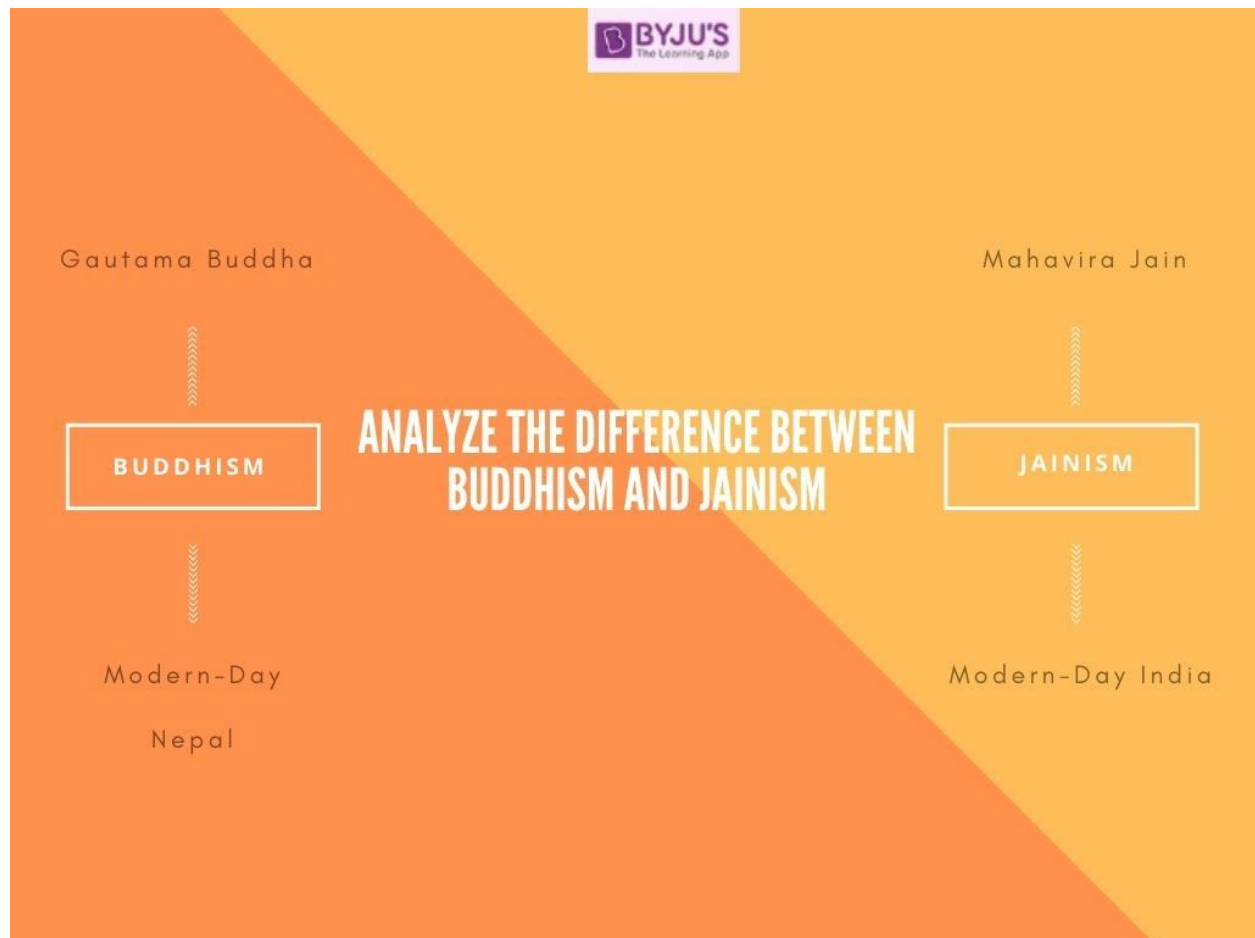


Differences and Similarities Between Buddhism and Jainism

Buddhism and Jainism are ancient religions that developed during the days of Ancient India. Buddhism is based on the teachings of Gautama Buddha, while Jainism is based on the teachings of Mahavira

Apart from this, there are many similarities between Buddhism and Jainism on grounds of terminology and ethical principles, but the way they are applied is different.

From this point on the key differences and similarities between Buddhism and Jainism will be highlighted within the context of IAS Exam.



Differences between Buddhism and Jainism

Buddhism	Jainism
Rebirth is one of the principal beliefs in Buddhism. It is thought that the endless cycle of birth and re-birth can only be broken by attaining <i>Nirvana</i> (Enlightenment)	Jainism believes that the circle of rebirths and deaths will continue due to good or bad deeds until liberation is achieved
Scriptures include <i>Tripitaka</i> , which is a vast text consisting of 3 sections: the Discipline, the Discourse and the Commentaries.	Jain religious texts are called <i>Agamas</i>
The principal teaching of Buddhism is that life is suffering and to escape suffering (end cause of desire) one needs to dispel ignorance by realizing the Four Noble Truths and practising the Eightfold Path	Jainism lays emphasis on the respect of all living beings. Liberation from the cycle of rebirths is attained by taking the Five Vows and following the principles of the Three Jewels
Sin is not a concept in Buddhism	Sin is defined as harm to others
Buddhism is divided into two major sects upon the death of Gautama Buddha. They are the Mahayana and the Theravada	Svetambara and Digambara are the two major sects of Jainism
According to some texts in Buddhism, there are beings in heaven but they are bound by " <i>samsara</i> ". They suffer less but they have not yet achieved salvation	Deities in Jainism are known as " <i>Tirthaneakas</i> ". But they are not worshipped in the conventional sense as they are regarded as wise teachers whose teachings must be followed
Buddhism was founded in modern-day Nepal by Prince Siddhartha in the 6th century B.C	Scholars of religion generally hold that Jainism originated in the 7th–5th century BC in Northern India. Mahavira, also known as Vardhamana was the 24th Tirthankara (Spiritual Teacher) of Jainism
Followers of Buddhism can be found mainly in Thailand, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Tibet, Japan, Myanmar (Burma), Laos, Vietnam, China, Mongolia, Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong and Taiwan	Followers of Jainism are found mainly in India, lower Asian subcontinent throughout, and America. Small groups exist in most countries

After we have learnt about the key differences between Buddhism and Jainism, we will now examine the **similarities** between the two religions.

Similarities between Buddhism and Jainism
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Factors	Explanation
Rejection of Vedas	Buddhism and Jainism rejected the notion of grand rituals along with the authority of the Vedas and the priestly class
Founders	Just like his contemporary, Gautama Buddha, Mahavir Jain was born into a royal family. Both of them renounced their comfortable lifestyle to attain enlightenment
Animal Rights	Both Buddhism and Jainism also stressed the principle of non-violence against animals and they must also be given equal respect as one gives to a fellow human being
<i>Karma</i>	Both Buddhism and Jainism believe in the concept of karma, which is an attachment of positive and negative forces to the soul based on a person's actions, beliefs, and spiritual attachments. Reincarnation carries this force forward and requires effort to purify the soul.
God and Scripture	Neither religion believes in God as the creator of the universe. They acknowledge all creation as being part of the universe's divinity. As such, their holy texts are not considered the word of a god or sacred stories.
Reincarnation	Buddhism and Jainism believe in the concept of reincarnation, which is the rebirth of the soul in a new body after the death of the previous body.