

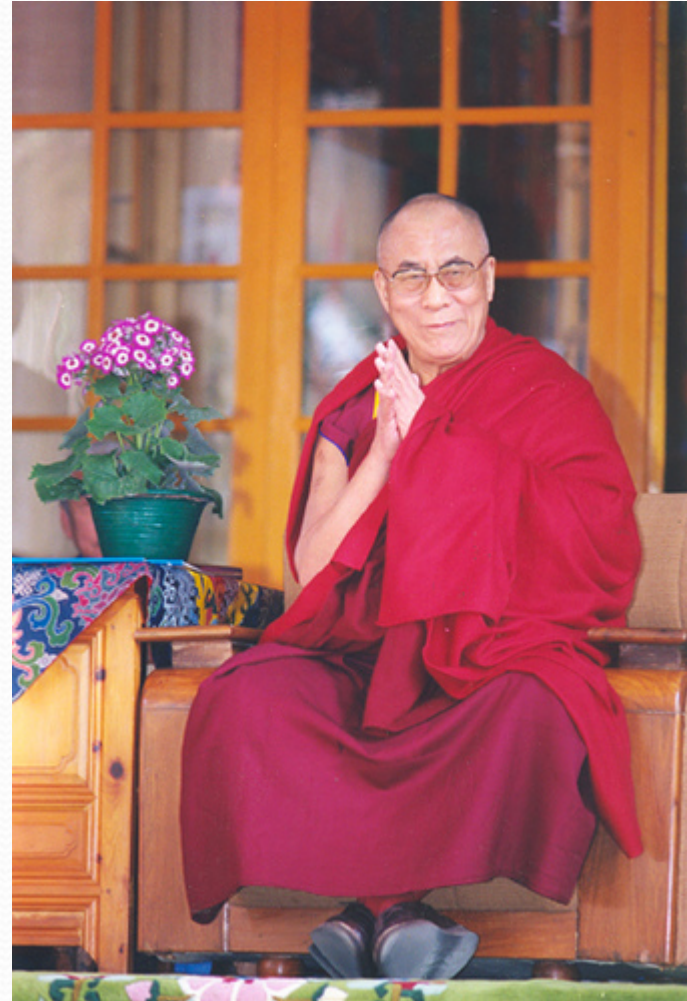
**Arsha Bodha Center**  
**History of Hindu Religion Lectures**  
**Lecture 6 - Nov 6, 08**  
**Buddha and Buddhism**

Buddha's Teachings

Dr. Lov K. Kher

## Dalai Lama (Born: 1935)

“Hindus and Buddhists, we are two sons of the same mother.”



# The Dhammapada, with Introductory Essays

By  
S. Radhakrishnan

"In Gautama the Buddha we have a master mind from the East, second to none so far as the influence on the thought and life of the human race is concerned.....judged by intellectual integrity, moral earnestness, and spiritual insight, he is undoubtedly one of the greatest figures in history."

"Buddha was more definitely opposed to Vedic orthodoxy and ceremonialism than was..... Jesus to Judaism, and yet he lived .....and founded a religious Order in his lifetime..... Perhaps the Indian temper of religion is Responsible for the difference in the treatment of unorthodoxy."



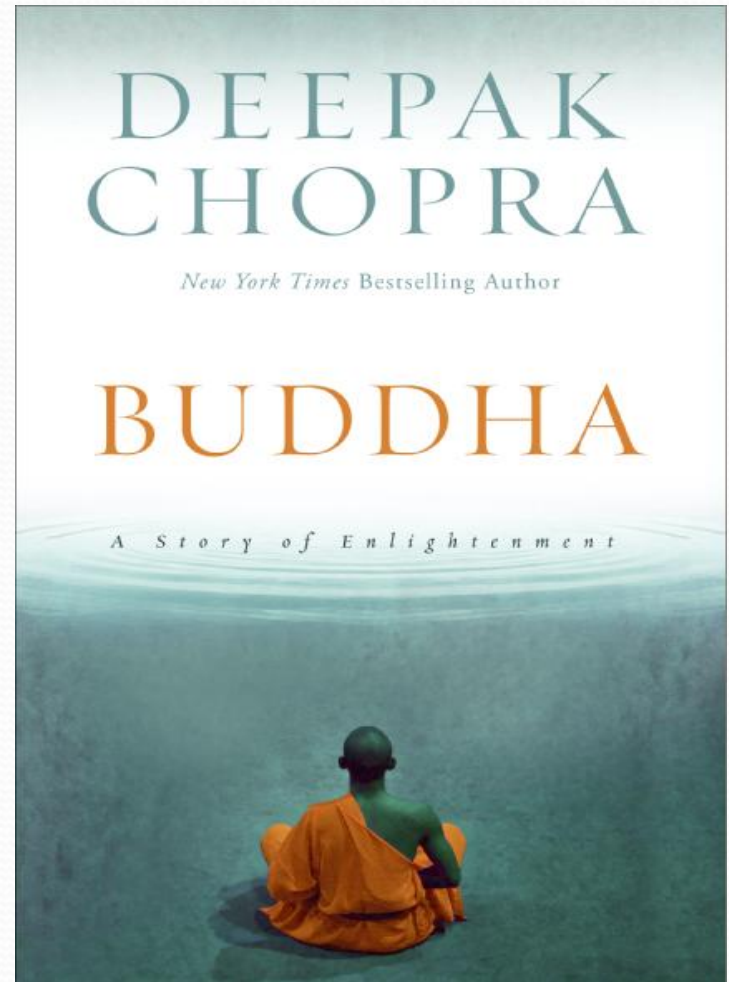
Dr. S.  
Radhakrishnan  
(1888 - 1975)  
Philosopher, Statesman,  
and President of India

