

Essay

A Simple Explanation of the Tao

Cyd Ropp*

ABSTRACT

The Tao Te Ching, or Book of the Way, is an ancient Chinese collection of 81 wisdom verses. In “The Simple Explanation” model, the Tao spoken of by Lao Tzu refers to the metaversal information and principles of organization that have informed our universe since the moment before creation. When one loses touch with the metaversal consciousness, one loses the Tao’s information pipeline. Once your personal Unit of Consciousness has lost its way, you no longer have true goodness. Morality is what you are left with once love departs. Morality is a system of rules meant to engender Godly behavior in those who no longer know God.

Key Words: Tao Te Ching, simple explanation, Lao Tzu, Consciousness.

The Tao Te Ching, or Book of the Way, is an ancient Chinese collection of 81 wisdom verses. In the “*Simple Explanation*” model, the Tao spoken of by Lao Tzu refers to the metaversal information and principles of organization that have informed our universe since the moment before creation. “Non-being” refers to clearing your personal Unit of Consciousness of earthly memes and karma. “Non-action” refers to allowing the originating universal Unit of Consciousness to direct your personal Unit of Consciousness for the greater good.

A Simple Explanation of the Tao Te Ching -- Verse 1

Here is the first verse of the Tao Te Ching, the Stephen Mitchell translation:

The tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao.
The name that can be named is not the eternal Name.

The unnamable is the eternally real.
Naming is the origin of all particular things.

Free from desire, you realize the mystery. Caught in desire, you see only the manifestations.

Yet mystery and manifestations arise from the same source. This source is called darkness. Darkness within darkness, the gateway to all understanding.

*Correspondence: Cyd Ropp, PhD, Independent Researcher. <http://asimpleexplanation.blogspot.com>
E-mail: cropp7@hotmail.com Also see: Ropp, C. *A Simple Explanation of Absolutely Everything* (Bluebird Books/lulu.com: Encinitas, 2012-2015).

A Simple Rewording of Verse 1

The information and principles of organization imagined in ideal form in the metaverse are more perfect and complete than we can ever articulate.

Pure conscious awareness without time and space exists outside our universe.

Abstract thought on the part of pure consciousness defined creation prior to the Big Bang. In our universe, we are only able to recognize objects and concepts we have named.

When we set down our meme bundles we are freed from personal preference. In that clear state we may perceive the workings of the universal model and our role in it. Remaining attached to our memes obscures the inflowing metaversal patterns and keeps us tethered to our familiar material and relational patterns.

Pure, undifferentiated consciousness dwells in the unformed darkness of the metaverse. The thought patterns that produce light and matter arise out of the metaverse, but the manifestations of these patterns takes place within our universe. The portal into our universe is the gateway to all understanding.

A Simple Explanation of the Tao Te Ching, Verses 4 & 48

Here is Verse 4, the Mitchell translation:

The Tao is like a well: used but never used up.
It is like the eternal void: filled with infinite possibilities.
It is hidden but always present.

I don't know who gave birth to it. It is older than God.

A Simple Rewording of Verse 4

The information and principles of organization streaming into our universe arise from an infinite source.

The eternal void is the resting state of the metaverse—pure consciousness without pattern or form but filled with limitless potential.

The metaverse cannot be seen or measured, but it surrounds and informs our universe.

The metaverse is not the same as God—it existed prior to God's first thought.

Here is Verse 48, the Mitchell translation

In the pursuit of knowledge, every day something is added. In the practice of Tao, every day something is dropped.

Less and less do you need to force things, until finally you arrive at non-action.

When nothing is done, nothing is left undone.

True mastery can be gained by letting things go their own way. It can't be gained by interfering.

A Simple Explanation of Verse 48

People believe that the more they know, the better off they and the world will be. However, academic study leads to the acquisition of academic memes, which tend to obscure best solutions. When we drop memes rather than add them, we allow transcendent patterns of organization and information to work through us.

When we make plans and do work according to our limited vision and personal desires, we strain to get things right. Acting only when truly inspired, the metaverse works through us. When a UC does nothing of its own accord, the metaverse can do exactly what needs to be done. Best results arise from inspired action. "Letting go and letting God" allows the metaverse to use us in the most efficient manner for the greatest good.

A Simple Explanation of the Tao Te Ching -- Verse 18

Here is the 18th verse of the Tao Te Ching, which I have translated directly into Simple Explanation terminology from Jonathan Star's verbatim translation:

When metaversal principles are disregarded—

Doctrines of good deeds and self-righteousness emerge, along with clever, scheming minds and accumulations of memes.

This gives rise to a great deal of lying and hypocrisy.

