[Template:About](/wiki/Template:About" \o "Template:About) [Template:Use dmy dates](/wiki/Template:Use_dmy_dates) [Template:Use Indian English](/wiki/Template:Use_Indian_English)

[Template:Buddhist term](/wiki/Template:Buddhist_term) [***Template:IAST***](/wiki/Template:IAST) ([Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en);[[1]](#cite_note-1) [Template:Lang-sa](/wiki/Template:Lang-sa) *nirvāṇa* [Template:IPA-sa](/wiki/Template:IPA-sa); [Template:Lang-pi](/wiki/Template:Lang-pi) *nibbāna*; [Template:Lang-pra](/wiki/Template:Lang-pra) *ṇivvāṇa*) literally means "blown out", as in a candle.[[2]](#cite_note-2) The term "nirvana" is most commonly associated with Buddhism, and represents its ultimate state of [soteriological](/wiki/Soteriology) release and liberation from rebirths in [*samsara*](/wiki/Samsara_(Buddhism)).[[3]](#cite_note-3)[[web 1]](#cite_note-4)[[4]](#cite_note-5) In [Indian religions](/wiki/Indian_religions), *nirvana* is synonymous with [*moksha*](/wiki/Moksha), *vimoksha*, *vimukti* and *mukti*.[Template:Refn](/wiki/Template:Refn) All Indian religions assert it to be a state of perfect quietude, freedom, highest happiness along with it being the liberation from *samsara*, the repeating cycle of birth, life and death.[[5]](#cite_note-6)[[6]](#cite_note-7) However, Buddhist and non-Buddhist traditions describe these terms for liberation differently.[[7]](#cite_note-8) In the Buddhist context, [*nirvana*](/wiki/Nirvana_(Buddhism)) refers to realization of [non-self](/wiki/Anatta) and [emptiness](/wiki/Śūnyatā), marking the end of rebirth by stilling the *fires* that keep the process of rebirth going.[[7]](#cite_note-8)[[8]](#cite_note-9)[[9]](#cite_note-10) In [Hindu philosophy](/wiki/Hindu_philosophy), it is the union of or the realization of the identity of [Atman](/wiki/Ātman_(Hinduism)) with [Brahman](/wiki/Brahman), depending on the Hindu tradition.[[10]](#cite_note-11)[[11]](#cite_note-12)[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) In [Jainism](/wiki/Jainism), it is also the soteriological goal, but unlike Buddhism, it represents the release of a soul from karmic bondage and samsara.[[12]](#cite_note-13)

## Contents

* 1 Etymology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]
* 2 Origins[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]
* 3 Hinduism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]
  + 3.1 Brahma-nirvana in the Bhagavad Gita[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]
* 4 Jainism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]
* 5 Sikhism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]
* 6 See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]
* 7 Notes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]
* 8 References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]
  + 8.1 Online references[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]
* 9 Sources[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]
* 10 Further reading[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]
* 11 External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

## Etymology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

The word *nirvāṇa*, states Steven Collins, is from the verbal root √*vā* "blow" in the form of past participle *vāna* "blown", prefixed with the preverb *nis* meaning "out". Hence the original meaning of the word is "blown out, extinguished". [Sandhi](/wiki/Sandhi) changes the spelling: the *v* of *vāna* causes *nis* to become *nir*, and then the *r* of *nir* causes [retroflexion](/wiki/Retroflexion) of the following *n*: *nis+vāna* > *nirvāṇa*.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

The term *nirvana* in the soteriological sense of "blown out, extinguished" state of liberation does not appear in the [Vedas](/wiki/Veda) nor in the pre-Buddhist [Upanishads](/wiki/Upanishad). According to Collins, "the Buddhists seem to have been the first to call it *nirvana*."[[13]](#cite_note-14) However, the ideas of spiritual liberation using different terminology, with the concept of soul and Brahman, appears in pre-Buddhist Vedic texts and Upanishads, such as in verse 4.4.6 of the [Brihadaranyaka Upanishad](/wiki/Brihadaranyaka_Upanishad).[[14]](#cite_note-15) This may have been deliberate use of words in early Buddhism, suggests Collins, since Atman and Brahman were described in pre-Buddhist Vedic texts and Upanishads with the imagery of fire, as something good, desirable and liberating.[[15]](#cite_note-16)

## Origins[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

*Nirvāṇa* is a term found in the texts of all major Indian religions – Buddhism,[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) Hinduism,[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) Jainism[[16]](#cite_note-17) and Sikhism.[[17]](#cite_note-18)<ref name=a>[Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)</ref> It refers to the profound peace of mind that is acquired with *moksha*, liberation from [samsara](/wiki/Samsara), or release from a state of [suffering](/wiki/Dukkha), after respective spiritual practice or [sādhanā](/wiki/Sādhanā).[Template:Refn](/wiki/Template:Refn)

The idea of *moksha* is connected to the Vedic culture, where it conveyed a notion of *amrtam*, "immortality",[Template:SfnTemplate:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) and also a notion of a *timeless*, "unborn", or "the still point of the turning world of time".It was also its timeless structure, the whole underlying "the spokes of the invariable but incessant wheel of time".[Template:Refn](/wiki/Template:Refn) The hope for life after death started with notions of going to the worlds of the Fathers or Ancestors and/or the world of the Gods or Heaven.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)[Template:Refn](/wiki/Template:Refn)

