

## WEEK OF WATER RESOURCE GUIDE FOR FAITH COMMUNITIES

The following resources have been selected by Sustainable Sanctuary Coalition for use by participants of various faith traditions. The resources are categorized in alphabetical order by faith tradition, as follows: All Faiths (pages 1-3); Baha'i (pages 3-4); Buddhist (pages 4-5); Christian (pages 5-7); Hindu (pages 7-8); Indigenous Peoples (pages 8-9); Jewish & Judeo-Christian (pages 9-12); Muslim (page 12); Sikh (pages 13); and Taoist (pages 14). It is our hope that you will use these resources as a springboard to dive more deeply into the spiritual significance of water within and beyond your own faith tradition.

### ALL FAITHS

#### WEEK OF WATER

[www.worldwaterweek.org](http://www.worldwaterweek.org)

World Water Week started in Sweden, where since 1991, the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) has been convening world leaders, water experts, representatives from global faith communities, and development professionals to collaboratively discuss and find solutions to the world's several escalating water crises.

The theme of the 2016 World Water Week is "Water for Sustainable Growth". His Eminence Cardinal Turkson, President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace at the Vatican, will speak at the Opening Plenary and present the keynote at a panel on water and faith.

#### WATER - SACRED AND PROFANED

<http://baylandsproductions.blogspot.com/2007/10/water-sacred-and-profaned.html>

Many documentaries have focused on the various way the Earth's water has become polluted and profaned. This program explores the sacred nature of this precious gift which is everywhere, surrounding us, enveloping our lives and those of every other living thing. Without water there would be no plants, no food, no fish, no birds, no people, no life. Six unique men and women share their experiences and insights about water, the most abundant and fundamental element of the Earth. Throughout the program are images of water in all its forms with a four-minute montage set to the inspiring music of David Foster.

From the introduction (narrated by Peter Coyote): *Since earliest times, humans have recognized that water can purify, heal, and rejuvenate. We built temples and created rituals to honor its sacred and mystical qualities. It is the most abundant and fundamental element of the Earth. We drink it, bathe in it, play in it, are totally surrounded by it at the very beginning of life. Without water there would be no plants, no food, no fish, no birds, no people, no life. But now scientists, environmentalists, and tribal elders are telling us that Earth's Water is endangered and therefore life itself is threatened because we have forgotten or ignored the precious nature of this gift.*

**STOP USING BOTTLED WATER CAMPAIGN**  
**Adapted from "Stop Using Bottled Water during Lent" Campaign**  
**Environmental Action Committee (EAC), Village Presbyterian Church, Prairie Village, Kansas**

EAC's 2014 Lenten project was part of its World Wide Water Awareness campaign which began in 2013 by introducing to the congregation the need for water conservation at home and safe clean water abroad. Internationally, the availability of safe clean water is becoming a major humanitarian and environmental problem with national security implications.

During Lent, World Water Week, or any other time of year, place signs at drinking fountains and at lavatories at your place of worship with messages such as these: **Heal the Earth. Save its People.**

**Conserve Water. Clean Water is a Human Right. STOP USING BOTTLED WATER - DRINK TAP WATER!** Each sign might also include two of following facts:

- (One 16.9-ounce bottle of water requires 1.5 gallons of tap water)
- Clean water means less disease, which means less money spent on medicine which means more money for books and school uniforms.
- Almost two in every three people who need safe drinking water survive on less than \$2 a day and one in three on less than \$1 a day.
- Only 14% of plastic water bottles are recycled in the US.
- Some plastics in the ocean will not break down in the lifetimes of the grandchildren of the people who threw them away.
- The average American consumes 167 bottles of water a year.
- Lack of sanitation is the world's biggest cause of infection.
- Unsafe water affects more people worldwide than AIDS and cancer combined.
- You pay more for a gallon of bottled water than you do for a gallon of gas.

Since tap water is significantly less expensive than bottled water, the goal is to **"Get People off the Bottle"** and to encourage them to **donate their savings** to a worthy cause pertaining to water security, such as:

- Water.org (920 Main Street, Suite 1800, KC, MO, 64105) ([www.water.org](http://www.water.org)).
- Thawake Village (Kenya) Well Project (Heartland Presbytery, 3210 Michigan Avenue, Suite 200, KC, MO 64109).
- One Great Hour of Sharing (using PCUSA Easter Offering envelopes).

Ask the congregation to consider the following statistics:

- 780 million people lack access to an improved water source; approximately one in nine people. That's more than 2.5 times the United States population.
- More than 3.4 million people die each year from water, sanitation, and hygiene-related causes. Nearly all deaths, 99 percent, occur in the developing world. This number is equivalent to the entire population of Los Angeles.
- Each day over 200 million hours are used by women collecting water for their families.
- Lack of access to clean water and sanitation kills children at a rate equivalent to a jumbo jet crashing every four hours!

