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Buddhism, Jainism and Other Shramanic Cults (in Hindi)

LESSON 8 OF 17



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Crash Course on Ancient India

Lesson - 7

Buddhism, Jainism and other Shramanic Movements

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Cleared

CS, CMA (CWA) and CA Final (Group I)

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Buddha : Early Life

- Born to Mayadevi and Shuddhodhana at Lumbini ; named Siddhartha
- Shuddhodhana was the leader of Shakya Republic ; Capital : Kapilvastu
- both Lumbini and Kapilvastu are on India-Nepal Border
- Mayadevi died after giving birth to Siddhartha
- Siddhartha was brought up by his step mother and maternal aunt Mahaprajapati Gautami
- He had a half-brother Devadutt, who was wicked
- Siddhartha was married to Yashodhara and had a son, Rahul
- Left home at the age of 29
- He initially went to Magadha, where its emperor Bimbisara offered him throne, but Buddha rejected it
- He was initially taught by Alara Kalama (Aarad Kalam) and Udaka Ramaputta (Udraka Ramaputra)
- He was then accompanied by five others, under the leadership of Kaundinya

Buddha : Early Life

- Siddhartha did meditation under a Peepal tree , near Falgu river , near Gaya and got enlightened at the age of 35. He became 'Buddha'.
- The place is Bodh-Gaya and the tree is Bodhi-tree, Mahabodhi, Bodh-Gaya
- Buddha delivered his first sermon at Sarnath near Varanasi
- They formed the first 'Sangha' with Kaundinya and four others
- Followed by the conversion of the three Kassapa Brothers and their 1000 followers.
- Later he got two main disciples - Sariputta (Shariputra) and Moggalana (Mudgalayana)
- He accepted his foster mother Mahaprajapati Gautami into Sangha, the first female disciple
- Buddha died at Kushinagara , near Gorakhpur, at the age of 80, after consciously consuming poisonous food from Kanda .
- He is said to have attained 'Mahaparinirvana' (Mahaparinibbana)

Buddha : Authors and Dates

- **Buddhacharita** by Ashvaghosha, 5 centuries later, is the full biography of Buddha (2nd century AD)
- **Lalitvistara** is the story up to the Sarnath Sermon, composed around 3rd century AD
- **Mahavastu** is composed between 2nd century BC and 4th century AD
- **Nidanakatha** by Buddhaghosha, c.5th century AD, who had deep influence in Sri Lanka.
- The date of Buddha is derived using Mahavamsha (a chronological history book from Sri Lanka, where Buddha did never visit)
- Accordingly, Buddha was born 563 BC and died in 483 BC, during the reign of Ajatshatru (the son of Bimbisara).

Buddha's Main Teachings

- Original teachings are under debate
- Majjhim Marg (Middle Path): Avoid Extremes
- Dhammachakkapavattanam (Dharmachakrapravartanam)
- Eight-fold Path evolved ; Tripitaka evolved
- There is no 'God' ; No Vedic rituals
- Ahimsa, Peace and Inner Peace ; Karma, Soul and Rebirth
- Nirvana and Parinirvana (Nibbana and Parinibbana)
: Salvation is the final goal
- The Four Noble Truths (Chatvari Arya Satyani)
 1. Dukkha : The world is full of miseries
 2. Samudaya : Desire is the root cause of miseries
 3. Nirodh : There is a way to end desires
 4. Marg (Magg) : Move towards it

Eight Fold Path (Attangiko) (Ashtangika)

Right = Samyak

View

Drishti

Resolve

Sankalp

Speech

Vacha

Action

Karmanta

Livelihood

Ajiva

Effort

Vyayama

Mindfulness

Smriti

Samadhi

Samadhi

Tripitaka : Tri = Three + Pitaka = Box/Basket

Vinaya = Rules & Regulations for the monks

Sutta (Sutra) = Buddha's Teachings

Abhidhamma (Abhidharma) = Interpretations of Buddha's Teachings

After Buddha

- Buddha was also known as 'Shakyamuni' and 'Tathagat'.
- Ajatashatru organized the 'First Buddhist Council' at Rajgriha, his capital c. 480 BC, just after the death of Buddha.
- Early Buddhism propagated three jewels – Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha
- Buddha's teachings were in Pali and preserved in the same language
- Buddhism was a big challenge to the Brahman monopoly
- Both Buddhism and Jainism faced competition from other sects
- The Second Buddhist Council was held c.383 BC at Vaishali, under the patronage of Shishunaga King Kalashoka (Kakavarma)
- Issue : change in Vinaya (Regulations for the monks)
- Split between Mahasmaghika (majority) and Sthaviras (who advocated change) ; The first schism/ split in Buddhism

Tirthankaras

- Total 24 Tirthankaras
- Mahavira was the 24th and final Tirthankara
- The first one was Rishabhdeva
- 23rd Tirthankara was Parshvanath, whose historicity can be established. He thrived around Varanasi (Kashi) and attained 'Moksha' at Parasnath Hill in Jharkhand
- All other 22 Tirthankars are mythical/ legendary

