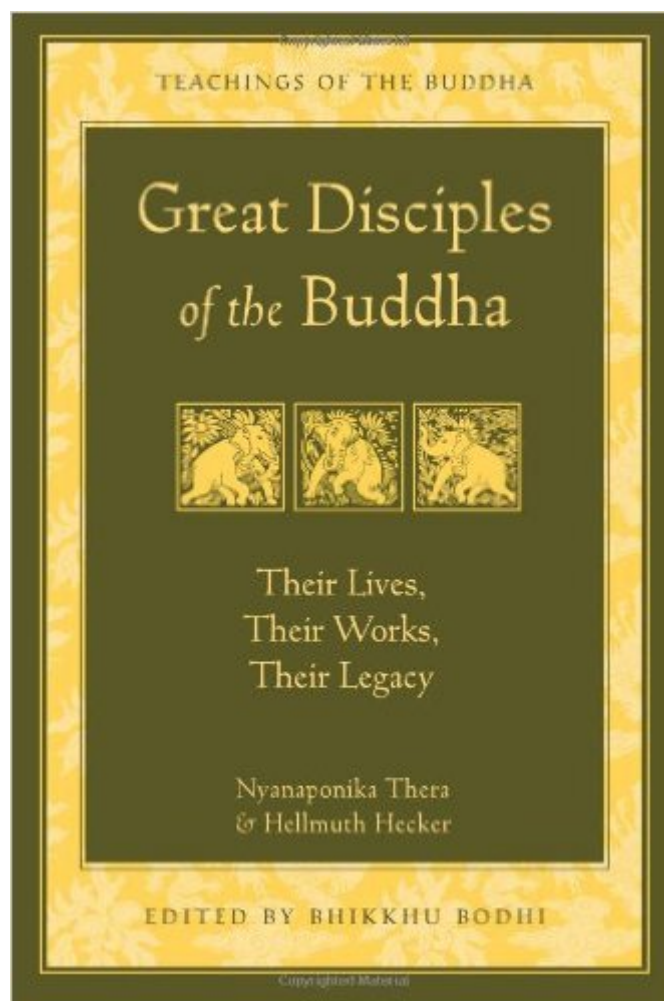


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# Great Disciples Of The Buddha: Their Lives, Their Works, Their Legacy (Teachings Of The Buddha)



## Synopsis

A perennial favorite, *Great Disciples of the Buddha* is now relaunched in our best-selling *Teachings of the Buddha* series. Twenty-four of the Buddha's most distinguished disciples are brought to life in ten chapters of rich narration. Drawn from a wide range of authentic Pali sources, the material in these stories has never before been assembled in a single volume. Through these engaging tales, we meet all manner of human beings - rich, poor, male, female, young, old - whose unique stories are told with an eye to the details of ordinary human concerns. When read with careful attention, these stories can sharpen our understanding of the Buddhist path by allowing us to contemplate the living portraits of the people who fulfilled the early Buddhist ideals of human perfection. The characters detailed include: Sariputta Nanda Mahamoggallana Mahakassapa Ananda Isidasi Anuruddha Mahakaccana Angulimala Visakha and many more. Conveniently annotated with the same system of sutta references used in each of the other series volumes, *Great Disciples of the Buddha* allows the reader to easily place each student in the larger picture of Buddha's life. It is a volume that no serious student of Buddhism should miss.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is a really good resource for anyone interested in expanding their knowledge in addition to the prose of all the ancient Pali texts. As the title of this book suggests, what you are setting out to read here is ultimately an exploration into the careers and character of the Buddha's greatest disciples.

He covers tough subjects such as their ambiguous and esoteric past lives and their aspirations towards enlightenment. Sometimes Nyanaponika, when possible, gives us an account as to the nature of the individual's death. For anyone who studies the Pali Canon, or who wants to further their understanding of Buddhist theological history - this is your book. The lives depicted here demonstrate that indeed upholding spiritual ideals are apparently documented as having paid off. And not necessarily by means of having gained some "thing." Here are examples of people who struggled against their human existence as much as we all do. Only through faith in the Buddhist path and their practice, were they able to transverse the mundane realm of existence into the realm of the spiritually noble. What a wonderful book we have here. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did.

