

# ***HISTORY PROJECT ON***



## **BUDHA'S PATH TO ENLIGHTENMENT**

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Thank you,

**Utilitarian Group**

## Certificate

This is to certify that this project work is prepared by the **Utilitarian Group** during the In-service Course for PGT-History year 2018 at KV, Sector 8 Rohini. The project entitled '**Buddha's Path to Enlightenment**' is the result of the efforts & endeavors of Utilitarian Group. The project is found worthy of acceptance as final project for the purpose of In-service Course (PGT-History).

Guide:

1. Course Director
2. Associate Course Director
3. Resource Persons

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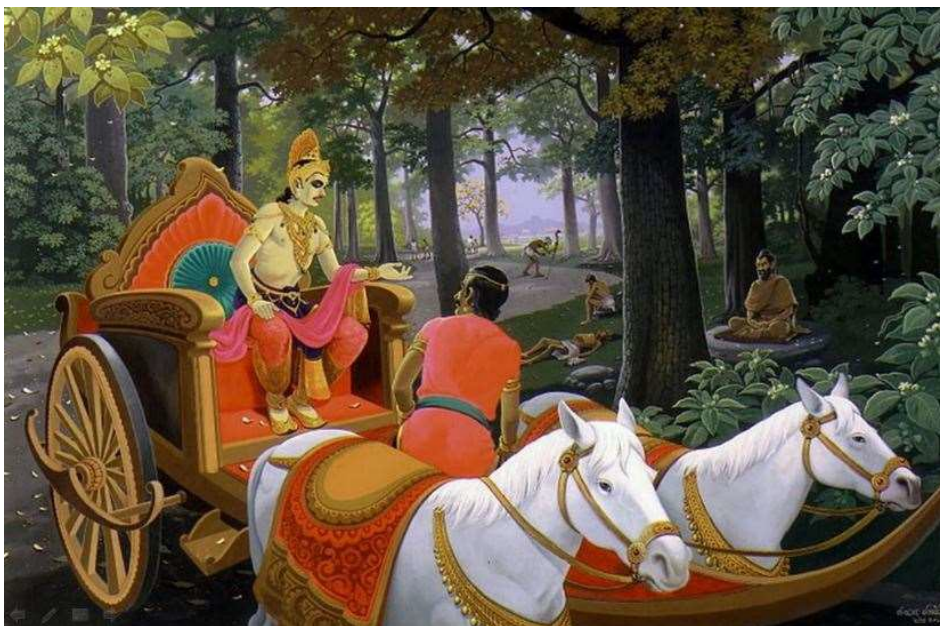




## Introduction



*This project is intended to give a brief introduction to Buddhism. It will discuss the way Buddha received the enlightenment, the four main teachings of the Buddha, the Buddhist view of the self, the relationship between this self and the various ways in which it responds to the world, the Buddhist path and the final goal.* Buddhism has been described as a very pragmatic religion. It does not indulge in metaphysical speculation about first causes; there is no theology, no worship of a deity or deification of the Buddha. Buddhism takes a very straightforward look at our human condition; nothing is based



on wishful thinking, at all.

Everything that the Buddha taught was based on his own observation of the way things are.

Everything that he taught can be verified by our own observation of the way things are.

Buddhism began in India in the sixth century B. C. as a reform movement in Hinduism. It was the first religion of the world to become international. The founder of Buddhism was Siddhartha Gautama, the son of a rich ruler of the Kshatriya caste.

Finally, around the age of thirty-five he sat down under the shade of a Peepal tree to meditate; he determined to meditate until he received enlightenment. After seven weeks he received the Great Enlightenment; The Four Noble Truths and the Eight-fold Path. Henceforth he became known as the Buddha (enlightened one).



Gautama Buddha taught a way of life devoid of authority, ritual, speculation, tradition, and the supernatural. He stressed intense self-effort. His last words before he died at the age of eighty were, "Work out your own salvation with diligence." Gautama accepted the law of karma and reincarnation. He saw Nirvana not as a state of extinction or annihilation but as "the highest destiny of the human spirit." It is so totally different that it is "incomprehensible, indescribably, inconceivable, unutterable...bliss."

Buddha did not believe in the existence of a personal God; nor did he believe that man had a soul. He tended to deny the



existence of substance of every kind and saw the transitoriness of all finite things and beings; he stressed impermanence. Man's life after achieving Nirvana is unfathomable - "reborn does not belong to him nor not-born, or any combination of such terms." Some scholars have pointed out that Buddhism in

its earliest form was not a religion but a system of



psychological-ethical discipline based on a pessimistic philosophy of life. Although there is some truth in this evaluation, there is much that is positive in Buddha's teaching.

