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Know the strength of man,
But keep a woman's care!
Be the stream of the universe!
Being the stream of the universe,
Ever true and unswerving,
Become as a little child once more.

Know the white,
But keep the black!
Be an example to the world!
Being an example to the world,
Ever true and unwavering,
Return to the infinite.

Know honor,
Yet keep humility.
Be the valley of the universe!
Being the valley of the universe,
Ever true and resourceful,
Return to the state of the uncarved block.

When the block is carved, it becomes
useful.
When the sage uses it, he becomes the
ruler.
Thus, "A great tailor cuts little."

28

Know the male,
yet keep to the female:
receive the world in your arms.
If you receive the world,
the Tao will never leave you
and you will be like a little child.

Know the white,
yet keep to the black:
be a pattern for the world.
If you are a pattern for the world,
the Tao will be strong inside you
and there will be nothing you can't do.

Know the personal,
yet keep to the impersonal:
accept the world as it is.
If you accept the world,
the Tao will be luminous inside you
and you will return to your primal self.

The world is formed from the void,
like utensils from a block of wood.
The Master knows the utensils,
yet keeps to the the block:
thus she can use all things.

28

Know the male, maintain the female,
Become the channel of the world, And Te
will endure. Return to infancy.
Know the white, sustain the black, Become
the pattern of the world, And Te will not
falter. Return to the uncarved block.
Know honour, sustain disgrace, Become
the valley of the world, And Te will prevail.
Return to simplicity.
Simplicity divided becomes utensils That
are used by the Sage as high official. But
great governing does not carve up.

28

Know the masculine, hold to the feminine
Be the watercourse of the world
Being the watercourse of the world
The eternal virtue does not depart
Return to the state of the infant
Know the white, hold to the black
Be the standard of the world
Being the standard of the world
The eternal virtue does not deviate
Return to the state of the boundless
Know the honor, hold to the dishonor
Be the valley of the world
Being the valley of the world
The eternal virtue shall be sufficient
Return to the state of plain wood
Plain wood splits, then becomes tools
The sages utilize them
And then become leaders
Thus the greater whole is undivided

28

Know the masculine,
but keep to the feminine:
and become a watershed to the world.
If you embrace the world,
the Tao will never leave you
and you become as a little child.

Know the white,
yet keep to the black:
be a model for the world.
If you are a model for the world,
the Tao inside you will strengthen
and you will return whole to your eternal
beginning.

Know the honorable,
but do not shun the disgraced:
embracing the world as it is.
If you embrace the world with
compassion,
then your virtue will return you to the
uncarved block.

The block of wood is carved into utensils
by carving void into the wood.
The Master uses the utensils, yet prefers to
keep to the block
because of its limitless possibilities.
Great works do not involve discarding
substance.