

# **The Analects Study Guide**

## **The Analects by Confucius**

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# Plot Summary

Confucius is the author of the Analects. He is very important in the Chinese tradition. However, little that is certain is known about the Master . He lived from 552 B.C. to 479 B.C. but his biography is not completed until the first century. By then many legends that cannot be confirmed surround him. Reliability of available sources depends on gleanings from the biography, Shih chi, the Lun yu, which is titled in English The Analects, a commentary—the Tso chuan and The Mencius as supplements. Confucius is the Western name of K'ung Ch'iu also known as K'ung Chung-ni. He is born poor in Lu about 552 B.C. and is orphaned but likes to learn. As an adult he becomes police commissioner of his birthplace. He leaves Lu in 497 B.C. to travel for thirteen years. Confucius returns in 484 B.C. when he is sixty-eight years old. While traveling, he visits other states in ancient China where he offers unheeded advice to feudal lords. Confucius does not succeed in getting his ideas put into practice, so he devotes the rest of his life to teaching. He died in 479 B.C.

The Analects is a 249 page, non-fiction quasi-historical work divided into twenty-four parts that include an introduction, twenty books and three appendices plus back matter and glossary. The Introduction is fifty pages in length; the Books are titled with Roman numerals and range in length from three to seven pages. The Appendices range in length from thirteen to thirty-four pages. Back matter includes notes and cited references pages plus a thirteen-page Glossary. The Introduction and Appendices are written in regular prose form that is invaluable to an understanding of Confucius' thinking. The Analects is compiled from ancient scripture, legends and traditions. Introduction and Appendices integrate themes, ideas and interpretations from many sources. They provide a road map to understanding the life, times and thought of Confucius, the founder of Confucianism.

The Analects are not written in prose but rather in a poetic verse-like form. This version is one of three discovered and is comprised of twenty books. The titles, Book I through Book XX may be intimidating until the term book is understood to be more like a chapter. Each book has numbered sections called Chapters that are more like verses. The Analects itself totals about one hundred pages. Reading comprehension is enhanced by explanations in the Introduction and Appendices. The Analects is a study in ancient Chinese culture and characters. The work is based on a complex and nuanced language that needs clarification for comprehension. Its poetic form and veiled Chinese nuance adds to the difficulty a casual reader may have in understanding the apparently disjointed, but clearly significant subject matter. Confucius is the father of the Chinese schools of Confucianism in their many forms. The Analects is not written by Confucius in a conventional Western sense of an author. It is compiled from Chinese archaeological source documents and ancient, edited translations researched and gathered together into an articulate work published by D.C. Lau in 1979.



# Characters

## Confucius

Confucius is the author of the Analects and is also referred to in it as the Master. During his lifetime, Confucius is known as a sage. Many stories about him flourish that may not be accurate. He descends from an ancestral sage but little is known about his father Shu Liang and nothing is known about his mother. Confucius is born in 552 B.C. or a year later in Lu, the city of his ancestors. As a youth he becomes skilled in menial tasks. At the age of twenty-seven, he holds a minor office in the Lu court that gives him access to visiting dignitaries. In addition, he learns about performing ceremonial rites for which he becomes well-known. From the years of 525 B.C. through 497 B.C., he performs various services and holds public office in and around Lu. Confucius leaves Lu in 517 for a short time to assist the Chi family with a performance in Ch'i. He works in the office of police commissioner of Lu in 502. At the age of fifty in 503 B.C., he resumes studying the Book of Changes as a personal goal to be sure he is free from error.

Confucius begins a period of travel abroad in 497 B.C. He spends thirteen years through 484 B.C. traveling in various provinces of China from Lu to Wei, Sung, Ch'en, Ts'ai and then returns to Wei and back to Lu where he spends his last years. During these years of travel he visits several states where he holds public office and offers advice that is often unheeded. Exact dates of travel and time spent abroad are logically inferred by assuming the time of events and order in which they occur. Some events that occur on his travels are the subject of his writings in the Analects. For example, his first visit to Wei ends when Duke Ling asking about military matters is recorded in the Analects. Confucius travels through Sung in disguise because he fears for his life. He is asked questions for which he records answers in the course of his sayings in the Analects. Many disciples are developed by him through his travels and advice. Various traditions indicate he has up to three thousand disciples, but the identifiable number in the Analects is twenty-five. He dies within five years after his return to Lu in 479 B.C. He is preceded in death by his son and a favorite disciple named Yen Yuan.

