



Summer 2 - What do you need to know about Buddhism?



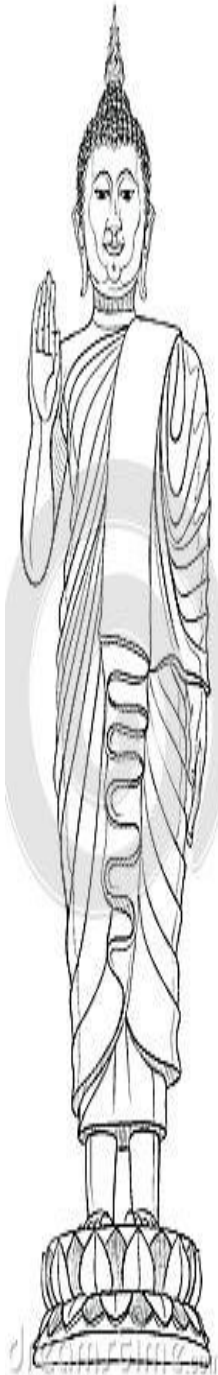
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Who was the Buddha?

The Buddha is the person who started the religion of Buddhism. He is very important to Buddhists. They follow his teachings and look up to him so that they can become enlightened (understand the truth about the world). The Buddha is **NOT a God**.

The story of the Buddha.

- Long ago a King and a queen had a baby boy who they called Siddhartha Gautama
- When he was born the King brought a holy man to see baby Siddhartha. He predicted the baby's future and said that one day he would grow up to be a great King or he would leave the palace forever to be a holy man
- The King really wanted his son to grow up and be a King like him so he tried to make sure that Siddhartha was always happy so he would never leave he spoiled his son and also hid away all the things that would make him sad like sickness, old age and death
- But when the boy grew up into a young man he became curious and he left the palace to see what the town was like. It was here that he saw four sights that shocked him these were:
 1. Sickness
 2. Old age
 3. Death
 4. A wandering holy man
- He decided he needed to go find out more about these things so that he could make the world a better place so he left the palace and his wife and baby and spent eight years wondering through the forests and talking to holy men
- He eventually met some ascetics and they told him he should starve himself so that his mind would get stronger, this didn't work and so he left them after a while
- He then meditated under the Bodhi tree and eventually reached enlightenment and learnt the truth
- He then revisited the ascetics and his family and told them to live 'the middle way' don't have too much but don't punish yourselves either. They started to call him "The Buddha" and followed his teachings they became known as "Buddhists" and so the religion of Buddhism was born.



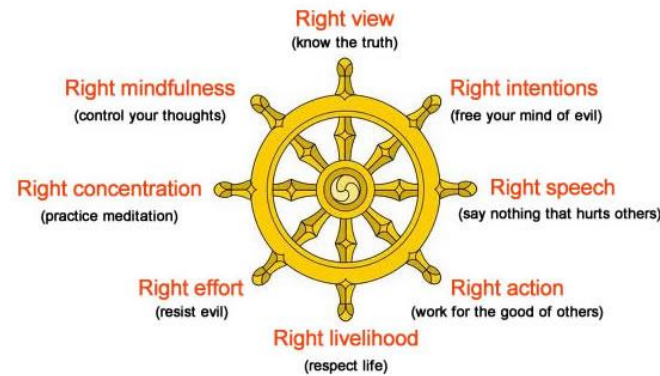
The Buddha taught his followers **the dharma** which means 'truth' about life. He taught them that there are four things we need to know as they happen to everyone no matter who they are.

These are called **the four noble truths** and they are:

1. Everybody suffers
2. All suffering is caused by wanting
3. If we want to stop suffering then we have to stop wanting!
4. To help us stop wanting we should follow **the eight fold path**.

But what is the eightfold path?

The eightfold path is guidance to help you live a better life you can see the eight guidelines on the wheel below:



The eightfold path will impact the way a Buddhist lives their lives. E.g. if they follow right speech they won't say lies or hurtful things.

What other guidance is there to tell Buddhists how to behave?

Buddhists also follow **the 5 moral precepts** these are:



1. Refrain from taking life
2. Refrain from stealing
3. Refrain from inappropriate sexual behaviour
4. Refrain from lying
5. Refrain from taking intoxicating substances

The word 'refrain' means to 'try not to' this is because Buddhists know that sometimes it might be necessary to break the rules!

What else do Buddhists believe?



Buddhist beliefs in life after death.

- Buddhists believe that when you die you are **reborn** and start a new life as someone new.
- They believe that if you are good and well behaved in life you get good **karma**
- But if you are badly behaved you get bad karma
- If you have lots of good karma stored up then good things will happen to you and also your next life will be a good one and good things will happen in that life too!
- But if you are badly behaved then bad things will happen to you and they may continue to happen in your next life too!
- If you have learnt the truth whilst you are alive (become enlightened) then you can **achieve nirvana** which is a feeling of peace where no pain can ever hurt you and then you don't have to be reborn again.

Buddhist practices



Meditation is important to Buddhists. This is when Buddhists will sit quietly and concentrating on their breathing and improving their minds and concentration.

Meditation is important because:

- It helps you control your thoughts better
- It clears your mind of negative thoughts and feelings
- The Buddha meditated so it must be important
- It help you to realise the truth about how the world really is (reach enlightenment)



Buddhists use prayer flags when they worship. These are coloured cloth with mantras (repeated phrases) written on them. They hang these in their monasteries and let the wind carry their prayers away.

Buddhists **chant mantras** when they worship. These are repeated phrases of ten about love of the people in the world or the importance of the Buddha.

Key words	
Dharma	The truth, the teachings of the Buddha
Enlightenment	Realising the truth about the world
Karma	Good or bad points that you achieve when you behave in a good or bad way
Mantra	A repeated word or phrase used in prayer and written on flags
Nirvana	A feeling of ultimate peace and happiness that Buddhists aim to achieve when they die

Key words continued	
The eightfold path	A set of eight guidelines on how to live a good life
The five moral precepts	Five rules about bad behaviour that you should avoid
The four noble truths	The things that Buddha said are true about life
The four sights	The four things that shocked Buddha when he first left the palace
The middle way	This is how Buddha said you should live your life. Not too much and not too little.



belief	people
believe	prayer
religion	religious
worship	