

14

Look, it cannot be seen - it is beyond form.
Listen, it cannot be heard - it is beyond sound.
Grasp, it cannot be held - it is intangible.
These three are indefinable;
Therefore they are joined in one.

From above it is not bright;
From below it is not dark:
An unbroken thread beyond description.
It returns to nothingness.
The form of the formless,
The image of the imageless,
It is called indefinable and beyond imagination.

Stand before it and there is no beginning.
Follow it and there is no end.
Stay with the ancient Tao,
Move with the present.

Knowing the ancient beginning is the essence of Tao.

14

Look, and it can't be seen.
Listen, and it can't be heard.
Reach, and it can't be grasped.

Above, it isn't bright.
Below, it isn't dark.
Seamless, unnamable,

it returns to the realm of nothing.
Form that includes all forms,
image without an image,
subtle, beyond all conception.

Approach it and there is no beginning;
follow it and there is no end.
You can't know it, but you can be it,
at ease in your own life.

Just realize where you come from:
this is the essence of wisdom.

14

Seeing but not seeing, we call it dim. Listening but not hearing, we call it faint. Groping but not touching, we call it subtle.
These three cannot be fully grasped. Therefore they become one.
Rising, it is not bright; setting it is not dark. It moves all things back to where there is nothing
Meeting it there is no front, following it there is no back.
Live in the ancient Tao, Master the existing present, Understand the source of all things. This is called the record of Tao.

14

Look at it, it cannot be seen
It is called colorless
Listen to it, it cannot be heard
It is called noiseless
Reach for it, it cannot be held
It is called formless
These three cannot be completely unraveled
So they are combined into one
Above it, not bright
Below it, not dark
Continuing endlessly, cannot be named
It returns back into nothingness
Thus it is called the form of the formless
The image of the imageless
This is called enigmatic
Confront it, its front cannot be seen
Follow it, its back cannot be seen
Wield the Tao of the ancients
To manage the existence of today
One can know the ancient beginning
It is called the Tao axiom

14

Look for it, and it can't be seen.
Listen for it, and it can't be heard.
Grasp for it, and it can't be caught.
These three cannot be further described,
so we treat them as The One.

Its highest is not bright.
Its depths are not dark.
Unending, unnameable, it returns to nothingness.
Formless forms, and imageless images,
subtle, beyond all understanding.

Approach it and you will not see a beginning;
follow it and there will be no end.
When we grasp the Tao of the ancient ones,
we can use it to direct our life today.
To know the ancient origin of Tao:
this is the beginning of wisdom.