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BUDDHISM and JAINISM for UPSC

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BUDDHISM

Origin and Historical Context

- **Founder:** Gautama Buddha (Siddhartha Gautama), born around 563 BCE in Lumbini (modern-day Nepal). Known as **Sakyamuni** (Sage of the Sakyas).
- **Background:** Born as a prince of the Shakya clan, he renounced worldly life at 29, attained enlightenment (**Bodhi**) at 35 under the Bodhi tree in Bodh Gaya, and delivered his first sermon (**Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta**, Turning the Wheel of Dharma) at Sarnath (Deer Park).
- **Historical Period:** Emerged during the 6th century BCE, a time of socio-religious upheaval in India, challenging Vedic rituals and Brahmanical dominance.

Core Principles

Four Noble Truths (Cattari Ariyasaccani in Pali):

- **Dukkha:** Life is suffering (physical and mental).
- **Samudaya:** Suffering arises from desire or attachment (**Tanha**).
- **Nirodha:** Suffering can be ended by overcoming desire.
- **Magga:** The path to end suffering is the Noble Eightfold Path.

Noble Eightfold Path (Ariya Atthangika Magga in Pali):

- **Wisdom (Panna):** Right View (**Samma Ditthi**), Right Intention (**Samma Sankappa**).
- **Ethical Conduct (Sila):** Right Speech (**Samma Vaca**), Right Action (**Samma Kammanta**), Right Livelihood (**Samma Ajiva**).
- **Mental Discipline (Samadhi):** Right Effort (**Samma Vayama**), Right Mindfulness (**Samma Sati**), Right Concentration (**Samma Samadhi**).

Key Concepts:

- **Nirvana (Nibbana):** Liberation from the cycle of birth and rebirth (**Samsara**).
- **Anatta (Anatman):** No permanent self or soul.
- **Anicca (Anitya):** Impermanence of all things.
- **Karma (Kamma):** Actions determine future rebirths.
- **Middle Path (Majjhima Patipada):** Avoiding extremes of indulgence and asceticism.



Notes

Major Schools

The following table outlines the major schools of Buddhism, including leadership where applicable:

School	Key Features	Geographical Prevalence	Head/Leadership
Theravada (Hinayana)	Emphasizes individual salvation, Arhat ideal (enlightened monk), strict adherence to Pali Canon.	Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia	No centralized head; led by senior monks (Sangha elders, e.g., Mahanayakas in Sri Lanka).
Mahayana	Advocates collective salvation, worship of Bodhisattvas (beings who delay Nirvana to help others), broader scriptures.	China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam	No single head; prominent figures like Dalai Lama (for some schools) or sect-specific leaders (e.g., Zen masters).
Vajrayana	Esoteric Buddhism, emphasizes tantric practices, rituals, and mantras, rapid path to enlightenment.	Tibet, Mongolia, Bhutan	Dalai Lama (Gelug school), Karmapa (Kagyu school), or other Lamas for specific lineages.

Note: Buddhism lacks a centralized hierarchical leadership like Jainism; authority is distributed among senior monks or lamas within each school or region.

Sacred Texts

- **Tripitaka (Pali Canon, Tipitaka in Pali):**
- **Vinaya Pitaka:** Monastic rules.
- **Sutta Pitaka:** Buddha's discourses.
- **Abhidhamma Pitaka:** Philosophical and psychological analysis.
- Mahayana texts (original Sanskrit names with English translations):
 - **Saddharmapundarika Sutra** (Lotus Sutra): Emphasizes universal salvation.
 - **Prajnaparamita Hridaya Sutra** (Heart Sutra): Focuses on emptiness (**Sunyata**).
 - **Vajracchedika Prajnaparamita Sutra** (Diamond Sutra): Explores non-attachment.
- Vajrayana texts: **Hevajra Tantra**, **Guhyasamaja Tantra** (esoteric tantric texts).

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Notes

Buddhist Councils

The following table details the Buddhist councils:

Council	Place	Year	Presided By	Headed By King/Emperor	Work Done
First Council	Rajagriha (Rajgir, Bihar)	~483 BCE	Mahakassapa	Ajatashatru (Haryanka Dynasty)	Compilation of Buddha's teachings into Vinaya and Sutta Pitakas.
Second Council	Vaishali (Bihar)	~383 BCE	Sabakami	Kalasoka (Shishunaga Dynasty)	Resolved disputes over monastic discipline (Vinaya), addressed lax practices.
Third Council	Pataliputra (Patna, Bihar)	~250 BCE	Moggaliputta Tissa	Ashoka (Mauryan Empire)	Standardized Theravada canon, purged heretical views, sent missionaries.
Fourth Council	Kashmir (or Jalandhar)	~100 CE	Vasumitra, Ashvaghosha	Kanishka (Kushan Empire)	Compiled Mahayana texts, formalized Mahayana doctrines.

Spread and Patronage

- **Patrons:** Emperor Ashoka (Mauryan Empire) played a key role in spreading Buddhism through missionaries and edicts (**Dhamma Lipi**). Other patrons include Kanishka (Kushan Empire) and Harsha.
- **Spread:** Reached Sri Lanka, Southeast Asia, Central Asia, and East Asia via trade routes (Silk Route) and missionaries.

Art and Architecture

- **Stupas:** Sanchi, Bharhut, Amaravati (relics of Buddha, Dhatu).
- **Viharas:** Monasteries like Nalanda and Vikramshila.
- **Chaityas:** Prayer halls, e.g., Karle and Bhaja caves.
- **Sculpture:** Gandhara (Greco-Buddhist) and Mathura schools.
- **Symbols:** Lotus (**Padma**), Dharmachakra (Wheel of Dharma), Bodhi tree.

