

CHAPTER 3

Jainism and Buddhism

SYLLABUS

Jainism and Buddhism

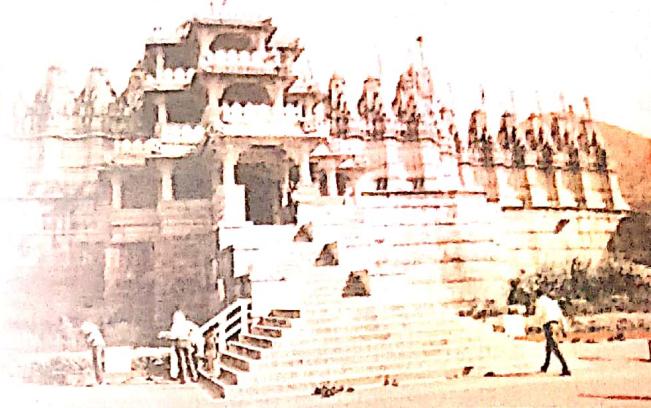
Sources: Angas, Tripitikas and Jatakas (brief mention).

Causes for their rise in the 6th century B.C.; Doctrines.

In the sixth century BC, the Aryan settlements expanded to the east, accompanied by rapid socio-economic and political changes. Society, at some places had traits of tribal political organisation while at some other places, kingdoms were on the rise. Materialism and spiritualism both existed side by side.

The people in the Later Vedic Age began to use implements and tools made of iron. The iron tools enabled them to clear forests, bring more land under cultivation and lead a settled life. As a result there was surplus production of food grains. This surplus produce could be utilised by the kings to meet their military and administrative needs. It could also be used by the people in the towns who specialised in various arts and crafts. All these advantages enabled the people to lead a settled life and to expand further in neighbouring areas.

This expansion resulted in wars between different tribes. In these wars, the larger and more powerful tribes defeated the smaller ones and expanded their territory and created large kingdoms. These kingdoms were called *janapadas*. A number of *janapadas* joined together to form bigger and more powerful independent kingdoms called *mahajanapadas*.



The sixth century BC is regarded as an important epoch in world history which saw the emergence of thinkers like Zarathustra or Zoroaster in Persia, Confucius in China and Mahavira and Gautama Buddha, among many others, in India. In India, it was the period when orthodox religious beliefs and practices were challenged and even rejected by the new sects. Of these sects, Jainism and Buddhism emerged as the most potent religious reform movements.

SOURCES

The three important sources which provide information about Jainism and Buddhism are the following:

(i) **Angas:** It is generally accepted that whatever Lord Mahavira taught after gaining omniscience, was compiled by his disciples in 12 parts called *Angas*, Sanskrit word for parts. These *Angas* are collectively known as *Dwadashangi*. The foremost of these *Angas* is *Aacharang Sutra*. Another well known *Anga* is the *Vyakyha Pragnapti* which is more popularly known as *Bhagavati Sutra*. While the former deals with the code of conduct which a Jain monk is required to follow, the later expounds the Jain doctrines in a comprehensive manner. Based on these *Angas*, the seers also compiled 12 auxiliary works that came to be known as *Upangas*.

It is said that these *Angas* and *Upangas* were not written for a long time. They were orally passed on by the religious leaders to their pupils.

According to famous historian, R.C. Majumdar, "Towards the close of the fourth century BC, a famine in South Bihar led to the exodus of an important section of Jainas, headed by Bhadrabahu, to South India. Those

that remained behind in Pataliputra called for a council, in order to revive the knowledge of the Angas. The result was the compilation of the twelve Angas. At another council held at Valabhi in Gujarat in the fifth or sixth century AD, a final collection of the scriptures was made for the first time in Ardhmagadhi Prakrit language".

The Angas are regarded as the most important part of the Jain doctrines. They discuss religious rites, stages of a householder's life, the vows of chastity, rules of conduct and other features of Jain philosophy.

(ii) Tripitikas: Tripitikas are the most important literary works of the Buddhists. The word 'Tripitika' means 'Three Baskets' of Buddhist canon. The earliest writings of these texts were taken on long, narrow leaves, sewn together on one side and bound in bunches, then stored in baskets; therefore, they were called *The Three Baskets*. These works, written in Pali language include the following:

- *The Vinaya Pitaka* deals with the rules and regulations which Buddha promulgated for the monks (bhikkhus) and the nuns (bhikkhunis). It also gives an account of the life and teachings of Buddha as well as some important aspects of ancient Indian history, customs and arts of the period.
- *The Sutta Pitaka* comprises the discourses of Buddha on various occasions. It also has discourses by some of the disciples of Buddha such as Sariputta, Ananda and others. The Dhammapada (way of truth) is an important component of this Pitaka, which comprises Buddha's teachings.
- *The Abhidhamma Pitaka* deals with Buddhist philosophy. It describes things like the working of the human mind and the state of matter.

Besides being the most reliable source of information about Buddhist religion and philosophy, the Tripitikas provide a glimpse of the social, economic and political life in the age of Buddha.

(iii) Jatakas: Jatakas refer to the tales which describe the previous births of Buddha, in both human and animal form.

