

## The Buddha:

- Stories of his early life: pre-birth, birth, prophecy, palace
- The Four Sights: old age, sickness, death, holy man
- His Enlightenment following renunciation and meditation

## Key Concepts:

<b>Anicca</b>	the impermanent nature of all things	<b>Anatta</b>	no independent or permanent self
<b>Dukkha</b>	suffering/unsatisfactoriness	<b>(S)kandhas</b>	the 5 elements that make up a human being
<b>Samatha</b>	calmness or breathing meditation	<b>Pratitya</b>	everything 'exists' because of other things
<b>Mettabhavana</b>	the development of loving kindness, usually through meditation	<b>Vipassana</b>	'insight' meditation to see the true nature of things

## Exam Practice:

- Describe the Buddha's early life. (5)
- Describe how the Buddha became enlightened after he had seen the Four Sights. (5)

## Key Beliefs and Teachings:

<b>Early Life</b>	Tradition says that <b>Gautama's</b> mother's dream of a white elephant implied that the baby would be special. <b>Gautama</b> was born out of his mother's side and he took seven steps and spoke, predicting that he would be <b>enlightened</b> during this (his last) life. <b>Asita</b> , a wise man, predicted that <b>Gautama</b> would either become a great ruler (like his father), or become a <b>spiritual</b> teacher and fully enlightened. His father did not want his son to be a religious leader, so he tried to make sure that <b>Gautama</b> did not see any suffering and that his life was luxurious. It is not essential for Buddhists today to <b>believe</b> that these events actually happened.
<b>The Four Sights</b>	When <b>Gautama</b> left the palace for the first time, his father tried to control what he saw but even so he saw Four Sights which changed the way he saw the world. The Four Sights showed him what life was like. He saw <b>old age, sickness, and death</b> which made him realise that everyone suffers ( <b>dukkha</b> ), that everything changes ( <b>anicca</b> ) and that there is no permanent self ( <b>anatta</b> ). Lastly, he saw a peaceful <b>holy man</b> and realised that there must be a way out of suffering. At this point, <b>Gautama</b> decided that he could not remain living a life of luxury in the palace.
<b>His Enlightenment</b>	<b>Gautama</b> decided to <b>renounce</b> his life in the palace which included his family and all his luxuries. This was quite a common practice for men at that time. The aim of this was to focus on <b>spiritual development</b> so <b>Gautama</b> was not concerned with physical needs, like eating. After 6 years, <b>Gautama</b> realised that this wasn't helping him find the answer to why people suffer so he began to <b>meditate</b> . During a night of <b>meditation</b> , he was tempted by Mara to give up his quest, but he overcame this temptation and was <b>enlightened</b> . It was at this point that he saw things as they really are and became the <b>Buddha</b> (one who is fully awake to the truth). After his Enlightenment he realised why people suffer and was able to set out how to overcome it. He began to teach the <b>Dharma</b> , the things he had realised e.g. the <b>Four Noble Truths</b> .

## Key Connections:

How do teachings about the life of The Buddha relate to other areas of your study?

*Three Marks of Existence, Four Noble Truths, enlightenment, meditation, Wesak, the Triratna, good, evil and suffering, issues of wealth & poverty*