

Origins of Buddhism: The Life of the Buddha

Siddhartha Gautama was born a prince in southern Nepal over 2,500 years ago.



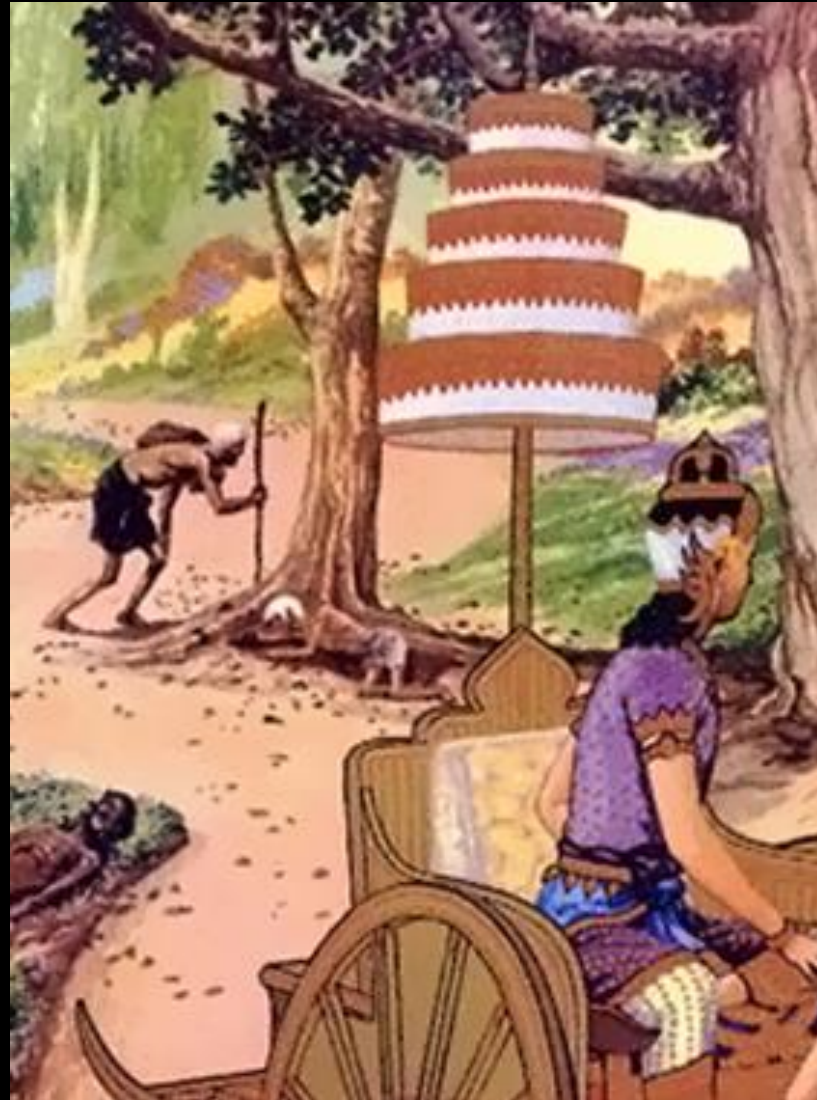
This was no regular event. His mother gave birth while standing, one hand holding a tree branch. The baby got up and took seven steps forward.



Siddhartha grew up in a life of wealth and privilege within the palace.



At age 29 he ventured outside the palace walls and saw old age, illness, and death for the first time.