Each tale begins by noting the occasion that prompted its telling and ends with the

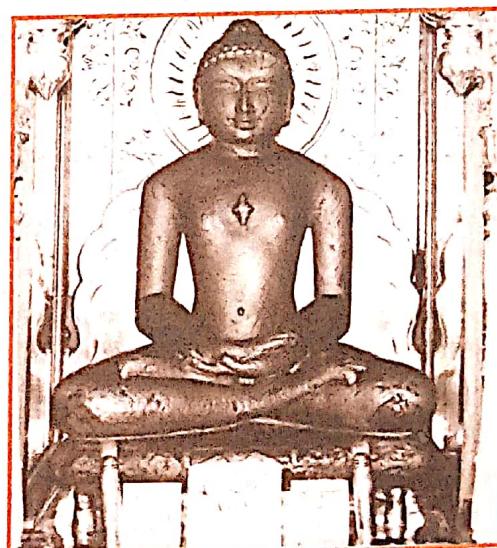
Buddha identifying the lives of the people in the introductory story with such people from the past. The future Buddha may appear in them as a king, an outcast, a god, an elephant — but, in whatever form, he exhibits some virtue that the tale thereby highlights.

Many *Jataka* tales have parallels in the *Mahabharata* and elsewhere in non-Buddhist literature. The *Jataka* stories have also been illustrated frequently in sculpture and paintings throughout the Buddhist world. According to A. K. Warder, the *Jatakas* are the precursors to the various legendary biographies of the Buddha, which were composed at later dates. Although many *Jatakas* were written from an early period, which describe previous lives of the Buddha, very little biographical material about Gautama's own life has been recorded. However, the *Jatakas* throw significant light on the political, economic and social conditions of people from the fifth to the second century BC. They also reflect Buddhist morals, ethics and principles.

CAUSES FOR THE RISE OF JAINISM AND BUDDHISM

The following factors favoured the rise and growth of Jainism and Buddhism:

(i) Reaction against Ritualism: Religious ceremonies by then had become very expensive, beyond the means of ordinary people. Some priests hardly realised the sufferings of the common man. This was an important cause that gave rise to faiths that were simple and inexpensive.



Statue of Mahavira

(ii) Corruption in Religion: Corruption crept into religious practices. In order to increase their own wealth, priests encouraged ordinary people to perform yajnas and conduct household rites beyond their means. *Kshatriya* rulers protested against the dominance of such practices. The common man could not reconcile to this attitude of the priests. Both Jainism and Buddhism were founded by two *Kshatriya* princes.

(iii) Rigid Caste System: The division of society into *Brahmans*, *Kshatriyas*, *Vaishyas* and *Shudras* had become rigid. It did not allow any social mobility. A person of one caste could not become a member of the other caste. There were restrictions on the basis of caste on food, drinks and marriage. Interchange of caste was impossible.

(iv) Difficult Language: Sanskrit was considered a sacred language. Most of the Vedic literature was composed in Sanskrit. The priestly class gave discourses and chanted mantras in this language, which the common people found difficult to understand. Therefore, many people began to look for an alternative religion that they could understand better.

(v) Political situation: In the sixth century BC, Magadha was ruled by Bimbisara and later by Ajatashatru. Both these rulers were liberal and tolerant. They too, were free from Brahmanic influence and condemned certain social evils in their kingdoms. When the opportunity came, they patronised both Jainism and Buddhism.

(vi) Agricultural Economy: Killing of animals to perform sacrifices was against the interests of farmers in the Gangetic valley. The use of iron had made the animal-drawn plough popular. Such farmers needed a religion that would give protection to animals. Both Jainism and Buddhism preached non-violence and were against animal sacrifices.

JAINISM

The doctrines of the Jains were preached by saints or *acharyas* called *tirthankaras*, literally meaning, those who guide men and women across the river of existence. Twenty-three *tirthankaras* preceded Mahavira. The first *tirthankara* was *Rishabhadev* and the twenty-third was *Parshvanath*.

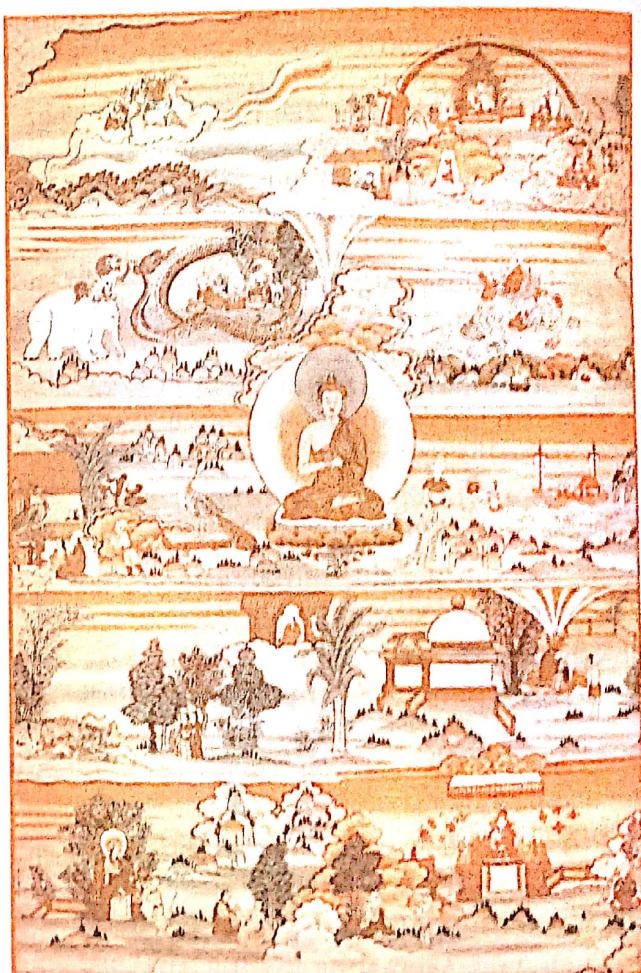
Vardhamana Mahavira

Mahavira was the twenty-fourth and the last of the *tirthankaras*. He made Jainism popular and

systematic. That is why Mahavira is considered as the founder of Jainism.

