

1. What events led Siddhartha to leave the palace and seek answers to the "pain of existence"?

Siddhartha's father had all "eye sores" removed from the surroundings of the palace which could expose Siddhartha to the harsh realities of the outside world. Siddhartha ended up going out with his charioteer into the real world afterwards. He saw 4 signs during this journey. The first sign he saw was an old man walking painfully and learned about the process of aging from this. The second sign he saw was a sick man riddled with disease. The third sign he saw was a corpse wrapped in linen. From this he learned man is mortal and that after death everyone is reborn to suffer and die to no end. The last thing he saw was a man wearing a robe with a begging bowl in front of him. He learned that the man gave up the pleasures of the world to confront reality and seek answers to life's painful existence. He learned all of these signs could happen to anyone and that he is not exempt.

2. What challenges did he face in his quest to find enlightenment?

He traveled for 6 years, suffered pain, and tested different methods to reach enlightenment, one being starvation. During his starvation period, he lived off a grain of rice a day which led to him almost dying. A little girl saved his life by giving him rice and milk at the very last minute. During his last meditative state under a tree, he had reached the deepest part of his subconscious where he had met with Mara, the demon lord of ego and illusion. This demonic king had an army of demons throw fired arrows at Siddhartha, but Siddhartha turned them into lotus flowers. The demon king then tried to tempt Siddhartha with 3 of his daughters, passion, lust, and aversion. The daughters then began to rot and disappeared into the earth. He then realized that he was just like Mara. He passed through 4 journeys to reach enlightenment.

3. Describe "the Middle Way" of peace and harmony he sought

After observing a musician tune his sitar, he noticed if the string was tuned too tight it would snap but if it was tuned too loosely, it wouldn't play. He figured out that somewhere in the middle the instrument would play a beautiful harmony. From this observation he believed that "the Middle Way" would lead him to the state of mind he was looking for, enlightenment.