The earliest layers of Vedic text incorporate the concept of life, followed by an afterlife in heaven and hell based on cumulative virtues (merit) or vices (demerit).[[18]](#cite_note-19) However, the ancient Vedic [Rishis](/wiki/Rishi) challenged this idea of afterlife as simplistic, because people do not live an equally moral or immoral life. Between generally virtuous lives, some are more virtuous; while evil too has degrees, and either permanent heaven or permanent hell is disproportionate. The Vedic thinkers introduced the idea of an afterlife in heaven or hell in proportion to one's merit, and when this runs out, one returns and is reborn.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)[[19]](#cite_note-20)[[20]](#cite_note-21) In Buddhism, liberation is achieved when all things and beings are understood to be with no Self.<ref name=suehamilton18/>[[26]](#cite_note-27) Nirvana is also described as identical to achieving [*sunyata*](/wiki/Sunyata) (emptiness or nothingness), where there is no essence or fundamental nature in anything, and everything is empty.[[27]](#cite_note-28)[[28]](#cite_note-29) In time, with the development of Buddhist doctrine, other interpretations were given, such as being an unconditioned state,[[29]](#cite_note-30) a fire going out because of lack of fuel, abandoning weaving (*vana*) together of life after life,[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) and the elimination of desire.[[30]](#cite_note-31) However, Buddhist texts have asserted, since ancient times, that nirvana is more than "destruction of desire", it is "the object of the knowledge" of the Buddhist path.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

## Hinduism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

In the most ancient texts of Hinduism such as the Vedas and early Upanishads, the soteriological term *Nirvana* is not used.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) This term is found in texts of Hinduism, such as the Bhagavad Gita,[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) and the [Nirvana Upanishad](/wiki/Nirvana_Upanishad), likely composed in the post-Buddha era.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) However, the concept of Nirvana is described differently in Buddhist and Hindu literature.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) Hinduism has the concept of [Atman](/wiki/Atman_(Hinduism)), which is the soul, self;[[31]](#cite_note-32)[[32]](#cite_note-33)[[33]](#cite_note-34) it asserts that [Atman](/wiki/Atman) exists in every living being, while Buddhism asserts through its *anatta* doctrine that there is no Atman in any living being.<ref name=5sourcesanatta>**[a]** [Anatta](http://www.britannica.com/topic/anatta), Encyclopedia Britannica (2013), Quote: "Anatta in Buddhism, the doctrine that there is in humans no permanent, underlying soul. The concept of anatta, or anatman, is a departure from the Hindu belief in atman ("the self").";  
**[b]** Steven Collins (1994), Religion and Practical Reason (Editors: Frank Reynolds, David Tracy), State Univ of New York Press, ISBN 978-0791422175, page 64; "Central to Buddhist soteriology is the doctrine of not-self (Pali: anattā, Sanskrit: anātman, the opposed doctrine of ātman is central to Brahmanical thought). Put very briefly, this is the [Buddhist] doctrine that human beings have no soul, no self, no unchanging essence.";  
**[c]** John C. Plott et al (2000), Global History of Philosophy: The Axial Age, Volume 1, Motilal Banarsidass, ISBN 978-8120801585, page 63, Quote: "The Buddhist schools reject any Ātman concept. As we have already observed, this is the basic and ineradicable distinction between Hinduism and Buddhism";  
**[d]** Katie Javanaud (2013), [Is The Buddhist ‘No-Self’ Doctrine Compatible With Pursuing Nirvana?](https://philosophynow.org/issues/97/Is_The_Buddhist_No-Self_Doctrine_Compatible_With_Pursuing_Nirvana), Philosophy Now;  
**[e]** David Loy (1982), Enlightenment in Buddhism and Advaita Vedanta: Are Nirvana and Moksha the Same?, International Philosophical Quarterly, Volume 23, Issue 1, pages 65-74</ref>[[34]](#cite_note-35)[[35]](#cite_note-36) In the Vedas and early Upanishads, the word mucyate ([Template:Lang-sa](/wiki/Template:Lang-sa))<ref name=mmw/> appears, which means to be set free or release - such as of a horse from its harness.

The traditions within Hinduism state that there are multiple paths (*marga*) to moksha: *jnana-marga* or the path of knowledge, *bhakti-marga* or the path of devotion, and *karma-marga* or the path of action.[[36]](#cite_note-37)

### Brahma-nirvana in the Bhagavad Gita[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

The term Brahma-nirvana appears in verses 2.72 and 5.24-26 of the Bhagavad Gita.[[37]](#cite_note-38) Brahma nirvana (nirvana in [Brahman](/wiki/Brahman)) is the state of release or liberation; the union with the Brahman.[[5]](#cite_note-6) According to Easwaran, this is an experience of blissful egolessness.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