# Dr. Deepak Chopra

(Born: 1946)

Chopra quotes Buddha's message as "*Whoever sees me sees the teaching,*" he said, "*and whoever sees the teaching sees me.*"

Chopra further says, "although we recognize Buddha today as an icon of peace and serenity, his life story was a tumultuous and spellbinding affair filled with love and sex, murder and loss, struggle and surrender. From the rocky terrain of the material world to the summit of the spiritual one, *Buddha* captivates and inspires—ultimately leading us closer to understanding the true nature of life and our selves. "



# Gautama Buddha (Circa: 563 B.C. – 483 B.C.)



# Buddha's Life – At A Glance

- > Siddhartha Gautama: born circa 563 B.C
- > Son of King Shuddhodana, Shakya clan, at the foothills of Himalayas, capital Kapilvastu, border between India and Nepal
- > Married at the age of 16 with his cousin, Yashodhara, and had a son, Rahul
- > At the age of 29, Siddhartha left his home to seek truth, renunciated princely life after seeing suffering, death and wandering ascetic
- > He scavenged some rags and went into the forest. Their color, saffron yellow, has become the emblem of the Buddhist monk
- > Initially, he became disciple of Brahmin ascetics Alara Kalama and Uddaka Ramaputta who taught him *Dharma* and *Vinaya*. Then wandered for six years subjecting his body to all kinds of mortification, almost found himself at death's door, but no glimpse of the riddle of life
- > Finally, Siddhartha settled near the city of Gaya, under a sacred fig tree, and meditated and passed through contemplations culminating in pure self-possession and equanimity – attained *bodhi*, and became the Buddha, the enlightened one
- > Formed his order with the help of first five disciples near Benares, traveled all over India to teach his **Four Noble Truths** and **eightfold path**, **Dhyanas**, and the **Sutras** (423 verses) are preserved in Pali
- > The quiet end of Buddha happened when he was at the age of 80 (around 483 B.C.), in Kusinagara, near Benares

# The Four Noble Truths

## 1. Suffering

- All desire happiness, *sukkhā*. Yet, life brings *dukkhā*, just the opposite
- **Life is change, which brings suffering**
- *"Conflict is at the root of man's misery, of his spiritual disease."*

## 2. Cause of Suffering

- Everything has a cause and produces an effect
- **Selfish desire: *trishna*, craving for existence - the thirst to have what one wants in his own way**
- *"Ignorance and craving are bound together as One."*

## 3. End of Suffering

- **When mind is free of selfish desire, peace and joy comes, *nirvana***
- *"Ignorance is destroyed by intuition and, desire by ethical striving."*

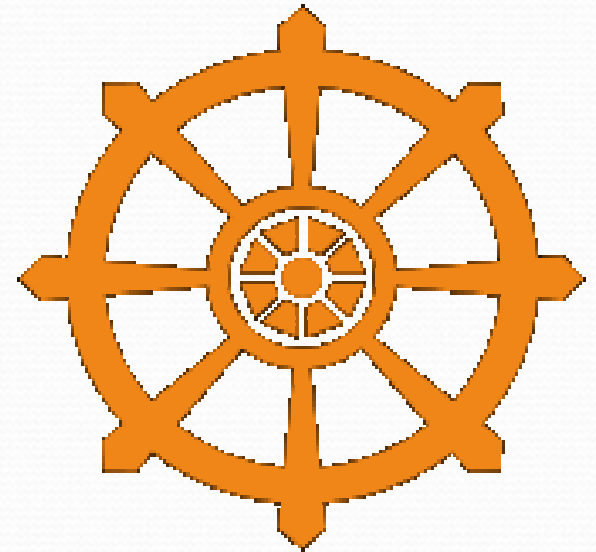
## 4. Eightfold Path to Extinguish Selfish Desires

- ***Dharma* is a wheel, the eightfold path are its spokes** (See next slide)

"Buddha does not mention ceremonial, austerities, gods –one or many – or even worship of himself. He is the discoverer, the teacher of the truth. Would not discuss whether the world was infinite in space or limited, had an origin in time or not, life after death."

