

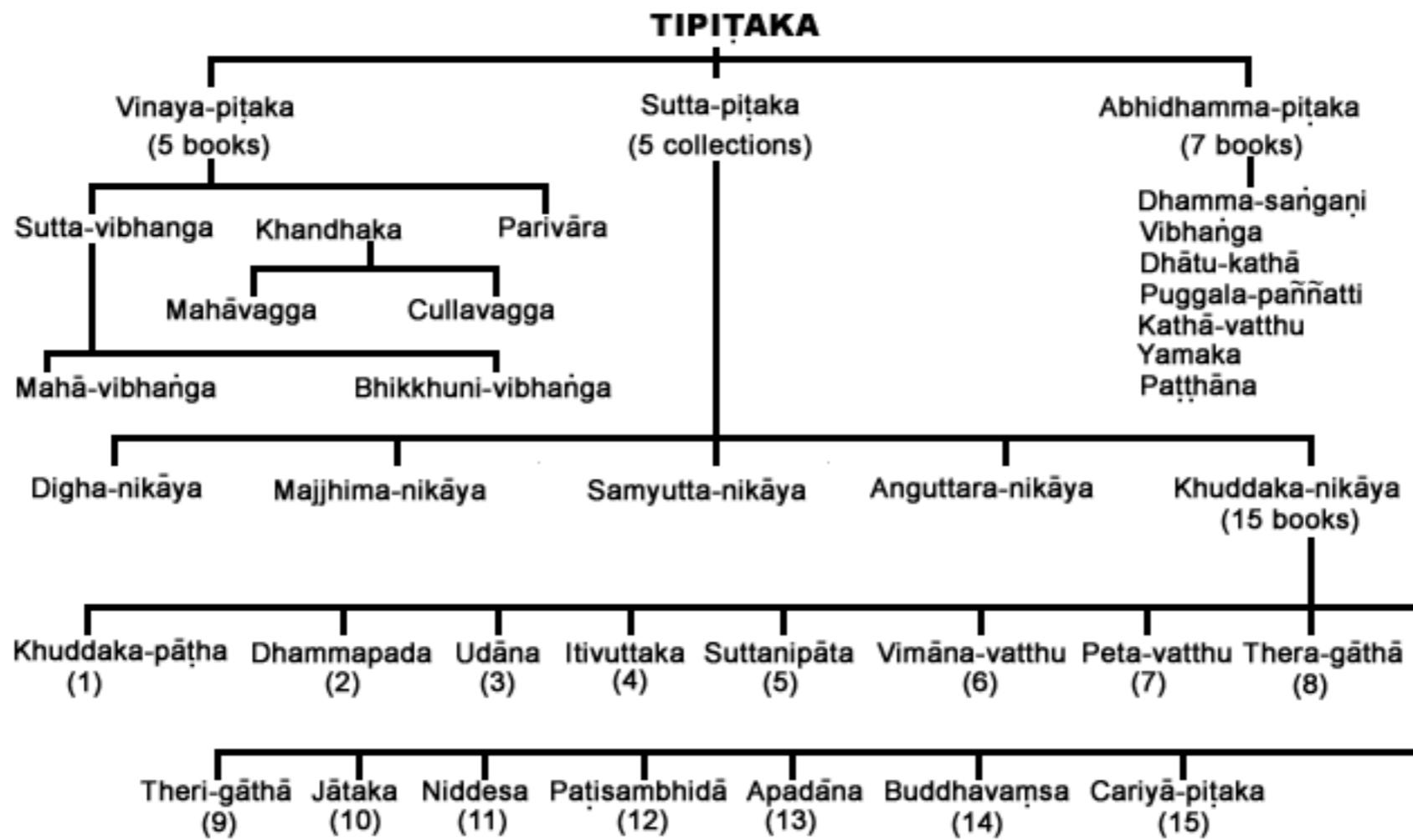
THE TEXT OF

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**BUDDHISM**

# THE TEXT OF BUDDHISM

- ▶ “The Pali Canon is the complete scripture collection of the Theravada school. As such, it is the only set of scriptures preserved in the language of its composition. It is called the *Tipitaka* or "Three Baskets" because it includes the *Vinaya Pitaka* or "Basket of Discipline," the *Sutta Pitaka* or "Basket of Discourses," and the *Abhidhamma Pitaka* or "Basket of Higher Teachings”.



Ven. Pannyavaro (copyright) 2000

- ▶ Source: [http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/history/s\\_theracanon.htm](http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/history/s_theracanon.htm)

## TIPITAKA

- ▶ "During the reign of the pious Sinhala king Vattagamani Abhaya, about 83 B.C., the Tipitaka was, for the first time in the history of Buddhism, committed to writing on palm leaves (ola) in Ceylon."
- ▶ "This voluminous Tipitaka, which contains the essence of the Buddha's Teaching, is estimated to be about eleven times the size of the Bible. A striking contrast between the Tipitaka and the Bible is that the former is not a gradual development like the latter."
- ▶ "As the word itself implies, the Tipitaka consists of three baskets. They are the Basket of Discipline (*Vinaya Pitaka*), the Basket of Discourses (*Sutta Pitaka*), and the Basket of Ultimate Doctrine (*Abhidhamma Pitaka*)."
- ▶ Source for above points: <http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/buddhism/nshell02.htm>

# TRANSMISSION OF THE TEXT

- ▶ “The Tripitaka [Sanskrit] [Pali: Tipitaka] is the Canon of the Buddhists, both Theravada and Mahayana. Thus it is possible to speak of several Canons such as the Sthaviravada, Sarvastivada and Mahayana as well as in term of languages like Pali, Chinese and Tibetan. The word is used basically to refer to the literature, the authorship of which is directly or indirectly ascribed to the Buddha himself.”
- ▶ “The Council of Vesali or the second Buddhist Council saw the break up of this original body and **as many as eighteen separate schools** were known to exist by about the first century B.C. **It is reasonable to assume** that each of these schools would have opted to possess a Tripitaka of their own or rather their own recension of the Tripitaka, perhaps with a considerably large common core.”
- ▶ Source: [http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/history/s\\_canon.htm](http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/history/s_canon.htm) (emphasis mine)

# A PICTURE OF BUDDHA'S TEACHINGS



A fragment of Buddha's teachings - AP picture (computer enhanced)

