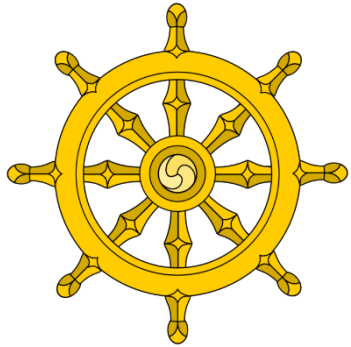




Buddhism



The **dharma wheel**, or **dharmachakra** in Sanskrit, is one of the oldest symbols of Buddhism.

When a wheel has eight spokes, the spokes represent the Eightfold Path.



The Buddha

A man called Siddhartha Gautama, who was born into a noble family, created Buddhism. He lived a sheltered early life, but when he was older he went out into the world and saw that sickness, age and death come to everyone. After seeing this, Gautama meditated and found the answer to life. This made him the Buddha. This was called enlightenment and the Buddha decided to teach others how to reach it. There are no gods in Buddhism.



Holy Books

When the Buddha died, people thought it would be a good idea to write down what Buddha said and thought. 500 Buddhist Monks met to check the content of his teachings. The teachings were then passed down by word of mouth for around 400 years, before being written down.

The Four Noble Truths

1. All human life involves suffering.
2. The root of suffering is craving.
3. We can escape suffering if we learn to be contented and stop craving.
4. We can end suffering by following what Buddha described as the 'middle way'.

Key Vocabulary

Buddha	The teacher and creator of Buddhism.
Meditate	When Buddhists close their eyes and breathe deeply, trying to empty their minds of thoughts.
Enlightenment	Breaking the Buddhist cycle of rebirth and reaching Nirvana.
Eightfold Path	The rules laid out by Buddha which will lead to Nirvana.
Dharmachakra	'The Wheel of Dharma'.
Nirvana	Perfect peace with no suffering.
Puja	The Buddhist act of worship.
Shrine	A special place that is linked with a holy object or person.
Wesak	Important Buddhist festival when Buddhists try to clear their minds of negative thoughts.