

Introduction To Tao



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What is Tao?

Observing the cosmos and all the living beings consciously, among all the earthly activities and phenomena, we will find the existence of the laws of nature. There is a supernatural origin which guides all the operations happening across the galaxy, the earth, and the human beings. We call this source "Tao".

Tao existed before primordial time, and even before the universe was merged. It is the origin of the world and it thereafter nurtures all the creatures and beings. Since it is unchangeable and does not evolve with time, it is the ultimate truth. It is what all saints and sages throughout human history have been searching for.

The essence of Tao is the foundation of nature. The law or the power that existed before the universe was formed is beyond description because there was no civilizations nor creatures, let alone languages. Since it cannot be applied any name, we simply call it "Tao"

After the world was merge, along with the mutations of the universe, we see the harmonious actions as exhibited in seasonal changes, rhythms of time and tide, and the balance of the ecosystem. We also find some conformity of human nature across various cultures. There prove the laws of nature. This is the extension of that original "Tao" when it is substantiated and materialized. It merged into everything that is with and within us.

Now that we know Tao is present universally and yet difficult to be recognized, there have been prophets and preachers trying to make us know and understand the origin and the truth of life through various teachings and literature since the beginning of civilization. They were scattered around the world throughout history. As a result, great commandments were taught to disciples and goodness and badness were differentiated. These teachings varies, based on differences in culture, background, timing and the level of each individual's comprehension. However, they all tried to express and transmit to their descendants, this creator and chief of the universe. It is "God" or what we call "Tao".

As we get to know it more and more, we will realize that the essence of Tao and its effect covers every existence without and exceptions.

Tao is actually the headwaters of all religions. It embrace the essence of all the preaching and teachings. And yet, it is superior to the system of belief. It is the nature, the universe itself. "Tao" or "God" represents the highest authority and power of nature. It is also the headstream and superior to all. It is the unchangeable principle.

Understanding "Tao" allows us not only to discover the center of all religions belief, but also to communicate with the origin and the highest power of nature. We will then be able to relate ourselves to the truth of the universe.

To probe further:

Tao existed before the formation of all, yet it was not anterior, which means the creation was embedded in it. Tao merges into the creation, yet it is not posterior, which means that it is not thereafter limited. Among those created, however large, they can be measured; however small, they can be detected. It is only Tao that cannot be measured of its immensity nor detected of its existence. Therefore, it is larger than the largest and leaves nothing excluded, and yet it can be smaller than the smallest and leaves nothing not penetrated. It is ubiquitous. It merges into and governs all. It is in charge of the space, the earth, human beings, all the creatures, and all existence. It penetrates and regulates the entire universe. It is the source of all the scriptures, sutras, as well as dharmas. It encompasses all the religions, and it is what makes one a Buddha or a saint. It is the single chief of all. And, above all, it is in charge of each individual too. It is the divine self. This is the true meaning of Tao. We should get to know it this way and rediscover our own invaluable treasure. So, to practice Tao is to revive one's own conscience as well as everyone else's and to act upon it accordingly. Then, all people can be of one spirit, all nations can be in peace like a family, and the Great Harmony will come true. How precious Tao is !

Tao and Me

The significance of Tao is in its immensity and ubiquity. Its mightiness guides the universe to carry on with changing seasons and natural phenomena seem so capricious and yet really in order and in cycles. This almighty being also resides in each of us. It is the divine self, the natural quality of a person. It enables us to see, to feel, to taste, to hear, and to move without learning.

While we research the ultimate truth in the universe, we should turn in upon and see into ourselves to discover that divine self. We will find the rules that govern the universe also comply with the way we are. Tao is not something too far to reach, nor too mysterious to comprehend. It is nothing particular, but has to do with our daily lives. We cannot do without it. Every movement we make, in order to see, to touch, to feel and to think, is associated with Tao. Consider how many wonders are hidden in our body, how delicately our physical functions are carried out. For example, when we shake hands, the components involved would include the coordination of joints and muscles, the chemical reactions of energy, the transmission of information through nerve systems, and the actions occurring in our brain such as issuing orders, making judgements and analyzing situations. Even with the most advanced technology and the highest level of knowledge we have developed today, we cannot completely reconstruct such a function. Yet the ability to perform such a simple movement is there for all individuals, regardless of the level of a person's knowledge and his/her being a grown-up or a baby, a scholar or an illiterate. These are the kind of abilities we come equipped with naturally, without learning and being taught. It sits within us and is in charge of all. It is "Tao", never diminishes nor inflates.