**A PRAYER FOR 2016 WORLD WATER WEEK**  
**By Reverend Helen J. Nelson**

*This nonsectarian prayer is intended to be suitable for use by all faiths. It may be offered either by a faith leader or layperson as an invocation or call to worship, or as otherwise seems appropriate during a worship service. It may be read aloud in its entirety by one person, or as a responsive reading with the congregation joining the leader in reading aloud the sections in bold print. Permission is granted by the author for faith leaders to adapt the prayer to meet the needs of their faith community or setting.*

Unto You, O Creator of All That Is, we humbly offer a prayer of gratitude for giving us life and calling us to be joyful participants in and caretakers of your wonderful Creation. We thank you for the beauty, bounty, and blessings of all Creation, especially for the precious gift of life-sustaining water.

For morning dews and damps, for mystic mists and fog, **we give thanks;**  
 For gentle rain and silent snow, for freezing sleet and hail, **we give thanks;**  
 For glazing ice and frost, for glaciers and polar caps, **we give thanks;**  
 For waterfalls and wetlands, for aquifers and watersheds, **we give thanks;**  
 For rambling rivers and rivulets, for beaver dams and deltas, **we give thanks;**  
 For brooking springs and gushing geysers, for creeks and streams, **we give thanks;**  
 For ponding pools and puddles, for lakes and muddy marshlands, **we give thanks;**  
 For steamy swamps and estuaries, for seas and oceans deep, **we give thanks.**

**Along with the voices of all the waters above and below and upon the face of the earth, we raise our voices in praise to You, Our Creator. We are mindful, and we deeply regret, that we have dishonored You and harmed others by our selfish abuse of Your precious gift of water. On this day we commit ourselves, by Your Grace and Power, to reverse wherever we can the damage we have caused. Let all Creation share our promise and prayer: Restore! Revive! Rejoice!**

<b>BAHA'I</b>
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**'ABDU'L-BAHÁ ON A PLANT'S PRAYER FOR RAIN**

“God will answer the prayer of every servant if that prayer is urgent. His mercy is vast, illimitable. He answers the prayers of all His servants. He answers the prayer of this plant. The plant prays potentially, ‘O God! Send me rain!’ God answers the prayer, and the plant grows.”

## THE BAHÁ'Í PERSPECTIVE ON WATER

By Arthur Lyon Dahl

[http://bahai-library.com/dahl\\_bahai\\_perspective\\_water](http://bahai-library.com/dahl_bahai_perspective_water)

This paper, which was presented at the Second Klingenthal Symposium: "Water" Klingenthal, France, November 26-30, 1997, discusses the topic of water in the Baha'i faith and Baha'i writings.

### A PRAYER BY BAHÁ 'U' LLA'H

Blessed is the spot, and the house,  
     and the place, and the city,  
         and the heart, and the mountain,  
 And the refuge, and the cave,  
     and the valley, and the land,  
         and the sea, and the island,  
 And the meadow where mention  
     of God that been made,  
         and His praise glorified.

## BUDDHIST RESOURCES

### BUDDHIST SCRIPTURE REFERENCES TO WATER

“Wash out your mouth every time you say ‘Buddha!’” is a common saying.

“Him I call indeed a Brahmana who does not cling to sensual pleasures, like water on a lotus leaf, like a mustard seed on the point of a needle.” A Proverb from The Dhammapada

### EXCERPTS FROM “ELEGANT SAYINGS” OF THE LAMAS, THE TIBETAN DOCTRINE

A foolish man proclaimeth his qualifications;  
 A wise man keepeth them secret within himself;  
 A straw floateth on the surface of water,  
 But a precious gem placed upon it sinketh.”

Although a cloth be washed a hundred times,  
 How can it be rendered clean and pure  
 If it be washed in water which is dirty?

### EXCERPTS FROM THE ZENRIN

The water before, and the water after,  
Now and forever flowing, following each other.

The wild geese do not intend to cast their reflection;  
The water has no mind to receive their image.

Scoop up the water and the moon is in your hands;  
Hold the flowers and your clothes are scented with them.

Mountains and rivers, the whole earth, –  
All manifest forth the essence of being.

Draw water, and you think the mountains are moving;  
Raise the sail, and you think the cliffs are on the run.

Entering the forest he moves not the grass;  
Entering the water he makes not a ripple.

