**II. Buddhism**

1. Origins and Beliefs

* 500 million followers today (8% of world’s population)
* Started in India
* Majority of Buddhist today live in China and Southwest Asia
* **Siddhartha Gautama –**
* Born into a noble family and his dad wanted him to be a great world leader
* Kept his son isolated within his palace

1. Buddhist Legend

* At age 29, Gautama ventured outside of his palace for the 1st time

**4 things that changed his life**

1)

2)

3)

4)

1. Result

* Gautama decided to spend his life in search of religious truth and end suffering
* Left his life of luxury and wandered around India for 6 years
* While meditating under a fig tree he reached enlightenment and understood the cause of suffering
* **Enlightenment –**
* After he reached enlightenment Gautama became known as Buddha or “the enlightened one”
* Started preaching his message

1. Four Noble Truths

1)

2)

* We always want more toys
* Grass is greener on the other side
* Endless disappointment because of desirers

3)

4)

1. Buddhist Main Goal

* Every person must wage a war against themselves – rid yourself of negativity and desire
* Also believe in karma and reincarnation
* There is no caste system in Buddhism
* People for the first time could take their fate into their own hands
* **Nirvana –**
* Takes at least 547 reincarnations to reach nirvana
* Buddhist believe that during this last stage they rejoin with Brahma

1. Spread of Buddhism

* When Buddha died few people accepted his ideas
* **Ashoka the Great –**
* After one battle he was shocked by the destruction he had caused
* Ashoka gave up his violent ways and accepted Buddhism
* By the time of Ashoka’s death Buddhism had become a major religion