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# History

## (Complete Buddhism)

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## Complete Buddhism

- 6th century BCE - A period of great Religious upheaval - As many as 63 Heterodox sects came forward to challenge the Brahmanical dominance prevalent at that time, Out of these 63 - Buddhism and Jainism came to the forefront and laid a strong foundation that exists even to this day.
- Causes of Origin of these sects
- Revolt against Brahmanical Dominance - Kshatriya reaction against the dominance of the Brahmins.
- Rise of new Agricultural Economy which demanded Animal Husbandry.
- Patronising of these sects by Vaishyas and other mercantile groups who wanted better social status and a reign of peace. (6th can CE - Era of Second Urbanisation)
- Simple methods of these new sects as compared to complex rituals of Vedic Age.

### Sources of Buddhism and their ideology

- Canonical texts - Directly linked to Gautam Buddha in one way or the other. (Difference among various sects as to, which source can be considered as canonical).
- Books which lay down the basic tenets and principles of Buddhism such as the Tipitakas (The Three Baskets/Collections). These are the Buddha's teachings written on long Narrow Leaves.
  - Sutta Pitaka (Conventional Teaching) - recited by Ananda
  - Vinaya Pitaka (Disciplinary Code) - recited by Upali
  - Abhidhamma Pitaka (Moral Psychology)
- Sutta Pitaka (Basket of Discourses) - These texts are known as words of Buddha as it refers to what the Buddha himself said, The authority of these texts has been accepted by all the schools of Buddhism. These texts are arranged in the manner of how they were delivered by Buddha.
- Vinaya Pitaka (Discipline Basket) - This contains the rule for monks and nuns of the Monastic Order (Sangha).
- Abhidhamma Pitaka (Basket of Higher Teachings) - contains a thorough study and systemization of the teachings of the Sutta Pitaka through summaries, questions, and answers.
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## Non-canonical texts or semi-canonical texts

- Commentaries and observation on canonical texts, Historic information, quotes, etc.
  - Milindaphano - A dialogue in Pali language consisting of a conversation between Indo-Greek King Milinda/Menander and the monk Nagasena.
  - Neetipakrana - The book on Guidance, which gives a connected account of the Buddha's teaching.
- Vishuddhimagga - The Path to Purity, written by Buddhaghosa, deals with the development from the purity of discipline to Nibbana/enlightenment.
- Nidanakatha - First connected life story of Buddha.
- Dipavamsa and Mahavamsa - Historical cum mythical account of Buddha's life in Pali Language-based out of Srilanka.
- Mahavastu - written in mixed Sanskrit - Prakrit, lays down the hagiography of Buddha.

## Buddha - The Story

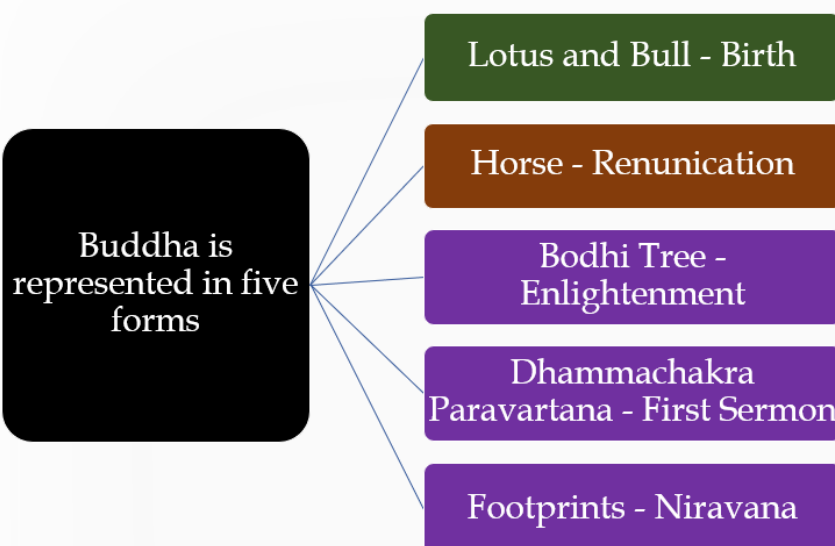
- The sacred biography of Buddha is briefed in Sutta and Vinaya Pitaka.
- According to sources, Gautam Buddha (Sakyamuni/Tathagata) was born as Siddhartha in 563 BCE at Lumbini (Nepal) to father - Suddodana (Chief of Republic Sakya Clan, who ruled from Kapilavastu in the Kosala Kingdom) and mother - Mahamaya (Princess of Kosala dynasty), who died at the time of his birth, and thus he was raised by his stepmother Gautami. (32 marks of Mahapursha)
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## Life of Buddha