The voice of the mountain torrent is from one great tongue;  
The lines of the hills, are they not the Pure Body of the Buddha?

## CHRISTIAN (SEE ALSO JEWISH & JUDEO-CHRISTIAN)

### CHRISTIAN NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE REFERENCES TO WATER

“But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.” Matthew 5:44,45

“And so John came, baptizing in the desert region and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.” Mark 1:4, 5

“I tell you the truth, anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to Christ will certainly not lose his reward.” Mark 9:41

“The disciples went and woke [Jesus], saying, ‘Master, Master, we’re going to drown!’ He got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waters; the storm subsided, and all was calm. Where is your faith?’ he asked his disciples. In fear and amazement they asked one another, ‘Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him.’” Luke 8:24

“The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, ‘Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I meant when I said, *a man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me*. I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel.’ Then John gave this testimony: ‘I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. I would not have known him except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, *The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit*. I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God.’” John 1:29-34

“Jesus said to the servants, ‘Fill the jars with water; so they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, ‘Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet.’ They did so, and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine.... This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed in Cana of Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.” John 2:7-a, 11

“Jesus said to her, ‘Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become a spring of water welling up to eternal life.’” John 4:13-14

"To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life." Revelation 21:6

#### **PRAYER FOR SISTER WATER**

**Adapted by Br. Cathal Duddy ofm from “The Canticle of the Creatures” by St. Francis of Assisi**

We praise and thank You, Lord,  
for the gift of living water.  
Guide us  
to use it wisely,  
learn from its humility,  
consume it sparingly,  
and protect its purity,  
so that with St. Francis,  
we may truly  
enjoy water  
Amen.

#### **GAELIC BLESSING (EXCERPT), ADAPTED BY MARY ROGERS**

Deep peace of the running wave to you,  
Of water flowing, rising, falling  
Sometimes advancing, sometimes receding...  
May the stream of your life flow unimpeded!  
Deep peace of the running wave to you!

**“LIVING WATER” FEMINIST CHRISTIAN CREATION RITUAL**  
 From Woman Prayer Woman Song by Miriam Therese Winter.  
 1995. Crossroad Publishing Company. New York. New York.

Woman Prayer Woman Song is a book written by Miriam Therese Winter (author; songwriter; musician; Medical Mission Sister; and Professor of Liturgy, Worship, and Spirituality at Hartford Seminary, Hartford, Connecticut). It offers liturgical resources that include scripture references, prayers, readings, and songs from a feminist Christian point of view.

**SEASON OF CREATION**  
[www.seasonofcreation.com](http://www.seasonofcreation.com)

A worship resource from Australia developed for use during September and focusing on various aspects of Creation. The first Sunday in September is Ocean Sunday. Worship resources for each Sunday and other significant dates are available for free download on the website.

<b>HINDU</b>
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**HINDU SCRIPTURE REFERENCES TO WATER**

“...I am the taste of water, the light of the sun and the moon, the syllable *om* in Vedic *mantras*; I am the sound in ether and ability in man.” Bhagavad Gita 7:8

“Whoever with loving devotion offers unto Me a leaf, a flower, a fruit, or water, I affectionately accept that devotional offering from that pure hearted being.” Bhagavad Gita 9:26

“You are air, fire, water, and moon! You are the supreme controller and the grandfather. Thus I offer my respectful obeisances unto You a thousand times, and again and yet again!” BG 11:39

**HINDU PRAYER (SUKLA YAJUR, VEDA XVI)**

O Lord, Thou art on the sandbanks  
 As well as in the midst of the current;  
 I bow to Thee.  
 Thou art in the little pebbles  
 As well as in the calm expanse of the sea;  
 I bow to Thee.  
 O all-pervading Lord,  
 Thou art in the barren soil  
 And in crowded places;  
 I bow to Thee.

### HINDU PRAYER TO THE WATERS

Waters, you are the ones who bring us the life force.  
 Help us to find nourishment so that we may look upon great joy.  
 Let us share in the most delicious sap that you have, as if you were loving mothers.  
 Let us go straight to the house of the one for whom your waters give us life and give us birth.  
 For our well-being let the goddesses be an aid to us, the waters be for us to drink. Let them cause well-being and health to flow over us.  
 Mistresses of all the things that are chosen, rulers over all peoples, the waters are the ones I beg for a cure.  
 Soma has told me that within the waters are all cures and Agni who is salutary to all.  
 Waters, yield your cure as an armour for my body, so that I may see the sun for a long time.  
 Waters, carry far away all of this that has gone bad in me, either what I have done in malicious deceit or whatever lie I have sworn to.  
 I have sought the waters today, we have joined with their sap. O Agni full of moisture, come and flood me with splendor.

