

## The Triple Gem

Buddhists take refuge (shelter, guidance and support) in the triple gem:

Buddha, that freedom from stress is possible through human effort and that Siddhattha Gotama achieved this.

Dhamma, the teachings leading to that freedom

Sangha, the community of practitioners dedicated to attaining that freedom

## The Tipitaka

Buddhist scriptures are contained within three groups known as The Tipitaka:

The Suttas: The recorded sayings and sermons of the Buddha, including The Dhammapada which is the most widely translated and read section of scripture

The Vinaya: The rules for monastics (monks and nuns)

The Abhidhamma: Systematic presentations of Buddhist doctrine added a few centuries after The Buddha's death

## Want to learn more about Buddhism?

The best place to learn more is from a local community, a monastery where you can ask monks and nuns questions and practice with the monastics (monks and nuns) and lay people. Try searching online for Buddhist monasteries near you!

**Dhammatalks.org** Contains many free books, talks and scripture translations.

**Suttacentral.net** Contains a large collection of translated Buddhist scriptures

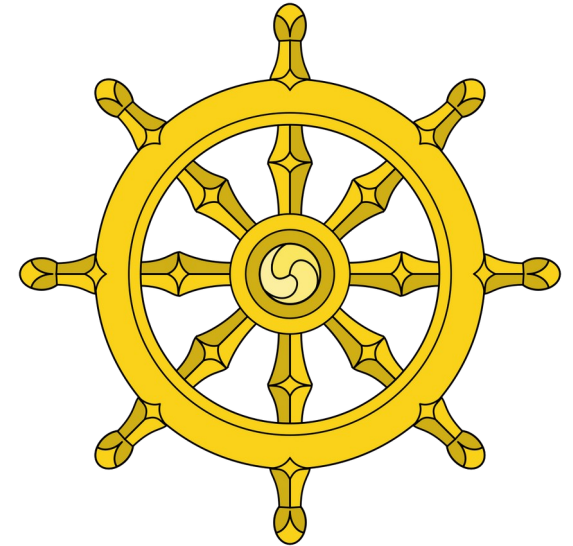


*"The non-doing  
of any evil,  
the performance  
of what's skillful,  
the cleansing  
of one's own mind:  
this is the teaching  
of the Awakened."*

*- The Dhammapada*

# Buddhism

*A 2600 year old path to happiness*



*They go to many a refuge,  
to mountains & forests,  
to park & tree shrines:  
people threatened with danger.*

*That's not the secure refuge,  
not the supreme refuge,  
that's not the refuge,  
having gone to which,  
you gain release  
from all suffering & stress.*

*-The Dhammapada*

Is there such a thing as a perfect happiness that can bring suffering and stress to a total end?

If there is, can this happiness be found through human effort?

If so, can it be found in a harmless and blameless way?

These are the questions that, 2,600 years ago, led a young man named Siddhattha Gotama in northern India to leave his family, go into the wilderness, and search for the answer within himself. Eventually he awakened to the fact that the answer to all three questions was Yes:

Yes, there is a deathless happiness that brings suffering to a total end.

Yes, it can be found through human effort.

And Yes, that effort is harmless and without blame.

In awakening to these facts, he became the Buddha: the Awakened One. Devoting the rest of his life to teaching others how to find the same happiness for themselves, he established an apprenticeship of practice and thought that has branched into the many forms of Buddhism today.

## The Path to Happiness

### The Four Noble Truths

The Buddha explained one of his most important insights in the Four Noble Truths:

- 1) Dukkha: that there is stress, suffering, pain, unsatisfactoriness, boredom, anxiety and other unpleasant experiences
- 2) Samudaya: that Dukkha arises because of different causes
- 3) Nirodha: that Dukkha stops when those causes stop
- 4) Marga: that there is a way to completely end Dukkha and attain a lasting happiness called The Noble Eightfold Path

The Noble Eightfold Path is composed of eight different steps and practices, each having to be done in a noble or correct way:

- 1) Right View
- 2) Right Resolve
- 3) Right Speech
- 4) Right Action
- 5) Right Livelihood
- 6) Right Effort
- 7) Right Mindfulness
- 8) Right Concentration

## Important Ideas

### Kamma

Actions have consequences. The effects of action can be experienced both now, in the immediate present, and into the future. Actions can produce pleasant, unpleasant and neutral results. The effects of actions are primarily based upon the intention behind them.

### Rebirth

Beings are born and die based on their kamma, although every birth is impermanent, from pleasant lives in various heavens to terrible lives in various hells. People are born and die because of craving and desire for everything from pleasurable feelings, material possessions and even wanting to exist or not exist!

### Anicca (Impermanence)

All normal things are impermanent, our bodies, friends, cities, cultures even our planet one day will break apart and be forgotten.

### Anatta (Not Self)

There is no enduring, permanent or stable self or part of us, we are only composed of a bundle or group of different things which started by various causes and will likewise change and end.