Consequently, relationships between Units of Consciousness are no longer harmonious.

Preaching about "Duty and Devotion," "Family Values," and "Us Against Them" gives rise to discord and chaos.

Because of the breakdown of authentic cooperation with others, one must depend upon loyal servants.

A Simple Explanation of Verse 18

This verse of the Tao Te Ching shows how sadly misguided is the human condition. It all begins by not acknowledging, listening to, and enacting the metaversal plan. Once off the beam of truth, look what follows... lying, hypocrisy, discord, and chaos. And the need for a class of do-gooders hired to do what cannot otherwise be accomplished due to lack of cooperation.

It's interesting to note that the first efforts the individualized Units of Consciousness enact on their own is filled with all good intentions. This is "me" doing my ideas of good deeds with all best intentions. But acting out of one's ego-centered point of view is what gives rise to self-righteousness, according to Verse 18. (I am being good! What is the matter with you!?)

Clever minds, self-promoting schemes, and the accumulation of "knowledge," i.e. your personal meme bundle, follow quickly on the heels of the good intentions.

Once the personalized Unit of Consciousness becomes self-righteous and full of its own memes, lying and hypocrisy are the inevitable result. Why? Because we are all flawed, imperfect beings when operating out of ego rather than the leading of the universal Unit of Consciousness. And who wants others to know how flawed and imperfect we are? Especially if we are holding ourselves out as more righteous than they are. Verse 18 says it is, ironically, self-righteousness that drives lying and hypocrisy.

At this point in Verse 18, there is a breakdown of familial and tribal relations within one's own family and tribe. Rules of conduct are imposed rather than authentic. Preaching about tribal "isms" replaces real relations of harmony and cooperation. If there is a breakdown of the parent-child relationship, or between siblings, or husbands and wives, then there's a lot of talk about how important family values are and the importance of duty and shows of devotion. But these are now hollow, rule-bound memes rather than vibrant, living relations. Borders are erected around groups, labeling "Us" against "Them," because once your primary relationships are no longer distinguished by love, differences between "us" and "them" need to be noted and emphasized, otherwise how are "we" any different from "them"?

Once true harmony and cooperation have ceased, loyal servants are needed to do the work. These servants can be government workers, social workers, household servants... any job that needs to be done that would not otherwise be done due to people following their own private ambitions rather than instantiating the metaversal plan. And note how Lao Tzu specified "loyal" servants... on the servant's part, disciplined loyalty and following someone else's orders has replaced spontaneous action in the here and now and the freedom to do what needs to be done.

All of these outcomes arise from not being in the here and now and instantiating the metaversal plan.

A Simple Explanation of the Tao Te Ching -- Verse 21

Here is the 21st verse of the Tao Te Ching, which I have translated directly into Simple Explanation terminology from an original verbatim translation by Jonathan Star:

Tao Te Ching, Verse 21

Highest virtue arises through total alignment with the originating source of consciousness.

How to become one with this elusive source? By disregarding everything else.

Oh, so elusive! So very indistinct!
Yet within its dimensionless center, dimensions form.

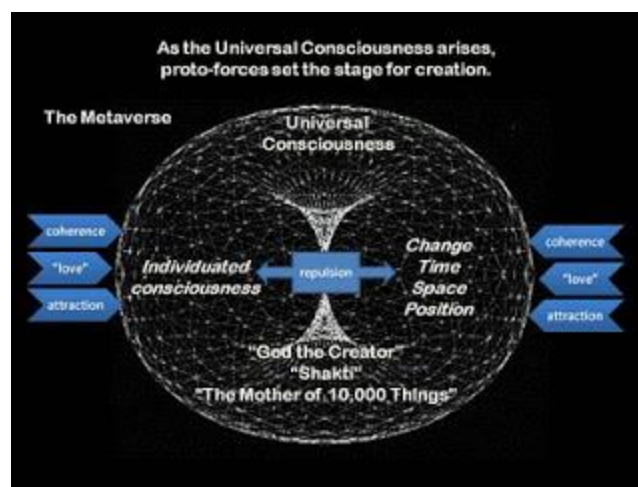
So uncertain! So intangible!
Yet its middle contains the latent substance of all things.

So profound! Such a mystery!
Housed deep within that mysterious middle--the seed of life is consciousness itself.

The life force within is self-evident. Thus, life itself provides trustworthy evidence of the originating source.

From the first moment until now, the manifestations of consciousness remain ever the same.
Thus do we all bear witness to the Creator, the Originator.

This is accordingly how I know the ways of everything and the origin of all things: by observing what is within me.