Mahavira was born in Kundagrama near Vaishali in Bihar in the second half of 6th century BC.

His father was the chief of a *Kshatriya* clan and his mother Trishala belonged to the royal family of Licchavis. Mahavira received his early education in all specialised branches. He is said to have been very brave and to have saved his colleagues from dangers. For these deeds of bravery, he was called *Mahavira*. At the time of his birth, his father's kingdom was prosperous; so the boy was called *Vardhamana* (Prosperity). He got absorbed in spiritual pursuits from early childhood. He was married to Yashoda. This was done in order to divert his attention from asceticism. At the age of thirty, after the death of his parents, Mahavira renounced the world and roamed about as an ascetic practising severe penance for 12 years. He silently endured all



Bhutanese painting showing Jataka Tales

the hardships. At last he obtained the supreme knowledge. He subdued his desires and became *Jina* or the conqueror. His followers came to be called *Jinas* or Jains—i.e., those who have conquered their desires.

Preachings of Mahavira: After becoming the *Jina*, Mahavira spent his life in preaching. He gave his first sermon at *Mount Vipul* situated in *Rajgrhi*, the capital of *Magadha*. He was now a *Kevalin* (all-knowing) or Lord Mahavira. He had a large number of followers. He preached at various centres like *Avanti*, *Kosala*, *Anga*, *Mithila*, *Champa*, *Videha* and *Vaishali*. Lord Mahavira attained salvation at the age of 72 at *Pavapuri* in Bihar. At the time of his death, he had about 14,000 followers.

MAIN TEACHINGS OF JAINISM

Jainism did not accept the authority of the *Vedas*. Jainism preaches five vows. It is said that only the fifth vow was added by Mahavira.

1. The Five Vows: A Jain householder has to take the following five vows:

- (i) *Ahimsa*: non-violence.
- (ii) *Achaurya or Asteya*: not stealing.
- (iii) *Satya*: not telling a lie.
- (iv) *Aparigraha*: not possessing property.
- (v) *Brahmacharya*: practising chastity.

These doctrines came to be regarded as *five vows*, which every Jain is supposed to take.

The most important precept in Jainism is that the entire world is animated, i.e., even stones, rocks and water have life. Therefore, non-injury to living beings, especially to humans, animals, plants and insects, is important in Jain philosophy. According to Mahavira violence is of three kinds—(a) Physical violence like killing, causing injury or pain, (b) Violence in words or harsh language and (c) Mental violence like ill-will towards others. Jains believed in the sanctity of life or the right of every living being to live.

2. Nine Truths: Besides the five vows and other general doctrines of Jainism, Jains are expected to have the knowledge of the nine truths.

According to Jain philosophy, the knowledge of these Nine Truths is essential and only renunciation is the shortest way to salvation.

These Nine Truths have a central place in the philosophy of Jainism. The Nine Truths are:

Jiva (living things), *Ajiva* (non-living things), *Punya* (results of good deeds), *Pap* (sin), *Ashraav* (good deeds), *Sanvar* (hindrances in the way of karma), *Bandha* (bondage), *Nirjara* (destruction of karmas) and *Moksha* (salvation).

DOCTRINES OF JAINISM

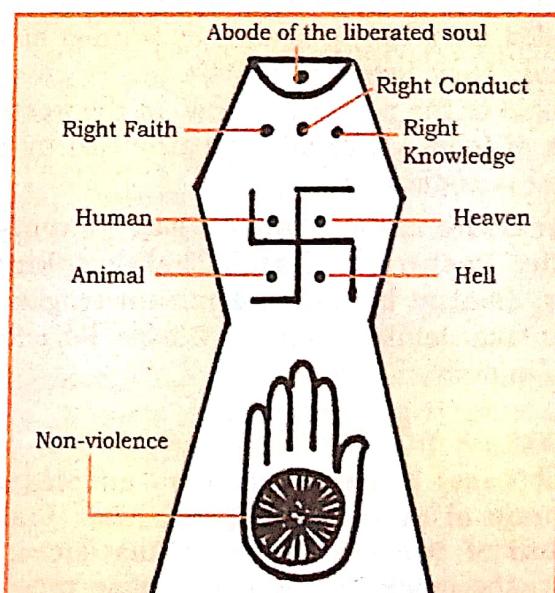
(i) Tri-ratnas: Mahavira preached that the ultimate goal of man is to attain freedom from worldly bonds or to attain 'moksha'. It can be obtained by following *tri-ratnas* or three jewels:

- (a) right faith,
- (b) right knowledge, and
- (c) right conduct.

These three jewels inspire a true Jain to have faith in the 24 *Tirthankaras* (literally, those who guide men and women across the river of existence), to acquire knowledge from their sermons and to lead a good life.

(ii) Karma: The Jains believe in the *Karma* theory of Hinduism and that one should be responsible for one's own *Karma* or actions. Good deeds alone liberate a man from the cycle of life and death.

(iii) Equality: Mahavira laid stress on equality between men and men as well as between men and women. He preached universal brotherhood. He considered all men equal irrespective of their caste or creed. Mahavira believed that the virtuous deeds could achieve ultimate salvation or *nirvana*. All living beings, from the tiny insect to the highest form of life, should be shown compassion.



