

WHY I AM NOT A BUDDHIST

BUDDHIST SITES

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"What troubles me most about Buddhism is its implication that detachment from ordinary life is the surest route to salvation" Austin Cline

BUDDHIST TEACHING

Buddha only claimed to be nothing other than a human being who achieved the truth by human effort without the help of any deity or God (page 1, What the Buddha Taught).

Buddha encouraged total freedom of thought because self-effort and finding things out for yourself was the only way to find the truth (page 2).

Buddha advised doubt and said it was a good thing (page 2). He was not interested in being an authority who must be believed and obeyed (page 3). He taught that doubt was a good thing only if it led to greater certainty for doubt could hinder one from attaining salvation or Nirvana.

Buddhism has never led to persecution or bloodshed (page 5).

Buddhism rejects the Buddhism label because nobody or no group has a monopoly on truth (page 5).

Buddhism stresses seeing not faith (page 8). The word saddha is often taken to mean faith but it means confidence that comes out of conviction or seeing. Questions such as is the universe eternal or not or is the soul the same as the body or separate from it and is the soul immortal are regarded as a waste of time in Buddhism (page 13, 14).

The Buddha said that a man with a poisoned arrow in him is wasting time if he refuses to let the arrow be taken out until he knows who fired the arrow and what kind of poison is in it and so on (page 13, 14). For Buddha you get on with living a good life.

Buddhism is neither pessimistic or optimistic for it takes a realistic view of life (page 17). Buddha denied that the faith he taught had any esoteric doctrines (page 2).

Manas, mind, in Buddhist thought does not mean mind as in spirit opposed to matter (page 21). Mind is a sense faculty (page 22) like the eye. Volition and karma are one and the same thing in Buddhist thought (page 22). Examples of volition are attention and will and love and hate. "According to Buddhist philosophy there is no permanent, unchanging spirit which can be considered 'Self' or 'Ego', as opposed to matter, and that consciousness (vinnana) should not be taken as 'spirit' in opposition to matter" (page 23). "Buddha declared in unequivocal terms that consciousness depends on matter, sensation, perception and mental formations, and that it cannot exist independently of them" (page 25). There is no such thing as individuality or anything that can be called I (page 26). There is no thinker behind the thought because none of the five things that compose you can be called I. You are not your body. You are not your consciousness. What you call I is simply a collection of five impermanent things. None of them can be you. They change all the time so they cannot be you. Your experience of yourself as being a person is false. It is just like how each thing that makes up a toy is not the toy itself. Realising that there is no you is the secret of happiness. This is enlightenment and makes you a Buddha.

Buddha argued that impatience with suffering only makes suffering worse and does nothing to alleviate it (page 28). The way to deal with suffering is to understand how it comes about and how to get rid of it (page 28).

In Buddhism, karma is not a law that punishes you for doing wrong and blesses you for doing right. It is not about justice. It is just a theory of cause and effect where bad results in more bad results for you (page 32). It is a naturalistic law not a magical or supernatural one. Buddhism teaches that it is not thinkers that think but thoughts that think and each thought has a reaction good or bad (page 42).

The person who realises the supreme truth is the happiest person in the world for he is free from the illusion of self (page 43).

Buddhism denies that you really exist and the next minute instead of you there will be a being that only thinks it was you

and the same person as you. It rejects the idea of a soul that goes back to God at death or that is reincarnated many times for purification (page 51). It argues that the concept of self the belief in I is the reason we are so selfish and unhappy and capable of hate and harm (page 51). Man creates God to be his protector. Man invents an immortal soul in the hope that he will live forever. These beliefs arise from the evil illusion of self which implies that self-preservation and self-protection drive man to these beliefs. If there is no self then there can be no God for God can't have self either and must need enlightenment. Needing enlightenment would mean he is not a God at all but a travesty.

My comment is that these two beliefs must be the ultimate in evil. If the idea of self is bad then there is nothing worse than wanting to believe that a God will keep you alive forever.

Page 55-59 refutes the lies of scholars that Buddha didn't exclude the idea of a spiritual soul being your true self. These scholars mistranslate the Buddha to promote their lie.

Buddhism teaches that you should not believe, "I have self" or "I have no self". Just experience that you have no real self (page 66). Buddhism is not a philosophy of faith but experience.

