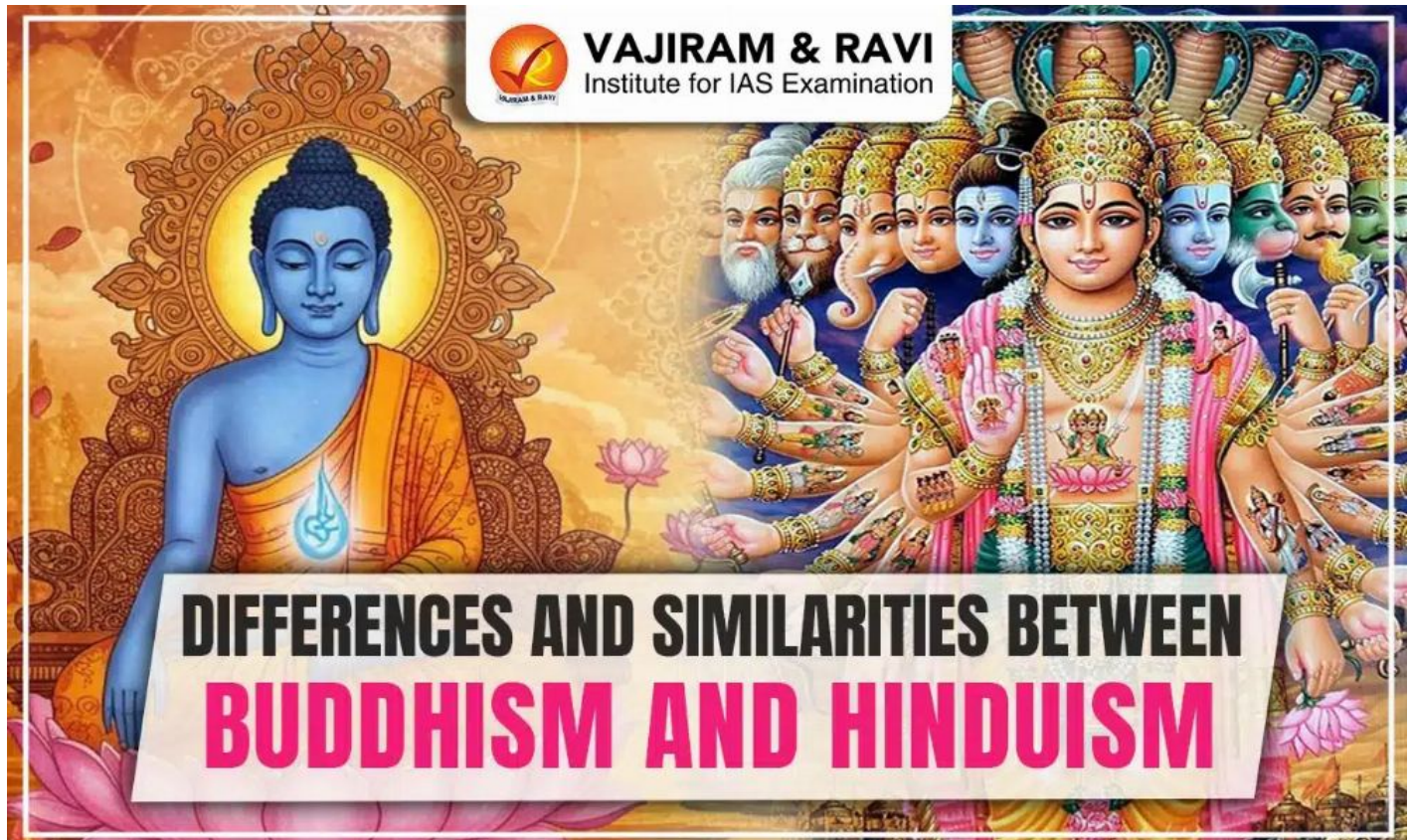


Differences and Similarities Between Buddhism and Hinduism

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Buddhism and Hinduism are two of the most influential religions that originated in India, yet they differ greatly in their philosophies and practices. Buddhism is centered around the teachings of Gautama Buddha and emphasizes the path to enlightenment through the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path. It rejects rigid rituals, caste distinctions, and the authority of the Vedas.

Hinduism, on the other hand, is considered the world's oldest living religion and is often described by practitioners as Sanatana Dharma or "the eternal way." It is a diverse system of beliefs rooted in the Vedas, emphasizing dharma (duty), karma (action), moksha (liberation), and devotion to various deities.

Understanding the Differences and Similarities Between Buddhism and Hinduism is important for grasping the basics of Indian religious thought, as well as their impact on culture, philosophy, and history.

Buddhism

- **Origin:** Founded in the 6th century BCE by Siddhartha Gautama (the Buddha) in present-day Nepal/India.
- **Sacred Texts:** Tripitaka (Pali Canon), Mahayana Sutras, Tibetan texts.
- **Beliefs:** Rejects caste system and authority of the Vedas. Emphasizes equality and personal effort in spiritual progress.
- **Core Concepts:** Four Noble Truths (suffering, its cause, cessation, and path). The Noble Eightfold Path provides the way to overcome suffering. The ultimate goal is Nirvana-freedom from suffering and the cycle of rebirth.
- **Practice:** Meditation, mindfulness, monastic life, ethical conduct, stupas and monasteries as worship sites.