Symbol of Jainism

THINK ABOUT IT

Buddhism; making these faiths relevant in today's world where terrorism is affecting everyone in all walks of life. How have they managed to survive through the centuries to be relevant even to this day?

(iv) Eternal soul: Mahavira believed in the immortality of the soul (*atma*). He said that the body dies but not the soul.

(v) Salvation: Like the Hindus, Jains believe in *Moksha* (Salvation) or freedom from the cycle of births and rebirths. This can be achieved only by leading an austere life based on non-violence and self-denial. To attain salvation it is necessary to practise the *tri-ratna* of right faith, right knowledge, and right action.

(vi) Belief in Penance: Jains believed in penance. To die of starvation, called *santhara* or *sallekhana* was considered a virtue. Jainism lays so much stress on severe penance that very few people could lead such an austere life. This explains why Jainism had few followers.

SPREAD OF JAINISM

Jainism had royal patronage. Therefore, it spread easily around Kosala, Magadha, Mithila, Champa and other parts of the country. Lord Mahavira founded monasteries headed by learned *munis* (sages). They lived an austere life to give an example to the people to follow. In the western parts of India, Jainism was patronised by the business community.

In South India, Jainism was patronised by the Rashtrakuta and Chalukya kings. Later, Jainism became a dominant religion in Karnataka. Jainism spread to Odisha, Rajasthan and Gujarat.

CAUSES OF THE SPREAD OF JAINISM

(i) Local Dialect: Mahavira adopted the language of the common people, i.e., Prakrit instead of Sanskrit to preach his doctrines. Later, the monks followed the same practice. People found it easier to follow the preachings of Jainism in the local language.

(ii) Royal Patronage: Jainism received royal patronage. Chandragupta Maurya is said to have been converted to Jainism in the later years of his rule. In the 5th century AD Chalukyas and Rashtrakutas also patronised Jainism. Kharavela, the ruler of Kalinga (Odisha), helped in the spread of Jainism in eastern India.

(iii) Saints: There were many devout Jain saints like Kalkacharya who lived in Ujjain and made it a centre of Jainism. Another Jain Saint Bhadrabahu took Jainism to Karnataka.

(iv) Appeal to People: People found the religion attractive as it was based on austerity, simplicity and spirituality. There were no animal sacrifices nor was there any class distinction.

DIVISION INTO TWO SECTS

During the time when Bhadrabahu took Jainism to Karnataka, there arose differences between him and Sthulabhadra, who was based in Magadha. In the first Jain council held around 300 BC, these differences came to surface. As a result, Jains were divided into two groups.

(a) *Shvetambaras* or the white clads were led by Sthulabhadra. They remained in Magadha. They wore white clothes and covered their faces with a small white cloth to avoid killing the tiniest of insects or germs that might enter the nose while breathing. They fasted but did not believe in extreme penance and austerity.



Tirthankaras

killing life forms by not wearing clothes because while washing clothes, many germs would get killed. They were orthodox followers of Mahavira. They kept long fasts and led an austere life.

IMPACT OF JAINISM

Jainism believes in the spirit of accommodation and equality. Its approach was pragmatic. It, therefore, had a profound impact on the political and social life of the people.

(a) Political Impact: In early stages, its success was more remarkable than that of Buddhism. However, it was mainly the Kshatriyas who took to this new faith. As a result they lost their war-like instincts. It is one of the reasons why Jains did not try to build any political empire of their own.

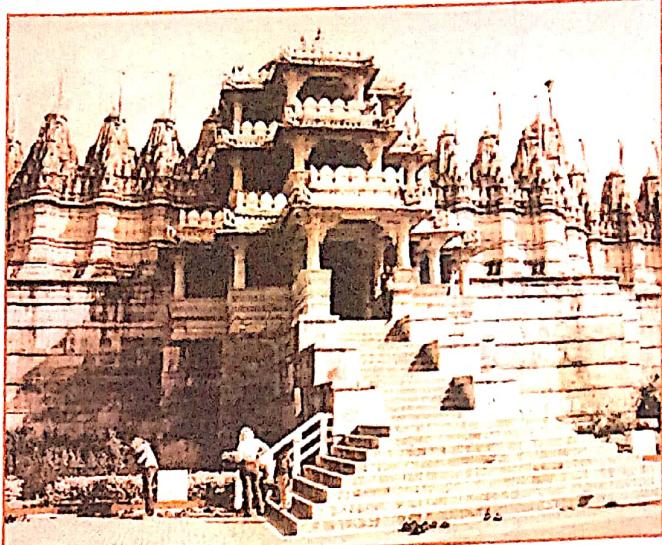
(b) Social and Religious Impact: Jainism discarded the system of casteism, shunned rituals and encouraged social service.

(c) Language and Literature: Jain scholars have made an important contribution in literary field. The Jain texts were written in Prakrit, but at some places these texts were also written in the local languages. They were finally compiled in the sixth century AD at Valabhi in Gujarat.

The *Angas*, the twelve books containing the teachings of Mahavira, are a great source of knowledge. The *Mahapurana* composed by Jinasena, *Kalpasutra* compiled by Bhadrabahu and *Ratna Malika* by the Rashtrakuta ruler, Amoghavarsha are outstanding literary works. Jain literature is in Ardhamagadhi and Prakrit dialects. It highlights the values of *ahimsa*. From the writings of the Jains, the history of India, especially from the 6th to 4th century BC, can be reconstructed.