## THE TEXT OF BUDDHISM

- ▶ “The Early Buddhist Manuscripts Project was founded at the University of Washington in September 1996 to promote the study, edition and publication of twenty–seven unique birch–bark scrolls, written in the Kharoṣṭhī script and the Gāndhārī language, that had been acquired by the British Library in 1994. Further discoveries have greatly increased the number of known Gāndhārī manuscripts, and the EBMP is currently involved in the study of seventy–six birch–bark scrolls (primarily in the British Library, the Senior Collection, the University of Washington Libraries and the Library of Congress) as well as numerous smaller manuscript fragments (in the Schøyen Collection, the Hirayama Collection, the Hayashidera Collection and the Bibliothèque nationale de France). ***These manuscripts date from the first century BCE to the third century CE, and as such are the oldest surviving Buddhist manuscripts as well as the oldest manuscripts from South Asia.*** They provide unprecedented insights into the early history of Buddhism in South Asia as well as its transmission to Central Asia and China. The research results of the EBMP and translations of the manuscripts are published by the University of Washington Press.”

- ▶ Source: <http://ebmp.org> (emphasis mine)

THE DOCTRINE OF

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**BUDDHISM**

## THE GOAL OF BUDDHISM

- ▶ “Although there are many items, all these teachings as vast as the ocean have only one taste, and that is the taste of Nirvana. As you will see, although there are many items of Buddhist teachings – the Four Noble Truths, the three ways of practice, dependent origination, the three characteristics and so on – ***all these teachings have one goal in view and that goal is the cessation of suffering. It is the goal that gives all the various teachings that we find in Buddhism their directions and purposes.***”
- ▶ Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 44 of 140 (emphasis mine)

DOCTRINE

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# THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

# THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

- ▶ “The Four Noble Truths are a very important aspect of the teachings of the Buddha. Their importance has been stated in no uncertain terms by the Buddha. He has said that it is because we fail to understand the Four Noble Truths that we have run on so long in this cycle of birth and death. This indicates how important the Four Noble Truths are to the understanding of the Buddha’s teachings and to the realization of the goal of His teachings. Similarly, it is no coincidence that in the Buddha’s first sermon the Dhammachakkappavattana Sutra to the five monks at the deer park near Benares, the Buddha spoke primarily about the Four Noble Truths and the Middle Path. Here we have two very significant indications of the importance of the Four Noble Truths. The Four Noble Truths in a sense are a summary of the Buddha’s teachings both from the point of view of doctrine or theory and also from the point of view of practice. So here in the Four Noble Truths which are **the truth of suffering, the truth of the cause of suffering, the truth of the end of suffering** and **the truth of the path that leads to the end of suffering**, we have the foundation of the teachings of the Buddha for understanding and practice.”

- ▶ Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 34 of 140 (emphasis mine)

## THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

- ▶ “All of us, I am quite sure, if we are honest with ourselves, will admit that there is a fundamental problem with life. Things are not as they should be. Something in somewhere is not quite right. And no matter how much we may try to run away from it, at some time or other, perhaps in the middle of the night, or perhaps in the middle of a crowd, or perhaps in the moment during one’s work, we do come face to face with ourselves, the realization that things are not all as they should be, that something is wrong somewhere. This is what in fact impels people to seek solutions.”

- ▶ Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 35 of 140

## THE FIRST NOBLE TRUTH

- ▶ “This is why suffering is the First Noble Truth. This recognition that existence is suffering is the essence of renunciation.” -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 26 of 140
- ▶ “In Buddhism, specifically the truth of suffering can be divided into two categories, broadly speaking, physical and mental.” -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 35 of 140

# THE SECOND NOBLE TRUTH

- ▶ "What is the cause of suffering according to the Buddha? The Buddha has taught that craving or desire (Trishna or Raga) is a great cause of suffering – craving for pleasant experiences, craving for material things, craving for eternal life and craving for eternal death." -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 34 of 140
- ▶ "Sometimes this chase after pleasant experiences leads one to extremely negative forms of behaviour such as alcoholism and drug addiction. All of these are the cravings for satisfaction of our desires for pleasant experiences. It is said that trying to satisfy one's desire for pleasant experiences is like drinking salt water when one is thirsty. If one drinks salt water to satisfy one's thirst, one's thirst, rather than being quenched, is only increased." -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 34-35 of 140

# THE SECOND NOBLE TRUTH

- ▶ “Craving for existence or eternal life is a cause of suffering. We all crave for existence, we all crave for life. Despite all the suffering and frustration of life we all crave for life. And it is this craving which causes us to be born again and again. Then there is the desire for annihilation, the desire for non-existence, what we might call the desire for eternal death. This expresses itself in nihilism and in suicide. Craving for existence is one extreme. Craving for non-existence is another extreme. You may ask, “Is craving alone a sufficient cause of suffering? Is craving alone enough to explain suffering? Is the answer as simple as that?” The answer is no. There is something that goes deeper than craving. There is something which in a sense is the foundation of craving. And that something is ignorance (Avidya).”

- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 38-39 of 140

# THE SECOND NOBLE TRUTH

- ▶ “Specifically in Buddhism, we are speaking about ignorance regarding the self, taking the self as real. This is the fundamental cause of suffering. We take our body or ideas or feelings as a self, as a real independent ego just as we take the tree stump for a potential assailant. Once we have this idea of self we have an idea of something that is apart from or different from ourselves. Once we have this idea of something that is apart or different from ourselves, then it is either helpful or hostile. It is either pleasant or unpleasant to ourselves. From this notion of self we have craving and ill-will. Once we believe in the real existence of ourselves, that “we” exist in reality, independently, apart from all others, apart from all the physical objects that surround us, we crave and desire and want those things which benefit us and we are averse towards those things which do not benefit us, which damage us or which are unhelpful to us. Because of this failure to see that in this body and mind there is no independent, permanent self, desire and ill-will inevitably thrive. Out of the root and the trunk of ignorance grow the branches of craving – desire, greed, ill-will, anger, hatred, envy, jealousy, pride and the whole lot. All these branches grow out of the root and trunk of ignorance and these branches bear the fruits of suffering. So here, ignorance is the underlying cause, and craving, ill-will, greed and anger are the secondary or subsequent causes.”