Worldly knowledge acquired through learning can be forgotten. A gymnast can abandon his/her techniques and a musician can lose his/her skills without practicing. The essence of Tao and its extension are always in charge of the macro-universe -- the nature, and the micro-universe -- the human being's self. We are associated with it unconsciously since the first day. Because it encompasses the whole nature within us, we also call it "native self". Tao is within and surrounding us. It needs not be worshiped nor debated over. Because its extension is unconditional, regardless of race, color, nationality, religion or status. It is impartial and stays constant.

In receiving Tao, we not only find the origin of the universe, but also the divine self. We get to know the highest power in the universe as well as the genuine nature in charge of self. We discover the ultimate truth of the cosmos as well as the integrity of ourselves. Recognizing that the laws which govern the universe also govern us makes us be able to return to our true nature.

To probe further:

The most essential concept in Tao is that we all possess it intrinsically. It is the wisdom and ability we were born with without learning or practicing. It is one's conscience, which is like the spirit of God -- the divine and immortal nature. It is invisible and intangible. For this reason, we call it "genuine emptiness", which means that to be really empty, it goes beyond emptiness and can therefore have marvelous existence in it. "Marvelous existence" is the foundation for the sky, the earth, humane beings, all the creatures, and all existences. With omnipotence, Tao is called "Great Lord of All Beings". This almighty being is not only in charge of the entire universe, but also in charge of oneself. So the proverb is, "Tao is within self which is the drive of all one's abilities; A physical body without Tao is useless." This is the treasure that we should all realize and fully explore.

What it is in Tao

When we look around the world, we admire the miracles and wonders of nature. Countless things changes and move simultaneously every second, and yet in order and in harmony. So do our bodies. Countless biochemical reactions and physical functions occur concurrently within our bodies. Without learning and thinking that come subjectively, the thousands of activities that happen within us are the extension and action of Tao. And all together, it is one single self. It functions naturally and automatically without the need for our intents to be involved. This is the effect of Tao within us.

Tao is not only in control of the universe and nature, but also in charge of every human being in his/her own actions. In other words, it is the same source that governs us as well as everything else. Tao is invisible and intangible, but it has been working out its magic before day one. Thereafter, languages, cultures, religious scriptures, literature and civilization were developed. They all originate from Tao functioning within us.

People don't realize it is "Tao" that has been residing and working within us and have used "soul" to represent the confusing and yet irrefutable being. Because it is eternal and intangible, we also call it "true self". This true self is the most abundant brilliant, and imperishable being.

Let's take a look at our tangible body and see if it can be the true self. We know the pictures taken throughout one's life show different faces and expressions. We recognize people by face, but our looks change and are not permanent. The handicapped, with impaired arms or legs, can also lead a complete life. One with a transplanted animal heart is still a human being. Even our brain cells keep decreasing and changing every second from the moment we were born. Therefore, the physical body is only the interim residence of the true self. Though it seems so real, solid and alive, it turns into dirt eventually. We call it "false self" because of its tentative and transient nature.

By recognizing the difference between the true self and the false self, we understand the reason and importance for us to receive Tao. Luckily, we are given the opportunity of receiving Tao and learning the "Three Treasures". The Three Treasures are straight forward yet profound. The meaning and details of them will be illustrated through the rite of receiving Tao. Here, we only discuss two issues:

First, by receiving Tao, the true self gets pointed out. It leads to our conscience. Upon the time when material pursuance surpasses spiritual seeking, giving up the true self only makes us a walking corpse. In order to fulfill and satisfy the sensational desires of the false self, we may commit wrong-doings and harm others, eventually creating troubles for ourselves. Our inner conscience is identified and enlightened by receiving Tao. Thus, the body gets to work with the spirit in a mutually beneficial and harmonious way, making our lives joyful and meaningful.

Second, by receiving Tao, the front door or Main Gate of our bodies gets opened. It leads us to conscience, mercy and wisdom. When we leave a house, we leave through the front door. If the front door is locked, we may have to leave through the back door, or even by breaking the window or jumping off the balcony. We may fall and get hurt by doing so. Our body is like a house, and our soul is the master who lives in the house. One day, when the body is aged and depleted and the soul has to leave, we can imagine its horror if it can not leave through the correct exit. This is the pain and discomfort human beings experience at the coming of death and after death. As we know, for most people, when they are dying, their body shows stiffness, and signs of helplessness and confusion. After we receive Tao, the door of life and death will be opened.

