

# Analects of confucius – analects of life

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Analects of Life As "the greatest single force" in a fifth of the world's population, Kong Fuzi or Confucius, spread his intelligence on philosophies to try and better the world (pg. 4). The Analects of Confucius is a book that essentially supplies the people of the West with the Chinese code of life in the words of Kong Fuzi. His words and beliefs helped shape Chinese civilization and spread far throughout the West, making Confucius one of the most profound scholars in Western history. The book *The Analects of Confucius* written by Chichung Huang is a translation of the words and beliefs of Confucius.

The book focuses on many different themes of life in Chinese culture. Filial piety and good behavior are two major themes in the book that go hand in hand. Family is an extremely important part of Chinese culture. Relationships, loyalty, and the institution of family as a whole is one of the highest points of significance of society and in China and throughout the West family bonds are very sacred and respected. In this culture and throughout *The Analects* there was especially a great influence and demonstration of a "son's love for his parents" (pg. 28). Confucius wrote, "In serving your parents, be gentle in remonstrance.

Seeing that they are not inclined to comply, remain reverent, and do not disobey them. Though weary, do not feel resentful," (pg. 70, 4. 18). A son's job was to serve his parents at any moment and he was only considered filial after he served his parents in the correct ways, "When his father was alive, he observed his aspirations, when his father died, he observed his deeds. If, for three years he does not change his father's Way, he may be said to be filial" (pg. 49, 1. 11). Filial piety was said to be the "first and foremost of all

virtues,” and honoring one's family went much farther than daily life (pg. 8). There was also a big emphasis on respecting parents after they had passed away.

Confucius said, “ When your parents are alive, serve them in accordance with the rituals; when they die, bury them in accordance with the rituals; offer sacrifices to them in accordance with the rituals” (pg. 53, 2. 5). Chinese cultures portrayed that for a son to be filial he had to “ serve his parents in three ways: to feed them when they are alive, to mourn them when they die and to offer sacrifices to them when mourning is over,” (pg. 28). It was so much of an importance to serve one's parents after death that Confucius himself said, “ There is hardly anything that can make a man spontaneously exhaust his grief. If an exception must be made, it is perhaps a parent's death,” (pg. 181, 19. 17). By instituting these analects of filial piety so intensely into the west and having them obeyed helped establish good behavior and put an emphasis on roles of the people. Since filial piety was such an essential virtue it was known for helping to “ shape young people into loyal law-abiding subjects” (pg. 29).

Social order and good behavior was a prominent throughout the west and taught through Confucianism. In Chinese culture reverence and respect was key and went along with good behavior. Confucius said, “ nowadays filial piety merely means being able to feed one's parents. Even dogs and horses are being fed. Without reverence, how can you tell the difference,” (pg. 53, 2. 7). He was essentially trying to say that if respect isn't important than what's the difference between a parent and a dog. Through reverence and family relationships it helped shape young people and instate good behavior.

The Analects went into great depth of illustrating being an ethical and good citizen. Confucius said, "Keep wholehearted sincerity and truthfulness as your major principles. Do not befriend those beneath you. When you make a mistake, do not be afraid to correct it," (pg. 106, 9. 25). He believed it was better to admit your mistakes than try and cover them up. The Chinese culture did not promote negative behavior or disobedience whatsoever. They focused on 'the gentleman', the most virtuous and talented man, the role model for everyone else.

Confucius stated, "the gentleman helps others achieve their good ends; he does not help them achieve their evil ends. The small man does the opposite," (pg. 129, 12. 16). The gentleman was essentially the perfect man and promoted good behavior. Having the gentleman in Chinese culture helped uphold and spread the Analects and good behavior. Overtime Confucianism and Confucius' philosophies spread throughout Chinese civilization and the west and became very popular. Even after Confucius' time his students and followers spread his beliefs.

His moral codes and ideals were accepted and grew more prominent overtime by Chinese civilizations and were adopted by neighboring countries. Although his ideals not always followed in every dynasty and period of time they came back in the time of the Han Dynasty and the civil service exam is an example of how the teachings of Confucius was later intertwined with society. Confucius is a critical scholar and philosopher in western history and for the rest of the world. His teachings will never be forgotten and his Analects will always be referred to.