

World Religions

Buddhism Questions

(The World's Religions by Houston Smith)

The Four Noble Truths (pp. 99-103)

1. What are the Four Noble Truths the Buddha's declaration of?
2. What is the First Noble Truth?
3. How does Buddhism differ from basic Hindu (Indian) thought?
4. What two questions obtrude upon the notion that life is enjoyable?
5. Buddha's First Noble Truth was prompted more by what than by morbidity?
6. What does *dukkha* name?
7. What is the exact meaning of the First Noble Truth?
8. No matter what their state or condition, all humans experience six moments when life is obviously dislocated. List them and explain if necessary.
9. What is meant by *skandas*? List the five *skandas*.
10. What is the Second Noble Truth?
11. What is *tanha* usually defined as?
12. Does all desire cause suffering? Give examples of desires that Buddhists advocate.
13. In what way is the desire that causes suffering related to selfishness?
14. What is our duty to our fellow humans?
15. Make sure to read the passage near the middle of p. 103 carefully ("Where is the man who...").
16. What is the Third Noble Truth?
17. What is the Fourth Noble Truth?

The Eightfold Path (pp. 103-112)

1. The Buddha's approach to the problem of life is essentially that of what?
2. The Eightfold Path is treatment by what?
3. What was the first way of living distinguished by the Buddha? What was the second way of living and what did he call it?
4. What does the Eightfold Path intend to do?
5. What is the preliminary step to all that follows in the Eightfold Path?
6. One of the three things we should give thanks for every day is what?
7. What is a Truthwinner?
8. What is the first step on the Eightfold Path?
9. What provides the orientation necessary for the first step to be fulfilled?
10. What is the second step on the Eightfold Path?
11. The does the second step advise us to "make up?"
12. What do people who achieve greatness always have in common?
13. What is the third step on the Eightfold Path?
14. What should we try to notice about our speech each day? Do you think you would be surprised by how often you deviate from the truth or utter uncharitable speech?
15. The first change in our speech should be directed toward what?

16. The second direction in which our speech should move is toward what? What is “accidental” tactlessness?
17. What is the fourth step on the Eightfold Path?
18. List the Five Precepts.
19. What is the fifth step on the Eightfold Path?
20. If a person is wholly intent on liberation and will give up their entire life to the project, what should he or she do?
21. What kinds of occupations should a layperson engage in?
22. What are some examples of professions that the Buddha thought were against spiritual awakening?
23. What do some people think the Buddha would be concerned with today regarding earning a living?
24. What is the sixth step on the Eightfold Path?
25. What is the seventh step on the Eightfold Path?
26. What is the best loved of all Buddhists writings? What are its opening words?
27. All things can be mastered by what?
28. How should we witness all things?
29. How should we deal with fearful or disgusting sights?
30. The entire world should be pervaded by what?
31. The seventh step summons the seeker to what?
32. What must be built into one’s schedule in order to do step seven?
33. What are the five insights that one arrives at through the practice of withdrawal?
34. What is the eighth step on the Eightfold Path?
35. What does the eighth step involve?
36. In what ways is Buddhism a regeneration and not just a philosophy of life?
37. What three poisons do we have to extirpate from our lives?

Basic Buddhist Concepts (pp. 112-119)

1. What four barriers make it difficult for us to know what the Buddha’s total outlook on life was?
2. Which of the four is the most serious obstacle and why?
3. What did Buddha mean by *nirvana*? What does it mean etymologically?
4. What does *nirvana* mean negatively? What does it mean affirmatively?
5. What is our final ignorance?
6. What is one meaning of God? According to this definition, is *nirvana* God?
7. In what sense is Buddhism atheistic?
8. What is the second meaning of God (the Godhead)?
9. List ten (any ten) words from the italicized paragraph at the top of p. 115 that help describe the Godhead.
10. What is the most startling thing Buddha said about the human self?
11. Define *anatta*.
12. How was *atta* (*Atman* or soul) defined in Buddha’s day?
13. What did the Buddha think about the “soul as homunculus”?
14. How did the Buddha use the image of a flame to explain his idea of reincarnation?
15. Briefly list the three ideas that summarize Buddha’s ideas about transmigration.

16. Do the same for the three points used by way of an analogy in the following paragraph.
17. What did the Buddha think about the relationship between mind and matter?
18. What are the Three Marks of Existence? List and explain.
19. What did Buddha call the components of the human self?
20. In what way is the body a “heap?”
21. What happens to ordinary people after their bodies die?
22. What happens to an *Arhat*, or holy one, after the body has died?
23. The ultimate destination of the human soul involves the eclipsing of individual awareness by what?
24. As long as the spirit remains tied to the body, can its freedom be complete?
25. Spiritual freedom brings what?
26. If increased freedom brings increased being, then what does total freedom bring?