## Yen Yuan

Yen Yuan is the most talented of Confucius' disciples. His premature death saddens Confucius in his last years. Confucius claims Yuan's virtuous conduct is exemplary and considers him to not lapse from benevolence in his heart for three months. He is a poor man that allows himself to live in dire poverty, for which Confucius calls him admirable. Yen Yuan is the only disciple the Master considers an equal. Yuan, like Confucius, is also eager to learn and the most intelligent of Confucius' disciples despite his short life. He listens passively and does not disagree but understands more than is said. Through the critical eyes of Confucius, Yen Yuan comes close to attaining perfection.



An ironic and somewhat prophetic story is told about Yen Yuan and the Master. They are under siege in K'uang and Yen Yuan falls behind. Confucius is concerned that he has died in battle. When they finally catch up to each other, Yen Yuan tells Confucius he would not dare die before him. Yen Yuan's actual death before Confucius grieves Confucius, who does not want to give him a lavish burial because it would be above his station in life. Contrary to the Master's wishes, his disciples do so anyway, which saddens Confucius.

## **Tsai Wo**

Tsai Wo is a disciple of Confucius. He is the most criticized disciple by Confucius. The Master criticizes him for the answers he gives others and for napping during the day. Confucius is particularly critical of his napping and speaks about carving rotten wood and troweling dried dung in reference to him. The Master does credit him with changing Confucius' idea of trust in the words one says to observe one's deeds first. Tsai Wo wants to shorten the mourning period for one's parents from three years to one, for which Confucius thinks he is unfeeling. Regardless of criticism Tsai Wo has limitless admiration for Confucius.

## **Tzu-kung**

Tzu-kung is a disciple of Confucius who is the only one of the three best known disciples to live longer than Confucius. He is the most distinguished of Confucius' early disciples. He has a successful career as a diplomat and merchant. Confucius says he lacks the qualities of a ruler since he is a specialist but is last mentioned holding office in Wei. His success making money makes him intolerant of unnecessary spending. Confucius compliments his intelligence but not his moral qualities. The Master thinks Tzu-kung is not capable of benevolence. Confucius thinks he is more likely to talk about wanting benevolence than actually practicing it. The disciple leaves many eloquent compliments about Confucius. Tzu-kung describes the Master as cordial, respectful, a sage, frugal and deferential.

## **Jan Yu**

Jan Yu is a disciple of Confucius who is talented in government. Confucius does not know whether Jan Yu is benevolent but does claim he can be given responsibility as a steward. As a young man Jan Yu asks what further benefit he can add to the population of Wei. He is put in charge of the affairs of Confucius' household and has interest in the administration of the state. He wants to increase the population and prosperity but lacks drive. Confucius judges Jan Yu as a good minister disinclined to patricide or regicide.



## Tzu-lu

Tzu-lu is a disciple of Confucius who is a steward to the Chi family and who dies in Wei fighting for his lord. Tzu-lu is the oldest in the group of Confucius' best known early disciples. He is a resolute, courageous man of action who is impetuous and not fond of learning. He is criticized by Confucius for his love of courage that lacks judgment. When he asks if courage is a supreme quality Confucius claims morality is supreme. The Master prophesies his unnatural death and dying while fighting for his lord makes it true. Confucius often warns him against acting rashly. Tzu-lu's major shortcoming is a lack of desire to learn. Confucius does compliment Tzu-lu on his ability to determine truth from little evidence and on keeping his promises. He is closest in age to Confucius.

## Tzu-yu

Tzu-yu is a disciple of Confucius about whom little is known except that he studies under Confucius after Confucius' return from travels in 484 B.C. Tzu-yu is the disciple who identifies the Way with music and rites. The beginning of excessive emphasis on conformity to rites starts with him. He is critical of other disciples for concentrating on menial duties to the extent of becoming ignorant of what is basic. He is in the group of disciples that cause the Confucian school to split into eight sects.

