

- 552 BCE- intro of Buddhism to Japan
- Japanese aware of Chinese and Korea- learned to write Chinese and study Confucian classics.
- King of Paekche(Korea) sent gift of Buddhist images/scriptures to Japan.
- Sun Line and Soga Clan made the Buddha chief Kami of the clan.
- Prince Shotoku (574-622) ruled as a regent for his aunt, Empress Suiko. Imported Chinese culture.
- Numerous seaborne missions went to China. Some remained for up to 30 years. Some returned immediately- Incorporated Chinese clothing, customs, religion and government.
- Foundation of Horyuji Temple near Nara. Oldest wooden building in the world.
- Taika or Great change in 645BCE.
- The supreme authority of emperor (tenno) was universally acknowledged, private land holding was abolished and central authority extended to the provinces.
- First census undertaken and Chinese systems of taxation/laws made into Taiho Code of 702.
- 710 BCE Empress Gemmyo established Japan's first city. Nara became capital city.
- Nara laid out as a small scale replica of Chinese capital.
- Chinese/Korean immigrants brought small pox/measles. Successive epidemics/fires killed upwards of 30% of entire Japanese population.
- Fragile tax base could not support reconstruction. – Life remained unstable in Nara.
- Buddhist establishment became even more wealthy and powerful.
- 16m statue of the Buddha at the Todaiji temple used a million pounds of metal.
- Shosoin (treasure house) collected 10,000 objects: books, textiles, gold, screens , and fine jewelry from all over the world.
- Buddhism brought the Nara period to a close. Empress Koken fell in love with a Buddhist monk.
- She abdicated throne, changed her name to Shotoku and remade herself empress when she was not happy with her successor.
- Fear that the monk had too much power and would break the Sun line. After Koken's death, no female was ever made empress (until 17th Century).
- Court left Nara. Established new capital at heian-kyo (Kyoto). Capital of Japan from 794- 1868.