Being able to receive Tao and the Three Treasures while having the door to heaven opened, we have the opportunity to recognize the true self and the Tao that dwells within us. We are going to treat people and the world with conscience and make our lives more meaningful. We can transcend life and death. Within a hundred years, we will be able to return to where we came from. Therefore, the heavenly Tao is also the way to return back to heaven.

To probe further:

The enlightenment of Tao is superior to studying thousands of sutras. This is the value of Tao. The enlightenment of Tao opens the Main Gate, the front door, which is the entrance to heaven. It gives us the guarantee to be exempted from rebirth cycles and to reach eternity. The superiority of this enlightenment lies in that it surpasses Buddhas and saints, it exceeds the scope of sutras and dharmas, and it transcends the universe. Tao is therefore Source of All Sutras, King of All Dharmas, Mother of All Buddhas, and Creator of the Universe. Transcendence of rebirth cycles leads to eternity. Being imperishable, Tao never deteriorates, and we have never lost it at all. Hence Tao is the direct way back to heaven

WHAT DO I GET IN RECEIVING TAO.

As mentioned earlier, by receiving Tao, we act upon our conscience, gain more wisdom, and find the door to heaven. In addition to these basics, we also benefit from the following for our lifetime.

A. Being away from sufferings and closer to happiness.

The troubles and worries we face in our daily lives mostly result from our disregard of the true self. Receiving Tao helps us to recognize the Tao that has been dwelling in us and to restore the beauty of the true self, so that our behavior and mind is free from being controlled by the earthly pleasures and being swayed by the losses and gains of the material world. Since our minds are cultivated spiritually, devils would not approach and close to us. Thus, our fortune can be altered from bad to blight, and we can obtain real joy.

B. Being away from disasters and calamities.

Tao has been passed on through generations to one single master since the beginning of human history. The thread of its passage weaves through ancient civilizations, including China and India. However, in recent centuries, human beings have been trapped by materialism and a weaker sense of right and wrong. Wars prompted the development of powerful lethal weapons. In reviewing the thousands of years of human history, we realize, in just less than one hundred years, there have been two major world wars, which caused numerous killings and tragedies. The abuse of science and technology has also destroyed the ecology, causing damage to the ozonosphere and the unbalance of the climate. The corruption of human being's minds has called the natural disasters to come. The human have created calamity. God, with his mercy, makes Tao available to everybody in order to save good people. After we receive Tao, with the true meaning of Tao in mind, we will be conscientious. We can use the Three Treasures whenever something dangerous and uncontrollable happens to us. We will be able to get away from bad encounters, This is a confessed fact.

C. Transcending life and death

Life is a mixture of happiness and bitterness. Throughout the journey of life, we experience birth, growth, aging, illness, and death. Joys are momentary and wealth is here today and gone tomorrow. Rather than seeking the pleasure of material life, the wise make full use of their lifetime searching the true meaning of life and eternity.

In old times, Tao could only be received after harsh self-cultivation. Among the hermits looking for the master in order to receive Tao, only very few could obtain it. Whereas in this century, Tao is allowed to be spread and transmitted through the authorized masters to the truth-seekers. The master points out the Main Gate of life and death, assuring the completeness of our true self. With the true self as our guide, which keeps us away from evil and greed, it helps us think, speak, and act in accordance with our conscience and intuition. Death then becomes the return of our soul to the eternal and peaceful home where we came from. Thus, we will have lasting joy.

D. Achieving sacred beings.

The enlightenment of Tao, which reveals the true self, is like the planting of the seed of righteousness and integrity. Through self-cultivation and self-improvement, the nurturing of wisdom, kindness, and purity, it will blossom and produce the fruit of sacred mind and eternal life.

In times of overwhelming utilitarianism, Tao is the lighthouse to the true. Receiving Tao, and then cultivating ourselves, not only improves our own lives, but also gives us the opportunity to better the world.

After we receive Tao, we act upon our conscience and care for people around us. We cherish Tao and disregard personal disadvantages. Then we make an effort to spread the message of Tao to the world, in order for everyone to benefit from it. We are devoting ourselves to the work of God, and certainly will achieve spiritual perfection in both this world and the world after life.