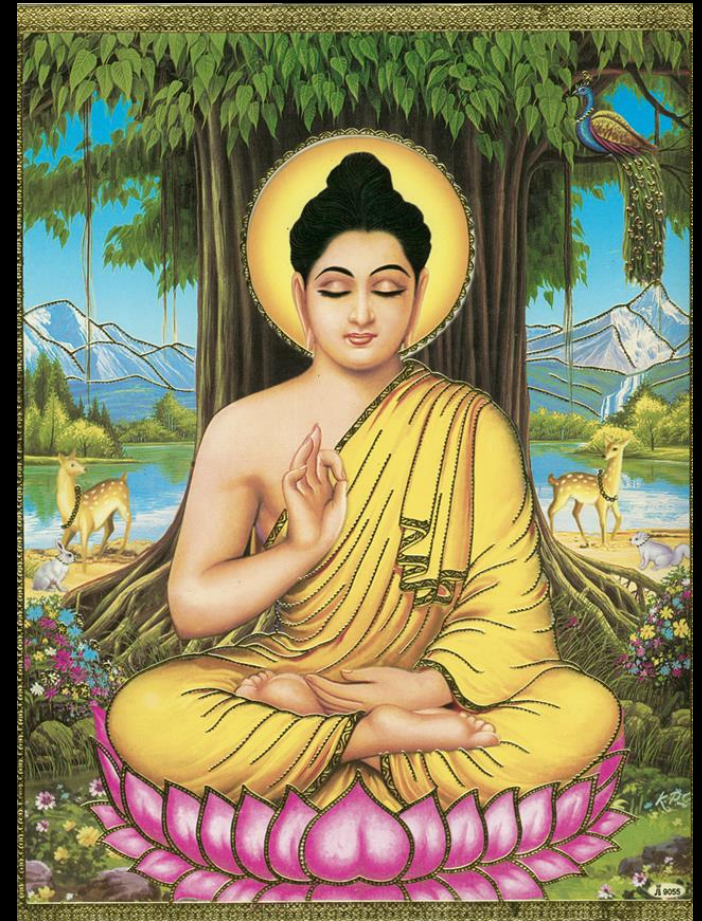
He also saw a monk meditating as a way to find release from life's troubles.



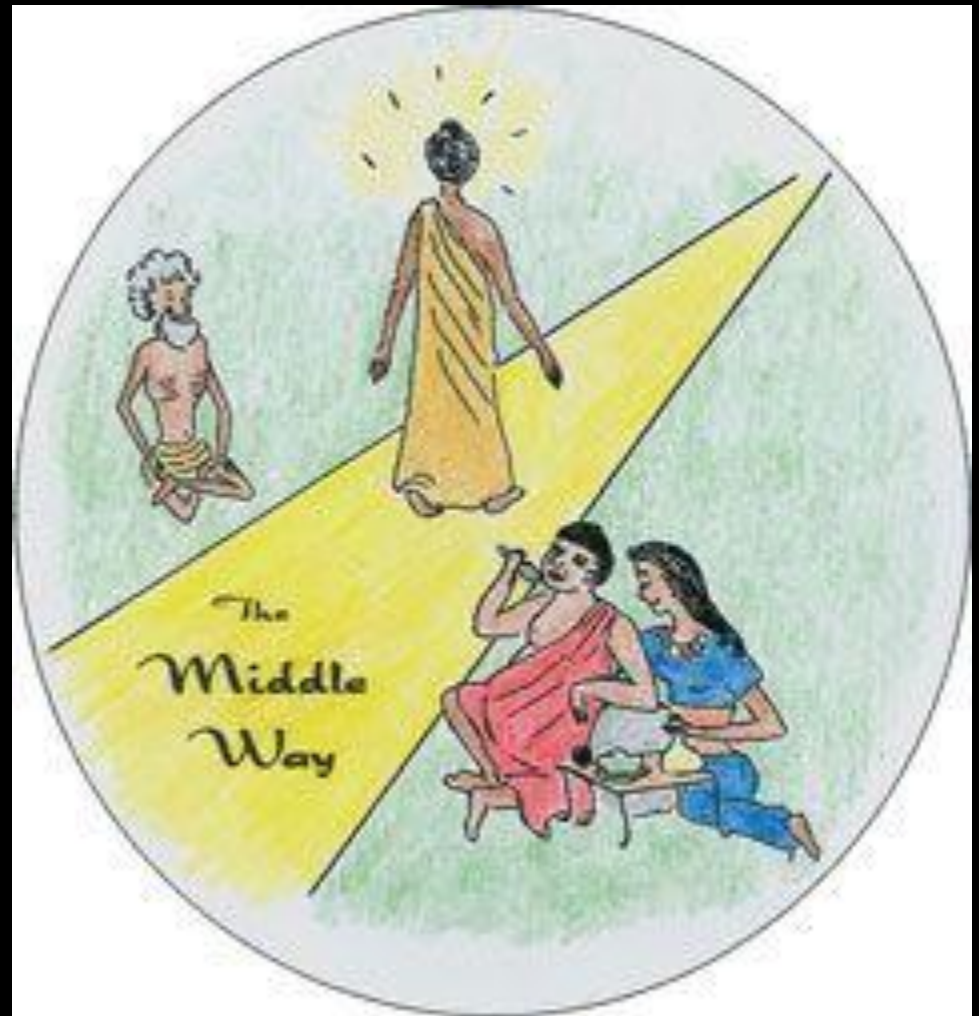
The prince left his life of luxury. For 6 years he rejected all comforts, seeking a reason for the suffering he had seen.