## **Objectives**

- 1. To reveal the path of enlightenment of Lord Buddha**
- 2. To develop the understanding about the principles/ teachings of Buddhism ..**
- 3. To know about the sources of Bodh History**
- 4. To know about the causes of spread of Budhism.**
- 5. To know the major Bodhist centers.**



## **Early Life of Buddha**

The 6th century BCE was very important for religious transformation in India. There were more than sixty religious or philosophical schools/sects in India during this period. Among them the rise of Buddhism was most important ideology.

The Buddha was born in a large clan called the Shakyas in Lumbini in the 6th century B.C.E. His father was king who ruled the tribe, His mother died seven days after giving birth to him, but a holy man prophesized great things for the young Siddhartha: He would either be a great king or military leader or he would be a great spiritual leader.

The prince reached his late 20s with little experience of the world outside the walls of his palaces, but one day he ventured out beyond the palace walls and was quickly confronted with the realities of human frailty: He saw a very old man, and Siddhartha's charioteer explained that all people grow old. Questions about all he had not experienced led him to take more journeys of exploration, and on these subsequent trips he encountered a diseased man, a decaying corpse and an ascetic. The charioteer explained that the ascetic had renounced the world to seek release from the human fear of death and suffering. Siddhartha was overcome by these sights, and the next day, at age 29, he left his kingdom, wife and son to lead an

ascetic life, and determine a way to relieve the universal suffering that he now understood to be one of the defining traits of humanity

## **Path to enlightenment**

Siddhartha went to different teachers to learn meditation and ascetic practice. He mastered all the levels of meditative absorption. Yet even after attaining the highest levels of concentration and deepest levels of pain and suffering from hunger and discomfort, he realized he was still not free. He saw that neither of these states was the ultimate enlightenment: that which is beyond birth and death.

Siddhartha then gave up the extreme ascetic discipline to follow a middle path of practicing moderation. He begged for food and rebuilt his body for the next great event in his sacred journey. Siddhartha sat beneath a Bodhi tree and vowed, "Even if my blood dries up and my skin and bones waste away, I will not leave this seat until I have attained supreme enlightenment, the Truth of life and death, and the end of suffering for all mankind!"

As he sat there with unwavering determination, while doubts, desire, craving, and fear arose, Siddhartha sat firm and did not allow these thoughts to disturb his concentration. Instead, he simply let them go. Eventually, after a long time, Siddhartha realized, "Wonders of wonders, all sentient beings are intrinsically complete and perfect, but they do not recognize it because of their delusions and attachments."

Siddhartha realized the impermanence of life, and how living beings die only to be reborn in accordance with their karma. All beings are caught in the same round of existence due to greed and ignorance. He realized the cause of all evil and suffering and how to be released from it. He understood how to be liberated from sorrow, unhappiness, suffering, old age, and death. He had become a Buddha, the Awakened One. The scripture of Buddhism is the Tripitaka (Three Baskets of Wisdom), made up of the Vinaya Pitaka (Discipline Basket), the Sutta Pitaka (Teaching Basket), and the Abhidhamma Pitaka (Higher Doctrine Basket). Parts of the Tripitaka such as the Dhamma Pitaka and the Sutta Pitaka are among the most expressive religious books in the world.

Buddhism has been divided into two major branches which have in turn been subdivided into numerous sects. Today one may find in this one family of religions nearly every form of religious belief and expression on the planet.

Hinayana (Lesser Vehicle) or Theravada Buddhism concentrated in Southeast Asia is conservative and more closely follows the original teachings of Buddha. It sees man as entirely dependent on self-effort, teaches wisdom as the key virtue and regards religion as a full-time job, primarily for monks. They regard Buddha as a saint, eschew metaphysics and ritual, and limit prayer to meditation. Their ideal is arhat (sainthood).

Mahayana (Greater Vehicle) Buddhism has spread throughout the world and rests on the principle that Buddha taught many things in secret to the elect who could properly interpret them. It sees man as involved with others and saved by grace. It teaches compassion as the key virtue and believes its religion is relevant to life in the world; therefore, it is a religion for laymen



as well as monks. The Mahayana branch sees Buddha as a savior, welcomes metaphysics and ritual, and engages in petitionary prayer. Their ideal is the Bodhisattva--a mortal who has achieved enlightenment and after death postpones Nirvana attainment to serve in heaven answering prayers and helping mortals who are in need. Mahayana Buddhism regards Buddha as a divine savior--pre-existent, plan fully incarnate, supernaturally conceived, miraculously born, sinless, with a redemptive purpose, all knowing, and everlasting. Buddha has been made a member of the Buddhist Trinity.