A Simple Explanation of the Tao Te Ching -- Verse 31

Here is the 31st verse of the Tao Te Ching, which I have translated directly into Simple Explanation terminology from Jonathan Star's verbatim translation:

Even the finest instruments of war cannot bring good fortune;
All Units of Consciousness seem to detest them.
Therefore, one who is aligned with the Universal Consciousness avoids them.

Consciousness prefers the passive, the weak--the "feminine."
War gives preference to the active, the strong, the "masculine."

Instruments of war are the least fortunate of all tools, in opposition to the instruments preferred by the indwelling Lord--the Universal Unit of Consciousness.
They should only be used when unavoidably compelled.

Detached restraint is the best policy.
Even in victory there should be no boasting, but rather find beauty in the Universal Unit of Consciousness.

Truly, those who find joy in killing others cannot expect to instantiate Heaven on earth!

Joyful events celebrate the feminine;
Sorrow and calamity prefer the masculine.

The second-in-command occupies the masculine position on the left,
The commander-in-chief takes the place on the right, or feminine side--
An arrangement on par with ancient funeral rites.
Accordingly, killing others causes all to weep with sorrow.

Victory in battle is therefore an opportunity for mourning, and should be treated as one.

This verse is most obviously about how we should react to war and the slaughter of war. Simply put, killing an "enemy" is only a last resort, one absolutely compelled by circumstances. Even then, victory is never sweet, never an occasion for boasting or celebration. For, according to Verse 31, good cannot come from it. "Heaven on Earth" cannot result from war--it's axiomatic.

Secondly, this verse talks a lot about left and right, feminine and masculine. These are references to Yin and Yang, not "women" and "men" per se. Here's what it says about this polarity: consciousness requires a yin state of mind, whether it be your own personal Unit of Consciousness or the Universal Unit of Consciousness with which your personal UC longs to be united. To be or become conscious, one must cultivate and dwell in the passive, feminine, yin state; which is to say one must be "receptive."



The rising yang is the white area on the left. The sinking yin is the black area on the right.

War, conflict, and killing are evidence of passionate yang states--the masculine, "active" mode. Verse 31 is advancing the axiom that the mode of being required by war is antithetical to that required by consciousness. Lao Tzu equates beauty and joy with consciousness and being in alignment with the Universal UC. This is why he equates killing with sorrow--because to wield the sword, the gun, or the explosive vest is never the metaversal plan, or "will of God," and will never bring the desired joyful outcome.

Lastly, here's how I interpret the part about the second-in-command occupying the yang position and the commander occupying the yin position: when seeking enlightenment, or alignment with the Universal Unit of Consciousness or God's will, your personal Unit of Consciousness needs to hold the commander's position in your soul. If your UC is in control, rather than your "little me" mind or your emotional yang passions, you will be in the passive, yin state and able to channel the Universal UC. In that state, it is just fine for the passions and mind to be second-in-command; this is how it should be. When those roles are reversed, as they are for most people whose theatre of action is in the material world, their yang state precludes the receptivity required for enlightenment. Therefore, when, with full consciousness of the tragic consequences, the UC must preside over war, this is an occasion for mourning, as if presiding over a funeral.

A Simple Explanation of the Tao Te Ching -- Verse 62

Here is the 62nd verse of the Tao Te Ching, which I have translated directly into Simple Explanation terminology from Jonathan Star's verbatim translation:

Pure Consciousness is the single source that flows through all creation.
Enlightened Units of Consciousness treasure their connection to Universal Consciousness.
Even those who have lost awareness of this connection are guaranteed its protection.

Pleasing words can be bought and sold, and good deeds may earn the respect of others.
Yet, is this any reason to abandon those who have lost their way?

Therefore, when Units of Consciousness gain enlightenment and take their place as Children of Heaven alongside their three ministers,

Rather than clutching priceless gems to the heart and racing about with a four-horse team,
It is better for them to sit calmly and advance the gift of consciousness.

This is the reason why the ancients treasured the Universal Consciousness--this is why!
Did they not say that those who seek, receive?
That those who have lost their way shall be forgiven?

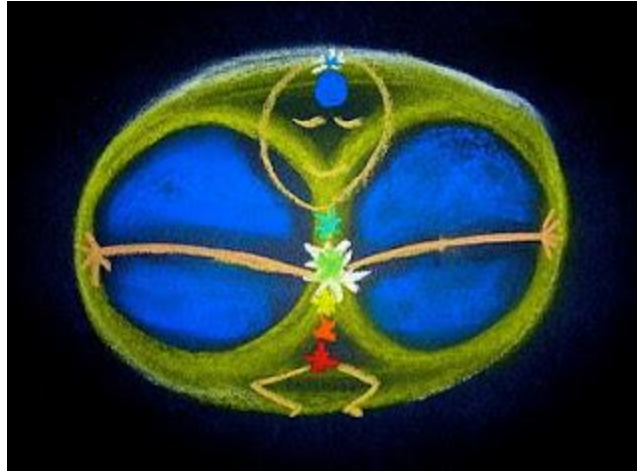
Therefore, creation holds consciousness most dear.

