

# ch4

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# Chapter 4

The Dao is empty, yet in using it there is no filling.

Deep indeed — it seems to be the ancestor of the ten thousand things.

It blunts the sharpness, so that none are overbearing;

unties the tangles, so disputes dissolve;

softens its radiance, so brilliance blends with the world;

makes itself the same as the dust, dwelling among all things without elevating itself.

Calm and clear — it seems as though it might exist, yet is beyond grasp.

I do not know whose child it is; it seems to have existed before the Lord of Heaven.

The essence of the Dao is without form or image and cannot be measured;

yet its virtue can bring forth Heaven and Earth, nurture the human heart, and give life to all beings.

The sage, by observing the Dao and following it in action, can be without contention toward others, without conflict toward things, and thus achieve enduring peace.

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