(d) Art and Architecture: Jains constructed temples and monasteries. Jain relics are found in Khandagiri and Udaygiri caves in Odisha. Jains constructed hundreds of *Dharamshalas*, opened several orphanages and supported many charitable institutions.

The gigantic structures of the *Bahubali* (Gomateswara) at Shravanabelagola and at Karkala in Karnataka are good examples of Jain art and architecture. The *Dilwara* temples at Mt. Abu in Rajasthan and at Ranakpur near Jodhpur and the Jain Tower at Chittor are famous for Jain architecture. The most famous Jain holy



Dilwara Temple, Mount Abu

place is Palitana in Gujarat which has more than 800 temples.

DECLINE OF JAINISM

The following factors were responsible for the decline of Jainism:

(i) Jainism preached rigid austerity. It rose at a time when Buddhism also existed. The theory of *ahimsa* was extended even to wearing of clothes. These factors prevented it from getting popular support.

(ii) The religion did not spread to foreign countries. It did not have missionary effort.

(iii) Jainism did not get royal patronage from contemporary rulers. In contrast, Buddhism received a large-scale support from Ashoka, Harsha and Kanishka.

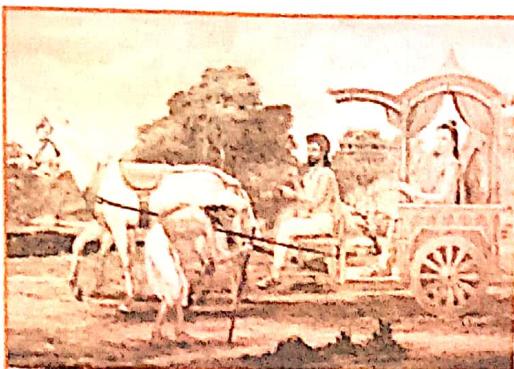
(iv) Though Jainism advocated equality of men, it did not do away totally with the high and low positions in society.

(v) During the Gupta period and in later years, Hinduism once again became popular. Therefore, Jainism remained restricted to a few pockets in the country.

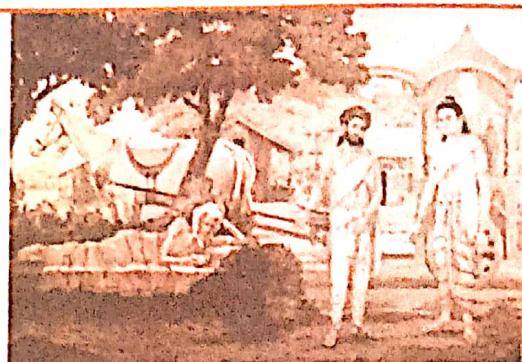
BUDDHISM

Buddhism catered to religious striving of the time. It was a midway between Hinduism and Jainism. Buddhism presented the ascetic traditions to Indian society. It had more followers abroad than in India. Buddhism is one of the imprints that India has left on other civilisations.

The background and causes for the rise of Jainism and Buddhism have already been presented earlier in this Chapter.



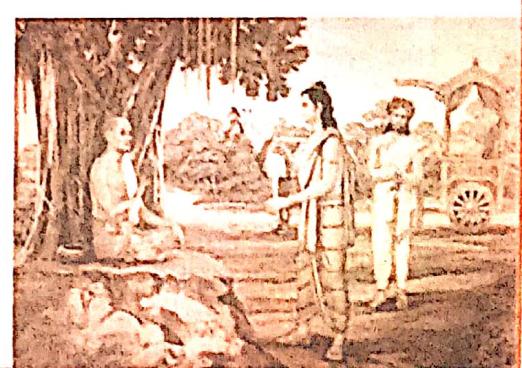
An Old Man



A Sick Man



A Dead Man



An Ascetic

The Four Great Sights

GAUTAMA BUDDHA

Gautama Buddha was the founder of Buddhism. He belonged to the *Kshatriya* clan of Saka. According to one legend he was born in 563 BC at Lumbini near Kapilavastu, in Nepal. His childhood name was Siddhartha. His father Suddhodana was the ruler of Kapilavastu. Like Mahavira, he was inclined from his childhood, towards spiritual pursuits.

All the royal luxuries in which Gautama lived had no effect on him. He was married at a young age to a princess called *Yashodhara* and had a son named *Rahul*.

The Great Renunciation: Once Gautama's charioteer was driving him through the town. The appearance of an old man bent with age moved Gautama. Again the sight of a sick man, groaning with pain, was pathetic. The dead body of a man being carried for cremation made Gautama think about man's destiny. He was consoled when he saw an ascetic in search of salvation. These sights are known as the 'Four Great Sights'. Gautama left home, his wife and the child in order to find a solution. This event is known as *Mahabhikramana* or 'The Great Renunciation'.

ENLIGHTENMENT

After leaving home in search of Truth, Gautama wandered from place to place. For some time he studied under renowned teachers of Rajgriha and then went to Gaya. He practised severe penance and led a life of extreme austerity. Finally, at the age of thirty-five Gautama attained enlightenment at Bodh Gaya in Bihar. From then onwards he began to be called the *Buddha* or the *Enlightened One*.

Dharmachakrapravartana: At the place where Buddha got enlightenment, a temple known as Mahabodhi Temple was constructed later. The peepal tree is now referred to as the Mahabodhi Tree. Buddha was also called the *Tathagat*, the founder of Truth. After the enlightenment, he embarked on preaching his religion. He delivered his first sermon at the Deer Park in Sarnath near Varanasi in the presence of five ascetics. This event in the history of Buddhism is known as *Dharmachakrapravartana* or the turning of the wheel of sacred law.

