

BUDDHISM

- Founded by **Gautama Buddha** in the **6th century BCE**

❖ **LIFE OF GAUTAMA BUDDHA & EARLY BUDDHIST TEACHINGS**

- **Gautama Buddha's birth** in **Lumbini**, Nepal (563 BCE)
- His renunciation of worldly life and search for **enlightenment**
- **Enlightenment** under the **Bodhi tree in Bodh Gaya**
- **Sermon** of the **First Turning** of **the Wheel of Dharma** in **Sarnath**

- **Four Noble Truths:** Existence of suffering, its cause, cessation, and the Eightfold Path
- **Middle Way:** Avoidance of extremes and moderation in all aspects of life
- Emphasis on mindfulness, compassion, and non-attachment

❖ THREE JEWELS & CORE TEACHINGS

- **Three Jewels (Triple Gem):** Buddha, Dharma, Sangha
- Buddha as the enlightened teacher and guide
- Dharma as the teachings and path to liberation
- Sangha as the monastic community and spiritual support system
- **Core teachings:** Four Noble Truths, Eightfold Path, and Three Marks of Existence

❖ BUDDHIST SCHISMS & COUNCILS

1. **First Buddhist Council (483 BCE):** Compilation of Buddha's teachings,
Rules of Monastic order: Sutta Pitaka & Vinay Pitaka (Tripitaka), Rajgir
2. **Second Buddhist Council (383 BCE):** Debate over monastic discipline, Vaishali
3. **Third Buddhist Council (250 BCE):** Compilation of Abhidhamma (philosophical texts), Patliputra
4. **Fourth Buddhist Council (78 AD):** Kundalvan, Kashmir
 - Mahasanghika and Sthaviravada schism: Differences in monastic practices and doctrines
 - Emergence of different Buddhist schools: Theravada, Mahayana, Vajrayana, Zen

❖ EIGHTFOLD PATH OF BUDDHA

- **Right View:** Understanding the nature of reality and the Four Noble Truths
- **Right Intention:** Cultivating wholesome and compassionate intentions
- **Right Speech:** Speaking truthfully, kindly, and avoiding harmful speech
- **Right Action:** Engaging in ethical conduct and avoiding harm to oneself and others
- **Right Livelihood:** Pursuing a livelihood that is honest and non-harming
- **Right Effort:** Cultivating wholesome qualities and abandoning unwholesome ones
- **Right Mindfulness:** Being present, aware, and attentive to the present moment
- **Right Concentration:** Cultivating focused and tranquil states of mind through meditation

❖ BUDDHIST LITERATURE

- **Tripitaka (Pali Canon):** Collection of Buddha's discourses (Sutta), Vinaya (monastic rules), and Abhidhamma (philosophical analysis)
- **Mahayana Sutras:** Vast collection of scriptures emphasising compassion and bodhisattva ideal
- **Tibetan Buddhist Texts:** Kangyur (translated words of the Buddha) and Tengyur (commentaries by Indian and Tibetan scholars)
- **Zen Teachings:** Koans, dialogues, and writings of Zen masters

- **Jataka Tales:** Stories of Buddha's previous lives and moral lessons
- Commentaries and Treatises by Buddhist scholars (e.g., Nagarjuna, Vasubandhu, Dogen)

❖ BUDDHIST PRACTICES & RITUALS

- **Meditation (Dhyana):** Mindfulness, concentration, and insight practices
- Observance of moral precepts (e.g., non-violence, honesty, compassion)

❖ BUDDHIST MONASTIC COMMUNITY

- **Monastic Sangha:** Community of monks (bhikkhus) and nuns (bhikkhunis)
- Importance of monastic discipline (Vinaya)
- Roles of monastics in preserving and spreading Buddhist teachings
- Monastic education and training in Buddhist scriptures and practices

❖ SPREAD OF BUDDHISM & BUDDHIST ART

- **Early spread** to Northern India, Sri Lanka, Southeast Asia, and Central Asia
- **Ashoka's patronage and propagation of Buddhism in ancient India**
- Silk Road trade route facilitating the spread to China, Korea, and Japan

- **Buddhist art:** Sculptures, paintings, and architectural monuments (stupas, viharas)
- **Symbolism in Buddhist art** (e.g., lotus, Buddha statues, wheel of Dharma)

ASPECT/EVENT	SYMBOL
Buddha's Footprints	The footprint of the Buddha, symbolizing his physical presence and spiritual guidance.
Dhamma Wheel	A wheel with eight spokes, representing the Noble Eightfold Path and the Buddha's teachings (Dhamma).
Bodhi Tree	A tree under which the Buddha attained enlightenment. It symbolises spiritual awakening and enlightenment.

Stupa	<p>A dome-shaped structure containing relics or remains of the Buddha or other revered figures.</p> <p>Symbolises the Buddha's final passing into Nirvana.</p>
Lotus Flower	<p>The lotus represents purity, enlightenment, and the potential to rise above suffering, as it grows from muddy waters but remains pristine.</p>
Dharmachakra	<p>The wheel of Dhamma, symbolising the Buddha's first sermon and the turning of the wheel of truth. Represents the path to liberation.</p>
Buddha's Three Gestures	<p>The hand gestures of the Buddha (mudras) symbolize various moments in his life, such as teaching, meditation, and reassurance.</p>

Offering Bowl	Represents offerings made by devotees to the Buddha and the Sangha, signifying generosity and devotion.
Alms Bowl	The begging bowl used by Buddhist monks during alms rounds. Signifies renunciation and reliance on the community for sustenance.
Dhammapada (Buddhist Text)	The Dhammapada is a revered text containing the teachings and sayings of the Buddha, used as a guiding principle for practitioners.

Aspect	Mahayana Buddhism	Hinayana Buddhism (Theravada)
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Definition	Mahayana means "Great Vehicle"	Hinayana means "Lesser Vehicle" or "Small Vehicle"
Goal	Emphasis on attaining Buddhahood for all beings	Focus on personal enlightenment (Arhatship)
Buddhas	Recognizes multiple Buddhas and Bodhisattvas	Focus on Gautama Buddha as the primary Buddha
Bodhisattvas	Bodhisattvas are highly revered and play an active role in helping others achieve enlightenment	Less emphasis on Bodhisattvas and their role

Compassion	Emphasis on universal compassion and altruism	Compassion is valued, but less emphasis on universal compassion
Scriptures	Expanded canon with additional Mahayana Sutras	Follows the Pali Canon (Tipitaka)
Enlightenment Path	Emphasis on the Bodhisattva path, striving to benefit all sentient beings	Focus on individual self-liberation and personal development
Language of Scriptures	Some Mahayana scriptures are in Sanskrit	Theravada scriptures are in Pali
Monastic Rules	Slightly more flexible monastic rules	Strict adherence to monastic rules

Followers	Predominant in East Asian countries (e.g., China, Japan, Korea)	Predominant in Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos
View of Lay Practitioners	Lay practitioners can actively participate in the Bodhisattva path	Lay practitioners are encouraged to support the monastic Sangha