## Tzu-hsia

Tzu-hsia is a disciple of Confucius who is credited by tradition with a major role in transmitting the Confucian classics. He is devoted to book learning. Six of the eleven sayings attributed to Tzu-hsia are about learning. He has a reputation for learning and is the author of a Preface to the Odes. Virtuous conduct, however, is a greater goal than book learning.

## Tseng Tzu

Tseng Tzu is a disciple of Confucius, and who plays a prominent part in early Confucianism. He is mentioned in the Mencius and the Hsun tzu and other works. Confucius describes him as slow but with great dedication. He is one of a group of four disciples that deserve the title master. Filial duty is associated with him in the Analects. He quotes Confucius that no man realizes himself fully until he mourns for his parents. He is conscientious by his own personal daily examination of whether he does his best, if he remains trustworthy in what he says and whether he recommends to anyone else what he does not try himself.

## Yu Tzu

Yu Tzu is a disciple who occupies a special position in the Confucian school after the death of Confucius. He is also one of a group of four disciples that deserve the title master. He records a wide range of moral topics in his sayings. His words resemble those of the Master in their sentiment.



## Objects/Places

### Lu

Lu is the name of a state in China where Confucius is born. Lu is in the southeastern part of the modern Shantung province. Confucius serves as the police commissioner of Lu before his travels. After traveling he returns to Lu where he spends his last five years teaching before his death.

### Ch'i

Ch'i is the name of a small state where descendants of Hsia are given land for their pledge of service in modern Honan and also a state comprising the northern part of modern Shantung and the southwestern part of Hopei provinces in China.

### The Mencius

The Mencius is a recorded history of Confucius' travels and sayings. It is one of the sources relied on to confirm, corroborate and supplement other sources of information about Confucius, events and the time.

### Wei

Wei is the name of a state in modern Honan province in China. Duke Ling of Wei is a ruler of Wei.

### The Book of Changes

The Book of Changes, also called the I Ching, is a study that Confucius wants to spend a few more years with when he is fifty, so he may become free from major errors. Some traditions indicate Confucius is an author of parts of the I Ching, but there is no firm evidence to support the tradition.

### Sung

Sung is the name of a state comprising part of modern Honan and Kiangsu provinces in China. Confucius travels through Sung in disguise because he is at risk of being attacked.





## Ch'en

Ch'en is the name of a state in the eastern part of modern Honan and the northern part of modern Anwehi provinces in China. Ch'en is invaded in 489 B.C. and Confucius has trouble traveling to Ts'ai, which is another small state in the same province. When Confucius later returns to Ch'en, he becomes homesick for Lu.

## The Odes

The Odes is a record of from three hundred to three thousand songs that some traditions indicate Confucius edits. The Odes are used in performance of music and the rites.

## The Shih chi

The Shih chi is a record of traditions among other works that contains stories about Confucius. He is portrayed in one category as a sage different from other men and another category records his activities after reaching high office.

## Legalist Theory

The Legalist theory is a theory of control by which a ruler uses reward and punishment to control his subjects. If a subject does not comply the ruler's control is diminished. This theory is in opposition to Confucius' belief that the people are best governed by example of the ruler. If a ruler is a good example, the common people will reform themselves.



# Themes

## Benevolence is Confucius' Underlying Principle

The theme of benevolence runs through the Analects. Benevolence can be defined with several distinct features. One way to express benevolence is to love one's fellow man. China's society during Confucius' time is organized by class. Consequently the term one's fellow man does not include the common people as it might in a modern Western society. Confucius' directive to love one's fellow man precedes by centuries Christ's birth and mandate. Specifically, benevolence requires generosity to the common people but not love. Confucius claims benevolence, also referred to as the right way, is essential to virtue. The spirit of benevolence requires that one not make others do or desire what oneself does not. The Master claims benevolence is more vital to the common people than either fire or water. No one can really dislike someone who practices benevolence by doing good. Similarly, no one can truly like someone who does evil.

Fan Ch'iu asks Confucius about practicing benevolence. The Master tells him he ought to be respectful at home, reverent when serving officially and do his best with others whether or not they are barbarians. Hsien asks if benevolence means opposing certain temptations. Confucius says just doing difficult things is not benevolence. He advises Tzu-kung to seek out and associate with benevolent gentlemen to learn benevolence. The underlying assumption of Confucius' thought is to be as good as possible or benevolent, which is the purpose of man and the only worthwhile thing to do. A man who desires benevolence is free of evil. Virtue is in part a gift from Heaven but benevolence requires man's effort.