Buddha's fame spread far and wide. For another forty years he travelled all over the

country spreading his message. He established a *Bodh Sangha* (Buddhist order) at Magadha. He had a large number of followers including the rulers of Magadha, Kosala and Kosambi. His disciples were from all classes of society.

Gautama Buddha, in his last years went to Kushinagar, which is near Gorakhpur district in Uttar Pradesh. He obtained *mahaparinirvana* at the age of 80 at Kushinagar. His disciples took his sacred remains to eight different places where huge mounds called *stupas* were erected.

TEACHINGS OF BUDDHISM

Buddha followed a simple path and inspired people to lead a simple life. His teachings have been reconstructed from stories, found mainly in the *Sutta Pitaka*. His message to people was that the world is full of sufferings and a man could attain salvation by following his teachings contained in the *Eightfold Path* and *Four Noble Truths*.

Four Noble Truths: The essence of Buddhism lies in Four Noble Truths. They are:

- (i) The world is full of suffering.
- (ii) The suffering has a cause.
- (iii) Desire is the cause of suffering.
- (iv) If desire is stopped, suffering can also be stopped.

Eightfold Path: The way to *nirvana*, in Buddhism, or the path that leads to removal of suffering, is known as the Eightfold Path (*Ashtangika Marg*) or the middle path.

It is a path midway between luxurious living and hard penance. It includes:

- (i) **Right action:** To remain away from theft, luxuries and violence.
- (ii) **Right thought:** To remain away from empty rituals and worldly evils.
- (iii) **Right belief:** To give up desire.
- (iv) **Right living:** Not to have dishonest dealings with others.
- (v) **Right speech:** Speak the truth and do not think ill of others.
- (vi) **Right effort:** Work for deliverance from sins and for the welfare of others.



Gautama Buddha

(vii) **Right recollection:** Think about pious things.

(viii) **Right meditation:** Concentrate on only what is right.

Attitude towards God: Buddha held that the whole universe was controlled by *Dharma*, a universal law. He was silent about the existence of God, though he never formally denied it. Like Mahavira he emphasised on non-violence.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Buddha formulated a code of conduct for his followers. This included the following:

- (i) Not to tell a lie.
- (ii) Not to own property.
- (iii) Not to consume alcoholic drinks.
- (iv) Not to commit violence.
- (v) Not to indulge in corrupt practices.

Karma: Like Hinduism, Buddhism believed in the theory of *Karma*. Buddhism said that man is the maker of his destiny and it believed in rebirth. The evil deeds will be punished. Therefore, man should follow a middle path. It is Karma which decides the type of man's existence in the next life. It is called the *wheel of Existence*.

Stress on Morality: Buddha insisted on a life based on good actions. His followers were enjoined to practise non-violence and to lead an upright life.

Nirvana: The ultimate goal of life is to attain *Nirvana* or salvation. It is a peaceful state of

mind, which conquers all diseases, makes the person free from the cycle of birth and death.

Universal Brotherhood: Lord Buddha preached universal brotherhood of mankind. He wanted people to live in peace, setting aside all their differences. He invited people of all classes and races to join Buddhism.

No Faith in Rituals and Sacrifices: Buddha said that *yajnas* cannot change a man's destiny. Sacrifices and rituals are empty ceremonies.

Ahimsa: Like Mahavira, Buddha attached importance to sanctity of life and followed the path of non-violence.

Thus, the importance given to conduct and values rather than claims of superiority based on birth, fellow feelings, compassion for the young and weak drew men and women to Buddhist teachings.

ORGANISATION

The Sangha: The organisation for teaching of Buddhism came to be known as the *Sangha*. It was a monastic order established to spread Buddhism. Later the *Sangha* became a powerful institution. It helped to spread Buddhism far and wide. The principles that governed the *Sangha* are the following:

1. Membership: The members of the monastic order were called *Bhikshus* (monks) and *Bhikshunis* (nuns). They were required to renounce the world before joining the *Sangha*. The minimum age was 15 years during Buddha's time. The members had to take the oath—*Buddham Shamam Gachhami, Dharmam Shamam Gachhami and Sangam Shamam Gachhami*. (I take shelter under Buddha; I take shelter under Religion; I take shelter under the *Sangha*). The followers had to undergo training for 10 years.

2. Ten Commandments: The members had to lead a disciplined life and follow the ten commandments (*Paramita*):

- to speak the truth.
- to abide by Brahmacharya.
- not to harm creatures.
- not to own property.

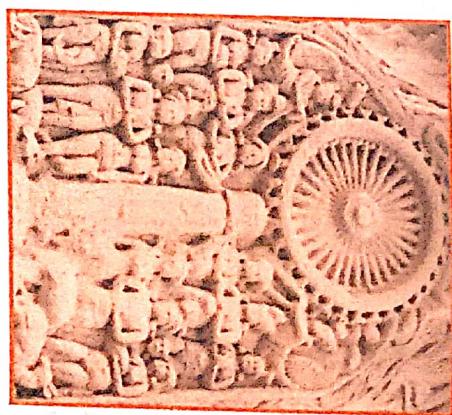
- (v) to shun music and dancing.
- (vi) to take meals only at fixed times.
- (vii) not to use intoxicants.
- (viii) not to use scented goods.
- (ix) not to sleep on cushions.
- (x) not to keep money.

