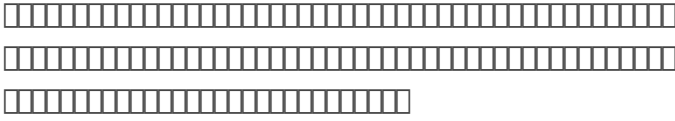


Chapter 67



Translation

All under Heaven say my Dao is great, yet seems to resemble nothing.
It is precisely because it is great
that it resembles nothing.
Were it to resemble something,
it would long since have become small.

I hold three treasures
and keep them close.
The first is compassion.
The second is frugality.
The third is not daring to be first under Heaven.

From compassion comes courage.
From frugality comes abundance.
From not daring to be first under Heaven
comes the capacity to lead all things.

Now: forsake compassion and grasp at courage,
forsake frugality and grasp at breadth,
forsake the rear and press to the front —
this is death.

In compassion, go to battle and you conquer;
stand in defense and you hold firm.
When Heaven moves to save,
it shelters with compassion.

Word Notes

- 似 — "**to resemble**": To be similar to, to look like something particular.
- 俭 — "**frugality**": Thrift, economizing, saving.

Chapter Explanation

All under Heaven say my Dao is exceedingly great, yet it seems utterly incapable — it resembles nothing at all. It is precisely because Dao is exceedingly great that it seems to resemble nothing. If it resembled some particular thing, it would long since have become something exceedingly small and petty. I have three treasures. I cherish and hold fast to them. The first is called **compassion**. The second is called **frugality**. The third is called **not daring to be first under Heaven**. With a compassionate heart, one's love for others is genuine and unwavering, and so one can be courageous. With frugality, one's wealth and resources will certainly be abundant, and so one can accomplish **expansive undertakings**. **Not daring to be first** under Heaven is to be a **great vessel late to completion** — and so one can become **the chief among all things**. Nowadays, people abandon compassion yet still pursue fierce and aggressive courage; abandon frugality yet still pursue expansive grandeur; abandon the principle of staying behind yet still compete to be first. In this way, they are certain to end in death. This compassion possesses sincere and unwavering perseverance. Use it to go to battle and you will conquer; use it to defend and you will hold firm. When Heaven would save a person, it guards them with compassion.

Discourse

Alas! The present-day world may be reckoned civilized, yet the more civilized it becomes, the higher the standard of living rises — and the more extravagant people become. The more they aim high and pursue the grandiose, the more they delight in novelty and crave the strange. They compete to show off. They compete for outward appearances. The more they compete, the more strained material resources become; the more strained resources become, the more people compete. From contention comes war. From war comes killing. It has reached the point where killing is regarded as a mark of capability. The compassionate heart has been entirely lost. The way of humanity has nearly been extinguished. If one traces this disease to its source, it is nothing other than going in the opposite direction from the three treasures Laozi taught — compassion, frugality, and not daring to be first under Heaven.

Laozi's words are not pedantic and useless. If one has a compassionate heart — like the genuine love of parents for their child — one will certainly have courage, and with courage one can accomplish great things. With frugality, one can ensure a surplus of material resources, enabling one to greatly expand production and to put resources to use and enrich life. Not daring to be first under Heaven is not dependence or lack of vigor. It is to conserve one's vital spirit and preserve it for the right moment, in order to become a great vessel and shoulder the cosmos. Nowadays, without any foundation, people pursue only the branch-tips. How could they not rush toward death?

I, this young student, upon perceiving this — earlier, when the European War was at its most intense — wished to find a way to bring rescue. I thought: all beings are born of Shangdi. In compassion and love for the people and all things, none can surpass Shangdi. Moreover, this very chapter says: "When Heaven moves to save, it shelters with compassion." But Shangdi is in Heaven above; no human has seen Him. I thought: those who represent Shangdi and share His same compassion can only be the **Five Great Religious Founders**.

Take Confucius: "The old are at ease and the young are cherished"; "benevolent toward people, cherishing all things." Laozi esteems Dao and De, holding compassion as a treasure. Shakyamuni

Buddha enters the hells to save all beings. Jesus gives up his body to redeem the sins of all beings. The Patriarch of Islam says the Lord practices compassion and forgiveness. All are of great compassion and great mercy.

And so, taking the central purpose of the Five Great Religious Founders as my basis, I selected passages from each religion's scriptures, combined them, and elaborated upon them, composing *A Compilation to Cease War* as a vanguard for rescuing the world from war and slaughter and for illuminating Dao and De. Furthermore, I wished to provide detailed explanations of the important scriptures of each religion, to serve as the path for the evolution of Dao and De.

At present I have already produced vernacular commentaries on the Confucian Four Books and the *Liyun*, and on Laozi's *Dao De Jing* — each as a vernacular explanation. Following that, I shall produce a vernacular commentary on the Buddhist *Diamond Sutra*. As for the scriptures of Christianity and Islam — our nation's predecessors have already rendered them in the vernacular — so I shall compose *Elucidations of the Christian Old and New Testaments* and *Elucidations of the Quranic Heavenly Scripture*, still entirely in vernacular explanation. Finally, I shall continue and revise the *Comprehensive Mirror of Immortals*, uniting the five great religions. I shall also unite the vanguard figures and the later schools and branches of all five great religions, gathering together the great force of compassion of all the sacred ones, immortals, and buddhas of every age and every land, ancient and modern, Chinese and foreign, and returning it all to Shangdi. By seeking the force of compassion from Shangdi, and by uniting all forces of compassion together, this will be sufficient to dissolve the killing qi. It will certainly close the cycle of killing and open the cycle of life, bringing the world to peace. Spears shall be cast down and Dao shall be taught. **Weapons shall be cast into farming tools.** Soldiers shall become farmers. The calamity of war shall be no more — forever. The shared happiness of peace, kinship, health, and joy shall endure — forever.

This is the small and humble wish of this young student. I wonder whether humane persons and noble-minded ones who hold compassion in their hearts consider this to be right.

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