- At the age of 29, he saw an old man, a sick man, a corpse, and an ascetic, and thus he left his place to become a wanderer in the last phase of dark night with Channa, the charioteer, and his favorite horse Kanthaka in search of truth (Mahabhinishkramana/Great Renunciation) and thus he wandered for 6 years.
- He meditated with established teachers of that era (Alara Kalama, Uddaka Ramaputta)
- Then, being unconvinced he left all the teachers and sat on the foot journey in search of truth with his 5 companions - Kondanna, Bhaddiya, Vappa, Mahanama, and Assaji - he practiced severe austerities until his body was almost emaciated, and thus he realized that these austerities will not lead to enlightenment.
- Then he reached the village named Senani, where he was offered a bowl of milk rice by a girl named Sujata, because of which his companions deserted him. After all this, he took a seat under the Peepal tree facing east, where he resolved not to rise again until enlightenment was attained.
- The story of Mara - The lord of Illusions happened to distract Buddha from his vow, but Gautam's wisdom broke through his illusion, and the power of his compassion transformed the demon's weapons into flowers.



- Thus, at the age of 35, he ultimately attained Nirvana/Enlightenment at Gayam under a Peepal Tree at Uruvela, on the banks of river Niranjana, and came to be known as Buddha, the enlightened one.
- (Attempts to Destroy this tree - By Ashoka's queen, Pushyamitra Sunga in 2nd cen BCE and King Shasanka in 600 AD)
- Buddha delivered his first sermon on the deliverance of suffering to his five former companions who had deserted him in a deer park at Sarnath.
- This event is known as 'Dhamma Chakka Pavattana' meaning 'turning the wheel of Dharma' - and this way his disciples became Arhats. (A perfected person, one who has gained insight into the true nature of existence and has achieved nirvana (spiritual enlightenment))
- Thus, Buddha constituted an audience of his disciples which came to be known as Sangha.
- He finally attained Mahaparinirvana at the age of 80 at Kusinara (Malla Mahajanapada).
  - His last words were - 'All composite things decay, stove diligently'



## Doctrines of Buddha

- Buddha while giving the analogy of Boat and raft, stresses the fact one should not cling to anything, including his teachings.
- The teachings are only Upaya and are thus not dogma.
- Ariya-Sachchani (Four Noble Truths)
- AshtangikaMarga (Eight Fold Path)
- The core of Buddha's doctrine on expressed in the -