SECTS OF BUDDHISM

During the deliberations of the 4th Buddhist Council, in the reign of Kanishka, Buddhism split into two sects—the *Hinayana* and the *Mahayana*.

Hinayana: Hinayana stood for following the doctrine of Buddha in letter and spirit. It denies the existence of God. Hinayana holds that the Eightfold Path is the only means of salvation. It shuns idol-worship and does not believe that Buddha was God. Buddha was regarded as a human being who attained enlightenment and nirvana through his own efforts. Pali was used by the followers of Hinayana as the language of its scriptures. The Hinayana sect is found in India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos.

Mahayana: The term Mahayana means the "Greater Vehicle" of salvation. It is a combination of Buddhism and Hinduism. Mahayana believes



Dharmachakra on Sanchi Stupa

that Buddha was an incarnation of God and he was the one who could ensure salvation. Simultaneously, the concept of the Bodhisattvas also developed. According to Mahayana, the Bodhisattvas were those holy Buddhists who had not as yet got Nirvana like Buddha but who were proceeding rapidly towards it. In fact, they were Buddha in the making. They made their goal to attain *swarga* (a state of Bliss) rather than attaining Nirvana. The worship of images of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas became an important component of Mahayana.

Buddhist scholars like Nagarjuna and Asanga founded the Mahayana sect. They wrote their scriptures in Sanskrit. Kanishka was a follower of Mahayana. The followers of this sect are found in North-western parts of India, South-east Asian countries, China and Japan.

IMPACT OF BUDDHISM

Buddhism made a lasting contribution to Indian culture, religion, art and social life in the following respects:

(i) **Ahimsa:** The doctrine of Ahimsa became a weapon against the ills in the society. After the rise of Buddhism, animal protection became a new culture. Mahatma Gandhi later used Ahimsa in the form of non-violent struggle against the British rule.

(ii) **Influence on Religious Life:** Buddhism provided a challenge to Hinduism. There soon started a reform movement within Hinduism. The costly yajnas and sacrifices and rigidity of caste system were done away with.

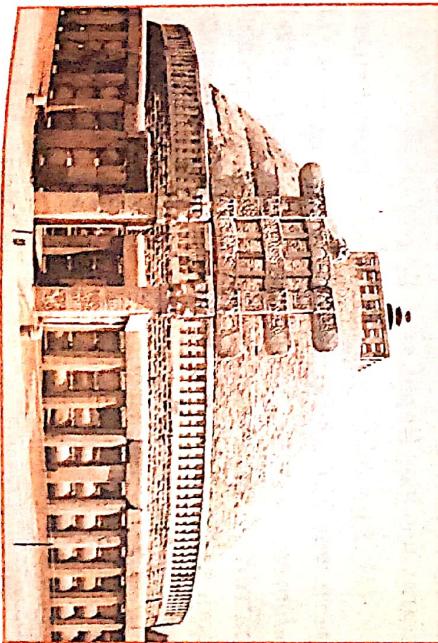
(iii) **Influence on Social Life:** Buddhism fostered intellectual tradition and exposed the weaknesses in our society. The weaker sections of the society, who had been subjected to many atrocities, got an opportunity to have their say in matters of political and social life.

(iv) **Political Impact:** The republics of Shakyas, Vaijis and Mallas embraced Buddhism. Ashoka and Kanishka made Buddhism their state religion.

(v) **Cultural Impact:** Buddhism spread far and wide in South-East Asia, China and Sri Lanka. It had a far-reaching cultural impact in raising the prestige of India. There emerged close cultural contacts between these countries and India. Buddhism acted as a vital force between different cultures.

(vi) **Language and Literature:** Buddhism made valuable contribution to the field of language and literature. A vast and varied nature of literature was produced in the language of the masses, i.e., Pali. The *Tripitakas* and the *Jatakas* are the most important literary works of the Buddhists. Besides these, other literary works of importance, written in Pali language are *Mahavamsa* and *Deepavamsha*. *Diuyavadana*, *Lalitvistara*, *Saundaranand* and *Buddhacharita* are significant works of Buddhist literature written in Sanskrit.

The Sanchi Stupa



The Bodhisattva Maitreya from Bharhut Stupa

(vii) Art and Architecture: Buddhism made immense contribution to the evolution of art and architecture. Stupas, chaityas, viharas and rock-cut cave temples were their unique contribution.

The **Stupa** is a semi-spherical solid dome-like structure containing the relics of Buddha like hair, teeth or bones. The Stupas at Sanchi, Bharhut and Amravati are remarkable specimens of art surviving upto this day.

The **Chaityas** were rectangular halls with a semi-circular roof supported by a number of columns. These halls were meant for worship.

The **Viharas** were the monasteries for the monks to live in. Later when statues of Buddha began to be carved after the Christian era, there emerged several schools of art and architecture. Even during Mauryan times, especially during the time of Ashoka, stone cutting and chiselling of pillars required high technical skill.

DECLINE OF BUDDHISM

(i) Split in Buddhism: The division of Buddhism into *Hinayana* and *Mahayana* sects brought about many changes in Buddhism. Its popularity and prestige suffered. Differences had begun to surface right from the Second Buddhist Council. *Hinayana* and *Mahayana* actually were only two major sects. There were sixteen other sects and each had its own followers.

(ii) Language: Buddha preached his teachings in Pali. After his death, Sanskrit, the language of the upper classes, also came to be adopted.