To probe further:

The supremacy of Tao is based on the Heavenly Decree of God, by which Grand Masters can perform the passage of Tao. “The enlightenment of Tao from Grand Masters directly open the Main Gate of our bodies, which revives our divine nature. It reveals that heaven is not beyond oneself. Instead, one’s true self merges into the entire universe.” This is the supremacy of Tao.

1. With the Heavenly Decree, the enlightenment of Tao is extremely profound and marvelous. It cannot be completely expressed by any words of languages. It is not recorded on any scriptures or sutras. It cannot be described by preaching, nor can it be acquired by human intelligence, nor achieved from gifted talents. Because the above mentioned all have to be

created and can be eliminated, which means that they cannot last forever themselves. They all bear partially and cannot be applied universally. Hence, they cannot surpass life cycles, nor can they reach eternity.

2. The wonder of the effects and omnipotence of Tao is beyond words. It is the wisdom that does not come from learning. It is what we acquire from God and possess intrinsically. It is the same divine heart before the creation of the universe. It is conscience, the holy heart. It is the divine and immortal nature – the spirit of God.
3. Tao is too marvelous to be described. It makes us know without learning and function without practicing. It is a prior wisdom, perception, potency, and ability. It's not constrained by words of languages. It functions without thinking, intents, or even actions. However, it can create the sky, the world, the human, all beings, and all existences. All these, after being created, still cannot carry on without Tao even for one moment. Tao is therefore called Grant Lord of All beings.
4. Without Tao, the stars and planets in the sky wouldn't have been in order/ The sun and the moon couldn't have illuminated or revolved properly. Then the yin-yang energies wouldn't have circulated, and, as result, this world wouldn't have been suitable for all of us to live on.
5. Without Tao, the five primary elements of the earth (metal, wood, water, fire, and soil) wouldn't have been balanced and complemented one another, which could have put the entire world in chaos. Mountains would have collapsed, lands would have cracked, and oceans would have dried up. Likewise, this world wouldn't have been an environment for us to live in.
6. Without Tao, we, human beings, wouldn't have been able to walk, to see, to hear, to speak, or to move. Our physical bodies would deteriorate quickly into a pile of soil in a hundred days.
7. If one really comprehends the effects and omnipotence of Tao, and can practice accordingly and persistently, one can communicate with and be united with God. This is the absolute truth. It is a glory and marvel beyond description. Therefore, it is not after death that one becomes a Buddha. It is when one is still alive that one achieves being a Buddha. And to be a Buddha is to revive and hold on to one's divine and original nature. This is what we benefit from attaining and practice Tao.

WHAT DO WE NEED TO RECEIVE TAO

We have discussed the many benefits we obtain after receiving Tao. Some would wonder, why there is so much given to us. Of course, we should realize it comes from God's grace toward human beings. This allows Tao to be spread around the world, especially at the approaching of the world-wide calamity. People with merit and conscientious mind will have the opportunity of learning about Tao and the way back to heaven. It always holds true that people who have the fortune of receiving Tao are derived from the tree of righteous ancestors.

In addition, during the passage of Tao, it is required that we make promises to God that:

- A. After we receive Tao, we will keep in mind the true meaning of Tao and put it into action in our daily life. What we speak and what we do will all be based on our conscience.
- B. After we receive Tao, we offer help to those in need of it, and do our best to indicate Tao to more people so that they can all benefit from the grace of God.
- C. After we attain the Three Treasures, we promise not to tell them to any other person. The Three Treasures can only be transmitted through authorized masters in front of God. If we reveal them to any person, they become invalid to the person, and we also defy the Heavenly Decree.

All the promises required are reasonable and achievable. It goes with our nature. If we practice and keep the promises, we will be able to become a wiser and a better person. We will become merciful and nurture the seed of Tao planted in our mind.

One last thing to mention is that one of the reasons we are able to receive Tao is due to the good deeds of our ancestors. Therefore, as we persistently practice Tao, our ancestors will also benefit from it and so will our descendants.

As long as you are prepared for the above mentioned, you are qualified to receive Tao, no matter what nationality, race, or religion you belong to.

Notes:

In order to be exempted from the rebirth cycles, to avoid the ordeal of hell, to alleviate the suffering and misfortunes in our lives, and to be able to return back to heaven after death and enjoy permanent happiness, we have to receive Tao. And the general qualifications are:

1. To be with a compassionate heart, and to be fortunate enough to be born in a time when Tao is available to the public.
2. To have sowed the seeds of virtue by help many people and offering lots of charitable services in the previous lives. This is the divine affinity with God.
3. To have ancestor with beneficences and welfare work as well.
4. To meet the Introducer and Guarantor who indicate the way to attain Tao to me. It is very likely that in the previous lives, we did charitable services together, or we self-cultivated together in the same religion. So, in this life, when Tao is available, we can help each other out and practice Tao together again. So time is ripe for Tao due to our divine affinity.

