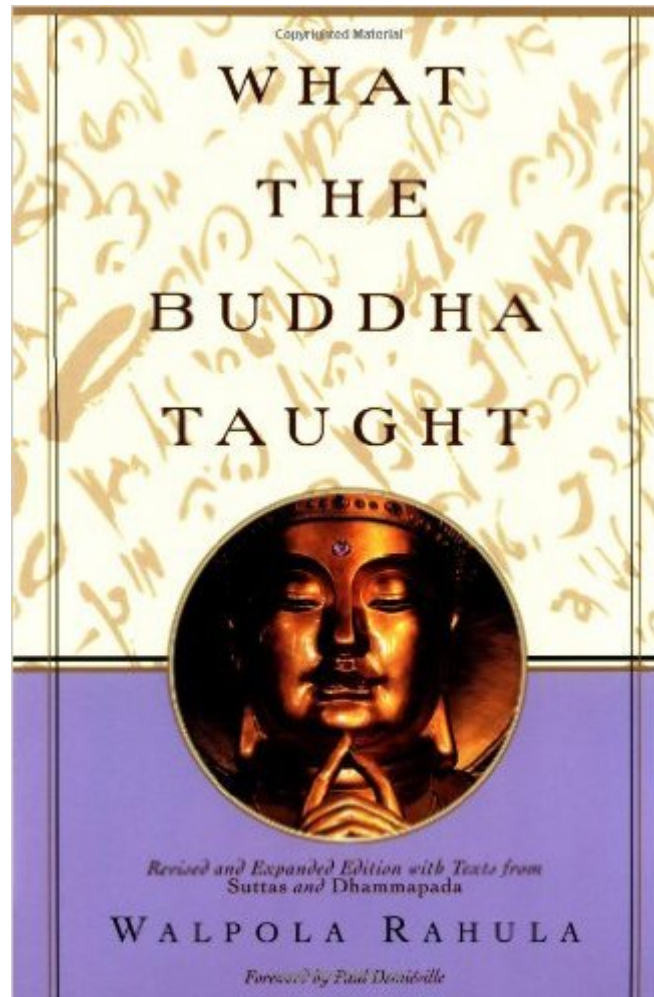


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# What The Buddha Taught: Revised And Expanded Edition With Texts From Suttas And Dhammapada



## Synopsis

This comprehensive, compact, lucid, and faithful account of the Buddha's teachings persistently enjoys great popularity in colleges, universities, and theological schools both here and abroad. "An exposition of Buddhism conceived in a resolutely modern spirit."—from the Foreword. "For years," says the Journal of the Buddhist Society, "the newcomer to Buddhism has lacked a simple and reliable introduction to the complexities of the subject. Dr. Rahula's What the Buddha Taught fills the need as only could be done by one having a firm grasp of the vast material to be sifted. It is a model of what a book should be that is addressed first of all to the educated and intelligent reader." Authoritative and clear, logical and sober, this study is as comprehensive as it is masterly. "A classic introductory book to Buddhism, What the Buddha Taught, contains a selection of illustrative texts from the original Pali texts, including the Suttas and the Dhammapada (specially translated by the author), sixteen illustrations, and a bibliography, glossary, and index.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The Ven. Dr. Walpola Sri Rahula has produced one of the best texts I have ever read on Buddhism! There are many out there that incorrectly talk about Buddhism and they also have many incorrect interpretations of the Buddha. Venerable Rahula does an outstanding job in his correct translations/interpretations of important teachings of Siddhattha. The reader is introduced to key Buddhist teachings such as:—The Buddhist attitude of Mind—The Four Noble Truths (each one having it's own chapter!) And the eightfold path as well as the five aggregates.—The doctrine of No-Soul: Anatta. This is one of the most important ones and the author talks about how 'self' is incorrectly

being introduced by some authors, etc.-Meditation: Everything from a few 'basic' meditation techniques to such things as why meditate...-What the Buddha Taught and the World Today: This great section shows how to apply the Buddhas teachings into every day life. There is even the 10 duties of a ruler (Government) which would be great if some politicians read!And finally there is 'selected texts' which provide even more insight...it was a refreshing thing to read after the chapters and after reading the book it made sense when reading these selected texts!There is even a Glossary to help you understand words used in Buddhism. In fact throughout the book you are introduced to the correct sayings and words...All in all you should get this book even if you are already 'into' Buddhism.

