

Buddhism



Buddhism

- About 6% of the world's population is Buddhist, making it the fourth largest religion in the world.
- Buddhism is practiced all over the world, though its largest numbers of followers are found in Southern & Eastern Asia.



Origins of Buddhism

- Buddhism is a religion that also began in India.
- Siddhartha Gautama, a rich young man, founded the religion about 500 B.C.
- He was born around 563 B.C. in northern India near the Himalayas. He was raised a Hindu in the Kshatriya, the warrior class.



Origins of Buddhism



- He lived a life of luxury, but he was troubled by the poverty and suffering he saw in the world around him.
- He left his family and became a wandering monk for a number of years, hoping to learn why people had to suffer.

Origins of Buddhism



- Finally, he quit wandering and simply sat and thought, meditated, about the unhappiness of man.
- He felt he understood what needed to be done.

Origins of Buddhism

- He believed that people could find peace if they could reject greed and desire.
- He accepted the Hindu belief in reincarnation and karma, but he did not accept the caste system or the need for priests.

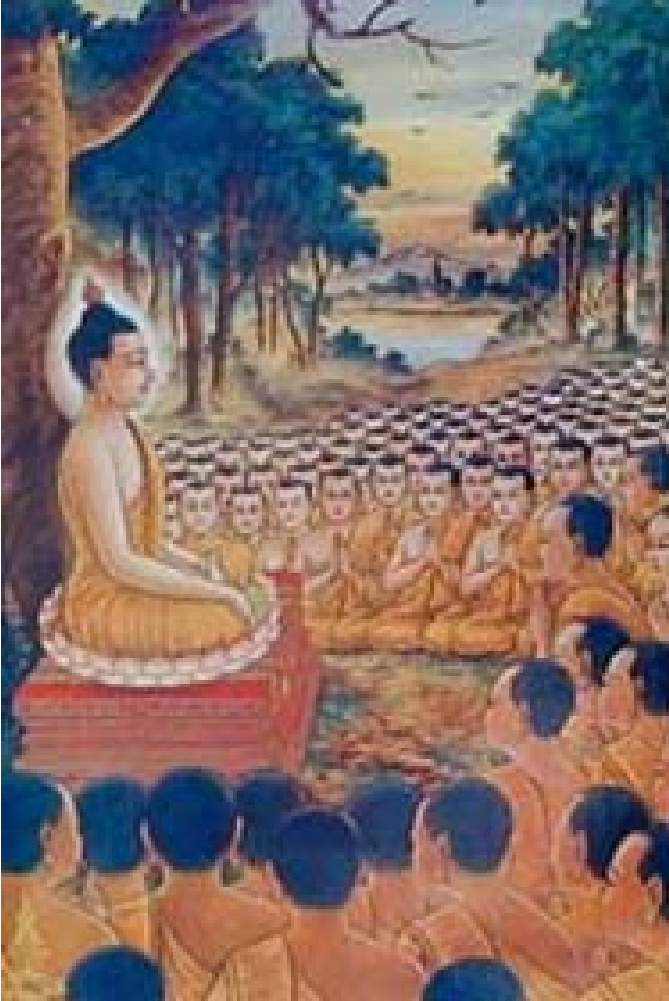


Origins of Buddhism



- Siddhartha Gautama was about 35 years old when he found enlightenment under the tree. From that point on, he was called “**Buddha**” or “**The Enlightened One,**” by his followers.
- The Buddha spent the rest of his life traveling across northern India and teaching people his ideas.

Teachings of Buddhism



- As he traveled, the Buddha gained many followers.
- Many of these followers were merchants and artisans, but he even taught a few kings.
- These followers were the first believers in Buddhism, the religion based on the teachings of the Buddha.

Four Noble Truths

At the heart of the Buddha's teachings were four guiding principles.

1. Suffering and unhappiness are a part of human life. No one can escape sorrow.
2. Suffering comes from our desires for pleasure and material goods. People cause their own misery because they want things they cannot have.
3. People can overcome their desires and ignorance and reach **nirvana**, a state of **perfect peace**. Reaching nirvana would free a person's soul from suffering and from the need for further reincarnation.
4. People can overcome ignorance and desire by following an **Eightfold Path** that leads to wisdom, enlightenment, and salvation.

Middle Way (Eightfold Path)

People can achieve nirvana by following the Middle Way



- 1 Right Thought**
Believe in the nature of existence as suffering and in the Four Noble Truths.