Buddhism received its greatest impetus from the Indian emperor, Asoka, who was converted in 297 B. C. and became convinced that Buddhism was a religion for all of the peoples of the world. Accordingly, he sent missionaries throughout the known world. Asoka also called the third council of Buddhism in 247 B. C. for the purpose of determining the true canon of Buddhist scriptures.

## **Teachings of Buddha**

After attaining nirvana , Lord Buddha started teaching the way of life to people. Near the city of Benares, he shared his first teachings to five holy men and they immediately understood his teachings and agreed to follow Lord Buddha . For forty-five years, Buddha along with his disciples started spreading Buddha's wisdom and teachings in India. The teachings of Lord Buddha are also known as Dhamma . Let's see some of the

important teachings Lord Buddha has left behind for the sake of humanity.

During his enlightenment , Buddha found answer to three universal questions and he explained these answers and truth in a simple way for his disciple.

These **Three Universal truths** some basic teachings of The Buddha

### **1. Nothing is lost in the Universe :**

The first universal truth of Buddha found was nothing is lost in this universe. Old solar systems disintegrate into cosmic rays. We are the child of our parents and we will be the parents of our children.

If we destroy something around us, we destroy ourselves. If we lie to another, we lie to ourselves. Learning and understanding these truths, Lord Buddha and his disciples never killed any animal.

### **2. Everything changes :**

The second universal truth is everything changes and keeps on changing continuously . Dinosaurs, mammoth used to rule this planet but now we humans rule the planet. Life is like a river, it keeps on flowing, ever-changing.

### **3. Law of Cause and effect:**

" The kind of seed sown will produce that kind of fruit. Those who do good will reap good results. Those who do evil will reap evil results. If you carefully plant a good seed, You will joyfully gather good fruit. "

Dhammapada is mentioned , if we do some good things, then good things will come to us. If we do something evil, then evil things will happen to us. It is all due to cause and effect. This law of Cause and effect is known Karma .

Most religion strongly believes in Karma, so do Buddhism . Good karma results to good results and evil karma leads to bad results.

The Buddha's first sermon after his [enlightenment](#) centered on the Four Noble Truths, which are the foundation of Buddhism. The Truths are something like hypotheses and [Buddhism](#) might be defined as a process of verifying and realizing the truth of the Truths.

### **The Four Noble Truths**

1. The truth of suffering (*dukkha*)
2. The truth of the cause of suffering (*samudaya*)
3. The truth of the end of suffering (*nirhodha*)
4. The truth of the path that frees us from suffering (*magga*)



This **Middle Way** is a psychological-philosophical insight into the cause and cure of suffering and evil.

The First Noble Truth points out that the human condition is steeped in suffering, that in some way life has become estranged from reality. The Second Noble Truth tells us the cause of life's dislocation. Anxiety and suffering are caused by indulging in inherently insatiable desires. All forms of selfishness tend to separate us from others, life, and reality. The Third Noble Truth states a logical conclusion: suffering will cease when we suppress, overcome, and master these cravings and desires. We must develop non attachment to the things of the world.

Buddha's analysis of the problems of life in the Four Noble Truths is essentially that of a therapist; and the Eight-fold Path is the course of treatment through training.

**First one** needs to have right knowledge in order to have the facts, principles, and values to establish a wise life plan.

**Second**, right aspirations are required to give power to this plan. The heart as well as the head must be dedicated to our goals.

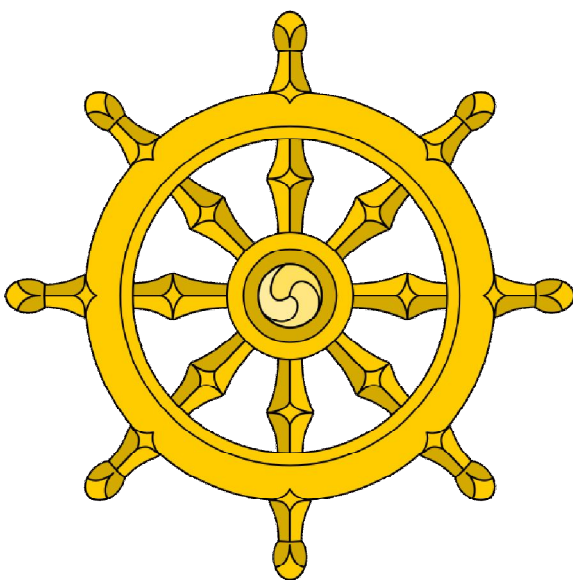
**Third**, right speech is needed to take hold of what is in our consciousness which controls our thinking. We need to change our speech and thinking toward truth and charity.

