

Buddhism - What does it mean to be enlightened?
Can we all be enlightened?

Do you have to believe in a God to have a religion?

Buddhists would say "no". Buddhism is a religion, but there is not a Buddhist god.

Most Buddhists are agnostic- they do not think it is possible to know whether a god exists.

Who is this?



Buddha

The story of Prince Siddhartha

Many years ago in village called Lumbini near the border between India and Nepal a Prince called Siddhartha was born.



His father ruled a tribe called the Shakyas. The King and Queen were delighted when Siddhartha was born and many people came to see him. The wise men told them that the Prince would become a great man. They were very happy.

One day a Holy man called Asila, who lived alone in a forest miles away, came to see the baby Prince.

He told them "If your son decides to stay with you he will become a great King, but if he leaves his future will be even greater, he will become a great teacher, showing all people how to live with peace

and love in their hearts. On seeing sadness in the world he will leave the palace and discover a way to end all suffering."

Growing up Prince Siddhartha had everything he could want, his own palace and servants. The King tried to stop Siddhartha from ever



knowing about pain. He even made sure he would not see servants who were ill or old.

Siddhartha became unhappy, he wanted to see life outside the Palace, and so one day he persuaded the Kings Chariot driver to take him into the city.

On his first visit he saw an old man leaning on a stick, he asked Channa what was wrong with him; Channa said "He is old, one day we shall all be like him, both princes and ordinary people."

On the second visit, Siddhartha saw a man who was ill. Channa told him that everyone gets ill; it was a fact of life.

On his third visit, he saw a dead man, Channa explained that everyone dies. Siddhartha was confused, why had his father hidden such truths from him?

On his fourth visit to the city, he saw a bald man, carrying a bowl and wearing only a simple robe. Channa told him that this was a holy man, who had given up everything for the cause of the truth.

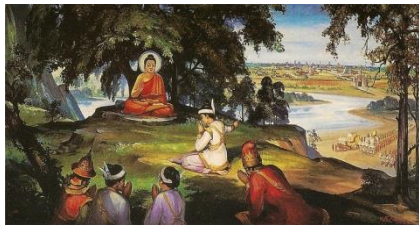


Siddhartha was very unhappy and decided that he must leave the palace in order to learn the truth. So early one morning when everyone was still asleep, Siddhartha woke up Channa and ordered him to take him to where the holy man lived.

Siddhartha took off his rich clothes and cut his long hair and went to begin his search for the truth with the holy men.

Eventually he found the wise men, he studied with Arada and Udraka, soon he mastered everything they had to teach, but still he was not satisfied.

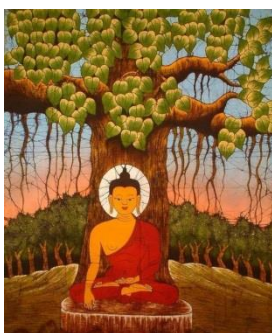
He continued to travel, he found a group of 5 men, their life was extremely simple, they ate very little food, lived out in the open, and sat perfectly still for many hours each day.



"Why are you doing such painful things to your bodies?" he asked them. They replied "Most people in the world treat their bodies very gently and yet still experience much suffering. We feel that if we can learn to master pain we shall have found the way to control all sufferings,"

So Siddhartha joined them, he treated his body more and more harshly, he stopped sleeping and eating even one meal a day, he would only eat the seeds and berries that blew into his lap. He grew thinner and thinner. He became little more than a living skeleton. But still he would not give up and existed like that for 6 long years.

One day a young girl from a nearby village saw Siddhartha sitting there, she thought he was the King of the Tree Spirits. She took him some specially prepared food and placed it before him. Siddhartha slowly opened his eyes and saw the bowl in front of him. He began to drink. To her amazement his body grew more and more radiant as he drank. He thanked her; he felt strong again and was sure he would find the truth.



Siddhartha stood up and headed to the Bodhi Tree, which later became known as the Tree of Enlightenment.

Siddhartha's mind was calm and relaxed, as he sat under the tree his concentration deepened and his wisdom grew brighter. During the night he began to understand about the nature of suffering and that

it was possible to be free from suffering.

He found the truth of suffering in what he called the Four Noble Truths. He saw the Eightfold Path as a way to give people freedom or liberation.

At the age of 80 Buddha knew he had done all he could to help others, he had taught them how to live with love and not fear anything in life.

He went back to the city he grew up in and died, his disciples carried out his work.

What do you think is the most important part of the story?

Complete the worksheet, giving reasons for your choice.

You can also draw a picture to go with your writing.

You can watch a video of Buddha's life on the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wUh3E9PSbI>

Buddhism - The story of Siddhartha

L.O. To be able to say what you think was the important part in the story and explain why.

Draw a picture.

I think the important part of the story was

I think it was important because

Write down any questions you have.