- 2 Right Intent**
Incline toward goodness and kindness.



- 3 Right Speech**
Avoid lies and gossip.



- 4 Right Action**
Don't steal from or harm others.



- 5 Right Livelihood**
Reject work that hurts others.



- 6 Right Effort**
Prevent evil and do good.



- 7 Right Mindfulness**
Control your feelings and thoughts.



- 8 Right Concentration**
Practice proper meditation.

Teachings of Buddhism

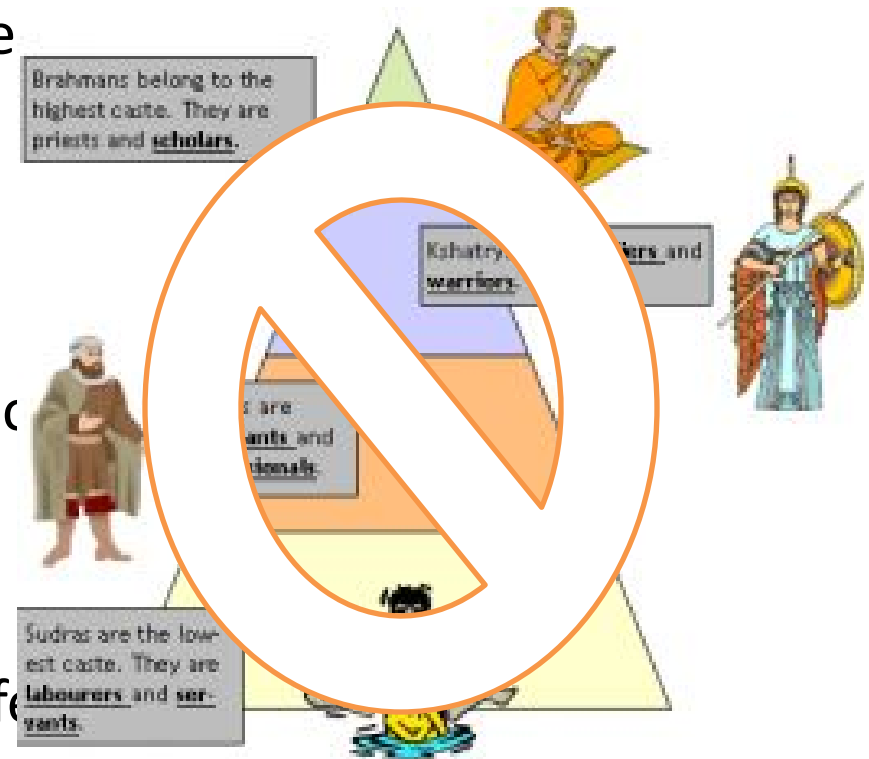
- Buddha believed that unselfishness was the key to everything.
- He did not recognize gods or see a need for priests.
- He felt man alone could change evil into good.
- If a person followed the Middle Way, the soul of that person would eventually reach a state of perfect peace, nirvana.

