

Scripture of Purity and Tranquility

The Great Tao has no form;
It brings forth and raises heaven and earth.
The Great Tao has no feelings;
It regulates the course of the sun and the moon.

The Great Tao has no name;
It raises and nourishes the myriad beings.
I do not know its name—
So I call it Tao.

The Tao can be pure or turbid, moving or tranquil.
Heaven is pure, earth is turbid;
Heaven is moving, earth is tranquil.
The male is moving, the female is tranquil.

Descending from the origin,
Flowing toward the end,
The myriad beings are being born.

Purity— the source of turbidity,
Movement— the root of tranquility.

Always be pure and tranquil;
Heaven and earth
Return to the primordial.

The human spirit is fond of purity,
But the mind disturbs it.
The human mind is fond of tranquility,
But desires meddle with it.

Get rid of desires for good,
And the mind will be calm.
Cleanse your mind,
And the spirit will be pure.

Naturally the six desires won't arise,
The three poisons are destroyed.
Whoever cannot do this

Has not yet cleansed his mind,
His desires are not yet driven out.

Those who have abandoned their desires:
Observe your mind by introspection—
And see there is no mind.

Then observe the body,
Look at yourself from without—
And see there is no body.

Then observe others by glancing out afar—
And see there are no beings.

Once you have realized these three,
You observe emptiness!

Use emptiness to observe emptiness,
And see there is no emptiness.
When even emptiness is no more,
There is no more nonbeing either.

Without even the existence of nonbeing
There is only serenity,
Profound and everlasting.

When serenity dissolves in nothingness—
How could there be desires?
When no desires arise
You have found true tranquility.

In true tranquility, go along with beings;
In true permanence, realize inner nature.
Forever going along, forever tranquil—
This is permanent purity, lasting tranquility.

In purity and tranquility,
Gradually enter the true Tao.
When the true Tao is entered,
It is realized.

Though we speak of "realized,"
Actually there is nothing to attain.
Rather, we speak of realization
When someone begins to transform the myriad beings.

Only who has properly understood this
Is worthy to transmit the sages' Tao.

The highest gentleman does not fight;
The lesser gentleman loves to fight.
Highest Virtue is free from Virtue;
Lesser Virtue clings to Virtue.

All clinging and attachments
Have nothing to do with the Tao or the Virtue.

People fail to realize the Tao
Because they have deviant minds.
Deviance in the mind
Means the spirit is alarmed.

Spirit alarmed,
There is clinging to things.
Clinging to things,
There is searching and coveting.

Searching and coveting,
There are passions, afflictions, deviance, and imaginings;
Trouble and pester body and mind.

Then one falls into turbidity and shame,
Ups and downs, life and death.
Forever immersed in the sea of misery,
One is in eternity lost to the true Tao.

The Tao of true permanence
Will naturally come to those who understand.
Those who understand the realization of the Dao
Will rest forever in the pure and tranquil."

- Translated by Livia Kohn, "The Taoist Experience: An Anthology." Albany, State University of New York Press, 1993; *Qingjing Jing*, Scripture of Purity and Tranquility, pp.24-29.