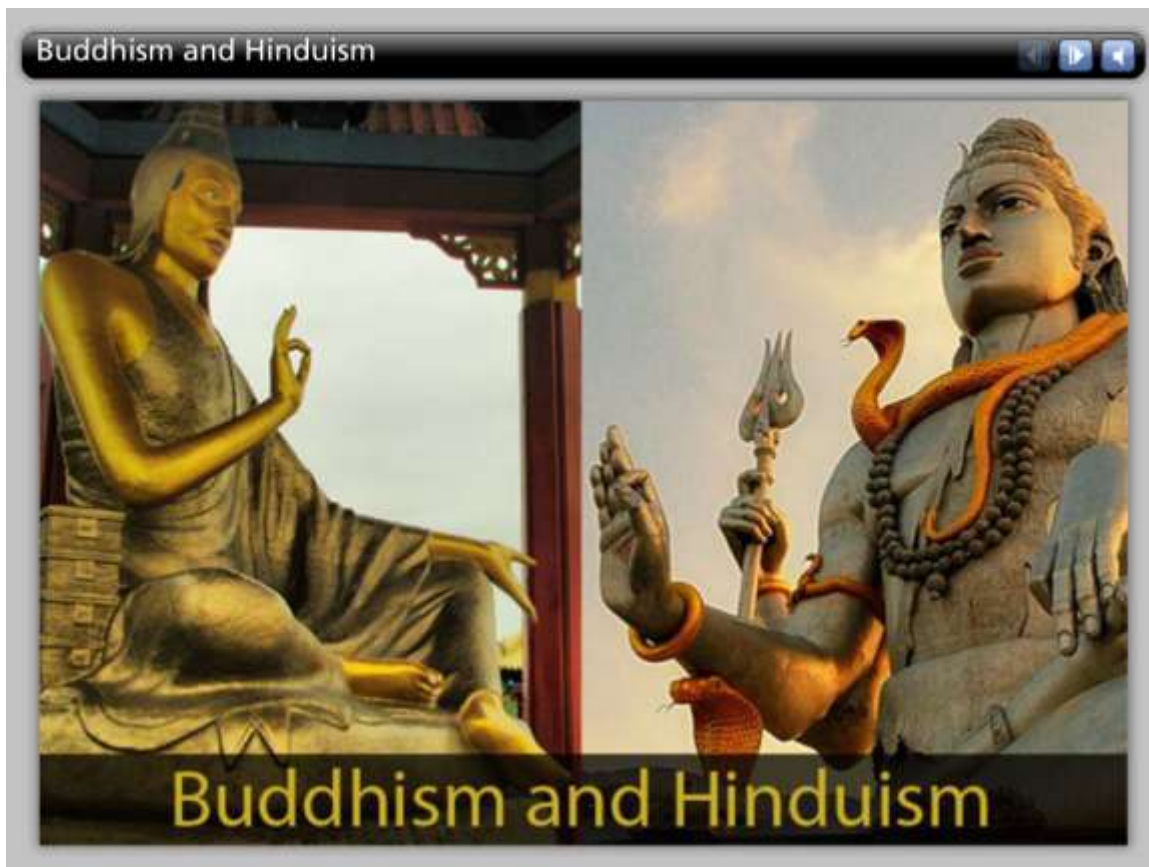


Module 1: Religion and Empires
Topic 1 Content: Buddhism and Hinduism



[Image of Shiva courtesy Thejas Panarkand. Image of Buddha courtesy Oleg-Akamatsu.]

Beliefs of Hinduism based on K.A.R.M.A.

Karma = Knowledge that all thoughts and actions result in future consequences.

All Hindus live within a caste system which was a strict class system set up by the Ancient Aryan Empire in India.



Karma is a religious concept which promotes the idea that all of a person's past and present thoughts and actions have consequences for future events. People's thoughts and actions produce good karma and bad karma, so a person's future will be either good or bad based on their current actions.

Hindus live within a caste system. Castes are strict classes that are based on birth. Castes were established by the ancient Aryan Empire in India. People could not change castes during their lives. For example, if you were born into the Sudra caste, you remained a Sudra and your children would be Sudra as well. Today, even though India's 1950 national constitution tried to abolish caste discrimination, the caste system remains deeply entrenched in Hindu culture.

