

Differences between hinduism and buddhism

[Religion](#)



Religion is the basic belief which one practices. It determines the life of an individual. Religions evolve from different customs, traditions, practices and values. Among these religions, Buddhism and Hinduism are one of the two most influential religions with a philosophical element in them. Both of the religions are closely related to each other and hence originated from South Asia. Since they were generated from different parts of India, the basic beliefs and practices are same, though they differ on major grounds.

Commenting upon the type of philosophy they practice, one would easily discern the difference of Hinduism being more stable and Buddhism relying more on humanitarian philosophy. However, Buddhism is considered to be a more universally accepted religion as compared to Hinduism. Both the religions spread from India reaching the corners of the World.

HINDUISM

Hinduism is religion which generated and expanded through different groups in India from 1500 BC. Hinduism dates back to the time of Indus civilization. There is no one person who found this religion, unlike Buddhism, whose origin is accredited to Gautama Buddha, a Hindu himself.

that is why, Hinduism is generally considered to be a collection of different ideas of groups sharing a common background, culture, traditions and beliefs. Hinduism is divided into different categories such as Brahmanic Hindus, Vedic Hindus, Reformed Hindus, Devotional Hindus and more. Hinduism has many interesting features. This includes the captivating culture, the myths and the stories from the past which is present in their Holy Scriptures. Important Hindu books include the Bhagwad Gita, Ramayan

and more which are essential for the guidance of Hindus. Hindus worship several Gods each accredited to a certain value.

However, it's the Brahman who is considered to be the Supreme Authority. Hinduism, a theistic religion, often regarded to be a polytheistic religion, generally prevails throughout India. Hinduism is often regarded as the 'eternal religion'. It is the third largest religion in the world with 837 million followers. Hindus practice the caste system, value meditation and entertain festive occasions such as Diwali, Holi and more. Other beliefs universally practiced by Hindus include the faith in Vedas which is the ancient sacred text, the priests, reincarnation and the law of Karma which determines the destiny of birth and death.

The basic purpose of life is to attain liberation from reincarnation where as they live a life according to the rules of Dharma.

BUDDHISM

Buddhism, as compared to Hinduism, is a non-theistic religion which is divided into two major schools- Mahayana and Theravada which differ on certain religious grounds yet practice certain same beliefs. Buddhism focuses on the individual spiritual development. However, Buddhism is based on the teachings of Gautama Buddha who was born in Nepal in 563 BC. His birth proved to be a milestone in history which amused people not with his origin but his character.

They used to ask questions such as are you God or an angel and Buddha used to give a simple yet intriguing reply that 'I am awake'. (Huston Smith).

1 Buddha generally means The Enlightened One or The Awakened One. With

his birth, a sense of serenity developed over the country and everybody rejoiced except the evil Mara. He was an epitome of perfection who was blessed with everything from family to wealth, from knowledge to understanding, yet there was a feeling of discontentment which outlasted during his twenties. He belonged to a wealthy family and led a luxurious life.

His father was worried about his future and to end this fret he consulted the fortune tellers. They told him the reality of Buddha's oncoming life. If he remained with the world he would end as the Universal King of India, its conqueror but if he forsook the world, he would eventually become a world redeemer. Keeping this scenario in view, his father put all his efforts to provide Gautama with every existing pleasure of life in order to keep him intact with the world. He was provided with a number of palaces and around 40,000 dancing girls.

All efforts were put forward to keep him away from the ugliness of life but despite these efforts he came in contact with the truth of old age, poverty and death which eventually ended the glitters of the worldly pleasures. Finally, he bid a silent goodbye to the worldly pleasures and led a pure life thereby keeping away from the luxuries of the world. Buddhists do not worship any deity. As per the teachings of Buddha, they believe that one should concentrate on issues which could be practiced or be divulged. However, he never denied the belief in God.

Buddhist scriptures comprise different myths and stories which circulated throughout the world. Buddhism follows certain practices and beliefs such as the idea of Karma, rebirth, Dharma, the path of enlightenment and more. The important concepts are The Four Noble Truths and The Eightfold Path.

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The Four Noble Truths include Dukkha which tells us that all existent happenings are associated with suffering, Trsna is all about the origin of suffering, Nirvana enfolds the concept of bringing a possible end to the sufferings and the EightFold Path which is a way of ending these sufferings through a possible solution.

However, other customs related to Buddhism include meditation, Buddhist worship and more.

