantly-spotted leopard. They lodge in the forests on the hills, and lurk in their holes among the rocks - keeping still. At night they go about, and during day remain in their lairs - so cautious are they. Even if they are suffering from hunger, thirst, and other distresses, they still keep aloof from men, seeking their food about the Jiang and the Hu - so resolute are they. Still they are not able to escape the danger of the net or the trap; and what fault is it of theirs? It is their skins which occasion them the calamity.

Zhuangzi



262 The practice of the Tao flows abroad, but its master does not care to dwell where it can be seen; his attainments in it hold their course, but he does not wish to appear in its display. Always simple and commonplace, he may seem to be bereft of reason. He obliterates the traces of his action, gives up position and power, and aims not at merit and fame. Therefore he does not censure men, and men do not censure him. The perfect man does not seek to be heard of; how is it that you delight in doing so?

Zhuangzi



**263** The interaction of superior men is tasteless as water, while that of mean men is sweet as new wine. But the tastelessness of the superior men leads on to affection, and the sweetness of the mean men to aversion. The union which originates without any cause will end in separation without any cause.

Zhuangzi





264 **Z**huangzi in the forest saw a cicada, which had just alighted in a beautiful shady spot, and forgot its (care for its) body. (Just then), a preying mantis raised its feelers, and pounced on the cicada, in its eagerness for its prey, (also) forgetting (its care for) its body; while the bird took advantage of its opportunity to secure them both, in view of that gain forgetting its true (instinct of preservation). Zhuangzi with an emotion of pity, said, 'Ah! so it is that things bring evil on one another, each of these creatures invited its own calamity.

Zhuangzi



**265** You are not a fish; how do you know what constitutes the enjoyment of fishes?

Zhuangzi

**266** If water is not piled up deep enough, it won't have the strength to bear up a big boat.

Zhuangzi

**267** To pile fire on fire, to add water to water, and is called 'increasing the excessive.'

Zhuangzi



- 268 **E**verything has its “that”, everything has its “this.” From the point of view of “that”, you cannot see it, but through understanding you can know it. So I say, “that” comes of “this” and “this” depends on “that” – which is to say that “this” and “that” give birth to each other.

Zhuangzi

- 269 **H**ave you heard about the mantis which waved its arms angrily in front of an approaching carriage, unaware that they were incapable of stopping it? Such was the high opinion it had of its talents.

Zhuangzi



270 The mountain trees do themselves harm; the grease in the torch burns itself up. The cinnamon can be eaten and so it gets cut down; the lacquer tree can be used and so it gets hacked apart. All men know the use of the useful, but nobody knows the use of the useless!

Zhuangzi



# THE BOOK OF HUAINAN ZI



271 The Saintly Man has forgotten his five viscera and has abandoned his bodily form. He knows without apprehending, sees without looking, accomplishes without doing, and discerns without applying himself. He spontaneously responds to the outer stimuli and acts only if he cannot do without it. He moves without wanting it, like beams of light and particles of brilliance. As his rule he follows the Tao and attains to it. He embraces his foundation in the Great Clarity and nothing can trouble him. Vast and deep, he maintains himself empty; pure and serene, he is without thoughts and worries.

Huainan Zi



## 272 In Ancient Times of Creation

In ancient times, when there were not yet Heaven and Earth, there were only images without forms. Deep! Obscure! Broad and wide, boundless and measureless! Vaporous and opaque, vast and cavernous! No one knows where this came from. There were two spirits (shen) generated from the inchoate, which aligned Heaven and oriented Earth. Empty! No one knows where it ends. Overflowing! No one knows where it stops. Thereupon it differentiated itself and became Yin and Yang, it separated itself and became the eight poles. The firm and the yielding completed each other, and the ten thousand things took form.