[Image of Shiva courtesy Nick Indian.]



All Hindus believe in the cycle of rebirth based on Karma.

Two of the major Hindu sacred texts are the Vedas and Upanishads.



Hindus believe in the cycle of rebirth, which is based on karma. If someone has good karma, they will go up in the caste system in the next life. On the other hand, if you live a life of bad karma, you will go down.

In the diagram, notice the box below the pyramid labeled “Untouchables”. Untouchables are the social outcasts of society who performed the dirtiest jobs imaginable. Also, look at the statue Shiva, the God of destruction in the Hindu religion. Can you tell what Shiva is standing on? It's actually a troll-like figure that represents the Untouchables.

Reincarnation is the word for the system of rebirth based on karma.



- All Hindus ultimate goal is to end the cycle of rebirth
- Reincarnation allows people to continue to work towards Moksha
- Dharma is the religious and moral duties of an individual in each caste

Reincarnation is the system of rebirth based on karma. As a Hindu, your next life will be either in a higher or lower caste, depending on how you lived your current life. The ultimate goal of all Hindus is to achieve moksha.

[Image courtesy Swaminarayan Sanstha.]

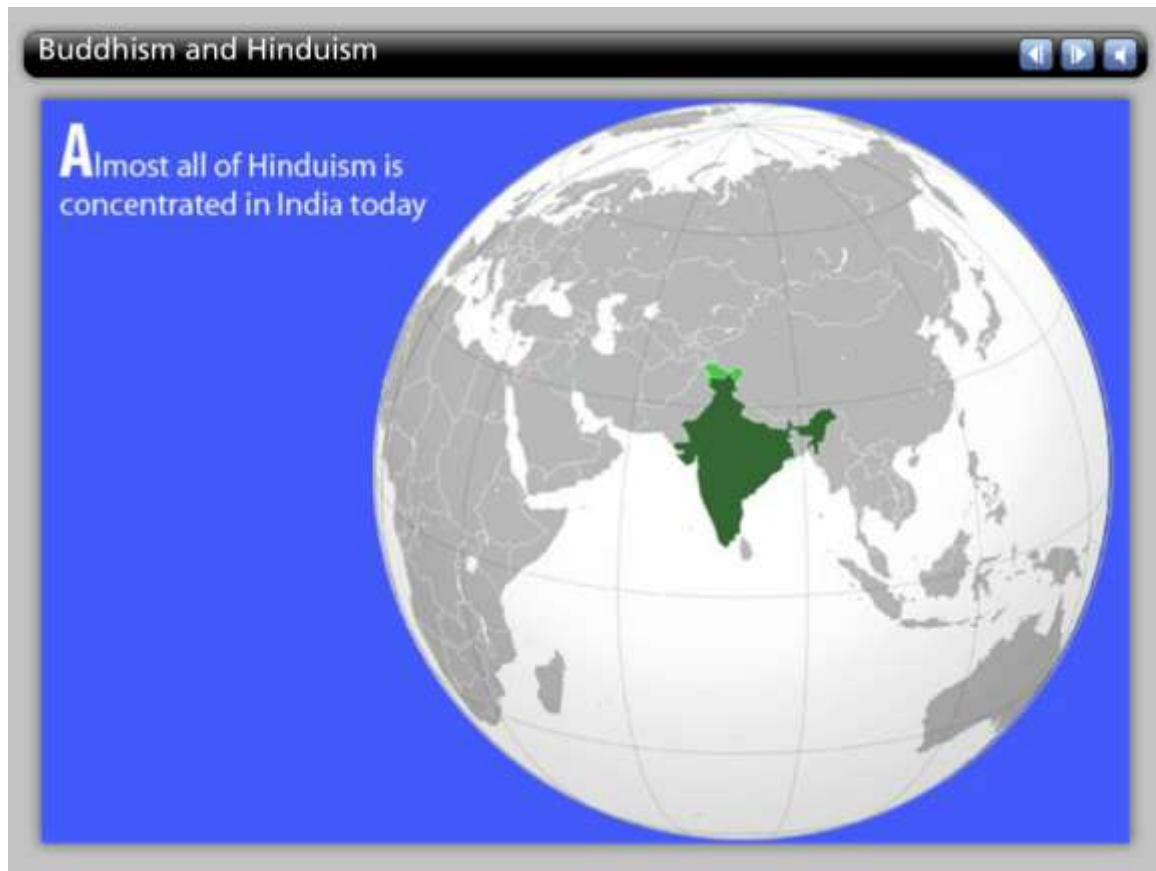
Moksha is achieving the end of reincarnation and becoming one with the Universal Spirit.