Mahavira : Life

- Born c.599 / 540 BC in Kundagram near Vaishali
- Original name was Vardhaman
- Father was a Vajji chieftain named Siddhartha and mother was Trishala
- He belonged to Kashyap Gotra of Ikshvaku Dynasty (legendary) (Jnatrika Tribe)
- Shwetambara and Digambara traditions are divided over his marital status. The bride in either case was Yashoda. Shwetambara sources mention about his daughter Priyadarshana (Anogna in some sources)
- Left home at the age of 30. Did penance for about 12 years.
- Attained 'Kaivalya' (just like Buddhahood) at the age of 42 or 43 under a Sal tree, on the banks of Rijupalika / Rijuvaluka River.
- At Jambikgram/ Jambiyagram/ Jribhikgram, some identify it as Jamui (Bihar) ; Here onwards, he was known as 'Mahavira'
- First Sermon at Vipulachala Parvat near Rajgriha, which is called Divya-Dhwani

Mahavira : Life

- Preached Jainism for the next 30 years
- Was contemporary to Bimbisara (Shrenik) and Ajatashatru (According to Jain traditions), who became his followers.
- Similar claims in Buddhism ; scholars place Buddha before and after Mahavira
- Died at the age of 72 at Pawapuri near Rajgiha and Nalanda c. 527 / 468 BC
- The disciples were known as 'Ganadharas'
- The first disciple was Jamali, said to be his son-in-law
- He had eleven main disciples, who were Brahmins earlier
- His chief disciple was Gautama Swami or Indrabhuti Gautama, from Magadh
- Gautama Swami compiled Agamas, the original sacred Jain scriptures
- Teachings in Prakrit (Ardh-Magadhi)
- Surprisingly, both Jain and Buddhist enlightened people are known as 'Arihant' / 'Arahant'

Mahavira : Life

- Mahavira was also came to be known as 'Kevalin' , 'Jin' and 'Nirgrantha'
- Digambara Jain Sect is the original one. Shwetambara Sect started during and after Mauryan Period.
- Jains also formed Sanghas like Buddhists
- There were two Jain Sangeetis (Councils) none of which took place during this period.
- Jainism will have to wait up to the Mauryan Period to have its first significant patron.
- The dating of 'Patliputra Famine' is very problematic. It will be discussed in the next part - Mauryan Period. Shwetambara and Digambara Sects.

Mahavira's Main Teachings

- 'Agamas' contain the earliest teachings of Jain Tirthankars , including Mahavira
- Agamas consisted of 12 Angas (11 Angas proper and the twelfth Anga containing 14 Purvas)
- No God

- Panch-vrats (Five major principles)
 1. Ahimsa (non-violence)
 2. Satya (truthfulness)
 3. Asteya (non-stealing)
 4. Brahmacharya (chastity)
 5. Aparigrah (Non-attachment)

Triratnas / Ratnatrayas are

- Samyak Gyan: means right knowledge
- Samyak darshana : Means right view
- Samyak Acharana:Means right conduct.

The Great Shramanic Movement

- The so called atrocities of Brahmins
- many theological sects emerged during the 6th and 5th centuries BC
- All of them were somewhat atheistic (Nastika) in nature, although some really followed spiritualism
- Buddhism and Jainism were the most popular among them
- Only these two survived , while five other major sects are extinct
- These other five were : Ajivika, Lokayat, Ajnana (Agyan), Teachings of Purana Kassapa, Pakudha Kachchayana
- Samannaphala Sutta of Digha Nikaya of Sutta Pitaka of Tripitaka
- Suyagadanga / Suttrakritanga – one of the 12 Jain Angas of Agamas

Teachings of Nigantha Nataputta

- Described by Shramanaphala Sutra (Sammanaphala Sutta)
- Identified as Vardhamana Mahavira
- Conclusion : There is mention of Mahavira in Buddhist religious texts

Ajivika

- Founded by Makkhali Gosala /Manthaliputra Goshalak , somewhere in eastern UP
- Makkhali Gosala is said to be a friend of Mahavira
- Ahetuvada – Without any cause
- There is no free will ; everything is pre-decided and depends upon fate (Niyati) – destiny cannot be changed
- Good deeds and conduct have nothing to do with salvation
- No primary sources exist. Buddhist and Jain (Bhagwati Sutra)sources mention it.
- Barabar Caves near Gaya, are associated with Ajivika sect.

Lokayata or Charvaka

- Founded by Ajit Keshakambali (wore a blanket of human hair)
- Original Text : Brahaspatya Sutra (almost lost) composed by Brihaspati
- “Perception is the only source of knowledge.”
- Uchedavada - “Death is the solution of every problem.”
- “Rinam Kritva Ghritam Pibet” - Take loan and drink Ghee.
- Theravada Text Brahmajala Sutta also mentions him and his philosophy

Ajnana (Agyan)

- Teachings of Sanjaya Belatthiputta (belonging to Belatthi Clan)
- Original teacher of Moggalana and Sariputta
- Agnosticism – Supernatural things, including God, are neither known nor knowable ; Skepticism, Escapism and Sophism

Teachings of Purana Kassapa

- Believed in Akriyavada – (non action) : Body and soul are mutually exclusive
- Ahetuvada – Without any cause
- There is no evil in doing anything ; There is no merit of practicing generosity

Teachings of Pakudha Kachchayana

- Seven elements of life –air, water, earth, fire, joy, sorrow and life
- All of them are eternal, mutually exclusive and don't affect each other
- These seven elements do whatever is done or whatever happens
- Calls his philosophy 'Shashvatavada' or 'eternalism' and Anu-vada or 'atomic theory'

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Alexander's Invasion

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