**Fourth**, right behavior should be initiated to further change and control our lives. We must follow the Five Precepts: do not kill, steal, lie, be unchaste, or drink intoxicants.

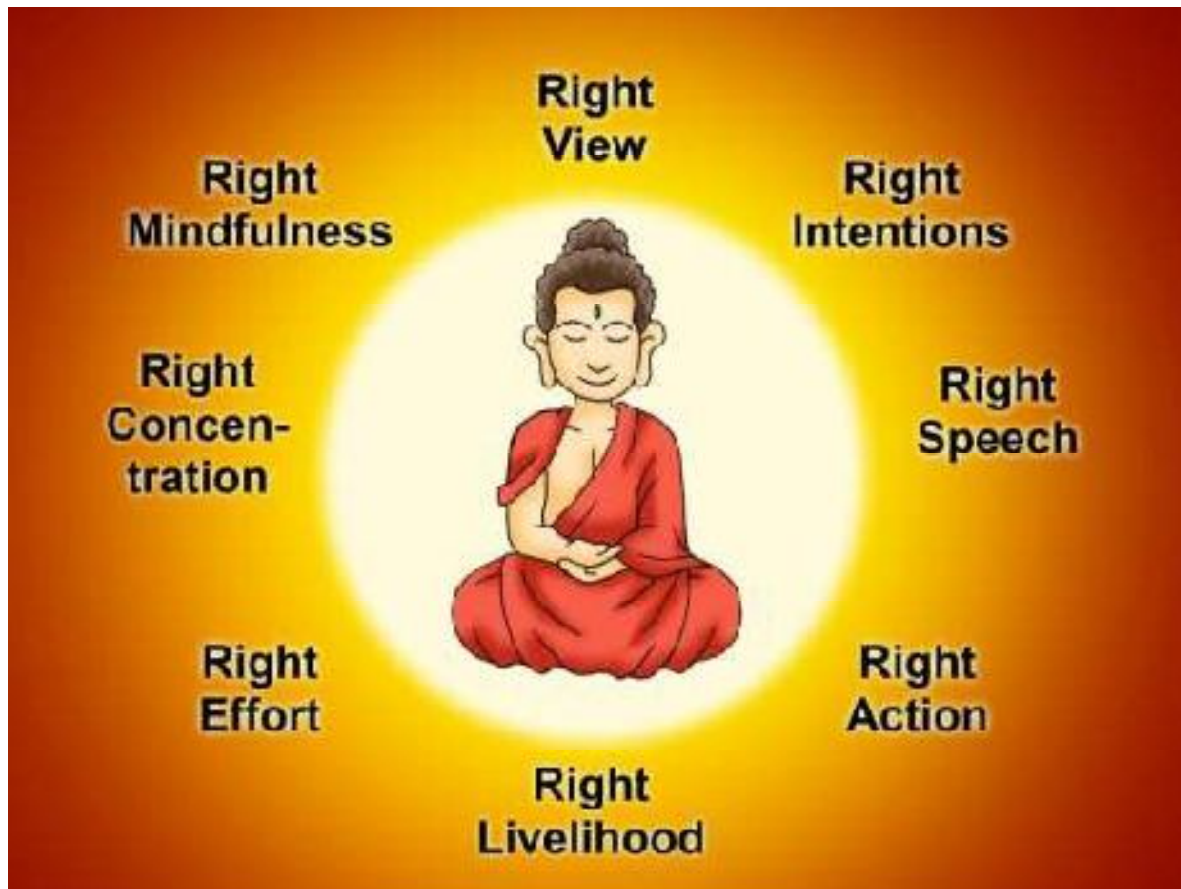
**Fifth**, we should engage in a right livelihood. Spiritual progress is difficult if one's occupation pulls in the opposite direction. One should not take work which weakens or destroys life but serve in those occupations that promote life. Sixth, right effort is needed to keep us growing in spiritual attainment. Buddha laid great stress on the importance of the will in determining our destiny. He had more confidence in the long steady pull than in quick spurts of activity. Seventh,, we need right mindfulness to sustain our growth.

