



February 2025

WE ARE COMMITTED TO MAKING BRIO LIVING SERVICES A SAFE, WELCOMING PLACE FOR ALL TO LIVE AND WORK



February Celebrations



African American History Month

1st National Freedom Day

1st-7th World Interfaith Harmony Week

15th Parinirvana Day

20th World Day of Social Justice

28th Ramadan Begins

Parinirvana Day, or Nirvana Day, is observed mainly by Mahayana Buddhists on February 15th to commemorate the Buddha's death and his entry into final Nirvana. It is a time for reflection on the Buddha's teachings, with some monasteries hosting meditation retreats and others welcoming the general public who bring gifts to support monks and nuns.

In Theravada Buddhism, the Buddha's Parinirvana, birth, and enlightenment are all celebrated together during Vesak, which falls in May and is based on the lunar calendar.

<https://www.learnreligions.com/nirvana-day-449911>

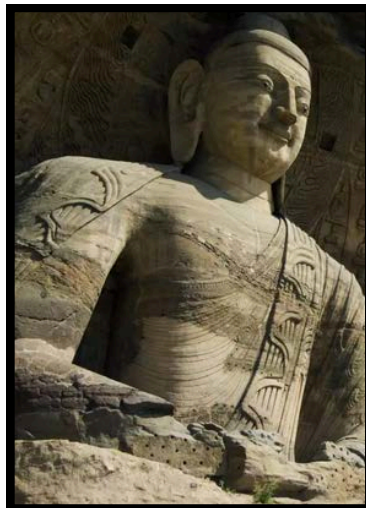




INTRO TO BUDDHISM

Buddhism is a religion based on the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, known as the Buddha, who lived in the 5th century B.C. in what is now Nepal and northern India. The Buddha achieved a deep understanding of life, death, and existence. Unlike many religions that focus on gods, Buddhism is non-theistic and emphasizes the importance of enlightenment rather than belief in deities.

<https://www.learnreligions.com/introduction-to-buddhism-449715>



MEANING OF 'NIRVANA'

Nirvana, meaning "to extinguish," refers to the ending of suffering and desires, symbolized by the extinguishing of a flame. In some Buddhist traditions, it is seen as a state of peace or bliss that can be experienced during life or after death. The Buddha taught that Nirvana is beyond human understanding and imagination, making speculation about it foolish. Some Buddhist schools believe enlightenment leads to a partial Nirvana, called "Nirvana With Reminders," while "Parinirvana" is the full realization of Nirvana after death.

<https://www.learnreligions.com/nirvana-day-449911>

ORIGINS OF MAHAYANA BUDDHISM

Buddhism has been divided into Theravada and Mahayana for nearly two millennia. While Theravada was once seen as the "original," modern research challenges this. Mahayana emerged between the 1st and 2nd centuries CE, gradually developing from earlier teachings. The Great Schism split the sangha into Mahasanghika and Sthavira factions over monastic rules, with Theravada stemming from the Sthavira school in Sri Lanka.

Mahayana's roots are now understood to come from multiple early schools, including Sthavira sects, rather than just Mahasanghika. By the 1st century BCE, Mahayana, meaning "great vehicle," emphasized the enlightenment of all beings, in contrast to "Hinayana." It teaches the Three Turnings of the Dharma Wheel: the Four Noble Truths, emptiness (sunyata), and Buddha Nature. Key doctrines include sunyata, Buddha Nature, and Yogacara. Shantideva's "Way of the Bodhisattva" (ca. 700 CE) emphasized the bodhisattva vow. Mahayana spread to China, Tibet, Korea, and Japan.

<https://www.learnreligions.com/mahayana-buddhism-overview-450004>

HOW MAHAYANA BUDDHISM IS THE GREAT VEHICLE

Mahayana, the dominant form of Buddhism in East Asia and Tibet, originated around 2,000 years ago and includes sub-schools like Vajrayana. Vajrayana, while rooted in Mahayana, is distinct, focusing on direct connection with buddha-nature. Mahayana emphasizes the Bodhisattva Vow, aiming for universal enlightenment, unlike Theravada's focus on individual salvation.

Mahayana teaches that all realities, including the ego, are illusions of emptiness (sunyata). The ideal is to become a Bodhisattva, embodying compassion and interconnectedness. It also teaches that Buddha Nature is inherent in all beings, a concept central to Vajrayana practices like Dzogchen.

Mahayana includes the Trikaya doctrine, stating that each Buddha has three bodies: dharmakaya (absolute truth), sambogakaya (bliss), and nirmanakaya (manifestation). Its canon features sutras like the Lotus and Prajnaparamita, using Sanskrit terms instead of Pali.

<https://www.learnreligions.com/origins-of-mahayana-buddhism-450007>



Dharma Wheel