### 4 Noble Truths

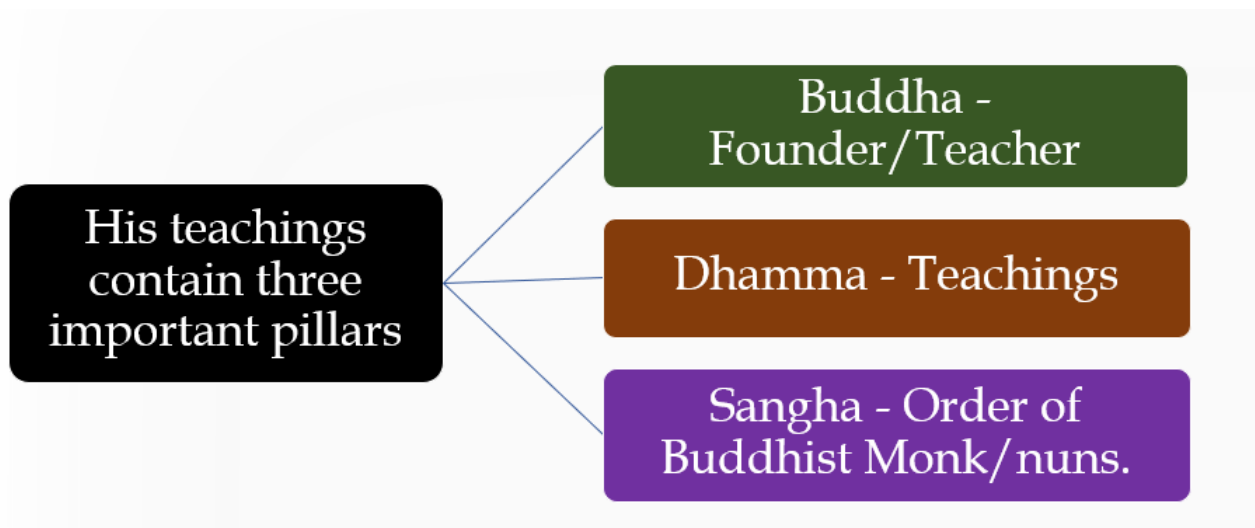
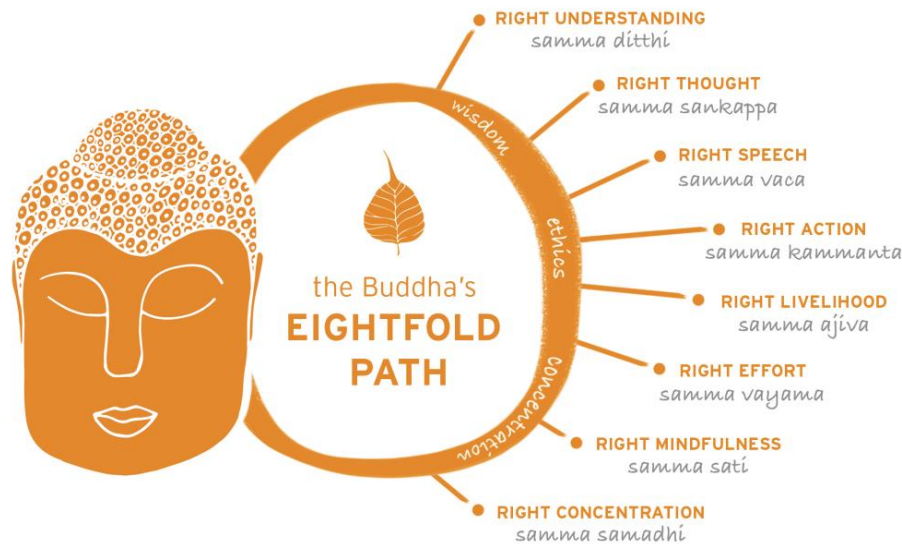
- **Dukkha**: Truth of Suffering
- **Samudaya**: Truth of the Cause of Suffering
- **Nirodha**: Truth of the End of Suffering
- **Magga**: Truth of the Path



#### ***Buddha's Four Noble Truths:***

- 1. Life has inevitable suffering***
- 2. There is a cause to our suffering***
- 3. There is an end to suffering***
- 4. The end to suffering is contained in the eight fold path***

*Our Wonderful World*



- The path of Buddha is often referred to as Middle Path (the one between extreme indulgence and extreme asceticism)
- Buddha says that when one follows this Eightfold path, One reaches the stage of Nirvana which means non-attachment and dying of sense of ego.
- It should be noted that Buddha rejects the idea of God and Soul, According to him soul is a myth.
- As opposed to ritual action of Brahmanical tradition, Karma in the Buddhist tradition is the result of an action depending upon the intention more than the action itself.
- 10 Forms of realms according to Buddha, in which a human can exist -
  - Bodhisattva - An enlightened being destined to be a Buddha, but purposely remains on earth to teach others.
  - Maitreya - Future Buddha.

- Buddha also established a code of conduct both for the monastic order and the laymen to follow which are also known as the Five Precepts or Pancasila and refrain from them.
  - Violence
  - Stealing
  - Sexual misconduct
  - Lying or gossip
  - Taking intoxicating substances e.g. drugs or drink