According to Zaehner, Johnson and other scholars, *nirvana* in the Gita is a Buddhist term adopted by the Hindus.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) The term *nirvana*, states Zaehner, was used in texts of Hinduism for the first time in the Bhagavad Gita, and that the idea therein in verse 2.71-72 to "suppress one's desires and ego" is also Buddhist.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) According to Johnson the use of the term *nirvana* is borrowed from the Buddhists to confuse the Buddhists, by linking the Buddhist nirvana state to the pre-Buddhist Vedic tradition of metaphysical absolute called Brahman.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

According to [Mahatma Gandhi](/wiki/Mahatma_Gandhi), the Hindu and Buddhist understanding of *nirvana* are different because the nirvana of the Buddhists is [shunyata](/wiki/Shunyata), emptiness, but the nirvana of the Gita means peace and that is why it is described as brahma-nirvana [oneness with Brahman].[[38]](#cite_note-39)

## Jainism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|right|250px|](/wiki/File:Kalpasutra_Mahavira_Nirvana.jpg)[Kalpasutra](/wiki/Kalpasutra_(Jain)) folio on *Mahavira Nirvana*. Note the crescent shaped *Siddhashila*, a place where all siddhas reside after nirvana. The terms [*moksa*](/wiki/Moksa_(Jainism)) and *nirvana* are often used interchangeably in the [Jain texts](/wiki/Jain_texts).[[39]](#cite_note-40)[[40]](#cite_note-41) Uttaradhyana Sutra provides an account of Sudharman – also called Gautama, and one of the disciples of Mahavira – explaining the meaning of nirvana to Kesi, a disciple of [Parshva](/wiki/Parshva).[[41]](#cite_note-42)[Template:Refn](/wiki/Template:Refn)

[Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

## Sikhism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

The concept of liberation (nirvana, mukti) as "extinction of suffering", along with the idea of *sansara* as the "cycle of rebirth" is part of Sikhism.[[42]](#cite_note-43) Nirvana appears in Sikh texts as the term *Nirban*.[[43]](#cite_note-44)[[44]](#cite_note-45) However, the more common term is *Mukti*, or *Moksh*,[[45]](#cite_note-46) a salvation concept wherein loving devotion to God is emphasized for liberation from endless cycle of rebirths.[[44]](#cite_note-45)

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

[Template:Div col](/wiki/Template:Div_col)

* [Ataraxia](/wiki/Ataraxia)
* [Baqaa](/wiki/Baqaa)
* [Bodhi](/wiki/Bodhi)
* [Dzogchen](/wiki/Dzogchen)
* [Enlightenment (spiritual)](/wiki/Enlightenment_(spiritual))
* [God in Buddhism](/wiki/God_in_Buddhism)
* [Jannah](/wiki/Jannah) (Islam)
* [Jnana](/wiki/Jnana)
* [Monastic silence](/wiki/Monastic_silence)
* [*Nibbana-The Mind Stilled*](/wiki/Nibbana-The_Mind_Stilled)
* [Nirguna](/wiki/Nirguna)
* [Nirvana fallacy](/wiki/Nirvana_fallacy)
* [Satori](/wiki/Satori)
* [Shangri-La](/wiki/Shangri-La)
* [Śūnyatā](/wiki/Śūnyatā)
* [Yoga](/wiki/Yoga)
* [Zen](/wiki/Zen)

[Template:Div col end](/wiki/Template:Div_col_end)

## Notes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

[Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

## References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

[Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

### Online references[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

## Sources[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

[Template:Refbegin](/wiki/Template:Refbegin)

* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation)
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation)
* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation)
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation)
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation)
* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)
* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation)
* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)
* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation)

[Template:Refend](/wiki/Template:Refend)

## Further reading[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)
* Kawamura (1981). Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhism. Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
* [Template:Cite journal](/wiki/Template:Cite_journal)
* Nananaranda, Katukurunde (2012). Nibbana - The Mind Stilled (Vol. I-VII). Dharma Grantha Mudrana Bharaya.
* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)
* Yogi Kanna (2011). Nirvana: Absolute Freedom. Kamath Publishings.

## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

[Template:Wikiquote](/wiki/Template:Wikiquote)

[Template:Wiktionary](/wiki/Template:Wiktionary)

* [Nibbana-The Mind Stilled Vol. I : Sermons on Nibbana](http://seeingthroughthenet.net/files/eng/books/ms/nibbana_the_mind_stilled_I.pdf)
* [English translation of the Mahayana Mahaparinirvana Sutra](http://www.nirvanasutra.net)

[Template:Buddhism topics](/wiki/Template:Buddhism_topics) [Template:Indian philosophy](/wiki/Template:Indian_philosophy)

[Template:Authority control](/wiki/Template:Authority_control)

[Category:Buddhist philosophical concepts](/wiki/Category:Buddhist_philosophical_concepts) [Category:Buddhist terminology](/wiki/Category:Buddhist_terminology) [Category:Hindu philosophical concepts](/wiki/Category:Hindu_philosophical_concepts) [Category:Jain philosophical concepts](/wiki/Category:Jain_philosophical_concepts) [Category:Sikh beliefs](/wiki/Category:Sikh_beliefs) [Category:Salvation](/wiki/Category:Salvation)