Decline in India

- **Reasons:** Revival of Hinduism (Gupta period), rise of Bhakti movement, Muslim invasions (destruction of monasteries like Nalanda), and assimilation into Hinduism.



- **Revival:** Ambedkar's neo-Buddhist movement in the 20th century.

JAINISM

Origin and Historical Context

- **Founder:** Mahavira (Vardhamana), the 24th **Tirthankara** (ford-maker), born around 599 BCE in Vaishali (Bihar). Also known as **Jina** (conqueror).
- **Background:** Born into the Kshatriya clan, renounced worldly life at 30, attained **Kevala Jnana** (omniscience) at 42, and preached until his death at 72 in Pawapuri.
- **Historical Period:** Contemporary of Buddhism, emerged as a reaction to Vedic ritualism and caste rigidity.

Core Principles

Three Jewels (Ratnatraya):

- **Right Faith (Samyak Darshana):** Belief in Jaina teachings.
- **Right Knowledge (Samyak Jnana):** Understanding the nature of reality.
- **Right Conduct (Samyak Charitra):** Ethical living through vows.

Five Vows (Mahavratas) for monks/nuns (partial for laity):

- **Ahimsa:** Non-violence in thought, word, and deed.
- **Satya:** Truthfulness.
- **Asteya:** Non-stealing.
- **Brahmacharya:** Celibacy (chastity for laity).
- **Aparigraha:** Non-attachment to material possessions.

Key Concepts:

- **Jiva and Ajiva:** Soul (living) and non-soul (non-living) entities.
- **Karma:** Actions bind the soul to **Samsara**; liberation through shedding karma.
- **Moksha:** Liberation by attaining **Kevala Jnana**.
- **Anekantavada:** Doctrine of non-absolutism (multiple perspectives).
- **Syadvada:** Relativism in judgments.
- **Sallekhana:** Ritual fasting unto death for spiritual purification.

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Notes

Major Sects

The following table outlines the major sects of Jainism, including leadership:

Sect	Key Features	Geographical Prevalence	Head/Leadership
Digambara	Monks are sky-clad (naked), believe women cannot attain moksha directly, stricter ascetic practices.	South India (Karnataka, Tamil Nadu)	Acharyas (e.g., Bhattarakas like Laxmisena for specific mathas).
Shvetambara	Monks wear white clothes, believe women can attain moksha, relatively less rigid practices.	Western India (Gujarat, Rajasthan)	Acharyas (e.g., leaders like Vijay Vallabh Surishwar for specific sub-sects).

Note: Jainism has a structured monastic hierarchy with **Acharyas** (spiritual leaders) and **Bhattarakas** (heads of Digambara institutions). Specific names vary by region and sub-sect.

Sacred Texts

- **Agamas:** Canonical texts, primarily oral, later written.
- Digambara texts: **Shatkhandagama** (Six-Part Scripture), **Kasayappincipallyahuda** (Treatise on Passions).
- Shvetambara texts: **Angas, Upangas, Prakirnakas**.
- Other works: **Tattvartha Sutra** by Umasvati (accepted by both sects).

Jain Councils

The following table details the Jain councils:

Council	Place	Year	Presided By	Headed By King/Emperor	Work Done
First Council	Pataliputra (Patna, Bihar)	~300 BCE	Sthulabhadra	Chandragupta Maurya (Mauryan Empire)	Attempted to compile 12 Angas, but only 11 preserved; addressed loss of texts.
Second Council	Valabhi (Gujarat)	~512 CE (or ~453 CE)	Devardhi Kshamashramana	Not explicitly tied to a king	Final compilation of Shvetambara Agamas, standardized canonical texts.

Notes

Note: Digambaras do not recognize the Valabhi Council's compilations, as they believe many original texts were lost earlier.

Spread and Patronage

- **Patrons:** Chandragupta Maurya (converted to Jainism, Digambara tradition), Kharavela (Kalinga), Rashtrakuta and Chalukya rulers.
- **Spread:** Strong presence in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu. Jain merchants played a key role in its spread.

Art and Architecture

- **Temples:** Dilwara (Mount Abu), Ranakpur, Palitana.
- **Sculpture:** Gomateshwara statue at Shravanabelagola (Karnataka).
- **Caves:** Udayagiri and Khandagiri (Odisha).
- **Tirthas:** Sacred sites like Palitana, Shravanabelagola, Sammed Shikharji.

Decline and Survival

- **Decline:** Competition with Hinduism and Buddhism, lack of royal patronage after medieval period.
- **Survival:** Strong community presence due to mercantile influence and adherence to non-violence.

Key Differences for UPSC

Aspect	Buddhism	Jainism
Founder	Gautama Buddha (Sakyamuni, 563 BCE)	Mahavira (Jina, 599 BCE)
Soul	Rejects permanent soul (Anatta/Anatman)	Believes in eternal soul (Jiva)
Asceticism	Middle Path (Majjhima Patipada)	Extreme asceticism (e.g., Sallekhana)
God	No creator god	No creator god, but Tirthankaras revered
Sects	Theravada, Mahayana, Vajrayana	Digambara, Shvetambara
Spread	Global (Asia, beyond)	Mostly India (Gujarat, Rajasthan, Karnataka)
Focus	Ending suffering through Nibbana/Nirvana	Liberation through shedding Karma

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