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN HINDUISM AND BUDDHISM

Since both of the religions, Hinduism and Buddhism, originated from the same piece of the world, they constitute a wide range of similar teachings, beliefs and practices. It is even said that Buddhism originated through Hinduism therefore, it's obvious that both of the religions would have a number of similarities. 1. Smith Huston, The Worlds Religions: Our Great Wisdom Traditions, chapter 2, 3, Harper Collins Publisher.

Critically evaluating, one would easily say that the basic doctrines are same for the two religions but still they differ a lot when it comes to practicing those beliefs. Both of the religions have a faith on the deceptive power of the nature. The religions are ruled by the laws of Karma which is applicable to every being. According to this law, every living thing is rewarded or punished according to his deeds and intentions. Along with this, the religions even belief in the cycle of birth and death. They even place their faith in the fact of the presence of a number of hells and heavens.

According to Buddha, personal desires result in severe suffering. This concept is entertained by Hindus as well, as found in some Hindu texts. Both of the religions do believe in the concept of worshipping a God but on <https://assignbuster.com/differences-between-hinduism-and-buddhism/>

different planes. The idea of compassion and non-violence is entertained by the two religions. Moreover, the two religions deal with the benefits of the community giving it a higher priority than an individual. However, Buddhism focuses more on the individual development than the society. Both the religions reject the evil of selfishness.

The two religions follow certain common spiritual practices such as meditation, cultivation and other states of mind related to the purity of mind and soul.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BUDDHISM AND HINDUISM

Hinduism and Buddhism generally follow the same concepts yet differ on many circumstances. Some doctrines which are helpful important for the Hindus are not valued much by the Buddhists and vice versa. Buddhism has a more practical approach as compared to Hinduism. The major difference between the two religions is its origin and its founder. Buddhism was founded by a single leader, Buddha, whereas Hinduism has no one leader.

There are many groups behind the generation and expansion of Hinduism. The Vedas, which is the sacred text of Hindus, is of wide importance for Hindus whereas Buddhists do not consider the Hindu scriptures essential. The idea of individuality and belief in God is different for both the religions. There is a conspicuous variance in such philosophical pursuits among the two religions. Buddhism does not believe in the existence of souls and on the Supreme Authority- God. Whereas, believe in Atman which is the inner self. It is the ingredient of every individual which experiences the philosophical, spiritual and physical realm of life.

The Hindus place their belief and worship the Brahman who is considered as the omnipotent, omnipresent and the eternal self. The three Gods of Hindus are Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma. For Buddhists, Buddha is the Supreme Authority and they do not consider any other being equal to him in any aspect. on the other hand, since Buddha was a Hindu who resorted to the Hindus for knowledge and guidance, he is believed to be the incarnation of one of the Gods of Hindus, Mahavishnu. According to the Buddhists, the chief purpose of life is to end the suffering since the world is filled with sorrow and grief.

However, Hindus consider four major tasks to be fulfilled when in the world, the religious duty, issues related to wealth, fulfillment of desires and salvation. Hindus inculcate this idea in the human mind, that the passions are not supposed to be suppressed but intelligently fulfilled. Moreover, Hindus deem the four stages of life i. e. the stage of studentship, householder, forest dweller and the stage of renunciation, whereas the Buddhists deny these concepts. Buddha encourages his believers to reach to the end of suffering whereas Hindus lay greater emphasis upon the enjoyment and bliss of life.

The religions even differ on social aspects. Hinduism is practiced individually whereas the Buddhists are divided into a monastic Order. Another major difference between the two religions is that the Hinduism is divided into 4 castes such as Brahmins, Ksatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras. On the other hand, there is no distinction in Buddhism on the basis of color, caste and creed. Buddha obtained enlightenment through meditation whereas the general concept prevalent among Hindus is that an individual can attain God through

meditation. Hinduism and Buddhism are widely practiced and one of the two most influential religions of the world.

Since both of them arose from the same part of the globe, they do have a number of similar beliefs but they differ on other practices and doctrines. Buddhism starts from where Hinduism ends. Buddhism is based upon the teachings of Gautama Buddha who left no successor but spread the message of love and peace, or in short enlightenment, through a group of monks and nuns. Technically speaking, Buddhism is a more developed, organized and established religion which is based upon the belief of Dhamma in association with concepts of The Four Noble Truths and the eightfold Path.

On contrary, Hinduism has been originated through a number of groups sharing common interest, traditions, history and beliefs. Moreover, it can be evaluated from the fact that Buddhism is a more positive religion since it was generated as result of Hindu uprisings. The two religions are similar as well as different on the major beliefs such as Karma, Dharma, Mantra, Meditation and Reincarnation. In association with these concepts, certain features are entertained by Buddhism and certain by Hinduism. Thus the two are no doubt closely linked to each other.