***Life of Confucius***

Confucius in Chinese syllables are Kung Fu Tse.

Disclaimer: This is not meant to be a scholarly text. As a descendant of Confucius I will tell the story of my ancestor. Since I believe he has returned (like Christ Return), I will also convey his latest teachings. As a spiritual man, I sometimes receive dreams regarding his spiritual residence. Yes, we believe ancestors appear to us and even try to communicate with us (see the movie “Ghost” for a hilarious example of such attempts on communication).

There is scant verifiable written information on Confucius life. However, his teachings are what is larger than life. They are pervasive, touching every part of a Chinese person’s life.

Confucius was born in 551 BCE, in Shandong province. Some call the location the State of Lu. He was born into a noble family but due to the untimely death of his father, he lost his status and became poor. Supporting his poor mother, he worked many odd jobs. Through his poverty, he developed sympathy for the poor. Poverty sometimes drives people to do unethical behavior that people in normal circumstances may not. At a market, it was said that his fellow workers suggest he put his “finger on the scale” so to speak and make a little more money than his job was paying. His colleagues said, “Everyone does it. No one will find out. No one will know.” Confucius famously replied, “No one will know except I will know.” Thus Confucius is known for his integrity.

He studied at the Royal Archive where his world view was probably developed.

He learned that education starts in the family and that custom, culture, ritual, history , literature all play a role. He subscribes to moral inspiration and persuasion rather than brute force.

When he was the advisor to the ruler of his home state of LU, he put his philosophy into practice. He resigned when he found his ruler of Lu was immoral and unworthy. So he traveled everywhere to find a worthy ruler to serve, not compromising his principles.

He tried to persuade rulers from exacting harsh punishments and sheer power to govern. Good rulers inspires others to follow by his ethical charisma, he believed.

Family education was paramount. Family relationship was upheld. What would you do if you knew your father stole a neighbor’s sheep, will you inform the authorities? No, a son would remonstrate his father and gain the father’s respect and gain more good from their relationship than if the father was jailed due to his son’s accusation. Loving consideration of the consequences may outweigh just being honest. Virtues do have priorities. Love being the greatest. Thus Confucius was known for his Filial Piety and benevolence.

In his travels, he was often hungry, attacked for his opposition to authorities, and lived a lonely life. But he was not bitter. He believed in “Heaven” and virtue.

Traveling around but failing to find a worthy ruler to serve, he returned to the State of Lu and settled as a philosopher and a teacher. Not much else is known of his life. Like great saints such as Jesus and other religious leaders, their lives are told and retold as legends, their accuracy not often challenged. But Confucius teachings were what lasted throughout the centuries. They were so profound and influential that it became part of Chinese culture. He was the personification of a sage who leads through his example of virtue. His students recorded his teachings and collected them together into a book called, the Analects. His words in certain situations reveal his character and personality. For example, when Confucius heard about a stable being burnt down, he inquired more about the fate of the stablemates than the horses. Thus he is known for his benevolence or human heartedness. In Chinese, the word is “ren,” written with two Chinese characters, one for man and one for the number *rén* (仁). The left side is the word for a person and right side is the number 2. This means relationship between people is of paramount importance to Confucius.

Confucius followed the traditional cultural books such as the Five Classics: the Book of Odes, Book of Documents, Book of Changes, Book of Rites, and the Spring and Autumn Annals.

In addition to the “Analects,” the Great Learning written by Confucius student Zengzi contains significant teachings of Confucius also.

Confucius is well known for his “Silver Rule”: “Do not do unto others what you would not want others do unto you.” This is a corollary to Jesus “Golden Rule” which states “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you” (Matt 7:12). Such parallel is not coincidental. (Ed. Note: I believe that Confucius role in God’s providence was to prepare the Chinese people to accept Jesus when Jesus finally arrives in China. More revelations forthcoming)