A life of deprivation offered no answers. He vowed to meditate beneath a fig tree until he found the truth. After several days, as the dawn rose, he achieved understanding and became “the Buddha,” or “the enlightened one.”



The answer was to follow a path called the “Middle Way”—to live somewhere between extreme deprivation and over-indulgence.

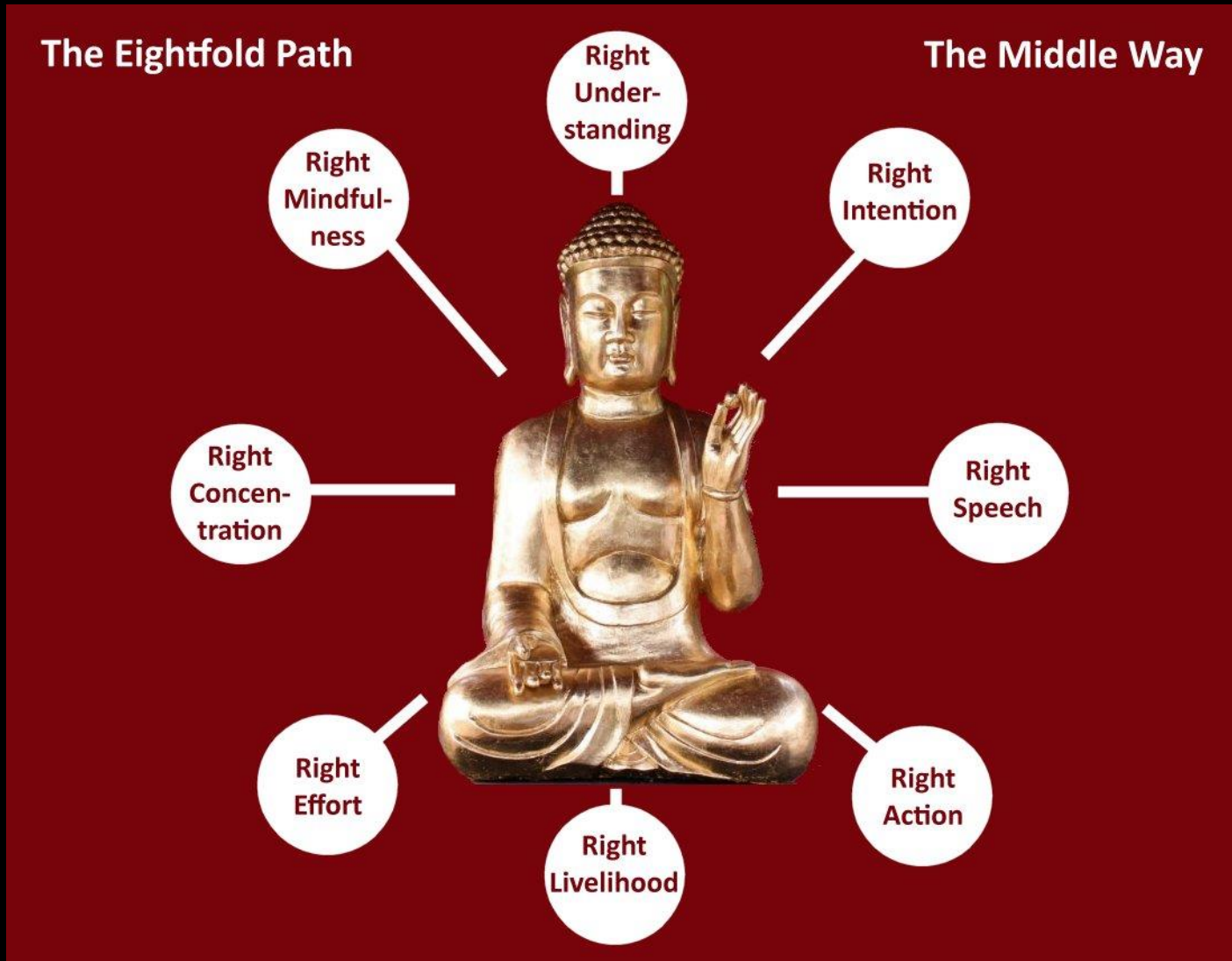


The Buddha began to travel and reveal the Four Noble Truths:

- Life is suffering
- Suffering is caused by desire
- Desire can be removed
- Following the Eightfold Path overcomes desire



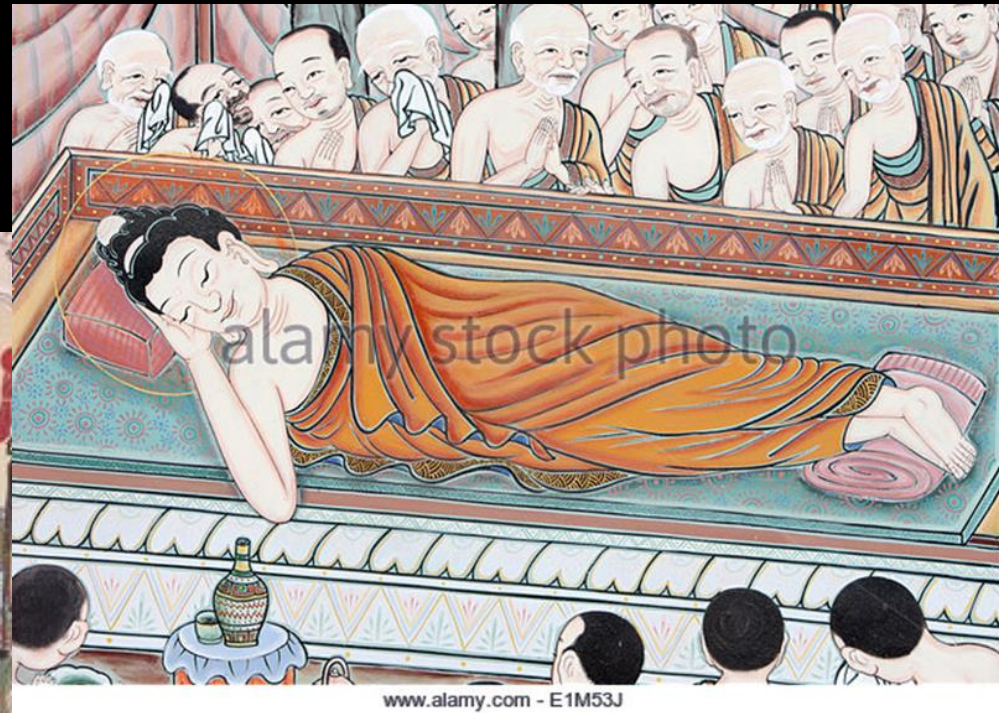
The Eightfold Path guides what we say, think, and do.
This path includes:



The Buddha's words of wisdom attracted many disciples, who formed an order of monks.



After 45 years of teaching, the Buddha died at age 80. He lay down and entered a state of eternal bliss called nirvana.



Buddhist monks created monasteries that became great centers of learning and attracted students from distant countries.



image source : www.travelnewsdigest.in

For over 1000 years, the Buddha's disciples recorded his teachings and spread the faith throughout Asia. The result was a wide variety of practices and beliefs which exist to the present-day.



All Buddhists seek nirvana, a release from an endless cycle of birth, death, and rebirth, called reincarnation. They believe the “Buddha nature” resides within all beings.

