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# BUDDHA

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**"Awakened One" (Buddha):** Prince Siddhartha Gautama, who would one day be known as the **Buddha**, began his life as a prince in a kingdom in ancient India.

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Prince Gautama (Buddha) was born about 553 BCE. He had parents who loved him, many servants to wait on him, the finest clothes, and a different palace for each season of the year. Yet, he found his world full of suffering. It upset him that painful old age, sickness, and death were all part of life in this world.

One day, he met a monk. He was amazed that this monk could find calm and peace in a world filled with such sufferings. That day he made a very difficult decision. He decided to leave his wealth, his comfort, his wife, and his newborn son, to become a monk.

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For the next six years he traveled throughout India. But the answers he found were not enough. One day, while sitting under a fig tree, an understanding came to him.

This understanding was a way to end suffering. That was the day Prince Siddhartha Gautama began to earn a new title, the **Buddha**, which means "Awakened One".

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## Four Noble Truths:

His journey to find the meaning of life had concluded. The Buddha realized that life is ruled by Four Noble Truths:

- Life is filled with suffering
- Suffering is caused by people's wants.
- Suffering can be ended if people stop wanting things, like more pleasure or more power.
- To stop wanting things, people must follow 8 basic laws, called the Eightfold Path.





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**Eightfold Path:** In brief, these are the laws of the Eightfold Path:

- To know the truth
- To intend to resist evil
- To not say anything to hurt others
- To respect life, property, and morality
- To work at a job that does not injure others
- To try to free one's mind from evil
- To be in control of one's feelings and thoughts
- To practice appropriate forms of concentration

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## The Middle Way:

The Eightfold Path was designed to guide people without making life too strict or too easy. The Middle Way is the name Buddhists call lives guided by the laws of the Eightfold Path.

Buddha spent the rest of his life traveling around India and sharing his message with everyone. He had many followers, who lived according to his Four Noble Truths. Some of his followers became Buddhist monks. They gave up all they owned and depended on other followers and kind hearted people to give them food. Their message was one of love.

After the Buddha's death in 483 BCE, Buddhism spread rapidly throughout Southern and Eastern Asia.

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## Proverbs:

Buddhists everywhere live by Buddha's teachings, which were written down as proverbs. Here are two of Buddha's proverbs, from an ancient Buddha text, written in about 100 BCE (Over 2000 years ago!)

**As a solid rock is not shaken by the wind, even so the wise are not ruffled by praise or blame.**

**Hatreds never cease by hatred in this world; by love alone they cease.**

**This is an ancient law.**



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Today, **Buddhism** is a major world religion. There are over 300 million Buddhists in the world.

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<http://www.wartgames.com/themes/religions/buddhism.html>



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