



*Religion in
Ancient India*

Buddhism



Founder

- **Siddhartha Gautama**
 - a prince around 540 BC
 - member of Kshatriya caste
 - was originally a Hindu

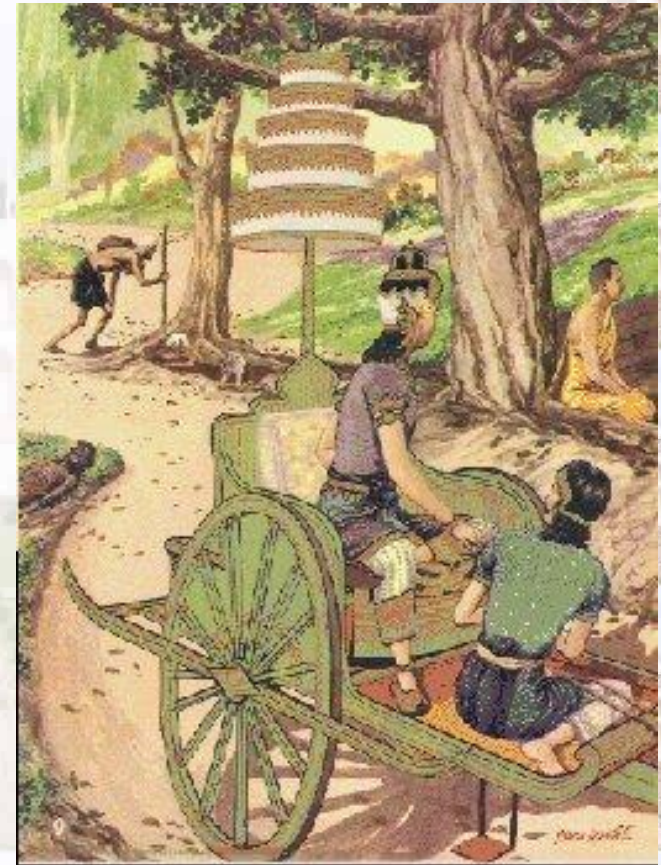


Siddhartha Gautama

- http://www.ancientindia.co.uk/buddha/story/sto_set.html

Reason Founded

- **Luxury is Unfulfilling**
 - father wanted him to be a warrior / ruler (Kshatriya)
 - Gautama saw suffering; sick, old, etc.
 - life of luxury was unfulfilling
- **Poverty is Unfulfilling**
 - turned to religion and led a life of denial, with extreme fasting; unfulfilling as well



The Middle Path

- Middle Path (Middle Way)
 - rejecting both luxury and denial
 - moderation in all things
 - Gautama found this to be fulfilling



Awakening

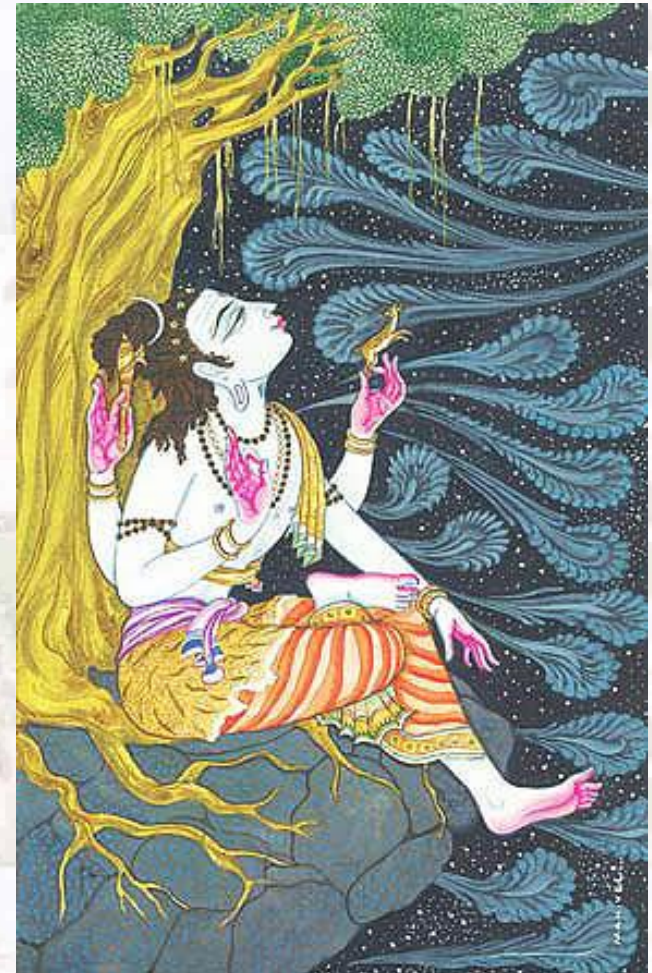


- **Great Enlightenment**
 - Gautama meditated
 - gained understanding about suffering and overcoming it
- **The Buddha**
 - Siddhartha Gautama became the Buddha
 - “the Enlightened One”

