

## Confucianism:

*Confucius (c. 551 - 479 BCE) has been one of the most important thinkers in Chinese culture. Confucius redirected Chinese philosophy toward establishing the correct moral behavior of people within society. Significantly, Confucian thought was founded on the oldest and most respected traditions of Chinese society. Confucius himself claimed that he did nothing new, but in reality he fundamentally changed the direction of Chinese thought.*

### ***Selections from the Analects (5<sup>th</sup> Century B.C.E.)***

#### **On Filial Piety**

Mang I asked what filial piety is. The Master said, "It is being obedient." Soon after, as Fan Chi was driving him, the Master told him "Mang asked me what filial piety is, and I answer him 'being obedient.'" Fan Chi asked, "What exactly did you mean?" The Master replied, "That parents, when alive, should be served according to ritual; that, when dead, they should be buried according to ritual; and that they should be sacrificed to according to ritual."

#### **On Goodness**

The Master said, "A youth, when at home, should behave well toward his parents, and when abroad, respectfully to his elders. He should be earnest and truthful. He should overflow in love to all, and cultivate the friendship of the good. When he has time and opportunity, after doing those things, he should study the polite arts."

Zhonggong asked about perfect virtue. The Master said, "When abroad, behave to everyone as if you were receiving an important guest; treat people as if you were assisting at a great sacrifice; do not do to others as you would not wish done to yourself. Thereby you will let no murmuring rise against you in the country, and none in the family. . . ."

#### **On the Gentleman**

"When gentlemen perform well all their duties to their relations, the people are inspired to virtue. When they remain true to their old friends, the people are preserved from irresponsible behavior."

The Master said, "A gentleman points out the admirable qualities of men and does not point out their bad qualities. A petty man does just the opposite."

The Master said, "A gentleman is distressed by his lack of ability, but he is not distressed by men's not knowing him."

The Master said, "What the gentleman demands is something of himself. What the petty man demands is something of others."

## **On Government**

The Master said, "To rule a country of a thousand chariots requires reverent attention to business, sincerity, economy in expenditures, and love for men, as well as the employment of the people only in the right seasons."

The Master said, "If the people are governed by laws and punishment is used to maintain order, they will try to avoid the punishment but have no sense of shame. If they are governed by virtue and rules of propriety [ritual] are used to maintain order, they will have a sense of shame and will become good as well."

### **Questions:**

1. What qualities and behaviors are emphasized by Confucius?
2. What is Confucius' view of human nature?
3. According to the words of Confucius, how can order and stability be achieved in a society?
4. Who would be interested in Confucianism? What type of people would they be?

## Daoism (Taoism):

### **Lao Tzu: Tao te Ching (Dao De Ching) – circa 6<sup>th</sup> Century B.C.E.**

*The Tao te Ching (literally, "the classic of the way of virtue") is attributed to Lao Tzu, though scholars disagree about his actual existence. In its very poetic form it teaches that there is a dynamic, cosmic structure underlying everything that happens in the world. Taoism speaks to two opposed forces, that of being and non-being. It will be found to interplay throughout the world, with non-being (emptiness, what is not) having as much significance as does being (the fullness of things, what is). In this way the Tao relates to the earlier Chinese concept of Yin and Yang*

<b>1. Tao</b>	<b>2. Qualities</b>
The Tao that can be known is not Tao. The substance of the World is only a name for Tao. Tao is all that exists and may exist...	When Beauty is recognised in the World Ugliness has been learned; When Good is recognised in the World Evil has been learned...
<b>17. Rulers</b>	<b>4. Properties of Tao</b>
The best rulers are scarcely known by their subjects; The next best are loved and praised; The next are feared; The next despised: They have no faith in their subjects, So their subjects become unfaithful to them. When the best rulers achieve their purpose Their subjects claim the achievement as their own.	Tao is a depthless vessel; Used by the Self, it is not filled by the World; It cannot be cut, knotted, dimmed or stilled; Its depths are hidden, ubiquitous and eternal; I don't know where it came from; It came before Nature.

<p>“Knowing the male, being the female, Being the course through which flows the World, One embraces unfailing Love And is again as a newborn. Knowing the light, being the dark, Being the World, One becomes unerring Love And returns to Tao. Knowing honour, being humble, Being the valley of the World, Love suffices, And one is as unshaped wood.</p> <p>When wood is shaped it becomes tools. Used by the sage, tools become powerful; So a good carpenter wastes little.”</p>	<p>Practise no-action; (<b>wu-wei</b>) Attend to do-nothing; Taste the flavorless, Examine the small, Multiply the few, Return love for hate.</p> <p>Deal with difficulty while it is yet easy; Deal with the great while it is yet small; The difficult develops naturally from the easy And the great from the small; So the sage, by dealing with the small Achieves the great. He who finds it easy to promise finds it hard to deliver; He who takes things lightly makes things hard; The sage confronts difficulty, and so has none.</p>
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