Buddhism is not promoting anything negative or annihilistic by saying there is no self (page 66). On the contrary you feel happier than ever when you realise the truth that I is an illusion caused by the feeling I am that you have. After all there is nothing to annihilate. It is belief in the self that is negative and despairing not the realisation that there is no self. You can be a Buddha when alive and know that there is no you and life still goes on and you enjoy it beyond belief.

Buddhism denies the concept of a free will that is absolutely independent and holds that freedom is relative and conditioned (page 54). Catholics claim to believe in that kind of free will but they do not and they plot to control it. There would be no such thing as influencing others if free will were that independent. Free will only works in a framework. The person in a rabid Catholic culture will be conditioned to refrain from sex outside marriage. He is not free to commit that sin. He can commit others but not that one.

The chapter on meditation says the meditation you must engage in to obtain enlightenment can be done while working so Buddhism does not require you to sit meditating and ignoring the poor at your door.

Buddhism is certainly the noblest religion in the world. But it is true?

BUDDHISM REFUTED

Siddharta Gautama was born in Lumbini about 560 AD and he was a Hindu prince. He wanted to know how to stop suffering his discovering the way out of it made him the Buddha, the enlightened one.

Buddha wanted to help people stop suffering by teaching them how to work and meditate so that they would attain a state of consciousness that would deliver them from suffering forever called Nirvana. He described Nirvana in paradoxes and contradictions meaning that it is not like anything we understand. It is not a material paradise or anything like it for Buddha sought to escape from anything material. Nirvana means blowing out because it is the blowing out of desire (page 293, Concise Guide to Today's Religions). Desire according to Buddhism is the reason why we suffer.

What did Buddha mean by suffering? It was obvious to him and to all that we don't really suffer all the time. Lack of happiness or being unsatisfied is inherent in life. This lack of happiness is what Buddha meant by dukkha. The word dukkha is mistranslated as suffering. Thus the perception that Buddhism says life is suffering is a misunderstanding. The perception puts many off Buddhism. Dukkha principally means the lack of being well and includes suffering but it is not about suffering only. We should use the word suffering in this page to mean dissatisfaction that may or may not include suffering.

Buddhism teaches that I am not an entity but a bundle of experiences. A person is just a name put on a pile of entities that comprise it. A person is not really a unified entity. Buddhists generally teach that Buddhism is not about ceasing to have feelings and experiences but casting off the ego, the ego seeks to enslave and delude us. In other words, I must get rid of the illusion that I am in control of my world and my life. I have very little control if any. That way I will be free and will not be disturbed by life and the world. When the illusion is gone, that is Nirvana. I accept what I cannot change.

Without Nirvana, the bundle will be made into a new person in the next life by reincarnation thanks to the law of karma, the power that returns to me what I send out of me. With Nirvana I will not be born again.

If I killed a person in a past life, it may be that I will be killed by somebody in this one or a future one. If I hurt a blind person in a past life I could end up being born blind in a future one. If you are good you are closer to salvation – escape from matter – and will be rewarded by good karma. If you work out all your karma you will not be born again when you die because birth is a result of bad karma. It unfortunately never occurred to Buddha that if birth is a bad thing that happens

to you for having done wrong then how did the first birth ever, come about?

If there was no first birth and we always existed and were continually being born and dying over and over again we will never get rid of the karma. If you have had an infinity of lives that means you have an infinity of bad karma as well. It is impossible to work off infinite or unlimited bad karma.

Salvation lies in losing all desire. It is Nirvana - a state of endless bliss and yet nothingness in the sense that there is no material element there.

Buddhism doesn't see the consciousness as a kind of soul. Though you are aware of being a person who existed since your birth Buddhism sees that as an illusion.

Buddhism denies that there is a soul or that you are the same person all the time. In fact person is not the right word for they think I am just a bundle of experiences with no personal identity and the reason I suffer is because I think there is a real I. I think there is something about and in me that makes me basically the same entity and individual all the time. With each moment I die and am replaced with a new "person" who seems to be the same person that was around before but is a totally different person. Buddhist philosophy agrees that to your experience, it will be as if you do not keep turning into different persons who never existed before but that is a mistake based on the trick of memory. You think because you remember that you were always the same person. You are dying and being reborn all the time but it does not seem like that to you. You think that you have been the same person and being since you were born. When you believe you don't really exist, what would you want deliverance from suffering for? What would you want salvation from bad karma for?

Buddhism says you must have no desire for the bliss of Nirvana but you experience it and enjoy it passively. Buddhism sees all desire as bad.

And all desire need not cause suffering. The desire we have, is preferred to the thing we desire so desire is an evil we like.