## Buddha and Brahmanism

- Buddha considered Varna based on Action and not based on birth, thus Sangha had members from all the castes.
- However it was not all-inclusive, there were a certain number of conditions which a joined must adhere to - entry of debtors, slaves, soldiers with our permission from their respective masters was prohibited.
- Reasons for Spread and Popularity of Buddhism
- Royal patronage by kings like Ashoka.
- Appealed to the common man as it was more democratic and liberal, won the support of the lower class.
- Buddha's personality and his rationale doctrine
- Role of Pali Language
- Patronisation by Monarchies such as Magadha, Kosala, Kausambhi.
- Reasons for Decline Buddhism
- Succumbed to the same rituals and dogs which it had initially denounced.
- Practice of large-scale Idol Worship began and received numerous offerings from the devotees - Resulted in corruption of the ascetic life of Buddhist Monks - Degradation of Buddhist Monks and their preaching.
- Persecution of Buddhists by Monarchs - *Pushyamitra Sunga, King Shashank*

## Important Terms to Remember

- Upasampada - Ordination ceremony when the novice becomes the full-fledged member of the monastic community.
- Pavana - Buddhist holy day celebrated on the full moon of the lunar month. It marks the end of the rainy season, sometimes called Buddhist lent. On this day, each monk must come before the Sangha and atone for an offense he may have committed during the (Vassa) rainy season.
- Paribbajaka/Parivrajaka - Wanderer

## Buddhist Councils

| Buddhist Council | Time    | Place                     | Ruler      | President   | Important Term                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------|---------|---------------------------|------------|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| First            | 483 BCE | Sattapani Caves, Rajgirha | Ajatshatru | Mahakassapa | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Held <u>after the death of Buddha</u> to <u>compile the teachings of Buddha</u>.</li> <li>Led to the <u>formation of - Vinaya Pitaka</u> - Rules of the Order - Recited by Upali and <u>Sutta Pitaka</u> - a collection of Buddhas Sermon - recited by Ananda.</li> </ul> |

| Buddhist Council | Time    | Place    | Ruler     | President | Important Term                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|------------------|---------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Second           | 383 BCE | Vaishali | Kalashoka | Sabbakami | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To <u>settle the debate</u> on certain practices among Buddhist Monks, led to the <u>division of Buddhism into sects</u> - <u>Sthaviravadins and Mahasangikas</u> - These 2 groups will eventually evolve into <u>Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism</u>.</li> <li>The group which remained stuck to the original spirit and teaching of Buddha called themselves the <u>Elders (Thera in Palli)</u>.</li> <li>The other group, <u>the greater community (Mahasangikas in Sanskrit)</u> interpreted Buddha's teaching more liberally but in a way that they felt was truer to his intentions.</li> </ul> |

| Buddhist Council | Time    | Place      | Ruler  | President        | Important Term                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|------------------|---------|------------|--------|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Third            | 250 BCE | Patliputra | Ashoka | Mogaliputtatissa | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The objective was to <u>purify the Buddhist movement from opportunistic factions</u>.</li> <li><u>Origin of Theravada School</u>.</li> <li><u>Abhidhamma Pitaka was composed</u>, Completing the Tripitaka, coded in Pali Language.</li> <li><u>Sent Buddhist Missionaries to other countries</u></li> </ul> |

| Buddhist Council | Time     | Place   | Ruler    | President                | Important Term                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|------------------|----------|---------|----------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Fourth           | 1 Cen CE | Kashmir | Kanishka | Vasumitra and Ashvagosha | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Reconciliation of various conflicts</u> between different schools.</li> <li>• Buddhism further divided into <u>Mahayana and Hinayana Sect.</u></li> <li>• <u>Tripitaka translated from Pali to Sanskrit.</u></li> </ul> |

## Different Schools of Buddhism

### Hinayana School (Theravada)

- Literal Meaning - 'The Lesser Path' and Theravada means 'Doctrine of the Elders'.
- It is considered as an orthodox school and to follow the original thought and teaching of Buddha.
- Theravada is considered to be the original school of Buddhism.
- Its scriptures are in Pali, the language in which Buddha taught.

### Hinayana School (Theravada)

- It treats Buddha as nothing more than a Human Being who does not believe in Idol Worship and tries to attain Individual salvation through self-discipline and meditation.
- Ultimate aim is Nirvana
- At present, found in Sri Lanka - Myanmar - Thailand.
- Ashoka patronised Hinayana.
- Salvation can be attained through self-discipline and meditation.

### Mahayana School

- Literal Meaning - 'The Greater Path'
- It is the heterodox School, as it originated later than Hinayana.
- It has 2 further philosophical schools - Madhyamika and Yogachara.
- Its scriptures are in Sanskrit.
- It treats Buddha as equal to God and worships idols of Buddha and Bodhisattvas.
- It believes in universal liberation from suffering for all living beings.