<h2>INDIGINOUS PEOPLES</h2>
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### CHINOOK BLESSING LITANY (EXCERPT)

We call upon the waters that rim the earth, horizon to horizon,  
 that flow in our rivers and streams, that fall upon our gardens  
 and fields, and we ask that they:  
 Teach us, and show us the way.

### ESKIMO SONG

The great sea has set me in motion.  
 Set me adrift,  
 And I move as weed in the river.

The arch of sky  
 And mightiness of storms  
 Encompasses me,  
 And I am left  
 Trembling with joy.

### NAVAJO CHANT

The mountains, I become part of it...  
 The herbs, the fir tree, I become part of it.  
 The morning mists, the clouds, the gathering waters,  
 I become part of it...  
 The wilderness, the dew drops, the pollen...  
 I become part of it.  
 Great waters, rains, cover the earth. Lightning cover the earth.  
 Let thunder be heard over the earth. Let thunder be heard,  
 Let thunder be heard over the six regions of the earth.

### SAMAR FISHERMAN'S SONG, PHILIPPINES

Brothers of the sea,  
 Look at the stars,  
 Look at the deep blue  
 And set the world free.  
 Our right is to live and be free,  
 Freedom will not come from outside.  
 It is only in ourselves united.

### ZUNI PRAYER

Cover my earth mother four times with many flowers.  
 Let the heavens be covered with the banked-up clouds.  
 Let the earth be covered with fog.

<h2>JEWISH &amp; JUDEO-CHRISTIAN</h2>
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### JEWISH/CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURE REFERENCES TO WATER

“And God said, ‘Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.’ And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.” Genesis 1:9-10

“You shall not pollute the land in which you live.... You shall not defile the land in which you live, in which I also dwell...” Numbers 35:33-34

“God gives rain on the earth and sends waters on the fields.” Job 5:10

“Can papyrus grow where there is no marsh? Can reeds flourish where there is no water? While yet in flower and not cut down, they wither before any other plant. Such are the paths of all who forget God.” Job 8:11-13a

“The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. God makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me besides still waters.” Psalm 23:1-2

“You make springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills, giving drink to every wild animal; the wild asses quench their thirst. By the streams the birds of the air have their habitation; they sing among the branches. From your lofty abode you water the mountains; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.” Psalm 104:10-13

“Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wonderful works to humankind. For he satisfies the thirsty.” Psalm 107:8-9

“If your enemies are thirsty, give them water to drink.” Proverbs 25:21

“For my people...have forsaken me, the fountain of living water, and dug out cisterns for themselves, cracked cisterns that can hold no water.” Jeremiah 2:13

“Is it not enough for you to drink clear water? Must you also muddy the rest with your feet?” Ezekiel 34:18

“With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.” Isaiah 12:3

“The earth dries up and withers, the world languishes and withers, the heavens languish together with the earth. The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, and broken the everlasting covenant.” Isaiah 24:4,5

#### **“PRESERVING THE BLESSING OF WATER”**

**<http://www.jpost.com/Jewish-World/Judaism/Preserving-the-Blessing-of-Water>**

Article in the Jerusalem Post by Rabbi Yonatan Neril, founder and director of Jewish Eco Seminars ([www.jewishecoseminars.com](http://www.jewishecoseminars.com)), which engages and educates the Jewish community through inspiring programs linking Israel, the environment, and Jewish values. This article is adapted from Canfei Nesharim's Eitz Chaim Hee series of environment-focused commentaries on the weekly Torah portion, for which he served as editor.

#### **WATER IN JEWISH THOUGHT**

**[http://jewcology.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Water\\_in\\_Jewish\\_Thought.pdf](http://jewcology.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Water_in_Jewish_Thought.pdf)**

“Water in Jewish Thought” explores water related values from Jewish scriptures and traditions. Compiled by Noam Dolgin, topics covered include rain, rainsticks, holidays, rituals, water libations, pollution prevention, and the Jordan River.

## THE PRAYER FOR RAIN

From Every Person's Guide to Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret, and Simchat Torah. Jason Aronson.

