

ATOMIC ENERGY EDUCATION SOCIETY

Class VI- Social Science

New Questions and Ideas- Handout-I

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- **Understand the context in which the Buddhism and the Jainism developed and flourished**
- **Outline the basic tenets of Buddhism Jainism and Upanishads.**

I. Context in which the Buddhism and the Jainism developed and flourished

- Complex rituals and sacrifices during the later Vedic period.
- These sacrificial ceremonies were too expensive
- The superstitious beliefs and mantras during the later Vedic period
- Rigid caste system based on four Varna
- Kshatriya reaction against Brahmanical domination
- Buddhism and Jainism were easy to practice
- They preached in common language such as Prakrit and Pali instead of Sanskrit
- Both religions were not based on caste system

II. Buddhism

- Sidhartha Gauthama also known as Buddha was the founder of Buddhism
- Born about 2500 years ago
- Gauthama was a Kshatriya belonged to Sakya Gana
- He left his luxurious life at the age of 29 to become an ascetic..
- At the age of thirty-five, under a papal tree, at Bodh Gaya in Bihar Sidhartha attained enlightenment
- After that he was known as Buddha or the wise one
- He gave his first sermon at Sarnath
- Passed away at Kusinara

Teaching of Buddha

- Life is full of sufferings and unhappiness
- This is caused because of cravings and desires (Tanha)
- Tanha can be removed by following moderation in everything
- People should be kind and respect the lives of others including animals
- The result of karma or actions affects us both in this life and the next
- Buddha taught in the language of the ordinary people, Prakrit
- He encouraged people to think for themselves rather than to simply accept what he said

III. Jainism

- Vardhamana Mahavira was the founder of Jainism
- Contemporary of lord Buddha
- Kshatriya prince of Lichhavis
- Left home at the age of thirty in search of truth
- After twelve years he attained enlightenment and came to be known as Jina - conqueror
- Because he was the conqueror of his inner enemies--greed, desire, anger, passion, ego etc.

Teachings of Mahavira

- Taught a simple doctrine
- Those who wish to know the truth must leave their homes
- They must strictly follow Ahimsa - means not hurting or killing living beings
- Used Prakrit language so ordinary people could understand
- Followers of Mahavira- Jainas
- They led simple life, begging for foods
- They had to be absolutely honest and were asked not to steal
- They had to observe celibacy
- Men had to give up everything including clothes
- Mainly supported by traders and very difficult for farmers to follow these the rules

IV. Upanishads

- Upanishads means approaching and sitting near devotedly
- It contains conversations between Guru and disciples
- Upanishad thinkers wanted to know life after death and why sacrifices should be performed
- They felt that that there was something permanent in this universe
- The Upanishads for the first time clearly define the concept of Brahman and Atman.
- They believed that both Atman and Brahman were one.
- Many of these ideas were recorded in the Upanishad
- These ideas were presented through simple dialogues in Sanskrit
- Most of the Upanishad thinkers were men especially brahmins and rajahs.
- Gargi was one of the famous women thinkers of upanishads.
- Satyakama Jabala was one of the best thinkers of the time who was a son of a slave woman