Buddha believed that suffering was caused by desire. Desire causes bad karma which ties you down to the cycle of birth, suffering and death. Desire is evil for it hurts so to embrace it is to merit bad karma. When you have no desire you can be perfectly happy in Nirvana so when you work for anything else you have a misplaced sense of what is important. Buddha taught that suffering can be ended by living out the Eightfold Path. These eight rules forbid acting out of desire and harmful actions. Lying, hate and gossip, for instance, are forbidden. You are not to do good because you want to but to do it without desire but doing it with desire is fine at the beginning for it takes hard work to eliminate the desire and it happens gradually. But you will always desire a little bit even when you are on the brink on Nirvana. Then desire will be taken away and you will find yourself in a purely passive state wherein peace and happiness are given to you but not willed or taken by you.

Buddhism claims that everything, even God if he exists or the most powerful of gods, is subject to karma. For God or anybody to get free from karma is to exist no longer (The Spirit of Buddhism, page 22).

Some say you do not lose your existence but only your existence as an individual. But if you are just a bundle of experiences and have to realise that there is nothing there to be left that means there is nothing.

Individuality is regarded as an illusion to be delivered from. But is being an individual really a bad thing? It would be nice to be an individual that does not suffer. Pain is caused by a part of the brain and it can be shut down or reduced. It is impossible to see how if we are all ultimately one thing – Nirvana makes us all one - we can imagine we are individuals. The individual cannot shift consciousness in such a way that she or he experiences herself or himself as being two or more minds at the one time.

Buddhists look down on us being individuals but say this is because of compassion – us being individuals is what causes suffering. But look, there are different levels of suffering. There are INDIVIDUALS who are not Buddhists who are reasonably happy. Is it not crazy to suggest that being an individual is bad because there will always be some hitches? That is harshness not compassion.

In Buddhism, you give up attachments so that you protect yourself from pain. But you lose pleasure this way as well. That is the price you pay to avoid pain. But it cannot work for you are surely numbing yourself and the pain of wanting to avoid pain is there underneath it all.

The entire message of Buddha is based on blind faith which destroys the credibility of its morality. You don't know if it is all true until you become a Buddha yourself. And a person with a depressive illness may be genetically unable to become a Buddha or even to feel happier. They are left behind in the Buddhist scheme. They may be put on a treadmill of hard work and meditation for nothing.

What if you experience enlightenment? Even then you are not sure for drugs, say LSD, can delude you into having a mystically joyful experience. Bad karma can delude you to think you are liberated and seem to experience it. Many have considered themselves to be enlightened without the Buddhist experience.

Your mind has the power to put itself into a purely delusional state of awareness. Before you go to sleep, you will feel so relaxed that you think and feel you know that it will last forever and that nobody else exists but you to enjoy this blissful peace. Even now this minute, you can close your eyes and imagine that it is true that you alone exist and will be safe forever.

Buddhism is a harmful faith for it is demanding and has only a dream that may be just a dream to offer as a reward. People should not suffer for guesses. There have been people who have claimed to have been enlightened but then lost their faith in it. They saw later that their enlightenment was false. Enlightenment cannot deliver one from suffering simply because you can't be sure you have really been enlightened. Also, that uncertainty is itself a kind of suffering. The suffering means you cannot be delivered from suffering after all! Buddhism teaches that suffering cannot save you – there you are!

Enlightenment is a delusion.

Buddhism offers its version of the ten commandments -the Eightfold Path. It basically is all about not hurting others wilfully - right thinking, right speaking etc. The Eightfold Path offers not morality but evil dressed as goodness. It cannot save the Buddhist because it is used as an expression of superstitious belief.

THE BODHISATTVA

In Mahayana Buddhism, the concept of the Bodhisattva is very important. This is a person who is ready to enter salvation but who postpones it in order to absorb or become other people who are trying to get saved so that they can be saved with her or him. Buddhists don't believe that the person is real and that many persons can seem to be different persons but be one consciousness or force in reality and which is only learned in meditation. It is like barriers that keep the pieces of awareness apart that are lifted so that they can merge to become one awareness or realise they have been one awareness all along. The Bodhisattva is a saviour. He or she is almighty, all-merciful and all-knowing (page 57, *The Case Against God*). They are open then to the same criticisms as belief in the Christian God.