Huainan Zi



## 273 The Formless and the Soundless (Tao)

Now, the Formless is the great forefather of creatures, and the Soundless is the great ancestor of sounds. . . . Therefore you look at it and cannot see its form, you listen to it and cannot hear its sound, and you follow it and cannot get to its person. It is formless, but what has form is generated from it; it is soundless, but the five sounds resonate from it; it is tasteless, but the five tastes take form from it; it is colourless, but the five colours are developed from it. Therefore Being is generated from Non-Being, and the actual is generated from the empty.

Huainan Zi





## 274 What Gives Life to Life

. . . Therefore forms come to depletion but spirit never undergoes transformation; this is because when what undergoes no transformation responds to what is transformed, it will never reach an end even throughout one thousand alterations and ten thousand reversals. Undergoing transformations means returning to formlessness; not undergoing transformations means living as long as Heaven and Earth.

Huainan Zi



## THE BOOK OF LIEH TZU



275 Some people think they can find satisfaction in good food, fine clothes, lively music, and sexual pleasure. However, when they have all these things, they are not satisfied. They realize happiness is not simply having their material needs met. Thus, society has set up a system of rewards that go beyond material goods. These include titles, social recognition, status, and political power, all in a package called self-fulfillment. Attracted and goaded on by social pressure, people spend their short lives tiring body and mind to chase after these goals. Perhaps this gives them the feeling that they have achieved something in their lives, but in reality they have sacrificed a lot in



life. They can no longer see, hear, act, feel, or think from their hearts. In the end, they've spent their lives following other people's demands and never lived a life of their own. How different is this from the life of a slave or a prisoner?

Lieh Tzu

**276** ...<sup>1</sup>do things merely co-occur and we give meaning to these co-occurrences based on our belief system? Lieh-tzu's answer: It's all in how you think.

Lieh Tzu



277 **Z**huangzi once told a story about two persons who both lost a sheep. One person got very depressed and lost himself in drinking, sex, and gambling to try to forget this misfortune. The other person decided that this would be an excellent chance for him to study the classics and quietly observe the subtleties of nature. Both men experience the same misfortune, but one man lost himself because he was too attached to the experience of loss, while the other found himself because he was able to let go of gain and loss.

Lieh Tzu



**278** In youth, our blood rises and becomes volatile. Desire, worry, and anxiety increase. External circumstances now direct the rise and fall of emotions. Will and intention become constrained by social conventions. Competition, conflict, and scheming are the norm in interactions with people. The approval and disapproval of others become important, and the honest and sincere expression of thoughts and feelings is lost.

Lieh Tzu



- 279** If a branch is too rigid, it will break. Resist, and you will perish. Know how to yield, and you will survive.

Lieh Tzu

- 280** A person with a mind is bound to be filled with conceptions. These conceptions prevent him from knowing things directly, so a person with a mind shall never really know.

Lieh Tzu



281 Let your eyes see what they see, not what others want you to see. Let your ears hear what they naturally hear, not what others want you to hear. Let your mouth speak your mind freely and not be constrained by other people's approval or disapproval. Let your mind think what it wants to think and not let other people's demands dictate your thoughts. If your senses and your mind are not allowed to do what they want to do naturally, you are denying them their rights. When you cannot think, sense, feel, or act freely, then your body and mind are injured. Break these oppressions, and you will cultivate life.

Lieh Tzu





**282** To be truly happy and contented, you must let go of the idea of what it means to be truly happy or content.

Lieh Tzu

**283** In infancy, our blood is strong and our energy is plentiful. Mind and body, thought and action are one. Everything we do is in harmony with the natural order. The infant is not affected by things that happen around him. Virtue and ethics cannot restrain his will. Naked and free of social conventions, he follows the natural path of the heart.

Lieh Tzu



**284** If you can dispense with reputation, then you are free from care. Reputation is only a visitor, but reality is here to stay.

Lieh Tzu



- 285 The ancients said that for persons who cultivated body and mind, and who are virtuous and honourable, death is an experience of liberation, a long-awaited rest from a lifetime of labour. Death helps the unscrupulous person to put an end to the misery of desire. Death, then, for everyone is a kind of homecoming. That is why the ancient sages speak of a dying person as a person who is 'going home'.