One has to read the work on Sariputta and Ananda to know that great virtues do live in the heart of mankind. Especially at the reading of 'Last Debt Paid' concerning to last days of Sariputta, I cannot help but to be moved by the details of the event. Each reading, makes me feel the presence of the Great Disciples near me. So inspiring and motivating. A good read and re-read for the future. A must have!

I have read and reread this book over 5 times. Each time I am able to extract new and significant understandings about each person in the book. This book was written vastly different from other Buddhist books. Most Buddhist books focus on the Buddha (understandably so) and not the disciples. This book, tells the same story that other books present, but from a different angle. They also present new information that is not commonly known in other tellings. This is a great book for inspiration. I have recommended this book to over 20 people, all of whom admit that this book has positively affected them. Each of the disciples and laypersons traveled different paths to where they were. This is the beauty of it. We, while reading, can relate to certain disciples more than others. For example, I related to Sariputta and Ananda most, while not so much Mahakassapa and Mahamoggalana. I felt that they represented what I believe and I also feel that I have some of their character traits. It gives me hope to see that people who I am relate to, have achieved that which we should all strive for. Overall, this is a great book, and before my life is done, I will probably read it another 10 times. Thank you for taking the time to read my review Buddha's Blessings to All

This is a great book to read before jumping into the suttas. In the original texts, so many people meet the Buddha, debate him, come and go, live, die, say this and that, it can be hard to keep their stories straight. Of course, some show up repeatedly or are particularly memorable, but the suttas

proper don't always fill you in on their details. Nor do they typically provide a coherent narrative all in one place, even of the great disciples like Ananda or Sariputta. I don't know of any other book that puts all these stories together to provide what approximates biographies in the modern sense. This book started off in 1966 as a series of separate publications by Hellmuth Hecker in the German Buddhist periodical *Wissen und Wandel*. Hecker singlehandedly researched and wrote the monographs that make up the bulk of the book, and when one considers the amount of material he had to go through to arrive at the reasonably comprehensive accounts offered here, the impressiveness of his achievement becomes clear. Also in 1966 Nyanaponika, then president of the Buddhist Publication Society in Sri Lanka, wrote and published a biography of the Buddha's preeminent disciple, Sariputta. However, it remained to Bhikkhu Bodhi to bring the work of these men together between two covers, to perform the necessary editorial tasks, and to round out the text with a biography of his own, that of Mahakaccana. The result is an indispensable addition to the library of any Buddhist devotee. Following is a list of the disciples whose lives are reviewed: Sariputta, Mahamoggallana, Mahakassapa, Ananda, Anuruddha, Mahakaccana, Visakha, Angulimala, Anathapindika, and fourteen other lesser known people. Bhikkhus and bhikkhunis are here, as well as laymen and laywomen. The tone throughout is pious and uncritical, and while some people may be bothered by this, Bhikkhu Bodhi makes clear at the beginning that the purpose of the book is not to try to find the historical "truth" of these people, but to present them as the Buddhist world has known and revered them. At times, the accumulation of legend weighs heavily, but very often too one can detect biographical truth and get the feeling for the reality of these people. As I read, I found myself wondering how it would have been, for example, to have had Ananda as a college roommate. I can see it even now: everybody loves him; his incredible memory means that studies are a cakewalk, women are drawn irresistibly to him and he gets voted "Most Likely to Succeed." On other hand, if I'd had to room with Mahakassapa I think I would have been a little intimidated—he was one tough daddy. All in all, this is a most worthy and informative book and I highly recommend it.

A unique book that collates all the relevant material on the key disciples of the Buddha Gotama. Beautifully and movingly done. An inspiration.

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