This is a clear and concise introduction to the central teachings of Buddhism--the Four Noble Truths, the Eightfold Path, no-self (which Rahula calls "no-soul"), and meditation--by a monk and scholar from the Theravada Buddhist tradition. It includes translations of selected Buddhist texts and a glossary of Buddhist vocabulary.When I first read "What the Buddha Taught" in college, it helped spark my interest in Buddhist practice, and one bit in particular has fundamentally shaped my approach to life and religion (Christianity as well as Buddhism): the story of the man wounded by a poisoned arrow, a parable illustrating the Buddha's utter noninterest in metaphysical speculation and his pragmatic and compassionate focus on liberation from suffering.I'd also recommend "Awakening the Buddha Within," an introduction to Buddhist teachings by Lama Surya Das, an American teacher of Tibetan Buddhism. (If you're looking for a "how to" book on meditation, I'd recommend "The Three Pillars of Zen.")

I was a student at Oxford University, England and was given this informative book to read for my studies. I was born into Buddhism and had practiced, even intensely at times, the Mahaparinirvana Sutra. So I had good experience going into my class. This book answered and made clear many of the questions I had been pondering for many years. It is the definitive book on Buddhism. The Chair of the Buddhism department at Oxford, use to tell us that "What The Buddha Taught" by Walpola Rahula will change the way you think about life and Buddhism. It has. I encourage everyone to buy this jewel of a book. It is rare you find a book so masterfully written.

Cycling through the books on Buddhism at the bookstore my eye caught "What the Buddha Tought" which its intrinsic appearance forced it down off the shelf and under my eyes. I've never read slower in my life yet finished in that bookstore that very day. Unlike other books on Buddhism the author

used no fillers and personal observation to distract the reader. Instead, quality and the natural sense of Buddhism were abundant in his translations and examples, as if it were the Buddha teaching himself. I have never read a more direct and enriching book on Buddhism before where every page filled in the gaps of unanswered questions I had and leaving me with a sense of completion and a wanting to learn more. I can sure say that my life has been changed today.

Many non-traditional religions in North America have experienced an increase in their membership numbers, not the least of which is Buddhism. For this reason alone, *What the Buddha Taught* may have a greater pragmatic value today than it did when it was first published in 1959. The principle value of this text is its' descriptive depth on the fundamental and foundational concepts that constitute the religion of Buddhism. Rahula gives a succinct and concise elucidation of the Four Noble Truths, the Eightfold Path and the doctrine of 'anatta' or no-self. For this reason alone this book is worth owning. However, to leave the discussion at that would be to underestimate its' potential utility. It is obvious that *What the Buddha Taught* is useful toward the study or understanding of Buddhism, but it is of equal value in the context of comparative religion or in the philosophy of religion. The fundamental concepts of Buddhism can be found in a wide variety of texts, Rahula's unique contribution is via his insight into the ways in which the ancient teachings of Buddhism can be incorporated into the modern world. To this end he devotes the last chapter of this book. A thoughtful addition to this edition, (1974) is the selection of translated Pali texts which enable the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path to be understood within the beauty of their original context. In addition, since many of these texts are in the form of parables, they provide an interesting comparative opportunity with traditional Christian biblical parables. An excellent primer for this text is Huston Smith's classic *The Religions of Man* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1958) and an excellent in depth follow up text is *Buddhism: The Religion of Analysis* by Nolan Pliny Jacobson, (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1966).

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