Achieving Nirvana – a
perfect state of
peace



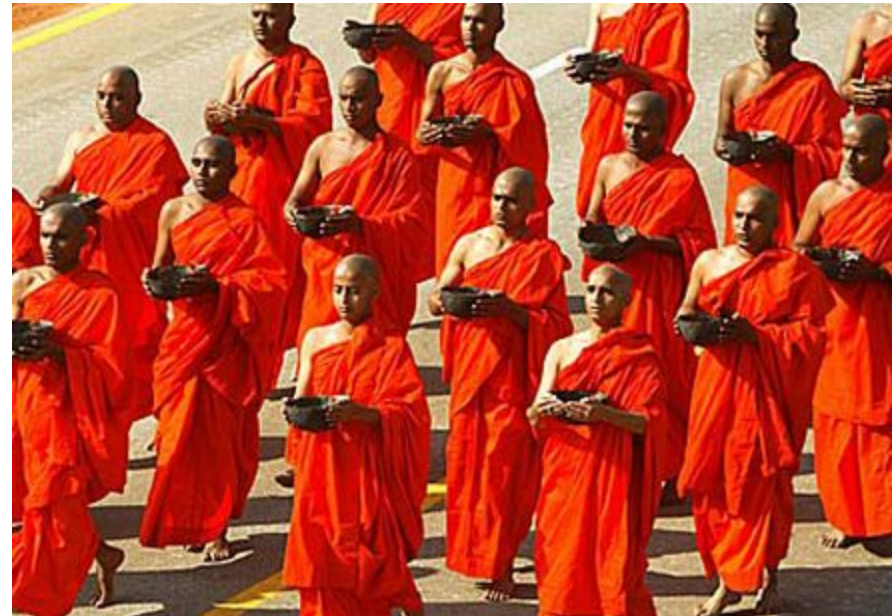
Challenge to Hinduism

- The Buddha was opposed to the caste system.
- He didn't think that people should be confined to a particular place in society.
- He taught that every person who followed the Eightfold Path properly would reach nirvana.
- It didn't matter what *varna* or caste they had belonged to in life as long as they lived the way they should.