# The Eightfold Paths

- > The eight spokes represent the Eightfold Paths
  - Right understanding, right purpose, right speech, right conduct, right occupation, right effort, right attention, and right meditation
  - *"This is the path that I myself have followed. No other path so purifies the mind. All the effort must be made by you, Buddhas only show the way."*
- > The chakra represents the perfection of Dharma
- > The hub stands for discipline which is essential for meditation
- > The rim, which holds the spokes, refers to mindfulness or *Samadhi*
- > The dharma chakra also refers to the dissemination of dharma teachings



# The Four Dhyanas

- > In the Vinaya Pitaka (III, 4) the Buddha left a concise roadmap of his journey to *Nirvana* – a description of the course of his meditation that night of enlightenment. The stages of this journey are called the "*four dhyanas*"
  - First, the attention is withdrawn from all the senses and turned inward
  - Second, concentration is much deeper, demands of the senses become much less shrill, though distractions can still impact but are more distant
  - Third, thought process slows down to crawl in meditation, enter into deeper consciousness, called *bodhi*, which comes like pure light accompanied by a flood of joy
  - Fourth, goal is to reach such a depth that even in dreams the awareness of unity remains unbroken. Then every corner of mind is flooded with light – this is *nirvana* – to blow out – quenching the fires of self-will and selfish passion
- > The Buddha's dry description of the four dhyanas hides the fact that traversing them is nearly impossible achievement. Even to enter the first dhyana requires years of dedicated, sustained, systematic effort, the kind of practice that turns an ordinary athlete into an Olympic Gold Medalist.

# The Sutras – Discourses of Buddha

Its 423 verses are part of Buddha's teachings. The Twin verses gives the cue: presents ten verse pairs, negative possibility followed by the positive one. The first alternative is easily accomplished and temporarily satisfying. The second, however, requires hard effort on the Eightfold Path, leads to *nirvana*

## >The Twin-Verses [1 thru 20]

- Our life is shaped by our mind; we become what we think. Suffering follows an evil thought as the wheels of a cart Follow the oxen that draw it [1]  
*Manopubbangama dhamma manosettha manomaya,  
manasa ce padutthena bhasati va karoti va,  
tato nam dukkham anveti cakkam va vahato padam*
- Our life is shaped by our mind; we become what we think. Joy follows a pure thought like a shadow that never leaves [2]  
*Manopubbangama dhamma manosettha manomaya,  
manasa ce pasannena bhasati va karoti va,  
tato nam sukkham anveti chaya va anapayini*
- Those who are selfish here and hereafter; they suffer in both worlds from the results of their own actions. But those who are selfless rejoice here and rejoice hereafter. They rejoice in both worlds from the results of their own actions [15-16]

# The Sutras – Discourses of Buddha (Contd.)

- > Vigilance [21 thru 32]
  - If you meditate earnestly, pure in mind and kind in deeds, leading a disciplined life in harmony with the dharma, you will grow in glory. If you meditate earnestly , through spiritual disciplines, you can make an island for yourself that no flood can overwhelm [24 & 25]
- > Thought [33 thru 43]
  - Those who can direct thoughts, which are unsubstantial and wander so aimlessly, are freed from the bonds of Mara [37]
- > Flowers [44 thru 59]
  - Many garlands can be made from a heap of flowers. Many good deeds can be done in this life [53]
- > The Fool (Immature) [60 thru 75]
  - Even if they pick up a little knowledge, the immature misuse it and break their heads instead of benefiting from it [72]
- > The Wise Man [76 thru 89]
  - Let him admonish or instruct or restrain you from what is wrong. He will be loved by the good and disliked by the bad [77]
- > The Arhat (The Saint) [90 thru 99]
  - They make holy wherever they dwell, in village or forest, on land or at sea. With their senses at peace and minds full of joy, they make the forest holy [99]
- > The Thousands [100 thru 115]
  - One who conquers himself is greater than another who conquers a thousand times a thousand men on the battlefield [103-104]
- > Evil Conduct [116 thru 128]
  - Hasten to do good; refrain from evil. If you neglect the good, evil can enter your mind [116]
- > Punishment [129 thru 145]
  - If one harms the innocent, suffering will come in ten ways [137]

