

Religious Studies 260
Buddhist Thought and Practice
BASIC BUDDHIST TERMS

Three Jewels/Treasures: Buddha / Dharma / Sangha

Siddhartha Gautama (5th c. BCE): The Buddha (Enlightened One)
 Sakyamuni (Sage of the Sakya clan)
 Tathāgatha (Thus-come-one)

Three Vehicles (branches):

Theravada (Hīnayāna): Way of the Elders (Lesser Vehicle)

- S/SE Asia
- Pali Canon: *Tripitaka* (below)

Mahāyāna: Greater Vehicle

- East Asia
- Chinese Canon: Pali Canon (arranged differently) + new sutras, commentaries, biographies

Vajrayāna: Diamond Vehicle

- Tibet, North/Central Asia, Japan (1 school)
- Tibetan Canon: Chinese Canon (arranged differently) + *Tantras* (ritual/meditation texts)

Theravada Buddhist Canon (*Tripitaka*, "Three Baskets"):

Sūtra: discourses of the Buddha

Vinaya: monastic codes

Abhidharma: philosophical analysis

Four Noble Truths and Eightfold Path:

I. "Suffering" / unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*): inevitable part of existence

II. Cause of suffering: craving, desire, thirst (*trishnā*)

III. Elimination of suffering: cessation (*nirodha*) of craving

IV. Way / Path: The Noble Eightfold Path (*mārga*)

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|------------------------|---|--|
| 1. Right views | } | Wisdom (<i>prajñā</i>) |
| 2. Right intention | | |
| 3. Right speech | } | Morality (<i>sīla</i>) |
| 4. Right action | | |
| 5. Right livelihood | | |
| 6. Right effort | } | Concentration, meditation (<i>samādhi</i>) |
| 7. Right mindfulness | | |
| 8. Right concentration | | |

Three Characteristics of Existence:

- impermanence (*anitya*)
- suffering (*dukkha*)
- no-self (*anātman*)

Three Ills (evils):

- greed
- anger / hatred
- ignorance

Five Skandhas (components, aggregates):

1. Form
2. Sensation
3. Perceptions/conceptions
4. Predispositions (karmic), volitions, will
5. Consciousness

Five Lay Precepts (vows):

1. Not to kill
2. Not to steal
3. Not to misuse sex (adultery)
4. Not to lie
5. Not to take intoxicants

Other key concepts:

- *karma*: moral causality
- *samsāra*: cycle of rebirth
- *nirvāna*: extinction of karma and rebirth
- *bodhi*: enlightenment
- ignorance (*avīdya*)
- *arhat*: enlightened person (in Theravada)
- *śamatha*: calming / *vipāśyanā*: insight
- dependent origination (*pratītya-samutpāda*), or the 12-fold chain of causation (12 *nidāna*):
 1. Ignorance (*avidyā*)
 2. Volitional action (*samskāra*)
 3. Consciousness (*viññāna*)
 4. Name and form (*nāma-rūpa*)
 5. Six Senses (*sad-āyatana*)
 6. Contact, touch (*sparśa*)
 7. Sensation (*vedanā*)
 8. Craving, desire (*trishnā*)
 9. Attachment, clinging (*upādāna*)
 10. Existence, being (*bhava*)
 11. Birth (*jāti*)
 12. Old age and death (*jarā-marana*)

Spread of Buddhism

- 5th c. BCE: originated in North India
- 3rd c. BCE: to Sri Lanka (Pali Canon first put into writing there in 1st c. BCE)
- 1st c. BCE: to Central Asia via Afghanistan / Mahayana developing
- 1st c. CE: first recorded mention in China
- 5th c.: to Korea
- 6th c.: to Japan (from Korea, but then most influence from China)
- 7th c.: to Tibet (from India and China)
- 10th-11th c.: mostly replaced in India by Islam
- 19th-20th c.: to Europe and America