The "*Simple Explanation*" generally chooses the most meta or universally applicable words for its translation of the Tao te Ching. I try to keep the interpretations usable for all Units of Consciousness, not just humans. This why we say "UCs" when talking about "people," because we may be talking about the consciousness of a single-celled organism or a quark or a flower--"consciousness is consciousness." Rather than translating "sage" or "good man" I choose to say "Enlightened UC," or "Enlightened Unit of Consciousness," because we may be talking about a Godly rock or mouse as easily as a human. Likewise, I don't like to say "bad man," but rather "those who have lost awareness," or "those who have lost their way."

This is because no matter the scale of fractal replication or hierarchical level of complexity, we are all identical Units of Consciousness, differing only in the layers of accretion that clothe us. Hence, "There but for the grace of God go I." "I" am no different from "you," from a skin cell, from a planet--we are all fractal replications of the original Unit of Consciousness. Verse 62 appears to be aimed at those UCs who have gained enlightenment, or realization of their status as fractal replications of the Universal Unit of Consciousness. If you are in touch with your UC, if you are seeking metaversal guidance in all that you do, then don't clutch worldly treasures or the approbation of others to your heart, for you may as well be tied to a team of four horses! Rather, sit quietly and lose your egoic self in pure consciousness.

And let it be known, this verse further admonishes, that heaven smiles on the wicked as well as the just. The Universal Unit of Consciousness enfolds, nourishes, and protects all of creation, even those who have lost their way. Therefore, it is the job of enlightened UCs to forgive others, even as the Universal UC forgives. Verse 62 tells us that good words and good deeds are, indeed, pleasing and we respect those that perform them, but this is not what the Universal Unit of Consciousness is seeking from us.

The Universal UC is all and only about unity through consciousness.



Depiction of a meditating person "in phase" with their UC.

A Simple Explanation of the Tao Te Ching -- Verse 68

Here is the 68th verse of the Tao Te Ching, which I have translated directly into Simple Explanation terminology from an original verbatim translation by Jonathan Star:

The most skillful military leader is neither violent nor aggressive;

The most skillful soldier never acts out of anger.

The best way to win a battle is to avoid confrontation.

The best way to get the job done is to make sure that others' needs are met.

This ancient principle is known as "living in harmony" with your fellow Units of Consciousness.

Living in harmony brings out the best in others.

When you live in perfect harmony with others, you live in perfect harmony with the metaverse.

In this verse, Lao Tzu describes the metaversal principle of Harmonious Cooperation thusly: all Units of Consciousness have their jobs to do, and the most efficient way for us all to get our jobs done is through cooperation, not competition. Even Generals and soldiers, whose very jobs seem defined by combative non-cooperation, are most successful when they fight not out of anger or violent intent, but dispassionately, solely to "get the job done."

Wayne Dyer says of competition in his commentary on the Tao entitled *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life: Living the Wisdom of the Tao*:

“...cooperate with your opponents by wanting them to play at a high level—the best they’re capable of. Shift your focus from being upset or self-reproaching to the task at hand. See the ball, move the ball, or remain upright and balanced in a martial-arts contest. When anger isn’t a component, your game will go to a new level... So change your thinking about competing to cooperating in all areas of your life, including your work.” p. 324

I like Dyer's meme: "See the ball, move the ball." In other words, there is no opponent, there is no competition, there is no attachment to outcome; there is only the job of moving the ball.

Begging the question: In this game of life, how do you know if the ball needs moving? You will find yourself there and aware in some situation; you will see a ball that needs moving; you will be in an excellent position to move the ball; therefore, it is quite likely your job is to move the ball. That's all. Your primary job is not to harm or crush any other Unit of Consciousness in order to move that ball. If the Universe has some need for the ball to move, it will be moved. The Universe has arranged circumstances to put you there to move the ball. If someone else winds up doing the job instead of you, that's great, too. It doesn't really matter who in particular gets the job done, as long as it gets done. In this manner, we not only cooperate with one another, but we cooperate with the Universe, and the metaversal principles it embodies.



Pure Consciousness is Ground, from "Diagramming the Ineffable"

