

Shakyamuni Buddha's Life and His Search for the Path

A series of four free to attend talks at

Chomon House, 6 Southcliff Rd., Southampton SO14 6FH. Phone 02380 837145
8.00-9.30pm every other Wednesday evening over eight weeks starting 23rd Jan 2019.

Seminar 1. Wed 23rd Jan 1019.

“THERE ARE AS MANY BUDDHA'S AS THERE ARE SANDS OF THE GANGES”.

The Buddha often used the Ganges as a simile or metaphor in his teachings. When he wanted to give the idea of the incalculable amount of something he would say that it was as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges.

'Buddha' is not the name of a person and it does not represent a single individual, and according to Buddhist tradition, there were countless Buddhas prior to the appearance of Shakyamuni Buddha. Furthermore, this inconceivable number of Buddhas each have many names, take on various forms and play multiple roles.

The word "Buddha" means "one who woke up," and in Buddhist doctrine, any such enlightened individual is technically a Buddha. In addition, the word Buddha is often used to mean the principle of Buddha-nature. But of course, there is one historical figure that normally is considered the Buddha.

Shakyamuni Buddha is a name of the person that is commonly referred to as The Historical Buddha. This historical figure was born Siddhartha Gautama and became known as Shakyamuni only after he became enlightened.

Shakyamuni Buddha had numerous previous incarnations, and in his enlightened form he is often referred to as the Tathāgata (from: Pali/Sanskrit meaning "thus gone; thus arrived").

<https://www.thoughtco.com/shakyamuni-buddha-449787>

Aside: An Inconceivable number of things ... and inconceivable periods of time multiplied by an inconceivable number of inconceivably long time periods!

Central content: Readings from *Buddha-Dharma* published originally by The Numata Centre for Buddhist and Research, Berkley, California.

Related subject matter in Jodo Shinshu/Pure Land literature: Readings from Buddhist Verses by Saizo (Zuiken) Inagaki, adapted by John Paraskevopoulos, from the website MURYOKO 'infinite Light' Journal of Shin Buddhism. <https://www.nembutsu.info/verseszi.htm>

In the Larger Sutra on the Land of Bliss, Shakyamuni Buddha tells of Amida's Seventeenth and Eighteenth Vows which are as follows:

'And again, O Ananda, in the ten quarters, the blessed Buddhas
Equal in number to the sands of the Ganges,
Glorify the Name of the blessed Amida, the Tathagata ...

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Seminar 2. Wed 6th Feb 2019. Chomon House 8-9.30pm
The Buddha's Enlightenment. Seminar synopsis to follow.

Seminar 3. Wed 20th Feb 2019. Chomon House 8-9.30pm
Dissemination of the Dharma. Seminar synopsis to follow.

Seminar 4. Wed 6th March 2019. Chomon House 8-9.30pm
A Former Incarnation of the World-Honoured One. Seminar synopsis to follow.