

## Tao Te Ching #15

The ancient Masters were profound and subtle.  
Their wisdom was unfathomable.  
There is no way to describe it;  
all we can describe is their appearance.

They were careful  
as someone crossing an iced-over stream.  
Alert as a warrior in enemy territory.  
Courteous as a guest.  
Fluid as melting ice.  
Shapable as a block of wood.  
Receptive as a valley.  
Clear as a glass of water.

Do you have the patience to wait  
till your mud settles and the water is clear?  
Can you remain unmoving  
till the right action arises by itself?

The Master doesn't seek fulfillment.  
Not seeking, not expecting,  
she is present, and can welcome all things

-- translated by Stephen Mitchell (2006)