# THE THIRD NOBLE TRUTH

- ▶ “After having identified the causes of suffering one is in a position to put an end to suffering. Just as when one might identify the cause of that pain in one’s lower abdomen on the left side as appendicitis, one would then be in a position to remove the cause of the pain. One can put an end to suffering by eliminating the cause of suffering, by eliminating craving, ill-will and ignorance. Here we come to the Third Noble Truth, the truth of the end of suffering. In dealing with the truth of the end of suffering, the first obstacle that we have to overcome is the doubt that exists in some minds of whether an end of suffering is really possible. Whether one can really end suffering, or whether one can really be cured. It is in this context that confidence or faith plays an important role in Buddhism. When we speak of confidence or faith we do not speak of faith in the sense of blind acceptance. We speak of faith in the sense of recognizing or admitting the possibility of achieving the goal of the end of suffering.”

- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 41-42 of 140

# THE THIRD NOBLE TRUTH

- ▶ “After having identified the causes of suffering one is in a position to put an end to suffering. Just as when one might identify the cause of that pain in one’s lower abdomen on the left side as appendicitis, one would then be in a position to remove the cause of the pain. One can put an end to suffering by eliminating the cause of suffering, by eliminating craving, ill-will and ignorance. Here we come to the Third Noble Truth, the truth of the end of suffering.”-

*Source: Fundamentals of Buddhism pg. 40-41 of 140*

- ▶ What is the Noble Truth of the Annihilation of Suffering? "It is the remainderless, total annihilation of this very craving, the forsaking of it, the breaking loose, fleeing, deliverance from it." - <http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/buddhism/nshell05.htm>

## THE FOURTH NOBLE TRUTH

- ▶ What is the Noble Truth of the Path leading to the Annihilation of Suffering? "It is the Noble Eightfold Path which consists of right understanding, right thoughts, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right endeavor, right mindfulness, and right concentration." -<http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/buddhism/nshell05.htm>

# NIRVANA

- ▶ “What does Buddhism offer in the way of the end of suffering? ***Practicing Buddhism results in the short term in relative happiness in this life.*** This happiness can be of a material variety in the sense of better material conditions or it can be of a spiritual variety in the sense of greater peace or happiness of mind. All of these are achievable in this very life here and now. This is one dimension of the end of suffering in this life. ***And this is equivalent to what the Semitic religions call the kingdom on earth.*** In addition to this, the end of suffering means happiness and good fortune in the next life, in the sense of rebirth in fortunate circumstances, in circumstances of happiness, prosperity, health, well-being, success and so on. And this can be as a human being on this earth or it can be in the heavens. We can liken it to the heaven that the Semitic religions speak of. ***The goal of Buddhism initially means happiness and prosperity in this life and next.*** But the goal of Buddhism is more than just that and it is here that Buddhism differs from the Semitic religions because not only does Buddhism promise happiness and prosperity in this life and next, Buddhism also offers liberation – ***Nirvana, the total, absolute and permanent cessation of suffering. This is the ultimate and final goal of Buddhism. When we speak of Nirvana, we encounter certain problems of expression because when we are speaking of an experience, the exact nature of that experience cannot be communicated. It has to be experienced directly.***”

# NIRVANA

- ▶ “The Buddha described Nirvana as supreme happiness, as peace, as immortal. Similarly, He has described Nirvana as uncreated, unformed, as beyond the earth, as beyond water, fire, air, beyond the sun and moon, unfathomable, unmeasurable. So we have two approaches to the description of Nirvana. One is the positive approach where we liken Nirvana to something which we experience in this world where, say, when one experiences intense happiness accompanied by profound peace of mind one can imagine that one is experiencing a faint glimpse of Nirvana.”

- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 47 of 140

# NIRVANA

- ▶ “One has to experience the end of suffering for oneself and the way that one does it is through eliminating the causes of suffering – the defilements of desire (Raga) ill-will (Dosha) and ignorance (Avidya). When one has totally eliminated these causes of suffering, then one will experience for oneself Nirvana.”
- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 47 of 140

# THE MIDDLE PATH

- ▶ “How does one remove these causes of suffering? What are the means through which one can remove the defilements that lead to suffering? This is the path taught by the Buddha. It is the Middle Path, the path of moderation. You will recall that the life of the Buddha before His Enlightenment falls into two quite distinct periods. The period before renunciation was a period when He enjoyed all the luxury possible. For instance, we are told that He had three palaces, one for each season. He experienced luxury to an extent which we can scarcely imagine. This period of luxury was superseded by six years of extreme asceticism and self-mortification when He abandoned the essential amenities of life, a period in which He lived in the open, wore the poorest garments and fasted for lengthy periods. In addition to these privations, He experienced the suffering of torturing His body through various practices of self-mortification – sleeping on beds of thorns and sitting in the midst of fires in the heat of the noon-day sun. Having experienced the extremes of luxury and privation, having reached the limits of these extremes, He saw their futility and He discovered the Middle Way that avoids the extremes of indulgence in pleasures of the senses and self-mortification. It was through realizing the nature of the extremes in His own experience that He was able to arrive at the Middle Path, the path that avoids the two extremes. As we shall see in the subsequent weeks, the Middle Path is capable of many profound and significant interpretations, but most importantly and most essentially, it means moderation in one’s approach to life, in one’s attitude, in all things.”

- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 48-49 of 140

# THE MIDDLE PATH

- ▶ “We use the example of the three strings of the lute to illustrate the Middle Path. The Buddha once had a disciple by the name of Sona who practised meditation so intensely that he could not progress in his meditation. He began to think of abandoning his life as a monk. The Buddha, who understood his problem, said to him, “Sona, before you became a monk you were a musician”. Sona said that was true. So the Buddha said, “As a musician which string of the lute produces a pleasant and harmonious sound. The over-tight string?” “No,” said Sona, “The over-tight string produces an unpleasant sound and is moreover likely to break at any moment.” “The string that is too loose?” Again, “No, the string that is too loose does not produce a tuneful sound. The string that produces a tuneful sound is the string that is not too tight and not too loose.” So here the life of luxury is too loose, without discipline. The life of mortification is too tight, too tense, too likely to cause the breakdown of the mind and body just as the over-tight string is likely to break at any moment.”

- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 48-49 of 140

DOCTRINE

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# THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH

## THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH

- ▶ "Here too when we look at the specific instructions with regard to following the path to the end of suffering, we can see that the instructions refer not only to one's body - actions and words - but also to one's thoughts. In other words, the Noble Eightfold Path, the path to the end of suffering is a comprehensive path, an integrated therapy. It is designed to cure the disease through eliminating the causes, through treatment that applies not only to the body but also to the mind. ***Right understanding is the first step of the Noble Eightfold Path and it is followed by Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration.***"
- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 49-50 of 140 (emphasis mine)

# THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH

- ▶ “Through Right Understanding and Right Thought we eliminate ignorance, greed and anger. But it is not enough to say that through Right Understanding and Right Thought we eliminate ignorance, greed and anger because in order to achieve Right Understanding and Right Thought we also need to cultivate, to purify our mind and our body. The way that this is done is through the other six steps of the path. We purify our physical existence so that it will be easier to purify our mind, and we purify our mind so that it will be easier to attain Right Understanding. For convenience’ sake, the Noble Eightfold Path has been traditionally divided into the three groups of training or the three ways of practice and they are morality or good conduct (Shila), meditation or mental development (Samadhi), and wisdom or insight (Prajna). The eight steps of the path are divided into these three ways of practice as follows – Right Speech, Right Action and Right Livelihood belong to the way of good conduct; Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration belong to the way of mental development; and Right Understanding and Right Thought belong to the way of wisdom. Because it is necessary to purify our words and actions before we can purify our mind, we begin our progress along the path with good conduct.”

# THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH

- ▶ “Nonetheless, for practical purposes the eight steps of the path have been divided into three ways of practice, or three divisions of training. These three divisions are good conduct or morality (Shila), mental development or meditation (Samadhi) and finally wisdom or insight (Prajna).” -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 52 of 140
- ▶ “The first of these three ways is good conduct. Good conduct forms a foundation for further progress on the path, for further personal development. It is said that just as the earth is the base of all animate and inanimate things, so is morality the foundation of all qualities. When we look around us we can see that everything rests upon the earth, whether it be the building, whether it be the tree and bush, or whether it be the animal. The earth is the foundation, and in the same manner morality is the foundation of all qualities, all virtues, all attainments ranging from the mundane to the supra-mundane, ranging from success, good fortune all the way up to skill in meditation, wisdom and enlightenment. Through this metaphor, we can understand the importance of good conduct as a foundation for following the path, as a basis for achieving results on the path.” -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 53 of 140

# THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH

- ▶ “What equality means is that ***all living beings are equal*** in their essential attitudes. In other words, all living beings want to be happy. They fear pain, death and suffering. All want to live, to enjoy happiness and security. And this is also true to all living beings just as it is true to ourselves. We can call this equality the great universality of the Buddhist vision in which all living beings are equal. On the basis of this equality, we are encouraged to act with the awareness of reciprocity. Reciprocity means that just as we would not like to be killed, robbed, abused and so forth, so would all other living beings not like to have these things happen to them. One can put this principle of reciprocity quite simply by saying “do not act towards others in a way which you would not want them to act towards you”. Given these principles of equality and reciprocity, it is not hard to see how they stand behind, how they create the foundation for the rules of good conduct.”
- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 54-55 of 140 (emphasis mine)

# KARMA

- ▶ “We know that what binds us in samsara are the defilements – desire, ill-will and ignorance. We spoke about this when we talked about the Second Noble Truth – the truth of the cause of suffering. These defilements are something which every living being in samsara shares, whether we speak of human beings or animals or beings who live in the other realms which we do not normally perceive. In this, all living beings are alike and yet amongst all the living beings that we can normally perceive, there are many differences. For instance, some of us are wealthy, some are less wealthy, some are strong and healthy, others are disabled and so forth. There are many differences amongst living beings and even more so there are differences between animals and human beings. These differences are due to karma.”

- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 83 of 140

- ▶ Samsara-“the indefinitely repeated cycles of birth, misery, and death caused by karma” -Webster

# KARMA

- ▶ “What we all share – desire, ill-will and ignorance – are common to all living beings, but the particular condition in which we find ourselves is the result of our particular karma that conditions the situation in which we find ourselves, the situation in which we may be wealthy, strong and so forth. These circumstances are ***decided by karma***. It is in this sense that karma explains the differences amongst living beings. It explains why some beings are fortunate while others are less fortunate, some are happy while others are less happy. The Buddha has specifically stated that karma explains the differences between living beings. You might also recall that the understanding of how karma affects the birth of living beings in happy or unhappy circumstances – the knowledge of how living beings move from happy circumstances to unhappy circumstances, and vice versa, from unhappy to happy circumstances as a result of their karma – was part of the Buddha’s experience on the night of His enlightenment. It is karma that explains the circumstances that living beings find themselves in.”

- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 83-84 of 140 (**emphasis mine**)

# KARMA

- ▶ “Having said this much about the function of karma, let us look more closely at what karma is. Let us define karma. Maybe we can define karma best by first deciding what karma is not. It is quite often the case that we find people misunderstanding the idea of karma. This is particularly true in our daily casual use of the term. We find people saying that one cannot change one’s situation because of one’s karma. In this sense, karma becomes a sort of escape. It becomes similar to predestination or fatalism. This is emphatically not the correct understanding of karma. It is possible that this misunderstanding of karma has come about because of the popular idea that we have about luck and fate. It may be for this reason that our idea of karma has become overlaid in popular thought with the notion of predestination. Karma is not fate or predestination. If karma is not fate or predestination, then what is it? Let us look at the term itself. Karma means action, means “to do”.”

# KARMA

- ▶ “In the moral sphere of conscious actions, we have a counterpart to the physical law of action and reaction, the law that every intentional, willful action must have its effect. This is why we sometimes speak either of Karma-Vipaka, intentional action and its ripened effect, or we speak of Karma-Phala, intentional action and its fruit. It is when we speak of intentional action together with its effect or fruit that we speak of the Law of Karma. In its most basic sense, the Law of Karma in the moral sphere teaches that similar actions will lead to similar results.”
- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 85 of 140

# KARMA

- ▶ "One may ask how does one know whether an action that is wholesome or unwholesome will produce happiness or unhappiness. The answer is time will tell. The Buddha Himself answered the question. He has explained that so long as an unwholesome action does not bear its fruit of suffering, for so long a foolish person will consider that action good. But when that unwholesome action bears its fruit of suffering then he will realize that the action is unwholesome. Similarly, so long as a wholesome action does not bear its fruit of happiness, a good person may consider that action unwholesome. When it bears its fruit of happiness, then he will realize that the action is good."
- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 86-87 of 140

# UNWHOLESOME ACTIONS

- ▶ "Specifically, the unwholesome actions which are to be avoided relate to the three doors or means of action, and these are body, speech and mind. There are three unwholesome actions of the body, four of speech and three of mind that are to be avoided. The three unwholesome actions of body that are to be avoided are killing, stealing and sexual misconduct. The four unwholesome actions of speech that are to be avoided are lying, slander, harsh speech and malicious gossip. The three unwholesome actions of mind that are to be avoided are greed, anger and delusion. By avoiding these ten unwholesome actions we will avoid their consequences. The unwholesome actions have suffering as their fruit."

- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 87 of 140

# CONSEQUENCES

- ▶ “The fully ripened fruit of the unwholesome actions consists of rebirth in the lower realms, in the realms of suffering – ***hell, hungry ghosts and animals.*** If these unwholesome actions are not sufficient to result in rebirth in these lower realms, they will result in unhappiness in this life as a human being. Here we can see at work the principle of a cause resulting in a similar effect. For example, habitual killing which is motivated by ill-will and anger and which results in the taking of the life of other beings will result in rebirth in the hells where one’s experience is saturated by anger and ill-will and where one may be repeatedly killed. If killing is not sufficiently habitual or weighty to result in rebirth in the hells, killing will result in shortened life as a human being, separation from loved ones, fear or paranoia.”

- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 87-88 of 140 (**emphasis mine**)

# KARMA

- ▶ “But the working of the Law of Karma is very finely tuned and balanced so as to match effect with cause, so as to take into account the subjective and objective conditions that determine the nature of an action. This ensures that the effects of actions are equal to and similar to the nature of the causes.” -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 87 of 140
- ▶ “Karma can either manifest its effects in this very life or in the next life or only after several lives. When karma manifests its effects in this life, we can see the fruit of karma within a relatively short length of time.” -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 87-88 of 140

# KARMA

- ▶ “We cannot see the long-term effect of karma, but the Buddha and His prominent disciples who have developed their minds are able to perceive directly the long-term effects. For instance, when Maudgalyayana was beaten to death by bandits, the Buddha was able to tell that this event was the effect of something Maudgalyayana had done in a previous life when he had taken his aged parents to the forest and having beaten them to death, had then reported that they had been killed by bandits.”
- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 91 of 140

# REBIRTH

- ▶ “There are a number of approaches that we can take to what we might call outlining the case for the reality of rebirth. One line which we might take would be to recall that in almost all the major cultures of the world, at one time or another, there had been a strong belief in the reality of rebirth. This is particularly true in India where the idea of rebirth can be traced back to the very earliest period of Indian civilization where all the major Indian religions, be they theism or atheism, be they schools of Hinduism or non-Hindu doctrines like Jainism, believe in the reality of rebirth.”

- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 93 of 140

# REBIRTH

- ▶ “Specifically, within the Buddhist tradition, we have the testimony of the Buddha on the matter of rebirth. On the night of His enlightenment, the Buddha acquired three varieties of knowledge and the first of these was the detailed knowledge of His past lives. He was able to recollect the conditions in which He had been born in His past lives. He was able to remember what His names had been, what His occupations had been and so on. Besides the Buddha’s testimony, His prominent disciples were also able to recollect their past lives.”
- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 94 of 140

# REBIRTH

- ▶ “In Buddhism, rebirth is part of the continuous process of change. In fact, we are not only reborn at the time of death, we are born and reborn at every moment. This too, like many other Buddhist teachings, is easily verifiable by reference to our own experience and by reference to the teachings of science. For instance, the majority of the cells in the human body die and are replaced many times during the course of one’s life.”
- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 96-97 of 140

# REBIRTH

- ▶ “In Buddhism, it is taught that there are various realms, spheres or dimensions of existence. There are thirty-one planes of existence listed, but for our purposes, we are going to utilize a simpler scheme which enumerates six realms of existence. In general, the six realms may be divided into two groups, one of which is relatively fortunate and the other relatively miserable. The first group includes three of the six realms and they are the realm of the gods, the realm of the demigods and the realm of human beings. Rebirth in these fortunate realms is the result of wholesome karma. The second group includes the three realms that are considered relatively miserable. They are sometimes called the realms of woe, and they are the realm of animals, the realm of hungry ghosts and the realm of hell beings. Rebirth in these states of woe is the result of unwholesome karma.”

- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 97 of 140

# REBIRTH

- ▶ “So here, as you can see, we have an affliction or defilement associated with the five realms – hell beings, hungry ghosts, animals, demigods and the gods, and they are ill-will, desire, ignorance, jealousy and pride. Birth in any of these five realms is undesirable. Birth in the three lower realms is undesirable for obvious reasons, because of the intense suffering and because of the total ignorance of the beings who inhabit these realms. Even rebirth in the realms of the demigods and the gods too is undesirable. This is because, although one experiences a certain degree of happiness and power, existence amongst the demigods and gods is impermanent. Besides, because of the distractions and pleasures in these realms, beings there never think of looking for a way out of the cycle of birth and death. This is why it is said that of the six realms, the most fortunate, opportune and favored is the human realm.”

- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 101 of 140

# REBIRTH

- ▶ “We must strive to free ourselves from the cycle of rebirth because failing to do so means that we will continue to circle endlessly amongst these six realms of existence. When the karma, wholesome or unwholesome, that causes us to be born in any of the six realms is exhausted, rebirth will occur, and we will find ourselves again in another realm. In fact, it is said that all of us have circled in the these six realms since beginningless time, that if all the skeletons that we have had in our various lives were heaped up, the pile would exceed the height of Mount Sumeru. If all the mothers’ milk that we have drunk throughout our countless existences were collected, the amount would exceed the amount of water in all the oceans. So now that we have the opportunity to practice the Dharma, we must do so without delay.”

- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 103 of 140

# REBIRTH

- ▶ “Finally, I would like to distinguish rebirth from transmigration. You may have noticed that in Buddhism, we consistently speak of rebirth and not transmigration. This is because in Buddhism we do not believe in an abiding entity, in a substance that trans- migrates. We do not believe in a self that is reborn. This is why when we explain rebirth, we make use of examples which do not require the transmigration of an essence or a substance. For example, when a sprout is born from a seed, there is no substance that trans- migrates. The seed and the sprout are not identical.” -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 104-105 of 140
- ▶ **“So there is rebirth, but not transmigration. There is moral responsibility, but not an independent, permanent self. There is the continuity of cause and effect, but not permanence.”** -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 104 of 140 (emphasis mine)

# DEPENDENT ORIGINATION

- ▶ “Particularly, we are interested in the principle of dependent origination as it applies to the problem of suffering and rebirth. We are interested in how dependent origination explains the situation in which we find ourselves here. In this sense, it is important to remember that dependent origination is essentially and primarily a teaching that has to do with the problem of suffering and how to free ourselves from suffering, and not a description of the evolution of the universe. Let me briefly list the twelve components or links that make up dependent origination. They are ignorance, mental formation, consciousness, name and form, the six senses, contact, feeling, craving, clinging, becoming, birth, and old age and death.”

- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 108 of 140

# DEPENDENT ORIGINATION

- ▶ “The two components of dependent origination that are included in the group of actions are mental formation and becoming. Mental formation refers to the impressions or habits that we have formed in our stream of conscious moments – our conscious continuum. These impressions or habits are formed by repeated actions. We can illustrate this by means of an example taken from geography. We know that rivers form their course by means of a process of repeated erosion. As rain falls on a hillside, that rain gathers into a rivulet. That rivulet gradually creates a channel for itself, and gradually grows into a stream. Eventually, as the channel of the stream is deepened and widened by repeated flows of water, the stream becomes a river which develops well-defined banks and a definite course. In the same way, our actions become habitual. These habits become part of our personality and we take these habits with us from life to life in the form of mental formation or habit energy. Our actions in this life are conditioned by the habits which we have formulated over countless previous lives. So to return to the analogy of the channel of the river and the water in it, we might say that mental formations are the channel of the river, and the actions that we perform in this life are the fresh water that flow again through the eroded channel created by previous actions. The actions that we perform in this life are represented by the component known as becoming. So here, as regards mental formation and becoming, we have the habits that we have developed over the course of countless lives combined with new actions performed in this life, and these two together result in rebirth and suffering.”

# DEPENDENT ORIGINATION

- ▶ "Because He saw that clinging to the extreme of eternalism would be like a chain that would bind us in samsara, the Buddha was careful to teach us to avoid belief in an independent and permanent self. Because He saw the possibility of freedom destroyed by the sharp teeth of belief in the self, the Buddha asked us to avoid the extreme of eternalism. Yet understanding that clinging to the extreme of nihilism would lead to catastrophe - rebirth in the states of woe - He was careful to teach the reality of the law of cause and effect, of moral responsibility. Because He saw that one would fall into the misery of the lower realms by denying the law of moral responsibility, He taught us to avoid the extreme of nihilism."

- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 115 of 140

# IMPERMANENCE

- ▶ “The fact of impermanence has been recognized not only in Buddhist thought but also elsewhere in the history of philosophy. It was the ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus who remarked that one could not step into the same river twice. This remark, which implies the ever-changing and transient nature of things is a very buddhistic remark. In the Buddhist scriptures, it is said that the three worlds (Dhatus) are impermanent like autumn clouds; that birth and death are like a dance; and that human life is like a flash of lightning or a waterfall. All these are compelling images of impermanence and they help us to understand that all things are marked or characterized by impermanence.”

- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 118 of 140

# IMPERMANENCE

- ▶ “While understanding impermanence yields these immediate benefits, here and now, it is particularly effective as an aid to our practice of the Dharma. The understanding of impermanence is an antidote to desire and ill-will. It is also an encouragement to our practice of the Dharma. And finally, it is a key to understanding the ultimate nature of things, the way things really are.”
- ▶ “Remembering death especially is said to be like a friend and a teacher to one who wishes to practice the Dharma. Remembering death acts as a discouragement to excessive desire and ill-will. How many quarrels, petty disagreements, life-long ambitions and enmities fade into insignificance before the recognition of the inevitability of death? Throughout the centuries, Buddhist teachers have encouraged sincere practitioners of the Dharma to remember death, to remember the impermanence of this personality.”
- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 120 of 140

# IMPERMANENCE

- ▶ “Some years ago, I had a friend who went to India to study meditation. He approached a very renowned and learned Buddhist teacher and asked him for some meditation instructions. The teacher was reluctant to teach him because he was not convinced of his sincerity. My friend persisted and asked him again and again. Finally, the teacher said to him, “You will die, meditate upon that.” Meditation on death is extremely beneficial. We all need to remember the certainty of our death. From the moment of our birth, we move inexorably towards death. Remembering this, and remembering that at the time of death, wealth, family and fame will be of no use to us, we must turn our mind to the practice of the Dharma. We know that death is absolutely certain. There has never been a single living being who has escaped death.”
- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 120-121 of 140

# IMPERMANENCE

- ▶ “Sometimes, this teaching of not-self is an occasion for confusion because often we wonder how one can deny the self. After all, we do say “I am speaking” or “I am walking,” or “I am called so and so”, or “I am the father or the son of such and such a person.” So how can we deny the reality of that “I”? In order to clarify this, I think it is important to remember that the Buddhist rejection of the “I” is not a rejection of this convenient designation, the name “I”. Rather, it is a rejection of the idea that this name “I” stands for a substantial, permanent and changeless reality. When the Buddha said that the five factors of personal experience were not the self, and that the self was not to be found within them He meant that on analysis, this name “I” did not correspond to any essence or entity.” -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 123 of 140
- ▶ “There is no self, no soul, no essence, no core of personal experience apart from the ever-changing, interdependent, impermanent physical and mental factors of personal experience such as our feelings, ideas, thoughts, habits, and attitudes.” -  
Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 125 of 140

# IMPERMANENCE

- ▶ “Even more importantly, understanding not-self is a key to enlightenment. The belief in a self is synonymous with ignorance, and ignorance is the most basic of the three defilements. Once we identify, imagine, or conceive of ourselves as an entity, we immediately create a schism, a separation between ourselves and the people and things around us. Once we have this conception of self, we respond to the persons and things around us either with desire or with aversion. In this sense, the self is the real villain of the piece. Seeing that the self is the source and the cause of all suffering, and seeing that the rejection of the self is the cause of the end of suffering, rather than trying to defend, protect and preserve the self, why should we not do our best to reject and eliminate this idea of the self? Why should we not recognize that personal experience is like a banana tree or like an onion, that when we take it apart piece by piece, that when we examine it critically and analytically, we find that it is empty of any essential, substantial core, that it is devoid of the self?”