If the Bodhisattva is heading for the gates of Nirvana then it must be a sin for him to stop and think of others for he does not need to. If he needed to, he would not be standing at the gates. It would be a very wrong action for him not to sacrifice for others and this would bring bad karma on him and prevent Nirvana. Because he has to be free from bad karma and fit for salvation or Nirvana to be at them, the Bodhisattva doctrine implies that it would be no sin if he went on and just put others out of his mind. This attacks the fact that morality is doing what is best. Buddhism like Christianity is just a chain for slaves. The experience of Nirvana must be delusional because one would need to save the world before one could enjoy it and yet we have Buddhists who claim to have enjoyed it.

The denial of individuality and its being designated as an illusion mean that he must be other people so by going in he will automatically save them for they are him and he does not need to take his time. He is harming them by trying to save them. It is only causing their salvation to be delayed when he could redeem them faster by going ahead. The Bodhisattva doctrine is incoherent.

BUDDHISM IS PESSIMISTIC

Philosophers believe in eternity or timelessness. This is a state of being in which there is no change or movement from past to present to future. The past and present and future moments of time are all rolled into one and they are in a kind of now. In a chapter called *Some Weaknesses in Fundamental Buddhism* in the book *Christianity for the Tough-Minded* we read that Buddha rejected the view that there is anything that always stays the same. So he rejected the eternal timeless and therefore unchangeable God of the Hindus. Buddha held that A causes B and B causes C and C causes D and D causes A so there is no point at which all things began. Suffering always existed. To get freed from this vicious circle of causality you have to break the links and you have to stop say C causing D. Buddhism denies that you can love your neighbour for himself for the self is something that should be destroyed or swallowed up in Nirvana. It denies the value of the person and your own value.

Christians don't like the Buddha's view that there was no first cause. The Christians reply that the Christian doctrine that God is the first cause or the originator of all things makes sense and his view doesn't.

The circle implies that you will have your present life all over again because when you get back to A after D that is what is happening. And why bother breaking the link when you are being replaced by a new you every second? The you that had the experience of Nirvana could be replaced by a you that does not. Why bother trying to save a future person who will take your place? It is only luck not effort that gives Nirvana because there is no person to make the effort. There is only a

collection of things that acts like it does make efforts.

Also when C might cause Nirvana instead of D why work for Nirvana for it is only luck that gives it to you anyway? Those destined to get it might meditate and work for it but they were destined to get it in the first place that way. Some monks reach the state quicker than others. Zen promises the experience is possible within minutes but only some manage it. Nevertheless the point is you might not have to work for it.

Buddhists hold that karma not luck determines when you will be enlightened. But why is it that nobody is enlightened by doing good works but by meditating? Meditation then is the only real good work. Helping others could not be really good because it is like offering a beggar a penny when you could give him a pound. It would be better to give him a book on meditation instead. Good karma would mean you will be more inclined to meditating than anybody else but often this is not the case. Many people only come round to believing in meditating late in life! The strange attitude towards meditation indicates that enlightenment is unreal for to get it you have to selfishly get wrapped up in meditating in preference to helping others. So it is luck if you are enlightened not karma. No matter what kind of experience is promised at the end of meditation is the experience real? Practitioners don't know if their efforts will be worthwhile. Is it right to have people doing all that possibly for nothing? Meditation is better than good works and what Buddhism is doing is having people sacrificing life and others for faith.

The thought that you might meditate all your life and not reach enlightenment is fearful and itself must produce bad karma and desire.

Buddhist morality forbids killing even insects (page 295, Concise Guide to Today's Religions). We kill all the time. When we eat food the germs and bugs in the food die in our stomachs. This morality makes salvation impossible and it accuses those who claim to have been saved of being liars.

The book, The Spirit of Buddhism, insists that Buddhism is not pessimistic (page 35). It alleges Buddhism says that life gets better and more peaceful the more good works you do and the more meditation you do. The reason pessimism is bad is because it is a closed hearted response to life. It's making yourself and others suffer by your complaining and attitude. In the process you end up doing harm for you feel bad about things that should be enjoyed and fear a future that has not shown any sign yet of being a bad one. The optimism of Buddhism is only individualistic and spiritual optimism. The Buddhist is so pessimistic about life and normality that he retreats into himself to find happiness. That is not true optimism and is even worse than pessimism. At least the obvious pessimist can change when he or she has had enough of thinking badly of life all the time. The Buddhist pessimist can't. Anything that runs down real life be it pessimism or a self-centred spirituality is not to be applauded.

Finally...

Just wish it were all true! Buddhism is nearly all true - is that enough? No.

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