Lieh Tzu

- 286 Once you transcend the external differences, anything can be merged with anything.

Lieh Tzu



287 Travel is such a wonderful experience! Especially when you forget you are traveling. Then you will enjoy whatever you see and do. Those who look into themselves when they travel will not think about what they see. In fact, there is no distinction between the viewer and the seen. You experience everything with the totality of yourself, so that every blade of grass, every mountain, every lake is alive and is a part of you. When there is no division between you and what other is, this is the ultimate experience of traveling.

Lieh Tzu



- 288** He likes to use his wit and verbal finesse to confuse others and win arguments. Although he can argue successfully that white is black and straight is crooked, you walk away with the feeling that he's won the argument not because he is correct but because you can't outwit him.

Lieh Tzu

- 289** Division and differentiation are the processes by which things are created. Since things are emerging and dissolving all the time, you cannot specify the point when this division will stop.

Lieh Tzu



**290** To solve a problem, you need to remove the cause, not the symptom.

Lieh Tzu

**291** The contented person finds rest in death, and for the greedy person, death puts an end to his long list of desires.

Lieh Tzu



**292** If you play a game where scrap pieces of glass are at stake, you will play skillfully. If your expensive belt buckle is at stake, you'll start to get clumsy. If it's your money that's at stake, you'll fumble. It's not that you've lost your skill. It's because you are so flustered by things happening outside that you've lost your calmness inside. Lose your stillness and you will fail in everything you do.

Lieh Tzu



293 People all know the pleasure of life but not the pain of life; they know the fatigue of old age, but not the freedom of old age; they know the horror of death but not the peace of death.

Lieh Tzu





**294** There was a man whose only son died of a sudden illness. He did not mourn for his son, nor was he sad about it. His friends were curious about his behaviour, so they asked him, “Your only son is dead. You should be heartbroken. Why do you act as if nothing had happened?”

The man replied, “Before my son came, I had no son. I was certainly not heartbroken back then. Now I have no son. Why should I be heartbroken now?”

Lieh Tzu



**295** The ancient saying that force outdoes inferiors while gentility outdoes superiors.

Lieh Tzu



296 People use the words “beginning” and “end” to describe the start and end of things. However, “beginning” is really the event of coming together when energy gathers, and “end” is simply the dissolution of that energy. That which came together can easily dissolve if conditions become unfavourable. That which has dissolved may come together again if circumstances are appropriate. Therefore, who is to say that there is a beginning and an end?

Lieh Tzu



**297** Strength should always be complimented by softness. If you resist too much, you will break. Thus, the strong person knows when to use strength and when to yield, and good fortune and disaster depend on whether you know how and when to yield.

Lieh Tzu



298 When we are rich and famous and powerful, we do not want to die. On the other hand, if we are miserable and suffering, we want to die and leave it all. But can joy or misery last forever? There is a saying, "All celebrations must end sometime." Any wish to live forever or die immediately is often a whim of the moment. How do we know that, although we are happy now, we may not be sad the next day, or sad now but may be happy soon? Given that good and ill, fortune and misfortune come in their own way, we should not cling to life or embrace death. Life and death will come of their own. Why be greedy about life and afraid of death?

Lieh Tzu



**299** The stories are also used as testing devices, to gauge mental state by reaction, as well as blueprints for further development.

Lieh Tzu



THE JADE EMPEROR'S MIND  
SEAL CLASSIC



- 300** The Supreme Medicine (in our body) has three dimensions: Jing (essence), Qi (vitality), and Shen (spirit), which are elusive and obscure.

The Jade Emperor's Mind Seal Classic

- 301** Keep to nonbeing, yet hold on to being and perfection is yours in an instant.

The Jade Emperor's Mind Seal Classic

- 302** The sages awaken through self-cultivation; deep, profound, their practices require great effort.