- ▶ -Source: *Fundamentals of Buddhism* pg. 126 of 140

NOW ON TO

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**ZEN BUDDHISM**

# ZEN BUDDHISM

- ▶ “By far and away, however, the most influential form of Buddhism is known as Zen Buddhism. Its origins are found in Tao-sheng (a.d. 360–434), a Mahayana Buddhist and in Bodhi-dharma (d. a.d. 534). He migrated from China to Japan, where his form of Buddhism combined with Taoism emphasis on oneness with Nature. This eclectic blend is known as Zen (“meditation”). Since Zen has made the deepest inroads into Christianity, it is of the greatest interest to the Christian apologists.” - Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# ZEN BUDDHISM

- ▶ **"Nature of Zen.** In order to understand Suzuki's form of pantheism, one must seek to grasp the nature of Zen. First, we shall note what Suzuki believes Zen is not, and then what he believes Zen is.
- ▶ *What Zen Is Not.* According to Suzuki, Zen is not a system or philosophy "founded upon logic and analysis." Zen is opposed to any form of dualistic thinking—that is, making any kind of subject-object distinction (*Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 38). Instead Suzuki calls us to "Hush the dualism of subject and object, forget both, transcend the intellect, sever yourself from the understanding, and directly penetrate deep into the identity of the Buddha-mind; outside of this there are no realities."
- ▶ Neither is Zen a set of teachings. Says Suzuki: "Zen has nothing to teach us in the way of intellectual analysis; nor has it any set doctrines which are imposed on its followers for acceptance." As such Zen has "no sacred books or dogmatic tenets." Indeed, "Zen teaches nothing." It is we who "teach ourselves; Zen merely points the way" (*ibid.*, 38, 46).
- ▶ All points taken from: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# ZEN BUDDHISM

- ▶ “Nor is Zen a religion as “popularly understood.” It has no god to worship, no ceremonial rites, no afterlife, and no soul. When Suzuki says that there is no god in Zen, he neither denies nor affirms existence of some deity. “In Zen, God is neither denied nor insisted upon; only there is in Zen no such God as has been conceived by Jewish and Christian minds” (ibid., 39).
- ▶ Zen claims not to be theistic or pantheistic as such, denying such metaphysical designations. Unlike the God of Christian theism or Vedanta Hinduism, “there is no object in Zen upon which to fix the thought” of the disciple. “Zen just feels fire warm and ice cold, because when it freezes we shiver and welcome fire. The feeling is all in all . . . ; all our theorization fails to touch reality” (ibid., 41).
- ▶ All points taken from: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# ZEN BUDDHISM

- ▶ *“What Zen Is.* So what may we say Zen is? According to Suzuki, “Zen is the ocean, Zen is the air, Zen is the mountain, Zen is thunder and lightening, the spring flower, summer heat, and winter snow; nay, more than that, Zen is the man.” Suzuki recounted a story that a Zen master defined Zen as, “Your everyday thought” (ibid., 45). Suzuki puts it another way:
- ▶ “When a hungry monk at work heard the dinner-gong he immediately dropped his work and showed himself in the dining room. The master, seeing him, laughed heartily, for the monk had been acting Zen to its fullest extent” (ibid., 85). In other words, Zen is life. “I raise my hand; I take a book from the other side of this desk; I hear the boys playing ball outside my window; I see the clouds blown away beyond the neighboring woods:—in all these I am practicing Zen, I am living Zen. No wordy discussion is necessary, nor any explanation” (ibid., 75). Zen is the personal experience of life, unencumbered by any abstractions or conceptualizations (ibid., 45, 132).
- ▶ All points taken from: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# ZEN BUDDHISM

- ▶ **"God and the World.** In Zen Buddhism God is man, and man is God. Citing the Western mystic (see Mysticism) Meister Eckhart with approval, Suzuki states: " 'Simple people conceive that we are to see God as if he stood on that side and we on this. It is not so; God and I are one in the act of my perceiving Him.' In this absolute oneness of things Zen establishes the foundations of its philosophy" (*Zen Buddhism*, 113). Not only is a human being God, but all is God and God is all. Everything and everyone are really One. "Buddhas [i.e., enlightened Ones] and sentient beings [i.e., those still ignorant] both grow out of One Mind, and there is no other reality than this Mind" (*Manual of Zen Buddhism*, 112).
- ▶ What this all-embracing Mind is, is no-mindedness which is the human spiritual nature. Says Suzuki: "This Nature [i.e., the human spiritual nature] is the Mind, and the Mind is the Buddha, and the Buddha is the Way, and the Way is Zen" (*Zen Buddhism*, 88). The Mind may be described as having "been in existence since the beginningless past." Mind is not born and does not die; it is beyond the categories of age or being (*Manual of Zen Buddhism*, 112). Mind is all and all is Mind.
- ▶ All points taken from: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# ZEN BUDDHISM

- ▶ “Suzuki is quick to point out that this form of monism is not a denial of the world we perceive and feel around us. However the world we do sense which is outside of us is a “relative world,” which has no final reality.” Individual beings exist, but they are real “only in so far as they are considered a partial realization of Suchness.” Indeed Suchness “exists immanently *in* them. Things are empty and illusory so long as they are particular things and are not thought of in reference to the All that is Suchness and Reality” (*Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism*, 140, 141).
- ▶ Ordinary experience, then takes the world for something that exists in itself, but it is an illusion. What really exists is Mind (*Manual of Zen Buddhism*, 51).
- ▶ Buddhists do not like to call Suchness or Mind by the word *God*. The very term is offensive to most Buddhists, “especially when it is intimately associated in vulgar minds with the idea of a Creator who produced the world out of nothing (see *Creation, Views of*), caused the downfall of mankind, and, touched by the pang or remorse, sent down his only son to save the depraved.” The variety of ways Buddhists describe this Ultimate reality is partly an effort to avoid speaking of Deity (*Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism*, 219, 220).
- ▶ All points taken from: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# ZEN BUDDHISM