## Noble Eight Fold Path or Middle Way

The Fourth Noble Truth tells us how this cure is accomplished--



by following the Noble Eight-fold Path or middle path, which are considered the path to ending the suffering of people. Noble Eightfold Path is one of the principal teachings of Buddha. The Noble Eightfold path is described below:



### **1. Right View:**

Knowledge about the cause of suffering, knowledge to end the cause of suffering, knowledge to way of path to end the suffering. This is called right view.

### **2. Right Intention:**

Right intention can also be called as “right thought”. Understanding the right view, one should be able to differentiate between right intention and wrong intention. One should be resolved to be free from ill will is what right intention will teach you.



### **3. Right Speech:**

One should always keep themselves from lying and ill speech. One should make best use of their speech and abandon false speech and always speak truth.

### **4. Right Conduct:**

Never hurting others, criticizing others, well behaving, are the right conduct. One should never conduct any actions that may harm others.

### **5. Right Livelihood**

Do not earn your living by harming others. Do not seek happiness by making others unhappy.

One should never choose living where his way of living may directly or indirectly harm others.

### **6. Right Effort**

Right effort can also be called "right endeavor". One should always try to take any action on the goodwill of people.

### **7. Right Mindfulness**

People must constantly keep their mind to phenomena that may affect the body and mind. This means one must be aware of their thoughts, words, and action.

## **8. Right Concentration**

Also known as “right meditation”, Right concentration teach people to concentrate and focus one thing or object at a time. Thus leading quiet and peaceful mind.

Following these 8 Noble Eightfold Path, one can cultivate their wisdom and thus leading to the path to attain “nirvana”.

## **The Triple Jewel**

Lord Buddha establishes the three refuges for people to follow his teachings. A refuge is the place where people can rely on and go to for the purpose of safety. The three refuges that Lord Buddha establishes are as follows:

1. The Buddha is the guide
2. The Dhamma is the path
3. The Sangha is the teachers and companions along the way.



## Concepts...

### **Triple Jewel or Three Refuges:**

Buddha(guide), Dharma (path), Sangha (teachers)

### **Six Perfections:**

giving, morality, patience,vigor, meditation and wisdom

### **Bodhisattva:**

person who has attained nirvana but chooses to be reborn within samsara in order to help others on path of enlightenment

### **Nirvana:**

escape from cycle of rebirth (based on karma, 8-fold path, enlightenment) to attain perfect freedom and bliss

## Symbols

- Wheel of Life

- 



## Mandala

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## Lotus Flower

- Stupa
- Temples
- Swastika
- Buddhapada



# BUDDHIST TEXTS

## **Pali Canon (Tipitaka):**

**Vinaya Pitaka:** dealing with rules for monks and nuns

**Sutta Pitaka:** discourses, mostly ascribed to the Buddha, but some to disciples

**Abhidhamma Pitaka:** variously described as philosophy, psychology, metaphysics.

Pali Canon is the scripture collection of the Theravada Buddhist tradition.

In Pali language-  
*Pitaka* means basket  
*tipitaka* means three basket



# Buddhism at a glance

**Founded:** 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE

**Founder:** Siddhartha Gautama, otherwise known as the Buddha "Enlightened One"

**Place of Origin:** India

**Sacred Books:** oldest and most important scriptures are the Tripitaka, (The Three Baskets of Wisdom)

**Number of Adherents:**

- approximately 200 million close adherents, although some estimates surpass the 600 million mark. Precision is impossible...

**Distribution:**

- predominant faith in Burma, Ceylon , Thailand and Indo-China. It also has followers in China, Korea, Mongolia and Japan.

