

KEYWORDS

Buddhist – A person who follows the religion

Vihara – The Buddhist place of worship

Buddha – enlightened one

Siddhartha Gautama – the founder of the faith

Tripitaka – holy text

The Four Sights – Four sights of suffering

Dharma – cosmic law and order, but is also applied to the teachings of the Buddha.

Nirvana – not a physical place but a state of complete happiness that is achieved when enlightenment is reached.

Wesak – festival celebrating Buddha's birth, enlightenment and death



Siddhartha Gautama was born into a life of luxury, lived in a palace and had everything he could have wished for. His father has never allowed him to leave the palace; however, he does leave and sees things that he has never seen before that changes his life.

The Four Sights are; an old man, a

sick man, a corpse and a holy man. This is the first time he comes into contact with things that are not perfect and decides he must leave the palace in order to find a way to overcome the suffering and pain in the world. The holy man was an **ascetic** and this influenced him to take up an ascetic lifestyle, which means depriving yourself of many things. It is believed that he lived on one grain of rice a day. He hoped that this would help him achieve an answer to the problem of suffering and how to overcome it. As this did not work he returned to eating and used meditation to help him instead. He encouraged a lifestyle known as the **Middle Way**. During his **mediation** he faced many hurdles but he did eventually find the answers he was looking for and how to overcome suffering. This is known as **Nirvana**

Differences in Buddhism; the two main groups in Buddhism are **Mahayana** and **Theravada**. Theravada is one the oldest schools of Buddhism and its focus is on meditation and commitment to the Buddha. Mahayana Buddhists believe the Buddha is still active in the world today and can be encountered through meditation.

Festivals; One of the most important festival for a Buddhist is **Wesak**. It remembers the birth, enlightenment and death of the Buddha. Buddhists celebrate by lighting candles and putting up decorations and will make offerings to the Buddha. Buddhists will spend this time remembering and honouring the Buddha's teachings.

The Eight Fold Path

There are 8 steps to help end suffering and achieve enlightenment:

1. Right speech
2. Right action
3. Right livelihood
4. Right effort
5. Right mindfulness
6. Right concentration
7. Right understanding
8. Right intention



The 5 moral precepts – A set of 5 guidelines, not rules, to help live a life that helps to avoid hurting others.

1. Avoid taking life – this means most Buddhists are vegetarian
2. Avoid taking what is not given – this means not stealing
3. Avoid sexual harmful activity – this means not using sexuality to harm others
4. Avoid saying what is not true – not even being dishonest with yourself
5. Avoid clouding the mind with alcohol and drugs, not doing anything that can distract your mind.

The 4 noble truths – These are 4 truths that are central to Buddhist beliefs. The Buddha taught that: **1.** Suffering exists **2.** Suffering is caused by something **3.** Suffering can end **4.** There is a way to end suffering. These truths are a way of explaining that all life involves suffering – there is no escape from it whoever you are. People often try to get rid of suffering by looking at quick fixes; these quick fixes don't work and people are unhappy again. The main cause of the suffering is due to wanting and desiring things. The Buddha taught that to end suffering, people needed to stop wanting things and this could be achieved by following the eight-fold path.

The Vihara and Worship Buddhist worship is called **puja** and takes place at a temple or shrine. The temple (Vihara) is the building where Buddhists will meditate or chant together or make offerings to the Buddha. A shrine is an area that is dedicated to the Buddha where people will make offerings and dedicate their time to thinking about the Buddha. **Shrines** can be found in a temple and also in homes. Shrines will have pictures or statues of the Buddha, along with flowers and candles also.

The 3 marks of existence A teaching in Buddhism that states there are 3 things that are always true to everyone:

1. **Anicca** – Everything around us changes, known as impermanence
2. **Anatta** – There is nothing permanent about human beings
3. **Dukkha** – Life involves suffering Understanding these is important to help others achieve enlightenment