Gautama Buddha, born as Prince Siddhartha Gautama in Lumbini (modern-day Nepal) around the 6th century BCE, is the founder of Buddhism. His life journey is a profound story of spiritual discovery. Born into a royal family, Siddhartha lived a life of luxury, sheltered from the harsh realities of the world. His father, King Śuddhodana, ensured that he was surrounded by beauty and pleasure, hoping to keep him from the suffering of life. However, at the age of 29, Siddhartha ventured outside the palace and encountered the "Four Sights"—an old man, a sick person, a corpse, and a wandering ascetic. These encounters deeply troubled him, leading him to realize that suffering is an inevitable part of life. Driven by a desire to understand the nature of suffering and its cessation, he renounced his princely life and became an ascetic. Siddhartha spent years practicing severe austerities, but found that extreme self-denial was not the path to enlightenment. Abandoning asceticism, he chose the "Middle Way," a balanced approach between indulgence and self-denial. At the age of 35, while meditating under the Bodhi tree in Bodh Gaya, Siddhartha attained enlightenment and became the Buddha, or "The Awakened One." He realized the Four Noble Truths: the existence of suffering, its cause (desire and attachment), the possibility of its cessation, and the path leading to its cessation, known as the Eightfold Path. For the rest of his life, Buddha traveled across India, teaching the principles of Dharma, the truths he discovered, and the path to Nirvana—liberation from the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. His teachings spread widely, becoming the foundation of Buddhism, a spiritual tradition that continues to guide millions toward inner peace and enlightenment.