The Jade Emperor's Mind Seal Classic





**303** Fulfilling vows illumines the Heavens.

The Jade Emperor's Mind Seal Classic

**304** Breathing nourishes youthfulness.

The Jade Emperor's Mind Seal Classic

**305** Each person has Jing. The Shen unites with the Jing, the Shen unites with the Qi, the breath then unites with the true nature. Before you have attained this true nature, these terms appear to be fanciful exaggerations.

The Jade Emperor's Mind Seal Classic



- 306** The Shen depends on life form (physical); the Jing depends on sufficient Qi. If these are neither depleted nor injured, the result will be youthfulness and longevity.

The Jade Emperor's Mind Seal Classic

- 307** The meeting of our Jing, Qi and Shen results in our existence, Their parting results in our non-existence.

The Jade Emperor's Mind Seal Classic

- 308** The seven apertures in our body interpenetrate, and each emits wisdom light.

The Jade Emperor's Mind Seal Classic



- 309** Acquiring the inner Elixir results in immortality, not acquiring it results in extinction.

The Jade Emperor's Mind Seal Classic

- 310** The Elixir is within yourself, It is not white and not green.

The Jade Emperor's Mind Seal Classic

- 311** Recite (the scripture) and uphold (practice) it ten thousand times. These are the subtle principles of self-illumination.

The Jade Emperor's Mind Seal Classic



- 312** It is not possible to attain the eternal just through invocation.

The Jade Emperor's Mind Seal Classic

- 313** The Elixir is called Green Dragon and White Tiger; The Elixir is the nature of no-nature, Emptiness of non-emptiness.

The Jade Emperor's Mind Seal Classic

- 314** (In cultivating the inner Elixir) Even if you are unable to make use of the substance, you can certainly make use of the function.

The Jade Emperor's Mind Seal Classic



**315** The ancients said, “The term emptiness embraces the entire teaching.”

The Jade Emperor’s Mind Seal Classic

**316** When you let go of the Void you unite with the Tao. Once you have returned to the source, the Tao, the Elixir of Immortality is complete.

The Jade Emperor’s Mind Seal Classic



THE TRUE SCRIPTURE OF THE  
BIG DIPPER, THE GOVERNOR  
OF LONGEVITY AND DESTINY,  
AS REVEALED THE SUPREME  
VENERABLE LORD TAI SHANG

(TAI SHANG XUAN LING BEI DOU BEN  
MING ZHEN JING)



**317** It is difficult to be reborn in human form. It is even more difficult to be born in the central lands. Even if you have that opportunity, to encounter the true teaching of Tao is rare.

The True Scripture of the Big Dipper, the Governor of Longevity and Destiny, as revealed the Supreme Venerable Lord Tai Shang

(Tai Shang Xuan Ling Bei Dou Ben Ming Zhen Jing)



318 Humanity does not understand karma. They do not know the true way of Tao. They are confused and lost.

The True Scripture of the Big Dipper, the Governor of Longevity and Destiny, as revealed the Supreme Venerable Lord Tai Shang

(Tai Shang Xuan Ling Bei Dou Ben Ming Zhen Jing)





**319** I (Supreme Venerable Lord) will let them know that all life comes from the Tao. If they understand this, then they will attain longevity. Their seed of life will not wither. They will continue to exist in human form.

The True Scripture of the Big Dipper, the Governor of Longevity and Destiny, as revealed the Supreme Venerable Lord Tai Shang

(Tai Shang Xuan Ling Bei Dou Ben Ming Zhen Jing)



**320** Cultivating the Tao, they will not be born in lands where the teachings of the Tao are unknown. They will not lose the essence of being human. They will cultivate the Tao in themselves and gradually enter the path of immortality.

The True Scripture of the Big Dipper, the Governor of Longevity and Destiny, as revealed the Supreme Venerable Lord Tai Shang

(Tai Shang Xuan Ling Bei Dou Ben Ming Zhen Jing)



**321** Cultivate the Tao and be liberated from cycles of rebirth. One will transcend earthly existence and merge with the Tao and return to their true nature.