<http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-prayer-for-rain/#>

Our God and God of our ancestors:  
Remember Abraham who flowed to You like water.  
You blessed him like a tree planted by streams of water.  
You rescued him from fire and water.  
He passed Your test by planting good deeds by every source of water.  
For Abraham's sake, do not keep back water.  
Remember Isaac, whose birth was foretold when Abraham offered the angels a little water.  
You asked his father to spill his blood like water.  
In the desert Isaac dug and found wells of water.  
For Isaac's sake, do not keep back water.  
Remember Jacob, who crossed the Jordan's water.  
He bravely rolled the stone off the mouth of the well of water.  
He wrestled with an angel made of fire and water,  
And therefore You promised to be with him through fire and water.  
For Jacob's sake do not keep back water.  
Remember Moses, who was drawn in a reed basket out of the Nile's water.  
Who helped Jethro's daughters: He drew water and gave the sheep water.  
He struck the rock and out came water.  
For Moses' sake do not hold back water!  
Remember Aaron, the High Priest, who, on Yom Kippur, washed himself five times with water,  
He prayed and was sprinkled with purifying water,  
He kept apart from a people who were as unstable as water.  
For Aaron's sake do not hold back water.  
Remember the Twelve Tribes whom  
You brought through the divided waters;  
For whom You sweetened bitter water;  
Their descendants' blood was spilled like water.  
Turn to us, God, who are surrounded by troubles like water.  
For the Jewish people's sake, do not hold back water.  
You are Adonai, our God  
Who causes the wind to blow and the rain to fall.  
For blessing and not for curse. Amen.  
For life and not for death. Amen.  
For plenty and not for lack. Amen.

**WATER, HOLY WATER**  
**[www.creationjustice.org](http://www.creationjustice.org)**

Water, Holy Water is a 10-page ecumenically-developed education and worship resource from Creation Justice Ministries. This resource explores water as a gift from God that is being threatened by overuse and pollution. Included are scientific and statistical information pieces, stories, Judeo-Christian Scripture references, sermon starters, worship resources, and a bulletin insert.

<b>MUSLIM</b>
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**MUSLIM SCRIPTURE REFERENCES TO WATER**

"And We made from water every living thing." Quran 21:30

"Allah created every [living] creature from water. Some of them go on their bellies, some of them on two legs, and some on four. Allah creates whatever He wills. Allah has power over all things." Qur'an, 24:45

**PRAYERS FOR RAIN**

**<http://www.islambasics.com/view.php?bkID=20&chapter=22>**

Instructions to imams for prayers of supplication for rain in times of drought.

**DUAS FOR RAIN**

Allaahumma 'asqinaa ghaythan mugheethan maree'an maree'an, naafi'an ghayradhaarrin, 'aajilan ghayra 'aajilin. O Allah, shower upon us abundant rain, beneficial not harmful, swiftly and not delayed. Abu Dawud 1/303.

Allaahumma 'aghithnaa, Allaahumma 'aghithnaa, Allaahumma 'aghithnaa. O Allah, send us rain. O Allah, send us rain. O Allah, send us rain. Al-Bukhari 1/224, Muslim 2/613.

<b>SIKH</b>
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**SIKH SCRIPTURE REFERENCES TO WATER**

“You shall find peace, and your mind shall be soothed and cooled; the fire of desire shall not burn within you.

The Guru has revealed God to Nanak, in the three worlds, in the water, the earth and the woods.”  
SGGS p.17

“Air is the Guru, Water is the Father, and Earth is the Great Mother of all.

Day and night are the two nurses, in whose lap all the world is at play.

Good deeds and bad deeds-the record is read out in the Presence of the Lord of Dharma.

According to their own actions, some are drawn closer, and some are driven farther away.

Those who have meditated on the Naam, and departed after having worked by the sweat of their brow.

O Nanak, their faces are radiant in the Court of the Lord, and many others are saved along with them! “ SGGS p.146

“The Lord infused His Light into the dust, and created the world, the universe.

The sky, the earth, the trees, and the water – all are the Creation of the Lord.” SGGS p.723

“Air, water, earth and sky - the Lord has made these His home and temple.” SGGS p.723

“I humbly bow to the Lord, the Supreme Being.

The One, the One and Only Creator Lord permeates the water, the land, the earth and the sky.”  
SGGS p.901

**“WATER AS A HOLDER OF VIBRATIONS”**

**<http://www.sikhnet.com/news/water-holder-vibrations>**

**Article by Dr. Roberto A. Bonom on the physical and spiritual properties of water and the impact of pollution. April 27, 2010.**

<b>TAOIST</b>
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**TAOIST REFERENCES TO WATER FROM THE TAO TE CHING**

#8 (excerpt)

The supreme good is like water, which nourishes everything without trying to.  
It is content with the low places that people disdain.  
Thus it is like the Tao.

#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.  
Shapeable 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.

#66 (excerpt)

All streams flow to the sea  
Because it is lower than they are.  
Humility gives it its power.

#78 (excerpt)

Nothing in the world  
Is as soft and yielding as water.  
Yet for dissolving the hard and inflexible,  
nothing can surpass it.