# The Sutras – Discourses of Buddha (Contd.)

- > Old Age (*Jara*) [146 thru 156]
  - A man who does not learn from life grows old like an ox: his body grows, but not his wisdom [152]
- > The Self (*Atman*) [157 thru 166]
  - Your own self is your master; who else could be? With yourself well-controlled, you gain a master very hard to find [160]
- > The World (*Loka*) [167 thru 178]
  - Misers do not go to the world of the gods; they do not want to give. The wise are generous, and go to happier world [177]
- > The Awakened One (*The Buddha*) [179 thru 196]
  - Even the gods emulate those who are awakened. Established in meditation, they live in freedom, at peace [181]
- > Happiness (*Sukha*) [197 thru 208]
  - It is good to meet the wise, even better to live with them. But avoid the company of the immature if you want joy [206]
- > Pleasure [209 thru 220]
  - Not seeing what is pleasant brings pain; seeing what is unpleasant brings pain. Therefore go beyond both pleasure and pain [210]
- > Anger [221 thru 234]
  - Conquer anger through gentleness, unkind through kindness, greed through generosity, and falsehood by truth [223]
- > Impurity [235 thru 255]
  - Lack of modesty is a drawback in women; lack of generosity taints those who give. Selfish deeds are without merit here and hereafter. But there is no impurity greater than ignorance. Remove that through wisdom and you will be pure [242-243]

# The Sutras – Discourses of Buddha (Contd.)

- > The Righteous (The Person Established in Dharma) [256 thru 272]
  - Dharma is not upheld by talking about it. Dharma is upheld by living in harmony with it, even if one is not learned [259]
- > The Path [273 thru 289]
  - All created things / beings are transitory / involved in sorrow; those who realize this are freed from suffering. This is the path that leads to pure wisdom [277-278]
- > Miscellaneous Verses [290 thru 305]
  - If a man who enjoys a lesser happiness beholds a greater one, let him leave aside the lesser to gain the greater [290]
- > The Downward Course (Hell) [306 thru 319]
  - He who says what is not true, he who denies what he has done, both choose the downward course. After death these two become partners in falsehood [306]
- > The Elephant [320 thru 333]
  - Be vigilant; guard your mind against negative thoughts. Pull yourself out of bad ways as an elephant raises itself out of the mud [327]
- > Thirst (*Trishna*) [334 thru 359]
  - I have conquered myself and live in purity. I know all. I have left everything behind, and live in freedom. Having taught myself, to whom shall I point as teacher? [353]
- > The Mendicant (*The Bhikshu*) [360 thru 382]
  - *Bhikshu*, empty your boat! It will go faster. Cast out greed and hatred and reach *nirvana* [369]
- > The Brahmin [383 thru 423]
  - Saffron robe and outward show do not make a brahmin, but training of the mind and senses through practice of meditation. Neither riches nor high caste make a brahmin. Free yourself from selfish desires, and you will become a brahmin [395-396]

# Celebrating Buddha's Death



# Summary

- > Buddha's teaching (*Dharma*) is based on **three important beliefs** about the nature of life:
  - *Anicca*: the belief that everything is impermanent
  - *Dukkha*: that because things change and die, nothing really satisfies and this causes "suffering"
  - *Annatta*: that the independent self is an illusion and does not exist
- > The Buddha not only **rejected** significant **aspects of Hindu philosophy**, but also challenged the authority of the priesthood, **denied the validity of the Vedic scriptures**, and **rejected the sacrificial cult** based on them. Moreover, he **opened** his movement to members of **all castes**, denying that a person's spiritual worth is a matter of birth
- > Originating as a monastic movement within the dominant Brahmin tradition of the day, Buddhism quickly developed in a distinctive direction
- > Buddhism **spread rapidly** throughout the land of its birth, India. Missionaries dispatched by **King Asoka** introduced the religion to southern India and to the northwest part of the subcontinent. According to inscriptions from the Asokan period, missionaries were sent to countries along the Mediterranean, although without success.
  - Presently, Buddhism is practiced in India, Sri Lanka, Tibet, Central China, Japan, Korea, Cambodia, Thailand, and Myanmar among other countries
  - There are **about 376 million people who follow Buddhism** (Christianity – 2.1 billion, Islam – 1.5 billion, and Hinduism – 900 million) in the World

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