- ▶ “Further, Absolute Suchness or Reality cannot be grasped “as it truly is.” It goes beyond categories, even of existence. Suzuki states: “We cannot even say that it is, for everything that is presupposes that which is not: existence and non-existence are relative terms as much as subject and object, mind and matter, this and that, one and other: one cannot be conceived without the other. ‘It is not so (*na iti*),’ therefore may be the only way our imperfect human tongue can express it. So the Mayahanists generally designate absolute Suchness as *Cunyata* or void.”
- ▶ This indefinable and unthinkable “void” may be more fully interpreted in this way: Suchness is neither existence or non-existence; it is neither unity nor plurality (ibid., 101-2). This is God, and God is All, and All is Mind, and Mind is Buddha, and Buddha is the Way, and the Way is Zen.
- ▶ All points taken from: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# ZEN BUDDHISM

- ▶ ***“View of Human Beings.*** Individual human beings then are simply a manifestation of this All or Mind or God. Individuals are not isolated entities anyway, as we imagine. By themselves people are no more meaningful than soap bubbles. Particular existence acquires meaning only when thought of in terms of the whole oneness (ibid., 46–47). This is not precisely a denial of materiality. Human beings have both materiality and immateriality, and more (ibid., 149). It is a denial of individuality in any ultimate sense. People only appear to be individual beings, but in reality they are all one in the One. The goal of Zen is to help people go beyond egoism to realize their oneness in God and so become immortal (ibid., 47).”
- ▶ All points taken from: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# ZEN BUDDHISM

- ▶ **"Human Destiny.** Human destiny is the achievement of *nirvana*—that is, "the annihilation of the notion of ego-substance and of all the desires that arise from this erroneous conception" and the practical expression of "universal love or sympathy (*karuna*) for all beings" (*Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism*, 50, 51). *Nirvana* is sometimes spoken of as possessing four attributes: *Nirvana* "is eternal because it is immaterial; it is blissful because it is above all sufferings; it is self-acting because it knows no compulsion; it is pure because it is not defiled by passion and error" (*ibid.*, 348; cf. 399). *Nirvana* also is God and to achieve it is to realize one's essential oneness with the absolute One.
- ▶ *Nirvana* is not achieved easily. However it does not involve asceticism, knowledge of certain books or doctrines, or even meditation divorced from life. Instead the realization of *nirvana* begins and ends in life itself. "Salvation [i.e., the attainment of *nirvana*] must be sought in the finite itself, there is nothing infinite apart from finite things; if you seek something transcendental, that will cut you off from this world of relativity, which is the same as the annihilation of yourself. You do not want salvation at the cost of your own existence."
- ▶ "Nirvana is to be sought in the midst of Samsara (birth-and-death)." No one can escape Samsara. It is one's subjective perception of life. If a person will but change his inner awareness, he will see that reality is "absolutely one" (*Zen Buddhism*, 14, 15). The awareness of this in the inner life is *Nirvana*.

▶ All points taken from: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# ZEN BUDDHISM

- ▶ “The road to Nirvana involves many things. However the most fundamental aspect is the ridding of all dualistic thinking. And the root of all such thinking is logic. Suzuki acknowledges that “we generally think that ‘A is A’ is absolute, and that the proposition ‘A is not-A’ or ‘A is B’ is unthinkable.” But such thinking only keeps us in bondage so that we cannot comprehend the truth. We must therefore shed the shackles of logic, and approach life from a new point of view. In this new experience there “is no logic, no philosophizing; here is no twisting of facts to suit our artificial measures; here is no murdering of human nature in order to submit it to intellectual dissections; the one spirit stands face to face with the other spirit like two mirrors facing each other, and there is nothing to intervene between their mutual reflections” (*An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 58, 59, 61).
- ▶ In order to help the Zen disciple beyond the logical interpretation of reality, the Zen masters created a whole approach to reality which included illogical sayings and questions as well as responses to questions—called the *koan*. For example, a very familiar question is “If you have heard the sound of one hand [clapping], can you make me hear it too?” (ibid., 59). A famous saying from Fudaishi graphically illustrates the irrationality of Zen:
- ▶ Empty-handed I go, and behold the spade is in my hands; I walk on foot, and yet on the back of an ox I am riding; When I pass over the bridge, Lo, the water floweth not, but the bridge doth flow. [ibid., 58]
- ▶ All points taken from: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

WHY THE ATTRACTION IN

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**AMERICA?**

# ME, ME, AND LITTLE MORE ME

- ▶ “How can we explain Zen’s popularity in the West? There are many reasons: One is that we live in a self-reliant culture. Rugged individualism is prided as an American virtue, and Zen fills that bill nicely. Although numerous Zendos have been formed in North America, there is no single organization that can claim bureaucratic authority over all – or even a large minority – of them. While many acolytes of Zen Buddhism in the West acknowledge that they are under the tutelage of a Zen master, there is no supreme authority figure equivalent to the Dalai Lama in Tibetan Buddhism. And most Western Zen Buddhists prefer it that way. Since Zen promotes the religion of self-effort, non-Asian Americans view Zen as a way to plunge deeper into themselves.”
- ▶ Source: <http://www.equip.org/article/zen-buddhism-north-americans-embrace-a-contemplative-school-of-buddhism/>

# ALL ABOUT THE “FEELS”

- ▶ “A second reason why non-Asian Westerners are attracted to Zen is that Zen is experience-oriented. North American culture places a high premium on experience. Whereas pop culture in the West promotes the thrill element in experience – such as enjoying the most passionate sexual climax or viewing the most gruesome violent murder on the screen or in a video game – philosophy and art in Western society exalt the existential moment when the true essence of self emerges to give meaning to one’s life. Either way, the quest for the ultimate experience is a troubling yearning in the consciousness of most North Americans, and many of them regard Zen as the vehicle that will transport them to that ultimate experience.”

- ▶ Source: <http://www.equip.org/article/zen-buddhism-north-americans-embrace-a-contemplative-school-of-buddhism/>

# WIMPY RELIGION

- ▶ “A third reason is that nonattachment is a key component of Zen Buddhism. As much as Westerners are addicted to the pleasures of the world, many are equally desirous of being detached from anything that would cause them to suffer. Lance Miller found solace in Zen because it compelled him to be detached from the sources of his suffering. Whether dealing with pain, stress, anxiety, or even discomfort, people in our society would prefer to cut themselves off from the causes of their suffering rather than face them and allow suffering to chisel them into better persons.”
- ▶ Source: <http://www.equip.org/article/zen-buddhism-north-americans-embrace-a-contemplative-school-of-buddhism/>