Ultimate Goal

- **Nirvana**

- ultimate goal of Buddhism
- letting go of greed, hatred, and ignorance
- leads to a state of eternal bliss, known as nirvana



Cycle of Rebirth

- **Reincarnation**

- birth, life, death, and rebirth
- good Karma
 - higher station in the next life
- bad Karma
 - lower station in the next life
- ultimate goal
 - break cycle of reincarnation and achieve enlightenment, or nirvana
- Buddhists don't believe in the Caste System or follow the Vedas



God in Buddhism

- Monotheistic or Atheistic ???
 - some Buddhists worship the Buddha as a god, rejecting the Hindu gods
 - believe that Gautama grew a second brain when he became the Buddha
 - other Buddhists consider themselves atheists, with no god
 - follow Buddhism as a philosophy rather than a religion
 - very popular opinion in communist China

Four Noble Truths

- four realizations and guiding principles that became the heart of Buddhist teaching



Four Noble Truths

1. **Suffering is a normal part of life.** Life is suffering. Birth, aging, dying, despair, grief, and disappointment are suffering.



Four Noble Truths

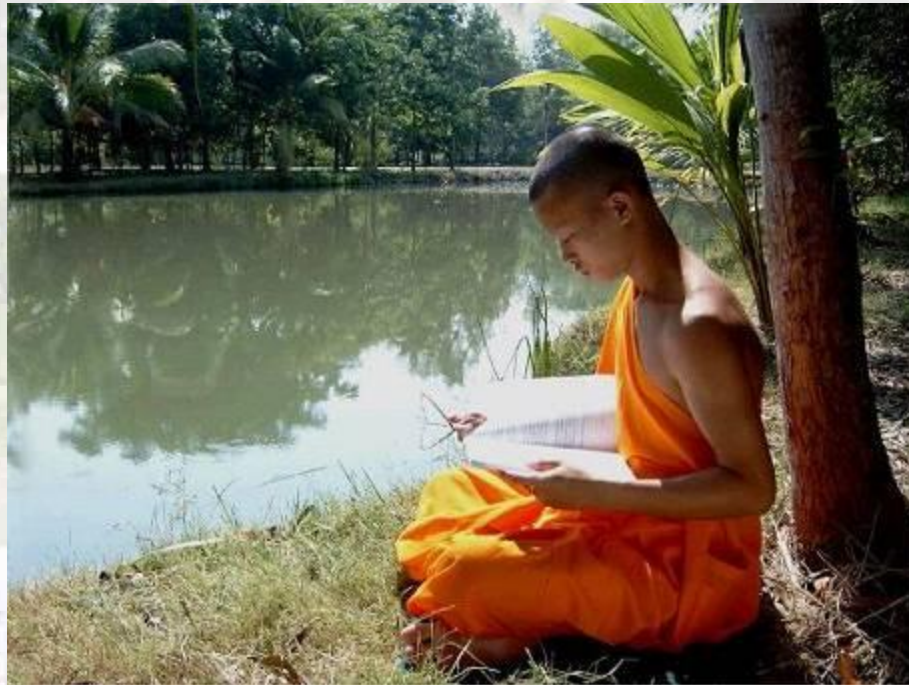
2. Suffering is caused by us, when we wish that what we had would be different.

Our desire for pleasure and material goods is what brings us our suffering.



