



Jainism and Buddhism

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Audio introduction: Traditional Pali chanting of the Buddhist Refuges and Precepts by Ajahn Bram

I. India in the sixth century B.C.E.

A. Social changes

B. Religion

1. Classical Vedic Period (Brahmanism)
2. Philosophical speculation (Upanishads)
 - a. Brahman/atman
 - b. Samsara/karma
 - c. Moksha (liberation)
3. Asceticism

II. Jainism

A. Nataputta Vardhamana (c. 540-c. 468 B.C.E.)

1. Mahavira (Great Hero)
2. Jina (Victor) = Jain

B. Jain cosmology and distinctive principles

1. Permanence and eternity
2. Jiva and ahimsa
3. Tirthankaras (= ford-crossers)
4. Karma and asceticism

C. Principal Jain sects (division c. 300 B.C.E.)

1. Digambaras (sky clad)
2. Svetambaras (white clad)

III. Buddhism

A. Siddhartha Gautama (c. 563-480 B.C.E.)

1. Asvaghosha and the problem of sources
2. Early life and the "Four Passing Sights"
3. The search for enlightenment
4. Turning the Wheel of Dharma

B. Buddhist teachings (Dharma or Dhamma)

1. The Four Noble Truths
 - a. All is dukkha (suffering; impermanence)
 - b. Dukkha is caused by desire (or ignorance)
 - c. Therefore, to end dukkha one must extinguish desire (or overcome ignorance)
 - d. Extinguish desire by following the Eightfold Path
2. Buddhist cosmology
 - a. Dependent Origination (Interdependent Arising)
 - b. Constant change; no permanence (thus no Brahman)
 - c. Anatman (no atman; no self)
 - d. Karma and reincarnation

C. The development and spread of Buddhism

1. Early Buddhism in India
 - a. The Sangha (community of monks)
 - b. The Tripitaka (sutta, vinaya, abidhamma)
 - c. Theravada Buddhism
 - d. The Buddhist King: Asoka (ruled c. 270-230 BCE)
2. Mahayana Buddhism
 - a. Further turning the Wheel of Dharma: The Heart, Diamond, and Lotus Sutras
 - b. The figure of the bodhisattva
3. The transmission of Buddhism into east Asia
 - a. Buddhism in China and Japan
 - b. Vajrayana (Tibetan) Buddhism