



FACULTY OF JURIDICAL SCIENCES

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Lecture-11



Buddhism

Founder of Buddhism

Siddhartha Gautama, the founder of Buddhism who later became known as “the Buddha,” lived during the 5th century B.C.

Gautama was born into a wealthy family as a prince in present-day Nepal. Although he had an easy life, Gautama was moved by suffering in the world.

He decided to give up his lavish lifestyle and endure poverty. When this didn't fulfill him, he promoted the idea of the “Middle Way,” which means existing between two extremes. Thus, he sought a life without social indulgences but also without deprivation.

After six years of searching, Buddhists believe Gautama found enlightenment while meditating under a Bodhi tree. He spent the rest of his life teaching others about how to achieve this spiritual state.

Buddhism History

When Gautama passed away around 483 B.C., his followers began to organize a religious movement. Buddha's teachings became the foundation for what would develop into Buddhism.

In the 3rd century B.C., Ashoka the Great, the Mauryan Indian emperor, made Buddhism the state religion of India. Buddhist monasteries were built, and missionary work was encouraged.

Over the next few centuries, Buddhism began to spread beyond India. The thoughts and philosophies of Buddhists became diverse, with some followers interpreting ideas differently than others.

In the sixth century, the Huns invaded India and destroyed hundreds of Buddhist monasteries, but the intruders were eventually driven out of the country.

Islam began to spread quickly in the region during the Middle Ages, forcing Buddhism into the background.

Types of Buddhism

Today, many forms of Buddhism exist around the world. The three main types that represent specific geographical areas include:

- **Theravada Buddhism:** Prevalent in Thailand, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Laos and Burma
- **Mahayana Buddhism:** Prevalent in China, Japan, Taiwan, Korea, Singapore and Vietnam
- **Tibetan Buddhism:** Prevalent in Tibet, Nepal, Mongolia, Bhutan, and parts of Russia and northern India

Each of these types reveres certain texts and has slightly different interpretations of Buddha's teachings. There are also several subsets of Buddhism, including Zen Buddhism and Nirvana Buddhism.

Some forms of Buddhism incorporate ideas of other religions and philosophies, such as Taoism and Bon.

Dharma

Buddha's teachings are known as "dharma." He taught that wisdom, kindness, patience, generosity and compassion were important virtues.

Specifically, all Buddhists live by five moral precepts, which prohibit:

- Killing living things
- Taking what is not given
- Sexual misconduct
- Lying
- Using drugs or alcohol

Buddha Quotes

Gautama traveled extensively, giving sermons on how to live and achieve enlightenment. Some popular quotes commonly attributed to Buddha include:

“Meditation brings wisdom; lack of meditation leaves ignorance.”

“If anything is worth doing, do it with all your heart.”

“A jug fills drop by drop.”

“Better than a thousand hollow words, is one word that brings peace.”

“Hatred does not cease through hatred at any time. Hatred ceases through love. This is an unalterable law.”

“If you knew what I know about the power of giving, you would not let a single meal pass without sharing it in some way.”

“The root of suffering is attachment.”

“People with opinions just go around bothering each other.”

Four Noble Truths

The Four Noble Truths, which Buddha taught, are:

- The truth of suffering (dukkha)
- The truth of the cause of suffering (samudaya)
- The truth of the end of suffering (nirhodha)
- The truth of the path that frees us from suffering (magga)

Collectively, these principles explain why humans hurt and how to overcome suffering.

Eightfold Path

The Buddha taught his followers that the end of suffering, as described in the fourth Noble Truths, could be achieved by following an Eightfold Path.

In no particular order, the Eightfold Path of Buddhism teaches the following ideals for ethical conduct, mental discipline and achieving wisdom:

- Right understanding (Samma ditthi)
- Right thought (Samma sankappa)
- Right speech (Samma vaca)
- Right action (Samma kammanta)
- Right livelihood (Samma ajiva)
- Right effort (Samma vayama)
- Right mindfulness (Samma sati)
- Right concentration (Samma samadhi)

Buddhist Holy Book

Buddhists revere many sacred texts and scriptures. Some of the most important are:

Tipitaka: These texts, known as the “three baskets,” are thought to be the earliest collection of Buddhist writings.

Sutras: There are more than 2,000 sutras, which are sacred teachings embraced mainly by Mahayana Buddhists.

The Book of the Dead: This Tibetan text describes the stages of death in detail.

[MCQ](#)

1. Gautama Buddha was born in 563 BC in which Kshatriya family?

- A. Shakya Kshatriya family
- B. Kuru Kshatriya family
- C. Yaduvansi Kshatriya family
- D. Chandravansi Kshatriya family

2. In which place Gautama Buddha delivered his first sermon?

- A. Kushinagar
- B. Sarnath (Banaras)
- C. Patliputra
- D. Rajgir

3. Which among the following is not 'Four Noble Truths of Buddha'?

- A. World is full of suffering
- B. Desire causes suffering
- C. Desire best way to get moksha
- D. Suffering will removed

4. Where was first Buddhist Council held?

- A. Kashmir
- B. Gaya
- C. Patliputra
- D. Rajagir

5. Who among the following presided the first Buddhist Council?

- A. Mahakasapa
- B. Moggaliputta Tissa
- C. Vasumitra
- D. Rishab Deva