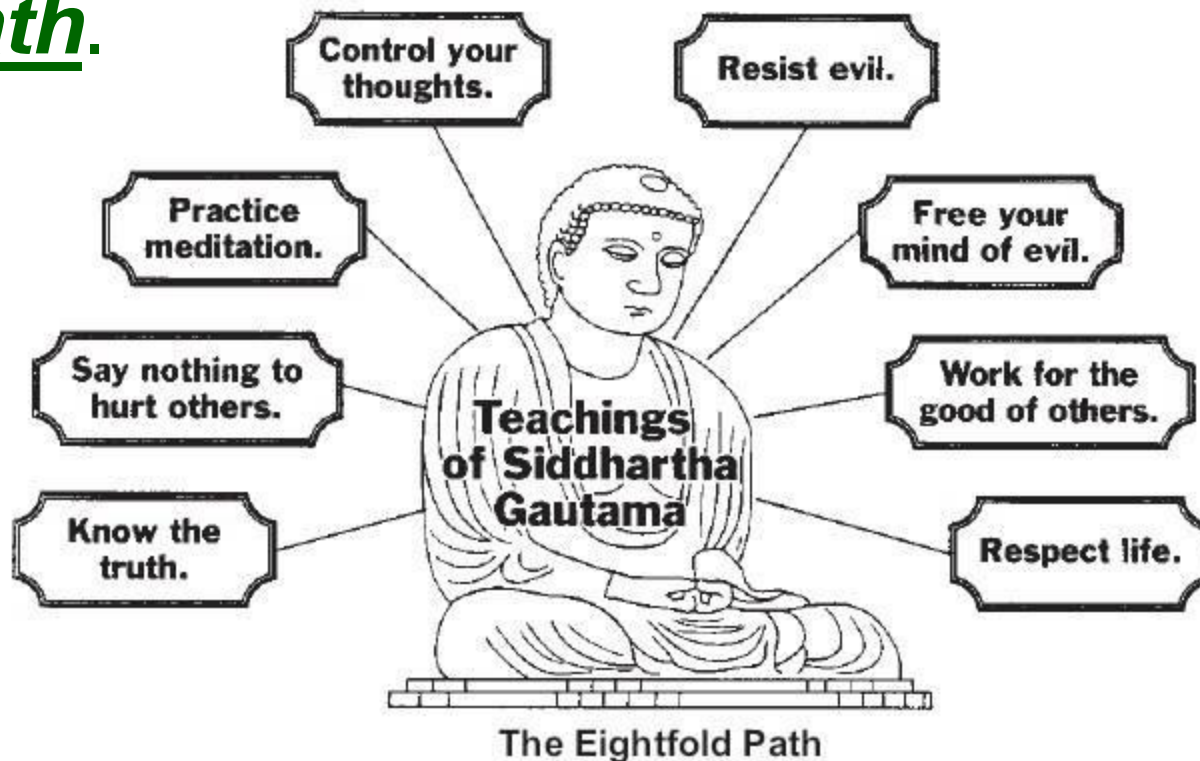
Four Noble Truths

3. *It is possible to end suffering and reach nirvana if we overcome desire and ignorance.*



Four Noble Truths

4. People can overcome ignorance and desire by following the Eight-Fold Path.



Eight-Fold Path

- eight guiding principles to help Buddhists follow the “middle way” to achieve nirvana



Eight-Fold Path

1. Right Thought (Understanding)

- Understanding the Four Noble Truths. Realizing that our own desires bring us suffering; and realizing that by letting go of this desire, we can achieve peace.



Eight-Fold Path

2. Right Intent

- Incline toward goodness and kindness to others.



Eight-Fold Path

3. Right Speech

- Speaking to others using words that are honest, kind, nurturing (uplifting), and worthy (valuable). Avoid lies and gossip.



Eight-Fold Path

4. Right Action

- Look deep in your heart and you will know what is right. Do the right thing at the right moment. Don't steal from or harm others.

Golden rule of Buddhism:

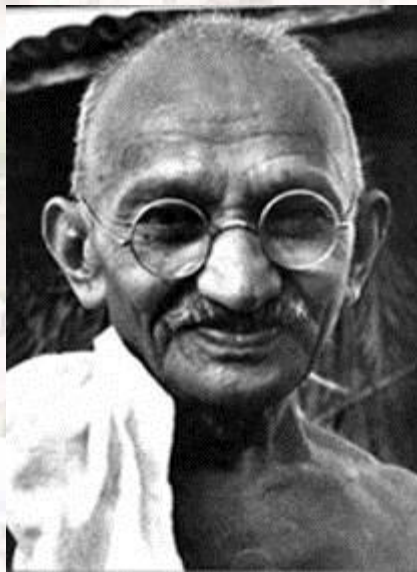
- Do no harm



Eight-Fold Path

5. Right Livelihood (Lifestyle)

- Living life in such a way as to end suffering and bring peace (and to help others do the same). Reject work that hurts others.



Eight-Fold Path

6. Right Effort

- When we have realized the truth of suffering, and are willing to seek freedom from desire with the same effort as a drowning man struggles for breath. Prevent evil and do good.



Eight-Fold Path

7. Right Mindfulness (Awareness)

- Pay careful attention to your body, feelings, mind, and mental state. Control your feelings and thoughts.



Eight-Fold Path

8. Right Concentration

- Using meditation, focus on following the path to peace (the Eight-Fold Path) in order to achieve nirvana. Practice proper meditation.



