

## Ancient History: Buddhism and Jainism

### Causes of Origin

1. The Kshatriya reaction against the domination of the priestly class called Brahmanas. Mahavira and Gautama Buddha, both belonged to the Kshatriya clan.
2. Indiscriminate killing of cattle for Vedic sacrifices and for food had led to the destabilization of the new agricultural economy which was dependent on cattle for ploughing the fields. Both Buddhism and Jainism stood against this killing.
3. The growth of cities with the increase in the circulation of Punch Marked coins and trade and commerce had added to the importance of Vaishyas who looked for a new religion to improve their position. Jainism and Buddhism facilitated their needs
4. The new forms of property created social inequalities and the common people wanted to get back to their primitive form of life
5. Growing complexity and degeneration of Vedic religion.



## Ancient History Buddhism and Jainism



### Difference between Jainism and Buddhism and Vedic Religion



1. They did not attach any importance to the existing Varna system
2. They preached the Gospel of non-violence
3. They accepted Vaishyas, including the Moneylenders who were condemned by Brahmanas
4. They preferred simple, puritan and ascetic living

## Buddhism

### Gautama Buddha and Buddhism

Gautama Buddha was born in 563 BC in the Republican clan of Shakyas in Lumbini near Kapilavastu. His mother was a princess from Kosalan dynasty.

Four Sights of Buddha's life at the age of 29 had moved him to the path of renunciation. They are

- An old man
- A diseased person
- An ascetic
- A dead person

### Important events in the life of Buddha

Events	Places	Symbols
Janma	Lumbini	Lotus and Bull
Mahabhinishkramana	-	Horse
Nirvana	Bodh Gaya	Bodhi Tree
Dharmachakra Pravartana	Saranath	Wheel
Mahaparinirvana	Kusinagar	Stupa

### Doctrines of Buddhism



- **Four noble truths**

1. Dukha – life is full of sorrow
2. Samyuda – there are causes for the sorrow
3. Nirodha – they can be stopped
4. Nirodha gamini Pratipada – Path leading towards the cessation of sorrow

- **Ashtangika Marga**

1. Right observation
2. Right determination
3. Right exercise
4. Right action
5. Right speech
6. Right memory
7. Right meditation
8. Right livelihood

- **Madhya Marga** – to avoid the excess of both luxury and austerity
- **Triratna** – Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha

### Special features of Buddhism and the causes of its spread

1. Buddhism does not recognize the existence of god and soul
2. Women were also admitted to the Sangha. Sangha was open to all, irrespective of caste and sex
3. Pali language was used which helped in the spread of Buddhist doctrines among the common people
4. Ashoka embraced Buddhism and spread it to Central Asia, West Asia, and Srilanka
5. Buddhist Councils

**First Council:** The first council was held in the year 483 B.C at Saptaparni caves near Rajgriha in Bihar under the patron of king Ajatshatru, during the first council two Buddhist works of literature were compiled Vinaya and Sutta Pitaka by Upali

**Second Council:** The second council was held in the year 383 B.C at Vaishali under the patron of king Kalashoka

**Third Council:** The third council was held in the year 250 B.C at Patliputra under the



patron of King Ashoka the Great, during the third council Abhidhamma Pitaka was added and Buddhist holy book Tripitaka was compiled.

**Fourth Council:** The fourth council was held in the year 78 A.D at Kundalvan in Kashmir under the patron of king Kanishka, during this council Hinayana and Mahayana were divided.

### Causes of the decline of Buddhism

1. Buddhism succumbed to the rituals and ceremonies which it had originally denounced
2. They gave up Pali and took Sanskrit. They began to practice idol worship and received numerous offerings from devotees
3. Monasteries came under the domination of ease-loving people and became the center of corrupt practices
4. Vajrayana form started to develop.
5. Buddhists came to look upon women as objects of lust.