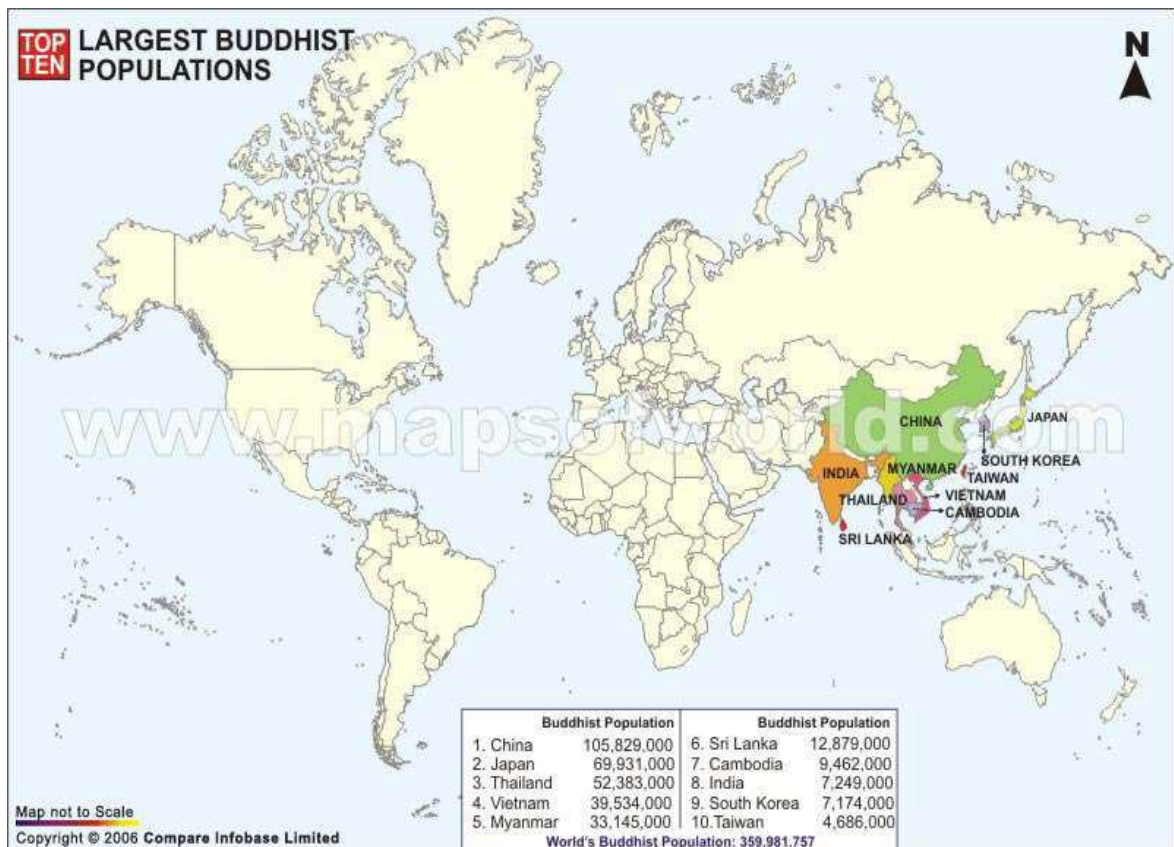
**Sects:**

- two principal schools are Mahayana and Theravadin (or Hinayana) Buddhism

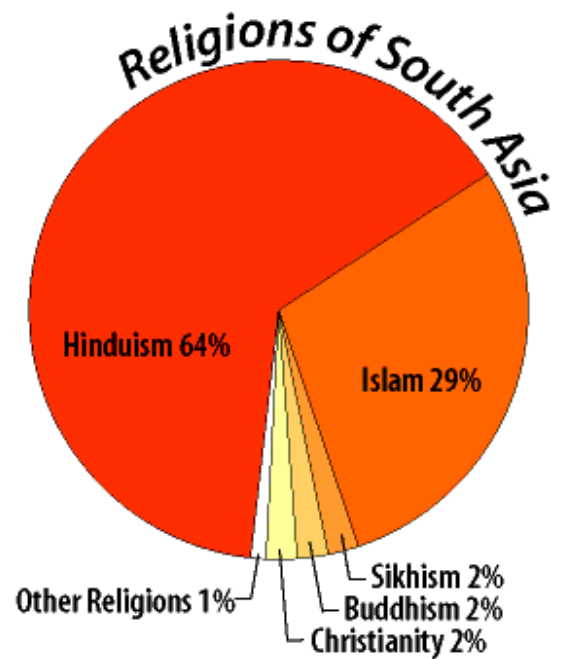


# Impact of Buddhism

- Buddhism elevated the level of religious life and thought in most Asia
- Forced Hinduism to remedy some of its abuses and revitalize its teachings
- Major effect upon philosophy, education, literature and art of south Asia, India , China and Japan
- However, many argue Buddhism has discouraged social progress (since it accepts life as full of suffering and does not produce a great concern or solutions regarding poverty, illiteracy, illness, pollution etc.)
- Spread of Communism (Communist takeover of China in 1949) led to nationalization of monasteries and all revenues)



