

BUDDHISM

Founded by Gautama Buddha (also called *Sakyamuni* or *Tathagata*) known originally as Siddhartha.

Gautam Buddha

- He was born in 563 BC at **Lumbini** in Sakya Kshatriya clan of Kapilvastu on Vaishakha Purnima day.
- His father **Suddhodhana** was the Saka ruler, his mother **Mahamaya** died after 7 days of his birth, so he was brought up by stepmother **Gautami**.
- He married **Yashodhara** and had a son named Rahul.
- His teachers were Alara Kalama and Udraka Ramputra.
- He left home, called Great Renunciation or *Mahabhinish-kramana* at the age of 29 years after witnessing four scenes in a sequence (old man, sick man, dead body and an ascetic).
- **Attained Nirvana** or enlightenment at 35 years of age at Uruvella (**Bodhi Gaya**) under a pipal tree on the banks of Niranjana (Phalgu) river on the 49th day of meditation.
- Delivered First Sermon or **Dharmachakra Pravartana** at **Sarnath**, to five of his disciples.
- Died at the age of 80 years in 483 BC under a Sal tree at **Kusinagar** in the Malla republic (**Mahaparinirvana**).
- Buddha's horse-**Kanthaka**; Buddha's charioteer-**channa**; Buddha's cousin-**Devadatta**.

Major Events of Buddha's Life

Events	Symbols
Janma (Birth)	Lotus and Bull
Mahabhinishkramana (Renunciation)	Horse
Nirvana/Sambodhi (Enlightenment)	Bodhi tree
Dharmachakra pravartana (First Sermon)	Wheel
Mahaparinirvana (Death)	Stupa

Teachings of Buddha

(a) Four Noble Truths (Arya Satyas)

1. The world is full of sorrows (*Sabbam Dukkham*).
 2. The cause of sorrow is desire (*Dwadesh Nidan/Pratitya Samutpada*).
 3. If desires are conquered, all sorrows can be removed (*Nirvana*).
 4. This can be achieved by following the 8-fold path (*Ashtangika Marga*).
- The second truth, is based on Buddha's doctrine of *Paticheha Samutpada* or *Pratitya Samutpada* i.e. law of dependent origination or causation.

(b) Eight-Fold Path (Ashtangika marga)

- Right understanding
- Right speech
- Right livelihood
- Right mindfulness
- Right meditation
- Right thought
- Right action
- Right effort

(c) Three Jewels (Triratnas)

- Buddha (the enlightened)
- Dhamma (doctrine)
- Sangha (order)

(d) Code of Conduct

- Do not covet the property of others
- Do not commit violence
- Do not use intoxicants
- Do not speak a lie
- Do not indulge in corrupt practices

(e) Belief in Nirvana

- Also known as *moksha* or salvation. It refers to a belief in the concept of ultimate bliss, whereby the person gets freedom from the cycle of birth and death.

(f) The Middle Path

It means that the man should avoid extremes of both a life of luxury and a life of severe asceticism and acquire a middle path. Also called *Madhya Marga* or *Madhayama Pratipada*.