

A Great Asian Thinker



In the 400s and 500s B.C., Siddhartha Gautama lived near present-day border of India and Nepal. Gautama had been born a prince but felt it was wrong to live such a comfortable life when so many people were suffering. He searched for answers. He was later called the 'Buddha', or 'Enlightened One', because he reached a new level of spiritual understanding. Buddha's ideas remain an important influence in Asia and other parts of the world.

More than those who hate you, more than all your enemies, an undisciplined mind does greater harm. More than your mother, more than your father, more than all your family, a well-disciplined mind does greater good

Do not give your attention to what others do or fail to do; give it to what you do or fail to do.

Like a lively flower, full of color but lacking in fragrance, are the words of those who do not practice what they preach. Like a lovely flower full of color and fragrance are the words of those who practice what they preach.

Many garlands (wreaths) can be made from a heap of flowers. Many good deeds can be done in this life.

The immature are their own enemies, doing selfish deeds, which will bring them sorrow. That deed is selfish which brings remorse (regret, sorrow) and suffering in its wake. But good is that deed which brings no remorse, only happiness in its wake.

If you see a wise man who steers you away from the wrong path, follow him as you would one who can reveal hidden treasures. Only good can come out of it.

Make friends with those who are good and true, not with those who are bad and false.

As irrigators lead water where they want, as archers make their arrows straight, as carpenters carve wood, the wise shape their minds.

Think it Over

1. Based on these quotations, what ideas did the Buddha believe in most strongly?
2. How are the ideas of the Buddha similar and different from those of other great thinkers you have studied?
3. How are they similar and different than those of your own?