

KEY TERMS Sanskrit, (Pāli)

बुद्ध

Buddha

Buddha

Awakened One

A fully enlightened human being, one who has attained *Nirvana*.

धर्म

Dharma (dhamma)

Dharma (Dhamma)

Duty, Law, Virtue, Morality, Righteousness

in Buddhism used in various meanings:

1) The cosmic law underlying the world; 2) the teachings of the Buddha; 3) Norms of behavior and ethical rules; 4) Manifestations of reality, of the general state of affairs; thing, phenomenon; 5) Mental content, object of thought, idea; 6) term for the so-called factors of existence which the Theravada tradition considers as building blocks of the empirical personality.

सँघ

saṅgha (saṅgha)

Sangha

Society, Association, Community

Originally in Buddhism the *Sangha* referred to the monastic order. More broadly the term refers to the Buddhist community.

प्रतीत्यसमुत्पाद

pratītya samutpāda (paṭicca samuppāda)

Pratitya Samutpada (Paticca Samuppada)

Dependent arising, Conditioned arising

A central doctrine of Buddhism which holds that all psychological and physical phenomena constituting individual existence are interdependent and mutually condition each other.

अनात्मन्

anātman (anatta)

Anatman (Anatta)

No-Self

The doctrine that says no self exists in the sense of a permanent, eternal, integral, and independent substance within an individual existent.

अनित्य

anitya (anicca)

Anitya (Anicca)

Impermanence, Transitoriness

The doctrine that everything that exists must pass away.

दुःख

duḥkha (dukkha)
Duhkha (Dukkha)

Suffering, Sorrow, Pain, Difficulty

The 1st Noble Truth of Buddhism holds that all life involves *duhkha*. Literally, *duhkha* means something like “having a broken axle-hole.”

तृष्णा

tr̥ṣṇā (taṇhā)
Trishna (Tanha)

Desire, Thirst, Attachment

The 2nd Noble Truth of Buddhism holds that *trishna* is the cause of *duhkha*.

निर्वाण

nirvāṇa (nibbāna)
Nirvana (Nibbana)

Enlightenment, Bliss

The 3rd Noble Truth of Buddhism holds that *duhkha* can be extinguished through the cessation of *trishna* leading to *nirvana*. Literally, *nirvana* means “blown out,” “extinguished.” *Nirvana* is the goal of enlightenment for Buddhists.

अर्हत्

arhat (arahant)
Arhat (Arahant)

Worthy One

One who is free from all fetters, defilements and impurities through realization of *Nirvana* in the fourth and final stage, and who is free from rebirth.

तथागत

tathāgata
Tathagata

The ‘Thus-Gone’ or ‘Thus-Come’ One

An epithet for the Buddha. The Buddha is the one who has crossed over the river of *duhkha* to the other shore of *nirvana*; or one who has come to the shore of *nirvana*.

प्रज्ञा

prajñā
Prajna

Wisdom, Intelligence, Knowledge

करुणा

karuṇā
Karuna

Compassion

स्कन्ध

skandha (khandha)
Skandha (Khandha)

Aggregate

Originally the term referred to the trunk of a tree, particularly the part where the branches begin. In Buddhism there are five *skandhas* or branches of the self: form, sensation, perception, mental formations, and consciousness.

रूप

rūpa
rupa

Form, Shape, Material Body

the first of the five constituent elements that make up the self in Buddhism

वेदना

vedanā
vedana

Feeling, Sensation

felt experience, either pleasant or unpleasant
the second of the five constituent elements that constitute the self in Buddhism

सँज्ञा

saññā (saññā)
samjna (sanna)

Perception

from *sañ* (put together, unite) and *jñā* (to know)
the third of the five constituent elements that make up the self in Buddhism

सँस्कार

saṃskāra (saṃkhāra)
samskara (samkhara)

Mental Formations, Impressions, Memories

the fourth of the five constituent elements of the self in Buddhism, the deep set mental habit patterns, attitudes and dispositions that form the character of one's mind; impressions on the mind of acts done in former lives

विज्ञान

vijñāna (viññāṇa)
vijnana (vinnana)

Consciousness

the fifth of the five constituent elements of the self in Buddhism, the capacity to think, comprehend, understand; intelligence; knowledge

ध्यान

dhyāna (jhāna)
dhyana (jhana)

Meditation

अहिंसा

ahiṃsā
ahimsa

Nonviolence

originally emphasized by the Jainas, it becomes a supreme moral value in Hinduism and Buddhism

स्तूप

stūpa
Stupa

Buddhist Monument or Memorial

generally a dome-like form erected over sacred relics of the Buddha or on spots consecrated as the scene of his acts

शील

śīla
Shila

Morality

समाधि

samādhi
Samadhi

Concentration, Absorption

the end goal of meditation, the last step of the eightfold path in Buddhism; the eighth limb of Yoga in Patañjali's *Yoga Sūtras*

