



The Dhammapada

Translated and Edited by Eknath Easwaran

Nigiri Press © 1986
208 pages

The Big Ideas

Quick Intro to Buddha

Siddhartha --> Buddha.

The Dhammapada

Buddhism in a nutshell.

The Four Noble Truths

1, 2, 3, 4.

Nirvana & Bodhisattva

Purify and serve.

The Eightfold Path

Eight steps to nirvana.

What Are You Thinking?

Well, what are you?!

Armies in Your Mind

Do a lot of damage.

How Do You Smell?

Good, yah?

Walk Alone (If you must)

Be w/those who inspire.

How's the Irrigation?

Shape your mind.

Solid As a Rock

Independence.

Self-Mastery

It's time.

Little by Little

That's how.

Just Do It

(Buddha Style.)

The Dhammapada. Eknath Easwaran, the brilliant translator and editor of this translation of the *The Dhammapada* (along with my favorite translation of the *Bhagavad Gita*) says that if all the sutras had been lost but the *The Dhammapada*, it alone would be sufficient for us to grasp the essence of Buddhism.

And, with this Note, we'll take a super quick look at Buddhism (in the book, Easwaran covers The Four Noble Truths, dharma, karma, nirvana, etc.) and then jump in to some of my favorite Big Ideas. If you haven't read or studied Buddhism (and especially, perhaps, if you have), this book is *incredible.* Easwaran has a remarkably warm style that reflects the spirit of a man who walked with Gandhi back in the day in his native India before heading the Berkeley where he started one of the early western meditation centers.

So, let's jump in!

■ A Quick Intro to the Buddha

Buddha was born Siddhartha Guatama in the 6th century bce, the son of a royal family in Nepal. He walked away from his riches and life of comfort at the age of 30, seeking spiritual fulfillment through a path of contemplation and asceticism before achieving enlightenment while sitting beneath the Bodhi tree.

The Buddha's teachings of the Four Noble Truths form the core of Buddhism, a religion practiced by hundreds of millions of people around the world. The word "Buddha" is derived from a Sanskrit word that means "to wake up"; thus, the Buddha is one who is awake and truly alive moment to moment.

[Note: Did you know that Buddha taught in India at roughly the same time (6th century bce) that Confucius and Lao-tzu (Taoism) taught in China? (I always think that's cool. :)]

■ The Dhammapada

The Dhammapada is one of the core books of Buddha's teaching. According to Easwaran, "*Dhammapada* means something like 'the path of dharma'--of truth, of righteousness, of the central law that all of life is one."

Easwaran continues: "The Buddha did not leave a static structure of his belief that we can affirm and be done with. His teaching is an ongoing path, a 'way of perfection' which anyone can follow to the highest good. *The Dhammapada* is a map for this journey....These