## Important centres of Buddhism



Sr. No	Place	Event
1.	<b>Bodh Gaya, Bihar-</b>	<b>Where Buddha achieved enlightenment</b>
2	<b>Leh, Jammu and Kashmir-</b>	Monasteries and Mountains
3		
4	<b>Sarnath, Uttar Pradesh-</b>	Echoes of Buddha's first sermons
5	<b>Rumtek Monastery, Sikkim-</b>	<b>A colorful, living, breathing monastery</b>
6	<b>Mindrolling Monastery, Dehradun-</b>	<b>Buddhist college and a magnificent Stupa</b>
7	<b>NamdrolingNyingmapa Tibetan Monastery and Golden temple, Karnataka</b>	A glittering, colorful spirituality

8	<b>Sanchi, Madhya Pradesh –</b>	almost synonymous to the Great Stupa here commissioned by Emperor Ashoka, the oldest stone monument in India. The Stupa is built over relics of Buddha and has some of the most exquisite carvings on its entrances and gates. You will also find a number of other pillars, temples, sculptures and monasteries in the area, making it an important Buddhist place in India. A recent development here is the Sanchi University of Buddhist-Indic Studies, close to this world heritage site itself.
9	<b>Tawang Monastery, Arunachal Pradesh-</b>	<b>A tourist's favorite</b>
10	<b>Rajgir, Bihar-</b>	known as one of Buddha's favorite places <b>where he gave two of his most famous sermons. The Saptarni cave here housed the first Buddhist council while the <u>Gridhakuta hill</u> was where Buddha gave the Lotus Sutra and the Prajnaparamita, two of his important sutras. An equally enchanting sight here is the white Shanti Stupa which has four gold statues of Buddha.</b>
11	<b>Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh-</b>	<b>From a Vipassana meditation center, numerous Buddhist meditation centers and schools to Dalai Lama's official residence and a grand monastery full of colours and chants. The SikharaDhamma provides 10-day meditation courses every fortnight from April through November and is blessed with immense natural beauty to provide you the perfect backdrop to your calm, peaceful and spiritual experience</b>
12	<b>Vaishali, Bihar-</b>	Buddha visited the city quite often and the <b>second Buddhist council</b> was held here. Buddha also came here in the fifth year of his enlightenment in the rains. Today, the city has a number of relic stupas and shrines. You will also find here, many fine Pillars of Ashoka.
13	<b>Spiti, Himachal Pradesh- Of beautiful monasteries and meditation caves</b>	other than landscapes which are unique and breathtaking, has a number of monasteries that foster immense color, culture, artworks, scriptures and statues for a fascinating experience ornamented with these spiritual and cultural treasure. The <b>Tabo Monastery</b> has numerous meditation caves, where one can spend some time celebrating silence and have an experience like no other.

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- 14 **Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh- Where Buddha attained Mahaparinirvana** **Kushinagar is one of the 4 sacred places for Buddhists** in India as this is where at the age of 81, Buddha passed away. This is also the site of his last lesson where he said "All things must pass. Decay is inherent in all things". The area houses the RambharStupa which is said to have been built at the same place as **where Buddha was cremated**. There is also a Mahaparinirvana temple which holds a magnificent statue of Buddha in reclining position. Other than these, there are a number of temples, stupas, shrines and a museum here.
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## Major Bodh centres in India