- The ultimate aim is 'spiritual upliftment'.
- It believes in Mantras.
- At present practiced in Japan, China.
- Kanishka patronized Mahayana Buddhism.
- Salvation can be attained through means of faith and devotion to the mindfulness of the Buddha.

## Vajrayana School

- Literal Meaning 'Vehicle of the Thunderbolt'.
- Vajrayana or Diamond Vehicle is also referred to as Mantrayana, Tantrayana, or Tantric Buddhism.
- It was a form of Buddhism which appeared in eastern India in the eighteenth century and was finally established in Tibet in the 11<sup>th</sup> century as a result of the mission sent from the great Vajrayana monastery of Vikramshila.
- It is based on 'Two Truths Doctrine', which means 'conventional' and 'ultimate' truths.
  - Conventional truth is the truth of consensus reality and common sense notions of what does and does not exist.
  - Ultimate truth is reality as viewed by an awakened or enlightened mind.
- It uses a highly symbolic language 'Sandhya-base or 'Twilight Language'.
- In this school, fierce deities known as Tara are worshipped.
- Great emphasis is placed on the role of guru in Vajrayana and the Tibetan translation of Guru is Lama.
- Popular in eastern India – Bengal and Bihar and is predominant in Himalayan nations of Tiber, Nepal, Bhutan, and also Mongolia.

## Great Bodhisattvas

- Manjushri - Bodhisattva of wisdom and insight.
- Avalokiteshvara / Padmapani / Lokeshvara - Bodhisattva of infinite compassion.
- Vajrapani - Bodhisattva that represents power and forceful energy.
- Maitreya - Bodhisattva who has not lived yet, future Buddha.
- Kshitgarbha - Bodhisattva destined to save the souls of all beings between Buddha's death and the age of Maitreya.
- Akashgarbha - Bodhisattva who can purify transgression and is known as twin brother of Kshitgarbha.
- Samantbhadra - Meaning 'Universal Worthy' the Bodhisattva refers to fundamental and unchanging goodness.
- Sarvanivarna-Vishkambhin - Bodhisattva who purifies wrong-doing and obstructions, both internal and external, that people face on the path to enlightenment.

- Shakyamuni Trinity - Gautam Buddha (*Shakyamani Buddha + Samantabhadra + Manjushri*)
- Three family protectors - Manjushri (Buddha's Wisdom), Avalokiteshvara (Buddha's Compassion), Vajrapani (Buddha's power)

## Mudras in Buddhism

- Mudras are a non-verbal mode of communication and self-expression, consisting of hand gestures and finger postures.
- Mudras in Buddhism
- They are symbolic sign-based finger patterns taking the place, but retaining the efficacy of the spoken word, and are used to evoke in the mind ideas symbolizing divine powers or the deities themselves.
- They are also used by monks in their spiritual exercises of ritual meditation and concentration and are believed to generate forces that invoke the deity.
- While there are a large number of esoteric mudras, over time Buddhist art has retained only five of them for the representations of the Buddha. Images of the Buddha which exhibit mudras other than these are extremely rare.

## Dharmachakra Mudra - means 'Wheel of Dharma'

- Symbolises one of the most important moments in the life of Buddha, the occasion when he preached to his companions the first sermon after his Enlightenment in the Deer Park at Sarnath.
- It thus denotes the setting into motion of the Wheel of the teaching of the Dharma.



## Bhumisparsha Mudra

- Literally, Bhumisparsha translates into 'touching the earth'. It is more commonly known as the 'earth witness'.
- This mudra, formed with all five fingers of the right hand extended to touch the ground, symbolizes the Buddha's enlightenment under the Bodhi tree, when he summoned the earth goddess, Sthavara, to bear witness to his attainment of enlightenment.
- It is in this posture that Sakyamuni overcame the obstructions of Mara while meditating on Truth



## Varada Mudra

- This mudra symbolizes charity, compassion, and boon-granting.
- It is the mudra of the accomplishment of the wish to devote oneself to human salvation.
- The five extended fingers in this mudra symbolize the following five perfections- Generosity, Morality, Patience, Effort, Meditative concentration.

