



## The Analects of Confucius

*Confucius (551 BC – 479 BC) Translated by William Jennings (1847 - 1927)*

Read by:	Jing Li	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
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*The Analects of Confucius* is a collection of anecdotes, sayings and ideas attributed to the Chinese philosopher and teacher Confucius. The term “analects” derive from the Chinese term Lun Yu, meaning “edited conversations”. *The Analects* are believed to have been written down by followers of Confucius during the Warring States period (475-221 BC) shortly after his death and to have been further revised into its present form by the mid-Han dynasty (206 BC -220 AD). For many years *The Analects* was considered a commentary on the Five Classics of Chinese literature\*, but grew to become a central text in the study of Confucianism and be recognized as one of the Four Books, all of which contribute to the philosophy. The core idea of Confucianism is that the general welfare of a country depends on the moral virtue of

its people, beginning with leadership. Cultivation of virtue is done via the practice of ren, which teaches the importance of devotion to parents and the wisdom of reconciling individual desires with rules and rituals of propriety, which engender respect for others and responsibility. The importance of *The Analects* as an essential philosophical work was seen in the inclusion in the “Four Books” during the Song Dynasty (960 – 1279). It has been one of the most widely read books in China for 2,000 years and maintains a strong influence on Chinese thought and values.

**Confucius** (551 BC – 479 BC) was a Chinese philosopher, teacher, politician, and editor who is credited with articulating the principles of Chinese philosophy that has come to be called Confucianism. He was born into the class of shi, between the aristocracy and the common people, in Zou, Lu state, near present-day Qufu in Shandong province. He was raised in poverty by his mother after the death of his father, a military officer, when Confucius was three. He married at nineteen and is said to have worked as a shepherd, cowherd, clerk and bookkeeper. He gained a reputation over the years for the wisdom of his teachings, and became a local mayor and later Minister of Crime for Lu state. He is known for his attempts to reconcile the interests of the three aristocratic families that governed the state under the ruling duke during a time of upheavals. His ability to articulate the values of proper conduct, filial piety, reciprocity, and doing the right thing were seen as a guidebook for achieving loyalty and legitimacy as governors. He resigned his post after the Duke of Lu state persisted in misbehavior and set out on a long set of journeys around the small kingdoms in northeast and central China, expounding his political beliefs. He returned to Lu at age 68 and spent his remaining years with disciples teaching the wisdom of the Five Classics. He is known for his early version of the Golden Rule: “What you do not wish for yourself, do not do to others.”