The True Scripture of the Big Dipper, the Governor of Longevity and Destiny, as revealed the Supreme Venerable Lord Tai Shang

(Tai Shang Xuan Ling Bei Dou Ben Ming Zhen Jing)



**322** The Big Dipper has nine luminous bodies. In the centre of the sky is the great sacred star: Upward it points toward the heavenly golden palace, downward it envelops the Kun-lun Mountains. It regulates the movement of all things and rules the universe.

The True Scripture of the Big Dipper, the Governor of Longevity and Destiny, as revealed the Supreme Venerable Lord Tai Shang

(Tai Shang Xuan Ling Bei Dou Ben Ming Zhen Jing)



**323** The celestial stars circle at the macrocosm and are present in the microcosm of a grain of dust. So, is there any disaster that it cannot avert? Is there any prosperity that it cannot grant?

The True Scripture of the Big Dipper, the Governor of Longevity and Destiny, as revealed the Supreme Venerable Lord Tai Shang

(Tai Shang Xuan Ling Bei Dou Ben Ming Zhen Jing)



**324** All the constellations rotate around the Celestial Pivot, day and night without stopping. We abide by the solemnity of the ritual. So that we may attain immortality.

The True Scripture of the Big Dipper, the Governor of Longevity and Destiny, as revealed the Supreme Venerable Lord Tai Shang

(Tai Shang Xuan Ling Bei Dou Ben Ming Zhen Jing)



**325** The Three Altar Stars (San Tai Xing): Energy of the Void, The Scholar and Warrior Stars that give balance – From them I am born: From them I receive nourishment; they protect my human form.

The True Scripture of the Big Dipper, the Governor of Longevity and Destiny, as revealed the Supreme Venerable Lord Tai Shang

(Tai Shang Xuan Ling Bei Dou Ben Ming Zhen Jing)



IMPERIAL SOVEREIGN WEN  
CHANG'S TREATISE ON THE  
UNSEEN MERITS

(WEN CHANG DI JUN YIN ZHI WEN)





**326** He, who wants to expand the field of happiness, let him lay the foundation of it on the bottom of his heart.

Imperial Sovereign Wen Chang's Treatise on the unseen merits

(Wen Chang Di Jun Yin Zhi Wen)

**327** Let your work conform to Heaven's reason, and let your speech express humaneness.

Imperial Sovereign Wen Chang's Treatise on the unseen merits

(Wen Chang Di Jun Yin Zhi Wen)



328 Be mindful when you are alone in the shadow of your coverlet.

Imperial Sovereign Wen Chang's Treatise on the unseen merits

(Wen Chang Di Jun Yin Zhi Wen)

329 Anything evil refrain ye from doing; all good deeds do! So will you be released forever from the influence of evil stars, and always be encompassed by good guardian spirits.

Imperial Sovereign Wen Chang's Treatise on the unseen merits

(Wen Chang Di Jun Yin Zhi Wen)



- 330** Practise benevolence wherever you find an opportunity, and let your deeds of merit be unheeded (yin).

Imperial Sovereign Wen Chang's Treatise on the unseen merits

(Wen Chang Di Jun Yin Zhi Wen)

- 331** Do not secretly steal things, harbour hidden plots, or harm other beings in order to profit yourself. Always practise hidden virtue and widely aid the host of living beings.  
- Precepts of Initial Perfection

Imperial Sovereign Wen Chang's Treatise on the unseen merits

(Wen Chang Di Jun Yin Zhi Wen)



332 Do not slander or defame the worthy and good or exhibit your talents and elevate yourself. Always praise the beauty and goodness of others and never be contentious about your own accomplishments and abilities. - Precepts of Initial Perfection

Imperial Sovereign Wen Chang's Treatise on the unseen merits

(Wen Chang Di Jun Yin Zhi Wen)



**333** Do not be greedy or acquisitive without ever being satisfied or accumulate wealth without giving some away. Always practise moderation in all things and show kindness and sympathy to the poor and destitute.  
- Precepts of Initial Perfection

Imperial Sovereign Wen Chang's Treatise on  
the unseen merits

(Wen Chang Di Jun Yin Zhi Wen)