Benevolence is the key virtue that can assure quality in a man. A wise man stays near others who practice benevolence. Self-interest distorts moral judgment and distracts from a moral purpose. Benevolence is greater than a man and may require that he sacrifice his life to uphold its value. Benevolence entails overcoming one's own self and observing the rites. Rites are rules that govern one's actions to sustain insights into morality. The Master asks rhetorically what a man who has no benevolence can do with rites or music. A man of wisdom knows right from wrong so is never morally confused, and a man of benevolence and courage never worries or fears the future. Confucius says no one finds benevolence to be unattractive or its opposite unbenevolence to be attractive. Unbending strength, commitment, ease and discretion can approximate benevolence. The love of benevolence without a love of learning leads to foolishness. A benevolent man speaks rarely and depends solely on himself. The terms for gentleman and benevolent man are more or less interchangeable because benevolence is the most important moral quality of a gentleman. Characteristics of a gentleman and benevolence are illustrated by example in over eighty chapters of the Analects.



## The Way Should Prevail in Man and State

The Way is a recurrent topic in the Analects. The Way in Confucian terms is roughly comparable to the meaning of Truth in Western philosophical and religious writings. It is comprised of the sum total of truths about the universe and man that an individual or state does or does not possess. The Way can be taught in words by the teacher to his disciple. The Way also has a vital emotional force that just hearing about it can make one's life worthwhile. Confucius compares following the Way to stepping through an open door. The Way can also be elusive. Yen Yuan claims the harder he tries to follow the Way, the more it eludes him. Confucius leads him back to the Way. He encourages him to follow it with culture and the rites, no matter how distant the Way may seem. Confucius says the Way grows from the root of a man's character by being a good son and obedient young man.

The Master is committed to the principle that the Way should prevail in the Empire. The ultimate purpose of government is providing for the welfare of common people. Welfare of the common people begins with satisfying their material needs. The time must be right for a state and the individual as well to participate in government. When the Way prevails in the state, an individual can speak and act with nobility. If the Way does not prevail, one ought to still act the same but may speak quietly. One example of gentlemanly behavior is to take office when the Way prevails in a state. Confucius says however, one may stay out of trouble by devoting oneself to the highest moral standard in one's life as a private citizen if the Way does not prevail. Specifically, when the Way prevails, speak and act with generosity of spirit. If the Way does not prevail act with nobility but speak softly.

When the Way prevails in the state, a gentleman can experience the culmination of his years of preparation by taking office. An individual who wants to follow the Way but is ashamed of having poor food and clothing is not fully committed to the Way. A man can do better by accepting his status but delighting in the Way and observing the rites. The Master is asked if a government should kill those who do not follow the Way. Confucius says the ruler ought to just desire good and the common people will follow his example. Confucius claims when the Way prevails, one ought to be rich and noble, and, ironically, then it is shameful to be poor and humble. He also claims it is shameful to be rich and noble when the state does not follow the Way.

When a disciple complains of another's influence on his master, Confucius says it is fate if the Way prevails or if it falls into disuse. Either way his master cannot be persuaded to oppose Destiny. For example, Liu Hsia Hui is dismissed three times from being a judge since he is unwilling to alter the Way. According to the Mencius, Confucius holds public office to promote the Way. He believes the Way can prevail in the Empire, so Confucius prefers society to being a hermit. Tzu-yu associates the Way with music and the rites that cause excessive emphasis on performing rites. A gentleman devotes his mind to the Way, not to food or earning a salary. A gentleman is easy to serve but hard to please if he does not follow the Way compared to a small man who is hard to serve but easy to please since he does not follow the Way.



## The Gentleman and a Small Man

The Analects theme of an ideal moral character is based on the gentleman. The term is used as an icon for men in authority with a cultivated moral character. The gentleman is contrasted with the small man, who is ruled over and is of uncultivated moral character. The lowest level of Confucius' stratified social system is the common people. The gentleman and benevolent man are referred to as the same man because benevolence is the supreme moral quality. A gentleman is described as being in awe of the Decree of Heaven, great men and the words of sages. By comparison a small man ignores the Decree of Heaven, disrespects great men and ridicules the wisdom of sages. The ideal moral character is the gentleman who has many qualities that he cultivates in hard work.