### Bodh Gaya, Bihar- Where Buddha achieved enlightenment





## **Sarnath, Uttar Pradesh- Echoes of Buddha's first sermons**

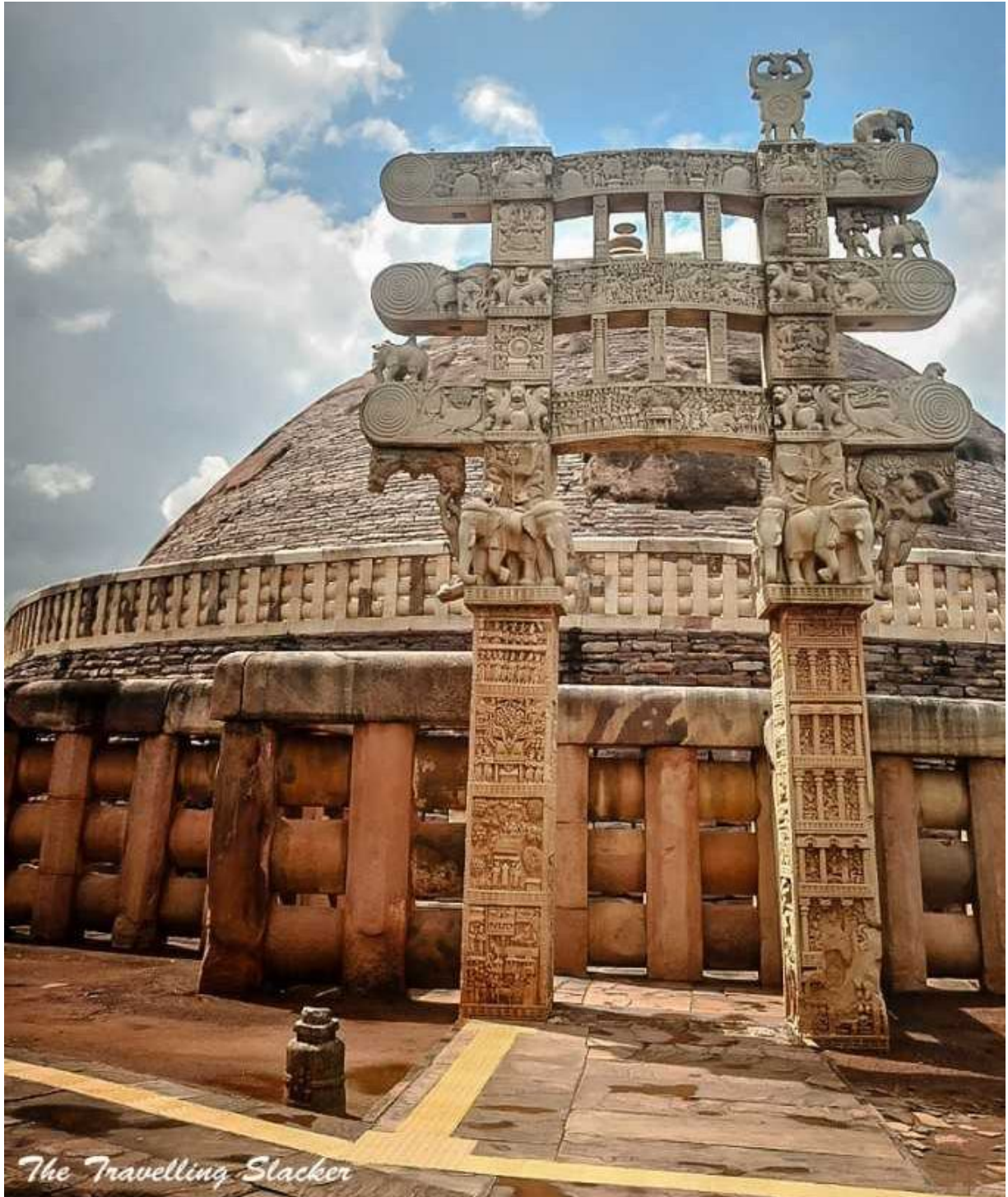


## Mindrolling Monastery, Dehradun-





## Sanchi, Madhya Pradesh



*The Travelling Slacker*



## Tawang Monastery, Arunachal Pradesh



## Rajgir, Bihar





## Vaishali, Bihar



## Kushinagar,



## **Conclusion:**

The teachings of the Buddha are exceedingly vast and very profound. In fact, over the past weeks, we have only managed to survey a few of the fundamental teachings of the Buddha, and these too only superficially. Yet, you may feel that what we have covered is a lot, and you may feel that it is impossible to practise all that we have discussed. In fact, it is said that it is difficult even for a monk living in isolation to practise all of the fundamental teachings of the Buddha. No small wonder that it is difficult for laymen and women like ourselves who have many secular responsibilities. Nonetheless, if one succeeds in sincerely cultivating and practising even a few of the many teachings of the Buddha, then one will have succeeded in making this life more meaningful. One will be certain that one will again in the future encounter circumstances favourable to the practice of the Dharma and to the eventual realization of liberation.

Everyone can achieve the highest goal in Buddhism, be he a layman or a monk. All we need to do is to make an honest effort to follow the Noble Eightfold Path. It is said that those who have realized the truth, like the Buddha Shakyamuni and His prominent disciples did not do so accidentally. They did not fall from the sky like rain, nor did they spring up from the earth like grain. The Buddha and His disciples were once ordinary sentient beings like you and me. They were once afflicted by the impurities of the mind, desire, ill-will and ignorance. It is

through contacting the Dharma, through purifying their words and deeds, through developing their minds and through acquiring wisdom that they became free, exalted beings able to teach and help others to realize the truth. There is therefore no doubt that if we apply ourselves to the teachings of the Buddha, we too can attain the ultimate goal of Buddhism. We too can become like the Buddha or like His prominent disciples.

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