**334** Do not have any relations or exchange with the unworthy or live among the confused and defiled. Always strive to control yourself, becoming perched and composed in clarity and emptiness. - Precepts of Initial Perfection

Imperial Sovereign Wen Chang's Treatise on the unseen merits

(Wen Chang Di Jun Yin Zhi Wen)



HEAVENLY LORD OF THE  
SUPREME EMPTINESS'S TREATISE  
OF THE FORTY-NINE CHAPTERS

(TAI SHANG XU HUANG TIAN ZUN SI SHI  
JIU ZHANG JING)



**335** If any one wishes to cultivate Tao, he should firstly cultivate merits.

Heavenly Lord of the Supreme Emptiness's  
Treatise of the Forty-nine Chapters

(Tai Shang Xu Huang Tian Zun Si Shi Jiu  
Zhang Jing)

**336** After eating honey, your mouth is filled with sweetness, and your tongue has the remaining flavour. Tasting my words (words of Tao) is like that, and much greater than that.

Heavenly Lord of the Supreme Emptiness's  
Treatise of the Forty-nine Chapters

(Tai Shang Xu Huang Tian Zun Si Shi Jiu  
Zhang Jing)





**337** When there are dirtiness accumulated on one's body, he will wish to bath, but his heart being defiled and his six-consciousness being polluted, he does not wish to clean them -- because he is deluded and perplexed.

Heavenly Lord of the Supreme Emptiness's  
Treatise of the Forty-nine Chapters

(Tai Shang Xu Huang Tian Zun Si Shi Jiu  
Zhang Jing)



**338** All blessings come from joy; all givings can arouse joy from the hearts [of both the givers and the receivers].

Heavenly Lord of the Supreme Emptiness's  
Treatise of the Forty-nine Chapters

(Tai Shang Xu Huang Tian Zun Si Shi Jiu  
Zhang Jing)



**339** The Heavenly Lord said: Studying Tao is very difficult, because ghosts, spirits, and demon kings prevent people from achieving the perfection. They only want people to die and do not like anyone to achieve the Tao of immortality.

Heavenly Lord of the Supreme Emptiness's  
Treatise of the Forty-nine Chapters

(Tai Shang Xu Huang Tian Zun Si Shi Jiu  
Zhang Jing)



**340** The Heavenly Lord said: My Tao is like the sun, whose light universally illuminate all, so that people can differentiate many and various appearances and phenomena. Without light, eyes cannot see. Therefore, you should practice Tao carefully, and never stop in the middle of the practice.

Heavenly Lord of the Supreme Emptiness's  
Treatise of the Forty-nine Chapters

(Tai Shang Xu Huang Tian Zun Si Shi Jiu  
Zhang Jing)



## OTHER TAOIST SCRIPTURES



- 341 Purity is heavenly qi; impurity is earthly qi. Motion is Yang qi; stillness is Yin qi. Heaven's purity is pure Yang; Earth's impurity is pure Yin.

The Way of Immortals Tranquil Sitting Classic  
(Zuo Wang Lun)

- 342 The smoke rises from the Incense stove, the breath of the Tao lingers. With dedication offer this fragrant incense.

Invocation for Lighting the Incense Stove



- 343** Let its scent surround the universe.  
Let it spread to the ten directions.  
Let all the spirits reveal their golden  
light.

Invocation for Lighting the Incense Stove

- 344** The Tao is approached from the  
heart. As the smoke rises, let my  
heart ascend to the Tao.

Invocation for Dedication of Incense

- 345** Before the fragrant incense and  
jade pure incense stove, I stand  
single-minded before the celestial  
lords.

Invocation for Dedication of Incense



**346** Let the true spirit descend. Let the immortals come. This I sincerely petition. Let my vision reach the nine celestial realms.

Invocation for Dedication of Incense

**347** When sky and earth follow the natural Tao, the impure breath will disappear.

The mysterious emptiness of the cavern will illuminate the great oneness.