(iii) Corruption in Sangha: The monks and nuns started living a luxurious life. There



Worshipping the Bodhi Tree (Image from Sanchi Stupa)

(iv) Reforms in Hinduism: Reform movement in Hinduism started with full vigour and the appeal of new religions vanished. Hinduism assimilated the positive aspects of Buddhism. Even foreign invaders and settlers adopted Hinduism as their new religion. Among these are included the Shakas and the Satavahanas.

(v) Invasions: From the eighth century AD the Turkish invasion dealt a blow to Buddhism. The monasteries, which had accumulated great wealth, were looted. The invaders plundered the monasteries of Nalanda and Takshila and forced some of the monks to flee to neighbouring countries like Nepal and Tibet.

(vi) End of Royal Patronage: Raiput rulers were war like and could not follow the policy of *ahimsa*. Besides, the kings of the Gupta period patronised temples in honour of Hindu gods and goddesses. Thus, the lack of royal patronage brought about the decline of Buddhism.

JAINISM AND BUDDHISM COMPARED

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN JAINISM AND BUDDHISM

(a) The founders of both religions, Mahavira and Gautam Buddha had similar backgrounds.

Both of them belonged to the Kshatriya clan and followed the same path.

- (b) Both sought the attainment of salvation (*moksha*) from the cycle of birth and death.
 (c) Both did not accept the *Vedas*.

- (d) Non-violence was their creed.
(e) Monks and nuns of Buddhism and Jainism had to renounce family life and the world. They had to lead a life of chastity.

Dissimilarity

Buddhism	Jainism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was completely a new religion in 6th century BC. It followed a middle path. It spread far and wide and led to cultural evolution in India. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It had been founded long before Mahavira. He was the last of its Tirthankaras. It believed in hard penance. It did not spread beyond the Indian shores.

EXERCISES

I. Multiple-Choice Questions

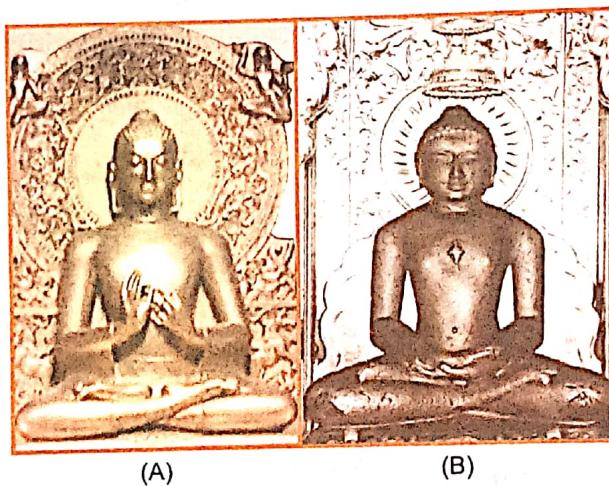
A. Choose the correct answers to the questions from the given options.

II Short Answer Questions

1. What are Angas? What is the subject matter of these Angas?
 2. What are the Tripitikas? Name the three Tripitikas.
 3. State two important causes for the rise of Jainism and Buddhism.
 4. Who was Vardhamana Mahavira? Give the significance of both parts of his name.
 5. List any four vows prescribed for the Jains.
 6. What are known as the Triratnas?
 7. Give two causes for the spread of Jainism.
 8. Name the two sects into which Jainism got divided. Why were they so called?
 9. List any two reasons for Jainism having few followers.
 10. Who was Gautam Buddha? Where was he born?
 11. What are known as Four Great Sights?
 12. How did Buddha attain enlightenment?
 13. Give Four Noble Truths of Buddhism.
 14. Give any four points of the Eightfold Path of Buddha.
 15. Give the meaning of Buddha and Tathagat.
 16. Buddha delivered his first sermon at Sarnath. What is this event called? What is the literal meaning of the name of the event.
 17. Name any two principles that governed the *Sangha*.
 18. State any two features of Buddhism that attracted people towards it.
 19. Give two differences between *Hinayana* and *Mahayana* Buddhism.
 20. Give two causes for the decline of Buddhism.

III. Structured Questions

3. With reference to Jainism answer the following questions:
- Who was Mahavira? Why was he called Jina?
 - State the five vows which a Jain householder has to take.
 - State the Jains view on *Karma* and *Salvation*.
4. With reference to Buddhism, answer the following questions:
- Who was Gautama Buddha? How did he achieve enlightenment?
 - What is known as '*Dharmachakrapravartana*'?
 - How did Buddha have a large following?
5. With reference to the Buddhism answer the following questions:
- What is the Eightfold Path?
 - What was the impact of Buddhism on the socio-religious life of the people?
 - What role did the Sangha play in the spread of Buddhism?
6. With reference to the given pictures, answer the questions that follow.



- Identify the two preachers, whose images are given. Name the religions founded by them.
- Mention three main teachings of each of the two religions founded by these preachers.
- Mention any two similarities and two dissimilarities between the two religions founded by them.

IV. Thinking Skills

- The most important precept of Jainism is *ahimsa* or non-violence. It was popularised by Mahatma Gandhi during India's freedom struggle. Do you think the philosophy of *ahimsa* is as relevant today as it was in the era of Mahavira?
- What were the reasons due to which Buddhism could spread beyond the Indian borders in other countries of the world?
- List the similarities and differences in the religions — Jainism, Buddhism and Hinduism.
- Buddhism which emerged in ancient India against the Brahmanic social order, has gained importance in contemporary India. State your views giving examples.
- Write the script of a play on the life and times of Gautam Buddha.