शमथ

śamatha (samatha)
Shamatha

Tranquility Meditation

विपश्यना

vipaśyanā (vipassanā)
Vipashyana, vipassana

Insight Meditation

बोधि

bodhi
Bodhi

Perfect Knowledge or Wisdom

The Four Noble Truths (Sanskrit, Pali)

- 1) The truth of suffering (*duḥkha, dukkha*)
- 2) The truth of the cause of suffering (*trṣṇā, taṇhā*)
- 3) The truth of the cessation of suffering (*nirvāṇa, nibbāna*)
- 4) The Eightfold Path leading to the cessation of suffering

The Eightfold Path (Sanskrit, Pali)

- 1) Right View or Understanding (*dṛṣṭi, diṭṭhi*)
- 2) Right Resolve or Intention or Thought (*saṃkalpa, sankappa*)
- 3) Right Speech (*vāc, vācā*)
- 4) Right Action (*karmānta, kammanta*)
- 5) Right Livelihood (*ājīva*)
- 6) Right Effort (*vyāyāma, vāyāma*)
- 7) Right Mindfulness (*smṛti, sati*)
- 8) Right Concentration (*samādhi*)

The Twelve Links of Dependent Arising (Pratitya-samutpada)

- 1) *avidyā, avijjā* —ignorance, lack of recognition of the four noble truths, ignorance of the suffering-ridden nature of existence. From ignorance arises:
- 2) *saṃskāra, saṃkhāra* —mental formations or volitional dispositions which precede actions. These can be good, bad, or neutral and are related to physical, verbal, and psychological actions. Through this connection with action, *saṃskāras* are tied to *karma*. From these mental formations (or *karma*) arises:
- 3) *viññāna, viññāna* —consciousness; consciousness in the next life is determined by *karma*. This consciousness reenters another womb after the death of an individual who has not been liberated and instigates there the arising of:
- 4) *nāmarūpa* —“name and form,” the psychological and physical factors, i.e., a new empirical being (body and mind) constituted by the five *skandhas*. Which womb the consciousness chooses is determined by its qualities, which in turn depend upon the *samskaras*. From this body/mind arise:
- 5) *Ṣadāyatana, salāyatana* —the six object realms of the senses, which present themselves to the being after its birth, thus conditioning:
- 6) *sparśa, phassa* —sensorial and mental contact with the environment through the six organs of sense. From contact arises:
- 7) *vedanā* —sensations. For someone ignorant in the Buddhist sense, sensations lead to:
- 8) *trṣṇā, taṇhā* —craving or desire, the source of suffering. After the death of the individual, this craving or desire leads to:
- 9) *upādāna* —“attachment or clinging to a womb;” attachments that create bonds that bind beings to existence and drives them from rebirth to rebirth. Thus, attachment leads to:
- 10) *bhāva* —existence or becoming. Existence leads to:
- 11) *jāti* —birth, which leads to:
- 12) *jāra-māraṇam* —old age and death.

The entire chain of conditions covers three existences: 1-2 relate to the previous existence, 3-7 to conditioning of the previous existence, 8-10 to the fruits of the present existence, and 11-12 to the future life.

QUESTIONS

1. What were the legendary four sights that led Siddhārtha Gautama to renounce his princely life and take up the spiritual search for liberation? How does this legend provide a context and frame for all of Buddhist philosophy?
2. What are the three characteristics of *samsāra* according to the Buddha's early teachings?
3. How is it that the doctrine of Dependent Origination (*pratītya samutpāda*) can be said to be the central doctrine of Buddhism? How do the teachings of impermanence (*anitya*) and no-Self (*anātman*) follow from this central teaching?
4. What are the Four Noble Truths taught by the Buddha in his first sermon? How are they linked?
5. What are the components of the Noble Eightfold Path? How is it that the Eightfold Path can be said to boil down to the two basic teaching of *prajna* and *karuna*?
6. How does *The Fire Sermon* explain the Buddha's central teaching concerning liberation?
7. If there is no *Ātman*, what is the self according to the Buddhist analysis? What are the five groups of processes that constitute the self from the Buddhist point of view?
8. If there is no Self, who is it that realizes *nirvana*? How does Nāgasena explain rebirth and transmigration?
9. How does the Buddhist notion of enlightenment, as indicated by the term '*nirvana*,' contrast and compare with the Hindu notion of *moksha*?
10. What is the difference between "tranquility meditation" and "insight meditation" taught by the Buddha?
11. What is meant by "mindfulness meditation" in the Buddha's teaching, *The Foundation of Mindfulness*? Why might it be considered the most important teaching concerning the practice of Buddhism?
12. Explain verse 9 of Chapter XII of the *Dhammapada*. How might this verse sum up the core teaching of Theravāda Buddhism?