Invocation for Purification of the Sky and the Earth





**348** Lord Lao Jun said: The great Tao has no form, yet it gives birth to Heaven and Earth. The great Tao has no desires, yet it moves the sun and moon along their orbits. The great Tao has no name, yet it constantly nurtures the myriad phenomena. I do not know its name, and yet I attempt to speak of it as the Tao.

The scripture of Peace and Tranquility

(Qing Jing Jing)



- 349** The human spirit is fond of purity, but the mind disturbs it; the human mind is fond of stillness, but desires lead it along. If the mind can be constant without desires, then the mind will become still; when the mind has settled, then the spirit will be pure.

The scripture of Peace and Tranquility

(Qing Jing Jing)

- 350** To observe the Tao of Heaven, and grasp its method of operation, is the limit of all achievement.

Yellow Emperor's scripture of the Unconscious  
Unification

(Huang Di Yin Fu Jing)



- 351** Tai Shang (Lao Zi) says, 'There are no special doors for calamity and happiness (in men's lot); they come as men themselves call them. Their recompenses follow good and evil as the shadow follows the substance.

Treatise of the Supreme Venerable on  
Response and Retribution

(Tai Shang Gan Yin Pian)

- 352** If a man's heart be awakened to the good, though the good be not yet accomplished, good spirits verily are already following him.

Treatise of the Supreme Venerable on  
Response and Retribution

(Tai Shang Gan Yin Pian)



**353** Blessed is the man who speak what is good, who think what is good, who practice what is good. If but each single day he would persevere in these three ways of goodness, within three years Heaven will surely shower on him blessings.

Treatise of the Supreme Venerable on  
Response and Retribution

(Tai Shang Gan Yin Pian)



**354** The great Tao is omnipresent, mystical, and empty; It never fails to respond to any thoughts. Thus, by the aid of precept-keeping, one can refine his physical body to become an Immortal of Reality

The Supreme Venerable Lord's scripture of precepts

(Tai Shang Lao Jun Jie Jing)



**355** Lord Lao Jun says: Eliminating disasters and relieving sufferings are not as easy as preventing them from happening. Treating illnesses and healing diseases are not as auspicious as taking precautions against them.

Lao Jun's Scripture about The One Hundred Diseases and the One Hundred Medicines

(Tai Shang Lao Jun Shuo Bai Bing Chong Bai Yao Jing)



**356** An ancient Saint does not omit a smallest virtue, and does not keep a smallest evil.

Lao Jun's Scripture about The One Hundred Diseases and the One Hundred Medicines

(Tai Shang Lao Jun Shuo Bai Bing Chong Bai Yao Jing)



**357** Knowing the Tao of No-Emptiness, you can observe all phenomena without obstacles, enter all of the miraculous doors, and by your own accord achieve realization. You can be free from all the webs of doubt, and detach from your perceptive fixation on “emptiness”. You can cleanse the six senses, and sever all evil obstacles.

Scripture of the Highest Mystery, Disaster  
Dissolving, and Life Protecting

(Tai Shang Sheng Xuan Xiao Zai Hu Ming Miao  
Jing)





**358** [If you are going to] study immortality then it must be celestial immortality, [which] alone is the most superior doctrine of the golden elixir.

The Chapters on Awakening to the Real

(Wu Zhen Pian)

**359** All people have [within them] the medicine of long life; [yet,] self-assured, foolish, and deluded, [they] vainly toss it away.

The Chapters on Awakening to the Real

(Wu Zhen Pian)



**360** The words of the ten thousand scrolls and scriptures of the immortals are all the same, the golden elixir, only this is the foundational teaching.

The Chapters on Awakening to the Real

(Wu Zhen Pian)



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上善若水  
水善利萬物  
而不爭  
處眾人之所惡  
故幾於道矣

淨玄學



***The good man is like water;  
Water benefits all things but does not compete  
with them.***

***It dwells in (the lowly) places that all disdain-  
Wherein it comes near to the Tao.***

- Tao Te Ching, Chapter 8