The gentleman develops qualities through hard work. Specifically, the gentleman must be benevolent, wise and courageous. Other virtues of a gentleman include wisdom that is also called intelligence and courage. The blend and effective application of these traits comprise quality of character in the Chinese view. Confucius says a man cannot become a gentleman without understanding Destiny, cannot take a stand without understanding the rites and cannot judge a man without understanding words. Two additional virtues of a gentleman are promise-keeping in word and deed, or being trustworthy, and reverence. Both virtues may be better understood from the viewpoint of an ancient Chinese culture. Reverence in Chinese culture is awareness of a gentleman's duty to promote welfare of the common people. Respectfulness differs from reverence in a gentleman's observance of the rites. Confucius shows more interest in the moral virtues of man than morality of action. A final characteristic of a gentleman is the right or duty he performs. Rightness is a feature of the gentleman's action. Specifically Confucius claims the gentleman does righteous acts. Confucius proposes that the fullest realization of a gentleman requires participation in government through study and office-holding activities.

Confucius says the gentleman is always aware of three things. The three notions are that a man of benevolence never worries about the future, a man of wisdom is never confused about right and wrong and a man of courage is never afraid. Confucius concludes that since he does not succeed in always practicing these habits, he is not a gentleman. He is skilled in menial things from being raised as a poor youth, which a gentleman would not be. Tzu-kung disagrees with Confucius' self-assessment and says that he actually describes himself as a gentleman.

A gentleman is distinguished from the small man by his native ability and refinement. Confucius says a gentleman knows what is moral but a small man knows only what is profitable. A gentleman values kind rule and respect for law but a small man values his native land and generous treatment. A gentleman agrees with others while not repeating them but a small man repeats others without agreeing. The gentleman is easy of mind but the small man is always anxious. A gentleman asks others to use their best ability but a small man demands their perfection. A gentleman is at peace and not arrogant but a small man is anxious and arrogant. A gentleman tries to get through to the above but



a small man gets through to what is below. Confucius says the difference is confirmed when a gentleman accepts hardship as part of life without surprise but a small man reacts without restraint.

# Style

## Perspective

Confucius is the author of the Analects. He is an ancient Chinese sage who is born and lives in the fifth century B.C. His background is neither exemplary nor outstanding, since he is raised as a poor orphan in a highly class conscious, feudal and aristocratic Chinese society. Confucius' thoughts, ideas, philosophy, wisdom and experiences are shared with and recorded for his disciples and contemporaries. His intended audience may number in tens or thousands of public and private figures interested in what he has to say. In his last days Confucius lives and records his ideas as a disgruntled teacher, who is never able to fully put his ideas into practice while alive. He serves in minor public office, is accepted in the court of feudal lords for his knowledge of ceremonial rites, travels while giving free, but unheeded, advice and returns to his homeland to die.

Confucius is the father of the Chinese schools of Confucianism in their many forms. He is the Confucius of the familiar parlor quip "Confucius says . . .". The Analects is not written by the author in a conventional Western sense of the term. The book is compiled from Chinese archaeological source documents, ancient edited translations and bits and pieces researched and gathered together into an articulate published work by D.C. Lau and his associates in 1979. D.C. Lau's intended audience may be comprised of readers interested in the life and sayings of Confucius, the school of Confucianism and literary scholars who are Lau's peers. The Analects contains extensive research and cited references that may be more useful to a scholar of ancient Chinese literature than the casual reader. The depth of research information provided in this work may bewilder, bore and distract the casual reader's appreciation and enjoyment of the Analects' extensive application of wise sayings still useful today in the Twenty-first Century.

## Tone

The Analects has an objective tone by an all-knowing, objective observer who records the actions, conversations and quoted opinions and beliefs of Confucius and his disciples. Liberal use of the first person "I" is quoted by the observer. Situations, ideas and things are noted in short sayings, statements of fact or opinion. There is no discussion about feeling, sentiment or emotion with any of the characters. Feelings one may have can be deduced by action taken possibly in response. For example, in Book XVIII, Duke Wei receives dancing girls as a gift and does not show up in court for three days. Confucius does not make any moral comments nor express any disapproval. He just leaves Wei.