### Importance and influence of Buddhism

#### Literature

1. Tripitaka
  1. Sutta Pitaka – Buddha’s sayings
  2. Vinaya Pitaka – Monastic code
  3. Abhidhamma Pitaka – religious discourses of Buddha
2. Milindapanho – dialogue between Menander and Saint Nagasena
3. Dipavamsa and Mahavamsa – the great chronicles of Sri Lanka
4. Buddhacharita by Ashvagosha

#### Sects

1. **Hinayana (Lesser Wheel)** - They believe in the real teachings of Gautam Buddha of attaining Nirvana. They do not believe in idol worship and Pali language was used in the Hinayana text
2. **Mahayana (Greater Wheel)** - They believe that Nirvana is attained by the grace of Gautam Buddha and following Boddhisattvas and not by following his teachings. They believe in idol worship and Sanskrit was used in Mahayana text



3. **Vajrayana** - They believe that Nirvana is attained by the help of magical tricks or black magic.

### **Bodhisattvas**

1. Vajrapani
2. Avalokitesvara or Padmapani
3. Manjushri
4. Maitreya (Future Buddha)
5. Kshitigriha
6. Amitabha/Amitayusha

### **Buddhist architectures**

1. **Places of Worship** – Stupas containing the relics of Buddha or Bodhisattvas. Chaityas are the prayer hall while Viharas are the place of residence of monks
2. **Development of Cave architecture** eg. Barabar caves in Gaya
3. **Development of Idol worship and sculptures**
4. **The growth of universities of par excellence** which attracted students from all over the world

### **Jainism**

- Jainism believes in 24 Tirthankaras with Rishabdev being the first and Mahavira, contemporary of Buddha being the 24<sup>th</sup> Tirthankara.
- The 23rd Tirthankar Parshwanath (Emblem: Snake) was the son of King Ashvasena of Banaras.
- The 24th and the last Tirthankar was Vardhman Mahavira (Emblem: Lion).
- He was born in Kundagram (Distt Muzaffarpur, Bihar) in 599 BC.
- His father Siddhartha was the head of Jnatrika clan. His mother was Trishla, sister of Lichchavi Prince Chetak of Vaishali.
- Mahavira was related to Bimbisara.
- Married to Yashoda, had a daughter named Priyadarshan, whose husband Jamali became his first disciple.
- At 30, after the death of his parents, he became an ascetic.



- In the 13th year of his asceticism (on the 10th of Vaishakha), outside the town of Jrimbhikgrama, he attained supreme knowledge (Kaivalya).
- From now on he was called Jaina or Jitendriya and Mahavira, and his followers were named Jains.
- He also got the title of Arihant, i.e., worthy. At the age of 72, he attained death at Pava, near Patna, in 527 BC.

### Five vows of Jainism

- Ahimsa – non-violence
- Satya – do not speak a lie
- Asteya – do not steal
- Aparigraha – do not acquire property
- Brahmacharya – celibacy

### Three main principles

- Ahimsa
- Anekantavada
- Aparigraha

### Triratna of Jainism

- Right faith – Samayak Shradha
- Right Knowledge – Samayak Jnan
- Right Conduct – Samayak karma

### Five types of knowledge

- Mati jnana
- Shruta jnana
- Avadhi jnana
- Manahparayaya Jnana
- Keval Jnana

### Jain council





- **1<sup>st</sup> Council** at Patliputra under the Patron of Chandragupta Maurya in 300 BC during which the 12 Angas were compiled
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Council** at Vallabhi in 512 AD during which the final compilation of 12 Angas and 12 Upangas was done

## Sects

- **Shwetambars** – Sthulabhadra – People who put on white robes. Those who stayed back in the North during the times of famine
- **Digambars** – Bhadrabahu – Exodus of monks to Deccan and South during the times of Magadhan famine. They have a naked attire

## Jain Literature

Jain literature used Prakrit, which is a common language of people than using Sanskrit. In this way, Jainism reached far and wide through people. The important literary works are

- 12 Angas
- 12 Upangas
- 10 Parikramas
- 6 Chhedsutras
- 4 Mulasutras
- 2 Sutra Granthas
- Part of Sangam literature is also attributed to Jain scholars.

