

LARGER THAN LIFE

A CELEBRATION OF GREATNESS



Gautama Buddha
(563 BCE - 483 BCE)

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The words sacrifice and simplicity describe the personality of Gautama Buddha. Siddhartha Gautama was a **spiritual teacher from ancient India and the founder of Buddhism**. He is universally recognized by Buddhists as the Supreme Buddha (Sammâsambuddha) of our age.

BIRTH AND EARLY YEARS

- Gautama Buddha was born in 563 B.C. in northeast India as a son of king Suddhodana, who ruled at Kapilavastu, on the border of Nepal and Queen Maya. He **was named Siddhartha**.
- Although his father ensured that Siddhartha was provided with everything he could want or need, **Siddhartha felt that material wealth was not the ultimate goal of life**. At the age of 16 he was married to Princess Yasodhara. They had a son named Rahula.

SIDDHARTHA BECOMES BUDDHA

- After seeing a decrepit old man, an invalid, and an ascetic beggar, he learned of suffering and decided to embrace asceticism. Soon afterwards, **at the age of 29, Siddhartha left the palace and his family** and submitted himself to rigorous ascetic practices, studying and following different methods of meditation with various religious teachers. But he was never fully satisfied.
- One day, however, **he was offered a bowl of rice from a young girl and he accepted** it. At that moment, he realised that physical austerities were

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not the means to achieve liberation. From then on, he encouraged people to follow a path of balance rather than extremism. He called this '**The Middle Way**'.

- That night Siddhartha sat under the **Bodhi tree**, and meditated until dawn. He purified his mind of all defilements and attained enlightenment at the age of 35, thus earning the title '**Buddha**', or '**Enlightened One**'.

LATER YEARS

For the remaining 45 years of his life, the Buddha is said to have traveled many places, teaching his doctrine and discipline to an extremely diverse range of people.

THE GREAT PASSING

At the age of 80, the Buddha announced that he would soon enter Parinirvana or the final deathless state abandoning the earthly body. After this, the Buddha ate his last meal. **At his death, the Buddha told his disciples to follow no leader, but to follow his teachings.** He then finally entered Parinirvana.

Buddhism went on to become a very popular religion in the subsequent centuries and even went abroad. Buddha's birthday i.e. **Buddha Jayanti is observed in India as a national holiday.**

Quotes

“He is able who thinks he is able.”



“The mind is everything. What you think you become.”



“An idea that is developed and put into action is more important than an idea that exists only as an idea.”

Quiz

- 1) What was the name of the son of Siddhartha and Yasodhara?
- 2) Gautama Buddha was born in _____ B.C. Please fill in the blank with the correct answer.
- 3) What was the name of the girl who offered Buddha a bowl of rice?