The work is a series of loosely-connected normative sayings and statements about how one should act or behave in a situation. Confucius uses native Chinese words that are lost in translation to English and centuries of foreign culture. For example the Chinese



term "ming" means Heaven or Destiny that man's effort cannot change like fate. Confucius uses a phrase "t'ien ming" rather than "ming" alone. A phrase mandates what man must do but a word is fate. The phrase must be done, but the word can only be accepted.

## Structure

The Analects is a 249 page non-fictional, quasi-historical work divided into twenty-four parts that include an introduction, twenty books and three appendices plus back matter and glossary. The Introduction is fifty pages in length; the Books are titled with Roman numerals and range in length from three to seven pages. The Appendices range in length from thirteen to thirty-four pages. Back matter includes notes and cited references pages plus a thirteen-page Glossary.

The Introduction is comprised of approximately fifty pages in regular prose form. This section is invaluable to the description and explanation of Confucius' life and thinking. The Analects is compiled and derived from several sources of ancient scripture, legends and traditions. The Introduction offers a summary and analysis of several themes, ideas and interpretations that are scattered throughout these several sources. To that extent, the Introduction provides a road map through the Analects of Confucius. The Introduction is essential to gain an understanding of the life, times and thought of Confucius, the founder of Confucianism. Critical to a more intense understanding is the literary criticism of the work itself, its compilation and supplementary source documents.

Unlike the Introduction and three Appendices, the Analects themselves are not written in prose but rather poetic form. This version is comprised of twenty books with Roman numerals denoting each book. Although the titles, Book I, Book II through Book XX seem overwhelming, the term Book is more like a chapter. Each Book is comprised of many numbered Chapters that are more like verses in this context. The Analects itself comprised of twenty books is approximately one hundred pages in total. The style in which chapters are written is not voluminous, but reading does require the explanations provided in the Introduction and Appendices to develop understanding. This is a study of an ancient culture and characters that needs much clarification for comprehension. The use of this poetic form exacerbates the difficulty a casual reader may have to make sense of the apparent disconnected and, on occasion, haphazard order of subject matter.

Three appendices of thirteen to thirty-four pages each develop specific aspects and dimensions of the Analects. The first appendix describes events in the life of Confucius that provides a chronology and timetable of significant events in his life. The second appendix names and describes the disciples of Confucius, and the third appendix discusses the structure, compilation and derivation of the twenty books of the Lun yu, which is the name of the Chinese source of the Analects. The appendices in general are more explicit and literary in analytic form than the casual reader might enjoy. The story of Confucius, his philosophy, disciples and commentators begins at his birth in about 552 B.C. through the first century A.D. This historical journey occurs more than twenty-



five centuries ago in China. Much of the explanation in the appendices discusses culture, nuance and inflection of custom and words used in the Chinese language. These appendices are essential to an understanding of the Analects of Confucius. The casual Western reader would not easily grasp the significance of experiences and language in this ancient and foreign culture. Similarly the reference back matter and glossary provide critical information for both the casual reader and formal researcher to use as a guide.





## Quotes

"Used in this sense, the Way seems to cover the sum total of truths about the universe and man, and not only the individual but also the state is said either to possess or not to possess the Way. As it is something which can be transmitted from teacher to disciple, it must be something that can be put into words." Introduction, Pg. 11

"Make it your guiding principle to do your best for others and to be trustworthy in what you say. Do not accept as friend anyone who is not as good as you." Book I, Pg. 60

"4. The Master said, 'At fifteen I set my heart on learning; at thirty I took my stand; at forty I came to be free from doubts; at fifty I understood the Decree of Heaven; at sixty my ear was atuned; at seventy I followed my heart's desire without overstepping the line.'" Book II, Pg. 63

"The Master said, 'The saying has got it wrong. When you have offended against Heaven, there is nowhere you can turn to in your prayers.'" Book III, Pg. 69

"4. The Master said, 'If a man sets his heart on benevolence, he will be free from evil.'" Book IV, Pg. 72

"16. The Master said of Tzu-ch'an that he had the way of the gentleman on four counts: he was respectful in the manner he conducted himself; he was reverent in the service of his lord; in caring for the common people, he was generous and, in employing their services, he was just.'" Book V, Pg. 78