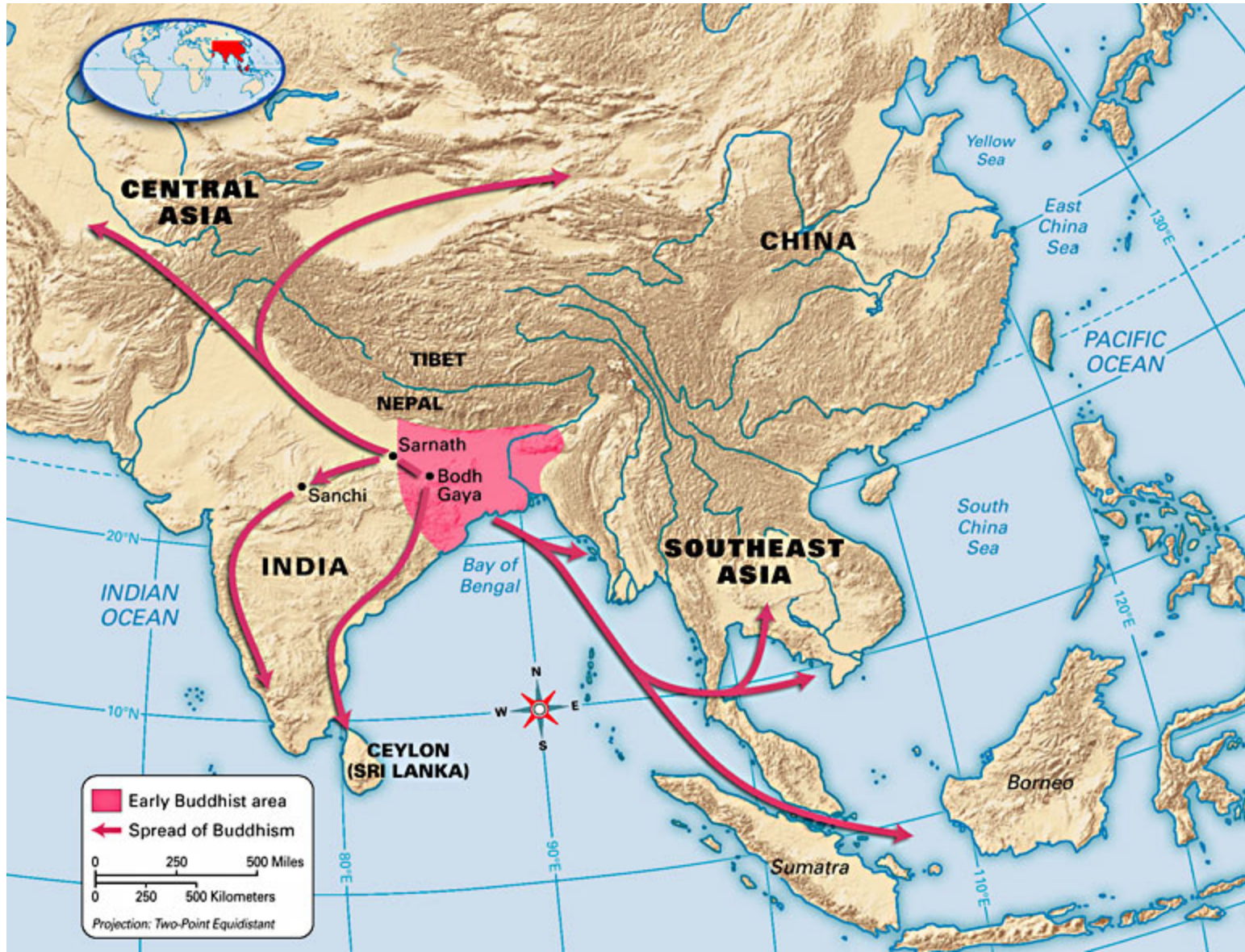


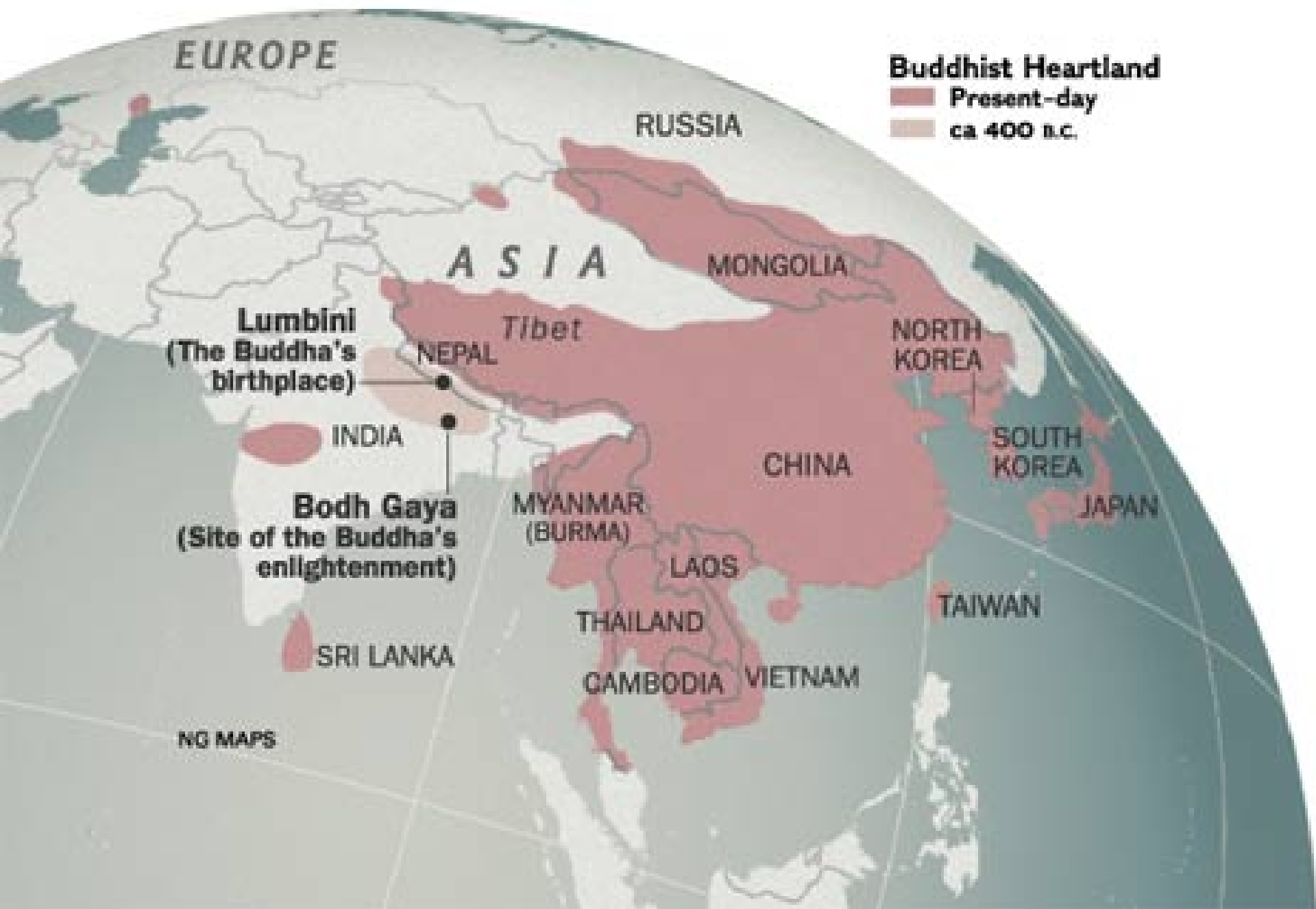
Challenge to Hinduism

- The Buddha's opposition to the caste system won him the support of the masses.
- Many herders, farmers, artisans, and untouchables liked hearing that their low social rank would not be a barrier to their enlightenment.
- Unlike Hinduism, Buddhism made them feel that they had the power to change their lives.



Spread of Buddhism







Jun Dung Sa Buddhist Temple - Lilburn