



The Dhammapada: Verses on the Way (Modern Library Classics)

By Buddha, Glenn Wallis

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*Trembling and quivering is the mind,
Difficult to guard and hard to restrain.
The person of wisdom sets it straight,
As a fletcher does an arrow.*

The Dhammapada introduced the actual utterances of the Buddha nearly twenty-five hundred years ago, when the master teacher emerged from his long silence to illuminate for his followers the substance of humankind's deepest and most abiding concerns. The nature of the self, the value of relationships, the importance of moment-to-moment awareness, the destructiveness of anger, the suffering that attends attachment, the ambiguity of the earth's beauty, the inevitability of aging, the certainty of death—these dilemmas preoccupy us today as they did centuries ago. No other spiritual texts speak about them more clearly and profoundly than does the *Dhammapada*.

In this elegant new translation, Sanskrit scholar Glenn Wallis has exclusively referred to and quoted from the canonical *suttas*—the presumed earliest discourses of the Buddha—to bring us the heartwood of Buddhism, words as compelling today as when the Buddha first spoke them. On violence: *All tremble before violence./ All fear death./ Having done the same yourself,/ you should neither harm nor kill.* On ignorance: *An uninstructed person/ ages like an ox,/ his bulk increases,/ his insight does not.* On skillfulness: *A person is not skilled/ just because he talks a lot./ Peaceful, friendly, secure—/ that one is called “skilled.”*

In 423 verses gathered by subject into chapters, the editor offers us a distillation of core Buddhist teachings that constitutes a prescription for enlightened living, even in the twenty-first century. He also includes a brilliantly informative guide to the verses—a chapter-by-chapter explication that greatly enhances our understanding of them. The text, at every turn, points to practical applications that lead to freedom from fear and suffering, toward the human state of spiritual virtuosity known as *awakening*.

Glenn Wallis's translation is an inspired successor to earlier versions of the

suttas. Even those readers who are well acquainted with the *Dhammapada* will be enriched by this fresh encounter with a classic text

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

"Organized in a way that is meant to encourage a fresh encounter with the Dhammapada," according to its introduction, this guide jumps right in with Wallis's careful translation of the 2,400-year-old Buddhist text. Wallis, an assistant professor of religion at the University of Georgia, wants readers to pore over the classic itself before using the notes in the back of the book on the second, third or even fourth reading. ("Learning is slow; careful reading is tedious; understanding is elusive," he cautions.) After this initial getting-to-know-you phase, readers can progress to the book's second half, which has an extended guide to the text as a whole and a detailed commentary on selected verses (which are marked by an asterisk in the translation). Wallis discusses the oral nature of the original work, which would have been memorized and recited by monks, nuns and laypersons. He argues that rather than being seen as a random collection of verses, the Dhammapada has an overriding structure and a coherent theme, emphasizing the need for spiritual diligence and effort. According to the text, readers should seek the meaning of these verses as a skilled gardener would gather flowers. Wallis's dexterous translation and commentary should help them in their task, though at times his writing is a bit technical.

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From the Inside Flap

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About the Author

GLENN WALLIS has a Ph.D. in Sanskrit and Indian Studies from Harvard. He is assistant professor of religion at the University of Georgia and the author of *Mediating the Power of Buddhas* and numerous articles.

From the Hardcover edition.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Patricia Smith:

Why? Because this *The Dhammapada: Verses on the Way (Modern Library Classics)* is an unordinary book that the inside of the book waiting for you to snap the idea but latter it will shock you with the secret that inside. Reading this book close to it was fantastic author who else write the book in such awesome way makes the content interior easier to understand, entertaining method but still convey the meaning thoroughly. So , it is good for you for not hesitating having this anymore or you going to regret it. This excellent book will give you a lot of rewards than the other book get such as help improving your expertise and your critical thinking way. So , still want to delay having that book? If I were being you I will go to the book store hurriedly.

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