- All living things have part of the Universal Spirit in them
- Hinduism has many forms of one God



Moksha is the state that all Hindus seek to achieve. When someone achieves moksha, they are no longer reincarnated, and they become one with the universal spirit. It is said that all living things are part of the universal spirit.

Unlike monotheistic religions, Hinduism has many different forms of one God.



Almost all Hindus live in India where it began. Hinduism has not spread significantly beyond the country's borders.

Beliefs of Buddhism based on B.U.D.D.H.A.

Buddha means the Enlightened One

The Founder of Buddhism is Siddhartha Gautama. He was a Brahmin Prince who became disturbed of the suffering happening around him.

He set out to discover “the realm of life where there is neither suffering nor death.”



The word Buddha means enlightened one. The founder of Buddhism was Siddhartha Gautama.

Siddhartha grew up in the Hindu caste system and was a Brahmin prince. He was so disturbed by the suffering in the world that he gave up his life of luxury and set out to discover “the realm of life, where there is neither suffering nor death.” He moved to the Himalayan Mountains and lived in a cave for a number of years. While he was living as a hermit away from the rest of society, he practiced meditation. During one of his meditations, he came up with his philosophy of Buddhism.




Did **U** know that that both
Hinduism and Buddhism
originated in India?



Did you know that both Hinduism and Buddhism originated in India? Today, however, most Hindus still live in India, while Buddhism has spread to other countries.

Buddhism and Hinduism



Religious **D**octrine = Four Noble Truths

Four Noble Truths

All life is full of suffering, pain, and sorrow.

The cause of suffering is the desire for things that are really illusions, such as riches, power, and long life.

The only way to end suffering is to overcome desire.

The way to overcome desire is to follow the Eightfold Path to Enlightenment.

When Buddha returned from his isolation, he started teaching his beliefs, which are found in the doctrine of the Four Noble Truths. The Four Noble Truths state that:

- All life is full of suffering
- The cause of this suffering is desire
- The cure is to overcome desire
- To overcome desire, one must follow the Eightfold Path

[Image courtesy Heinrich Damm.]



Religious **D**octrine
Eightfold Path to Enlightenment

Eightfold Path to Enlightenment

- Right Views
- Right Aspirations
- Right Speech
- Right Conduct
- Right Livelihood
- Right Effort
- Right Mindfulness
- Right Thought



The second religious doctrine is the Eightfold Path to Enlightenment. Buddha describes the full path as a moral code for Buddhists to live their lives. To be in line with the Eightfold Path, one must have right views, right ambitions, right speech, right conduct, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right contemplation.



Hey, Buddha believed if one follows both the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path a person would reach Nirvana.

Nirvana

Is the final stop for Buddhists where they achieve union with the universe and are released from the cycle of rebirth.

Buddha believed that if someone follows both the Four Noble truths and Eightfold Path, that person would reach nirvana. Nirvana is the final stop for Buddhists, where they achieve union with the universe and are released from the cycle of rebirth.

Asoka sent missionaries who spread Buddhism to East and Southeast Asia



Asoka was an Indian Emperor who helped spread Buddhism outside of India. Asoka started out as a fierce warrior who waged war and destruction to gain land and riches from present day Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh. However, he eventually realized that his conquests caused suffering to his army and his victims and he embraced the teachings of Buddha.

Asoka's greatest contribution to Buddhism was that he sent out Buddhist missionaries across East and Southeast Asia. His missionaries spread the teachings of Buddha in the local languages of these countries. This helped Buddhism take hold in East and Southeast Asia. Today, Buddhism is concentrated in these regions.

[Image of Asoka courtesy Andhra Pradesh.]