Hinduism

- **Origin:** Among the world's oldest religions; no single founder. Developed in ancient India through gradual assimilation of cultural traditions.
- **Monastic System:** Monks (male): Bhikkhus, Nuns (female): Bhikkhunis, Community: Sangha (monastic order), Discipline: Monks and nuns practice celibacy; lay followers may marry
 - **Sacred Texts:** The Vedas, **Upanishads**, Bhagavad Gita, Ramayana, and Mahabharata.
 - **Beliefs:** Flexible-includes monotheism, polytheism, pantheism. Major deities include Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, and Devi.
 - **Core Concepts:** Karma (actions and consequences), Dharma (duty), Samsara (cycle of rebirth). The ultimate goal is Moksha-liberation from samsara.
 - **Practice:** Rituals, devotion (bhakti), yoga, meditation, temple worship, pilgrimages.
 - **Symbols:** Dharmachakra (Wheel of Dharma), Lotus, Conch, Twin fish, Victory banner, Vase, Parasol
- **Monastic Titles:** Male Monks – Yogis, Sages, Rishis, Gurus, Priests; **Female Monks** – Sanyasini, Sadhvi, Swamini
- **Sacred Texts:** Vedas, Bhagavad Gita, Ramayan, Upanishads, Puranas
- **Marriage:** Marriage allowed; historical instances of polygamy.
- Sins committed deliberately repaid through Karmic consequences; repentance for unintentional sins prescribed

Differences Between Buddhism and Hinduism

Buddhism and Hinduism, though both rooted in the Indian subcontinent, differ widely in their philosophies, practices, and worldviews. Hinduism is considered the world's oldest religion, with a vast pantheon of deities and scriptures, while Buddhism emerged later as a reformist movement under the teachings of Gautama Buddha. The table below highlights the major Differences Between Buddhism and Hinduism:

Differences Between Buddhism and Hinduism		
Aspect	Hinduism	Buddhism

Origin	Originated in India around 2000 BCE or earlier; considered the world’s oldest living religion	Founded in the 5th–6th century BCE by Siddhartha Gautama (Buddha) in India
Core Belief	Believes in Brahman (universal soul) and Atman (individual soul)	Denies permanent soul (Anatta); emphasizes impermanence and non-self
Goal of Life	Moksha – liberation of the soul from the cycle of birth and death (samsara)	Nirvana – liberation from suffering and end of rebirth
Deities	Polytheistic; worship of many gods and goddesses like Vishnu, Shiva, Durga	Non-theistic; Buddha is revered as a teacher, not a god
Sacred Texts	Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, Ramayana, Mahabharata	Tripitaka (Pali Canon), Dhammapada, Mahayana Sutras
Path to Liberation	Karma, dharma, devotion (bhakti), meditation, and knowledge (jnana)	Noble Eightfold Path: right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration
Rituals	Complex rituals, puja, temple worship, festivals	Meditation, mindfulness, monastic discipline
Caste System	Strongly linked with caste system in society	Rejected caste distinctions, promoted equality

Similarities Between Buddhism and Hinduism

Hinduism and Buddhism, though distinct religions, share a deep historical and cultural connection as both originated in ancient India. Over time, they influenced each other’s philosophies and practices. Their common ground lies in ideas about karma, dharma, reincarnation, and the pursuit of liberation from worldly suffering. The table below highlights the major Similarities Between Buddhism and Hinduism.

Similarities Between Buddhism and Hinduism			
Aspect	Hinduism	Buddhism	Similarity
Origin	Emerged gradually in ancient India	Founded by Gautama Buddha in 6th century BCE	Both arose in the Indian subcontinent, sharing a common cultural background

Dharma	Refers to moral, social, and religious duties	Refers to Buddha's teachings and universal law	Both stress righteous living and moral duties
Karma	Every action has consequences affecting future lives	Actions shape rebirths and experiences	Both uphold the law of cause and effect
Reincarnation (Samsara)	Continuous cycle of birth, death, rebirth	Cycle of rebirth driven by karma	Both believe in samsara and rebirth
Liberation	Moksha: release and union with the ultimate reality	Nirvana: freedom from suffering and desires	Both seek liberation from samsara
Concept of Self	Belief in eternal self (Atman)	Denies permanent self (Anatta)	Both stress impermanence of worldly existence
Ethical Teachings	Emphasis on truth, righteousness, self-discipline	Four Noble Truths & Eightfold Path as moral guide	Both promote ethical conduct and detachment
Meditation	Central practice for self-realization	Core practice for enlightenment	Both value meditation and mindfulness
Non-violence (Ahimsa)	Strong emphasis on ahimsa in thought and action	Compassion and non-harming central to practice	Both promote compassion and respect for life

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