Siddhartha Gautama Essay, Research Paper

Siddhartha Gautama

Siddhartha Gautama was born about 563 BC in what is now modern Nepal. His

father, Suddhodana, was the ruler of the Sakya people and Siddhartha grew up

living the extravagant life on a young prince. According to custom, he married

at the young age of sixteen to a girl named Yasodhara. His father had ordered

that he live a life of total seclusion, but one day Siddhartha ventured out into

the world and was confronted with the reality of the inevitable suffering of

life. The next day, at the age of twenty-nine, he left his kingdom and new-born

son to lead an modest life and determine a way to relieve universal suffering.

For six years, Siddhartha meditated under a bodhi tree. But he was never fully

satisfied. One day he was offered a bowl of rice from a young girl and he

accepted it. In that moment, he realized that physical hardships were not the

means to freedom. From then on, he encouraged people not to use extremes in

their life. He called this The Middle Way. That night Siddhartha sat under

the bodhi tree, and meditated till dawn. He cleared his mind of all worldly

things and claimed to get enlightenment at the age of thirty-five, thus earning

the title Buddha, or “Enlightened One.” For the remainder of his eighty years,

the Buddha preached the dharma in an effort to help other people reach

enlightenment. When Siddhartha is a Brahmin, he believes in the existence of

many gods, and performs sacrifices to them. After a while he realizes this is

meaningless and decides to leave his family and community and become a Samana.

As a Samana, he tries to destroy himself in may ways. He feels if he kills

himself, with its passions and emotions, he will find the great secret.

Siddhartha doesn’t spend much time as Buddha, although he has an important

revelation. He discovers he can’t find peace by learning from a master. He

finds the only way to have peace with the world is by finding it for himself.

When Siddhartha leaves Buddha, he is enthralled with the world. He starts

paying more attention to the world because he knows he must get experience for

himself. As he walks he comes upon a town. He stays and becomes a merchant.

At first he looks at his actions as a game. After a while he becomes more

serious. He starts drinking and gambling and becomes lazy. Siddhartha sees

this and decides to leave the town.He wanders through a forest and comes upon a

river. Just as he’s about to kill himself he hears Om. Siddhartha decides

there is much to live for. He looks a this experience as a rebirth, and starts

a new life. Siddhartha stays by the river and looks for a ferryman he met years

ago who’s name was Vasudeua. Vasudeua had found peace with himself, and

Siddhartha stays with him. He comes to peace with the world and learns he must

love everything, because everything has good in it. He also sees the difference

between past, present, and future is just a myth. In his hometown, Siddhartha’s

social status was very high. He was popular, and lived by everyone, but he

decided that he could not stay. When he was with the Samanas, this social

status sunk to an all time low. He was considered a beggar. When Siddhartha

visited the Buddha, his social status was changing. Siddhartha is involved with

Brahmin rituals in his hometown. He lives with his family and is in good health.

He eats well, has good hygiene, and wears decent clothes. But when the Samanas

come to his village, he decides to leave his family for life in the forest. He

travels with the Samanas in the Forrest. He often meditates. He doesn’t eat

good or clean himself, and only wears a loin cloth. He leaves the Samanas by

hypnotizing the leader and convinces him to let him go. Siddhartha goes to see

Buddha. HE soon leaves Buddha and travels on his own as an independent Samana.

Eventually he becomes weary of his lifestyle and decides to live in a village.

There he finds Kamala, a beautiful prostitute. He works hard to get clothes,

shoes, and money for Kamala. Joining Kamaswami, a merchant. Siddhartha becomes

rich. This gets him nice clothes, shoes, tasteful meals, and good hygiene.

After a while he becomes tired of his life in the village and leaves. He tries

to commit suicide, but then decides not to kill himself. He falls asleep and

sleeps for a long, long time. When he wakes up he decides he wants to be a

ferryman and join Vasudeva. Siddhartha lives in Vasudeva’s hut with him and

occasionally talks with him. Siddhartha now wears few clothing, eats small

meals, and keeps poor hygiene. Soon, he has to take care of his son, this takes

time. Siddhartha eventually completely takes over Vasudeva’s business

Siddhartha was unhappy following Hinduism. He says, that since Atman created

the other gods, then he is the only true god, and the others are temporary.

Siddhartha’s discontent with Hinduism grows strong enough to drive him from home.

Siddhartha’s experience with the Buddha shows his growing doubt of teachings.

He sees Nirvana in Buddha, but knows in his heart that teachings cannot bring it.

After leaving Buddha Siddhartha becomes depressed and decides to leave virtue

for vices. After living with Samsara for may years, Siddhartha becomes depressed.

He realizes that the beautiful bird that once sang in his soul has become

silent. When he reaches the river he sits above it, and hears of his soul the

holy Om, this is proof that the bird exists. The river teaches him more than any

human teacher could have, like the fact that time is an illusion. Siddhartha

finally finds peace in this.

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