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World Civilization I

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Buddha Film

Questions

1. What events led Siddhartha to leave the palace and seek answers to the "pain of existence"?
2. What challenges did he face in his quest to find enlightenment?
3. Describe "the Middle Way of peace and harmony he sought.

Answers

1. Siddhartha's mother had a dream about being impregnated with Buddha (Siddhartha). Upon his birth his mother dies, and his father is given a prophecy that he would either be a great King or renunciate who would gain enlightenment. As a result of this prophecy his father keeps him within the walls of the castle and continues to train him to be a King. Even though he was training well, his father could see that he was still a deep thinker which caused him to produce more distractions as he aged. At the age of 9 his father takes him outside for the first time. As he observes, he sees a farmer plowing the ground and saw how hard the farmer was working compared to the work he's seen done in the palace. While the farmer was plowing, he spots a bird eating a worm and begin to think that if the farmer had not been

plowing, the worm would have still been alive (this would lead to his teaching of Karma and Meditation also). Once again, he was stuck in the palace until he got married and made his father believed that he was truly ready to leave the palace. On his journey he sees an old man struggling, a sick man, a dead man and a homeless man which scared him because he had never seen any of that before. It hit him that one day he would lose everything around him, so he leaves home. On his journey he sees an old man struggling, a sick man, a dead man and a homeless man which scared him because he had never seen any of that before. It hit him that one day he would lose everything around him, so he leaves home.

2. The first challenge Siddhartha faces is realizing that the system that the Brahmins lived by was a part of the problem therefore turning him against them. The second challenge was learning that the practice of meditation by itself was not enough to get him to where he wanted to be. This leads him to try fasting which nearly killed him and because it didn’t work, his followers left him because they no longer believed in him.
3. The best way to describe, “the Middle Way” of peace and harmony that Siddhartha sought would be a space where he would gain absolute wisdom and everlasting bliss (enlightenment) by being mindful of his body by not completely indulging in it but also not ignoring its needs.