"11. The Master said, 'How admirable Hui is! Living in a mean dwelling on a bowlful of rice and a ladleful of water is a hardship most men would find intolerable, but Hui does not allow this to affect his joy. How admirable Hui is!'" Book VI, Pg. 82

"22. The Master said, 'Even when walking in the company of two other men, I am bound to be able to learn from them. The good points of the one I copy; the bad points of the other I correct in myself.'" Book VII, Pg. 88

"14. The Master said, 'Do not concern yourself with matters of government unless they are the responsibility of your office.'" Book VIII, Pg. 94

"18. The Master said, 'I have yet to meet the man who is as fond of virtue as he is of beauty in women.'" Book IX, Pg. 98

"11. Even when a meal consisted only of coarse rice and vegetable broth, he invariably made an offering from them and invariably did so solemnly.'" Book X, Pg. 103

"The Master said, 'Either this man does not speak or he says something to the point.'" Book XI, Pg. 108



"18. The prevalence of thieves was a source of trouble to Chi K'ang Tzu who asked the advice of Confucius. Confucius answered, 'If you yourself were not a man of desires, no one would steal even if stealing carried a reward.'" Book XII, Pg. 115

"23. The Master said, 'The gentleman agrees with others without being an echo. The small man echoes without being in agreement.'" Book XIII, Pg. 122

"10. The Master said, 'It is more difficult not to complain of injustice when poor than not to behave with arrogance when rich.'" Book XIV, Pg. 125

"15. The Master said, 'If one sets strict standards for oneself and makes allowances for others when making demands on them, one will stay clear of ill will.'" Book XV, Pg. 134

"8. Confucius said, 'The gentleman stands in awe of three things. He is in awe of the Decree of Heaven. He is in awe of great men. He is in awe of the words of the sages. The small man, being ignorant of the Decree of Heaven, does not stand in awe of it. He treats great men with insolence and the words of the sages with derision.'" Book XVI, Pg. 140

"17. The Master said, 'It is rare, indeed, for a man with cunning words and an ingratiating face to be benevolent.'" Book XVII, Pg. 146

"4. The men of Ch'i made a present of singing and dancing girls. Chi Huan Tzu accepted them and stayed away from court for three days. Confucius departed." Book XVIII, Pg. 149

"2. Tzu-chang said, 'How can a man be said either to have anything or not to have anything who fails to hold on to virtue with all his might or to believe in the Way with all his heart.'" Book XIX, Pg. 153

"3. Confucius said, 'A man has no way of becoming a gentleman unless he understands Destiny; he has no way of taking his stand unless he understands the rites; he has no way of judging men unless he understands words.'" Book XX, Pg. 160

"Because Confucius gained the reputation of a sage, perhaps even in his lifetime, apocryphal stories about him abounded from very early times." Appendix 1., Pg. 161

"Confucius taught the Odes, the Book of History, the rites and music, and his disciples were said to have numbered three thousand, while those who were versed in the six arts numbered seventy-two." Appendix 2, Pg. 196

"The casual reader of the Lun yu may come away with the impression that the chapters in the individual books are in a haphazard order. This is because it happens to be so with Books I and II. But this is certainly not true of all the books." Appendix 3, Pg. 127



## Topics for Discussion

Discuss the disciples in relation to how Confucius considers their qualities in the Analects. For example, which disciples does Confucius consider fit to govern, as benevolent or intelligent and why?

Describe the reasons that four of the disciples are considered capable of being called Master like Confucius.

List and describe five experiences Confucius has while traveling abroad for thirteen years.

Compare and contrast at least five qualities that distinguish a gentleman from an ordinary man.

Compare and contrast differences and distinctions between the Way in Eastern thinking and the Truth in Western thought.

Describe and discuss how and why benevolence is considered a supreme quality in Confucian thought.

List and describe how five examples of experiences in Confucius' life compare to his thinking about the Way.

Describe and discuss the theory of Heaven's Decree. What are its implications for welfare of the common people and the Emperor if he follows the Decree?

Identify, describe and discuss five sayings of Confucius or his disciples that may be relevant to current events in government or society.

Describe Confucius' theory of governing the common people and discuss how it would or would not fit in the political thinking and practice of any modern state.