WHAT IMPACT DOES RECEIVING TAO HAVE ON ME

As we mentioned before, unlike the old days when hermits had to leave their families to receive Tao through meditation and self-cultivation, Tao, at the present time, can be received in a way that's applicable and conforming to our practical needs. We don't have to give up our life style in order to attain Tao. By the grace of God, Tao is intended to be delivered to the public at all levels of occupations and around the world, rather than being limited to a privileged group of people.

The impacts that receiving Tao can have on our daily life are summarized as the following:

A. Receiving Tao creates no conflicts with any religions.

Tao governs the universe including all human beings. It existed before the formation of any religions. It is concordant with all religions, in the sense that religions preach the awareness of conscience and the pursuit of the truth. We don't need to give up our religion in order to receive Tao. On the contrary, by receiving Tao, we will have further understanding of the truth.

B. Conscience becomes our ultimate guidance.

Due to the variations of cultures, customs, background, legislation, and value systems, it is difficult to find a universal guideline for all of us to follow in our daily life. In receiving Tao, the main commandment is to act by our conscience, the true self, rather than by literature. We should be sensitive to the conscience, rather than be familiar with the laws.

C. We will voluntarily keep the promises made while receiving Tao.

Through receiving Tao, we are not offered conscience or true self, but merely the opening of the door to wisdom and mercy. Therefore, we restore the heavenly principles inherent in us, and strengthen the power originating from our conscience. There is no external force that makes us keep the promises and commitments that we made while we receiving Tao. The only force comes from the guilty feelings that result from our misbehaviors, which reduces the mistakes we make.

D. Practicing Tao can accommodate our worldly affairs.

The fulfillment of practicing Tao and conscientious awareness does not have to be accomplished in a temple or church. It is not required to abandon worldly belongings or relationships in order to attain the ultimate truth. Each individual can still have his/her family, career, and schooling at the same time. As long as we keep in mind the basic guideline we should have our conscience, at any moment, in any occasion, we are practicing Tao and getting closer to our divine self.

E. We will make a better world by improving ourselves first.

After we receive Tao, by realizing the true self and what we are, the feeling of joy comes to us. The improvements on the quality of our spiritual life will affect people surrounding us. By interacting and working together in Tao, we will make the world better with lower crime rate and less pollution. The wise of Maitreya will finally come true -- to turn the world into God's kingdom and make people all live in harmony.

WHAT CAN ATTEST THE VALIDITY OF TAO.

Tao, due to its completeness and generality, regulates the totality of all beings. Many people, after receiving Tao, with their wisdom, faith, and devotion, realize that Tao is the fundamental principle that governs all things. They comprehend the truth of the universe not only through literature, but also through daily living and nature. Their faith in Tao becomes strengthened and they move forward in their spiritual life. However, for people who haven't or just received Tao, Tao can be confirmed through revelations.

- A. Anyone who has received Tao with the front door opened shall die peacefully. One proof of this is that for those who have received Tao and died, their bodies remained soft and their faces vivid. Since the soul leaves the body through the correct exit, the corpse can actually remain uncorroded for a few days. With the most advanced modern science and technology, it is still difficult to explain this phenomenon. However, it is a FACT that cannot be denied. This has happened before in some religions, but very rarely. For people who have received Tao, this kind of testimony is ubiquitous, unless they have committed serious sins and corrupted their own mind. This can prove the soul has reached an ultimate harmony.
- B. Being the superintendent of the things on earth, human beings are nonetheless weak. Since birth, we are subject to unpredictable accidents and natural disasters. There have been many people who encountered danger, used the Three Treasures with faith, and got away from the danger or reduced the damage to the minimum. Testimonies of this kind are numerous.

The above two mentioned are rarely heard of and difficult to believe, but they are the immediate security given by God once a person has received Tao. Thereafter, with each individual's faith, wisdom, and the accumulation of good deeds, one will come to know the truth more and more. It's up to you to experience the value of this treasure. I hope you will have the opportunity to receive Tao, experience it in your life, achieve ultimate perfection, and realize eternity.