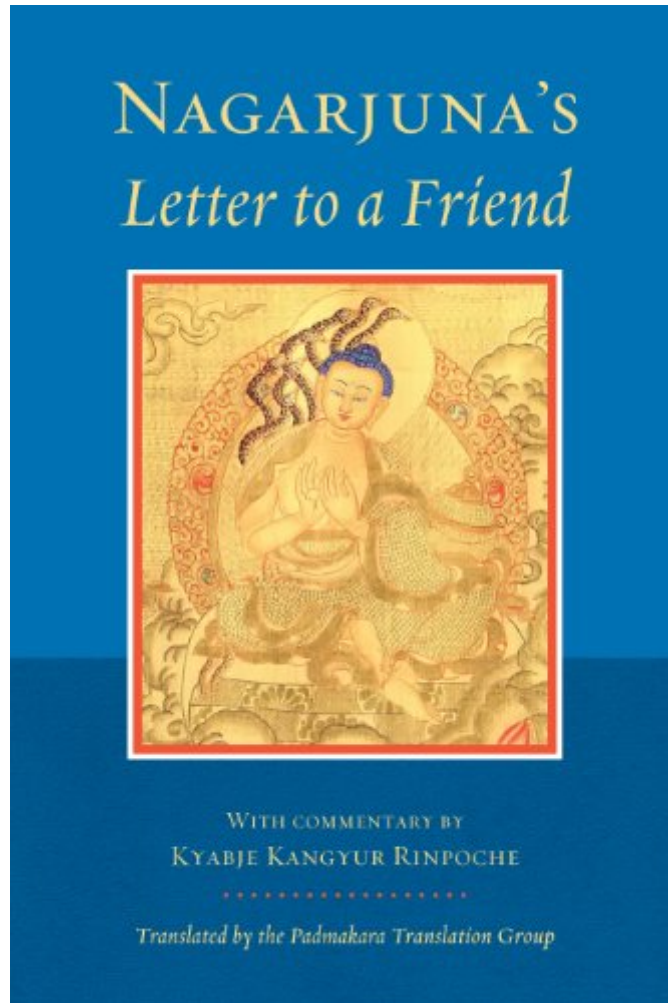


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Nagarjuna's Letter To A Friend: With Commentary By Kangyur Rinpoche



Synopsis

The great Indian Buddhist master Nagarjuna wrote his celebrated poem Letter to a Friend as a gift of advice to a South Indian king, and it has since become a monument in the Indian shastra tradition. Despite its short length (only 123 verses), it covers the entire Mahayana path, combining a practical approach to daily conduct with a theoretical exposition of the different stages leading to enlightenment. It has thus been an ideal source for many of Tibetâ€™s greatest scholars seeking a scriptural authority to enhance their own descriptions of the Buddhist path. In addition to a new English translation of the poem followed by the original Tibetan, this book includes commentary and a structural outline by the great twentieth-century scholar Kyabje Kangyur Rinpoche.

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Customer Reviews

Skillfully translated into English by Padmakara Translation Group, Nagarjuna's Letter To A Friend is an outline of the fundamental principles of Mahayana Buddhism as penned in the form of a poem by the Indian Buddhist master Nagarjuna (1st-2nd century A.D.) to a South Indian King. Now a classic

of Indian Buddhist literature, Nagarjuna's Letter To A Friend has only 123 verses yet covers the whole of the Mahayana path, in which followers strive for Buddhahood for the sake of all beings, and offers a practical approach to daily conduct alongside a theological discussion of the different stages leading to enlightenment. Kangyur Rinpoche offers a commentary that sheds light on the more technical or mystifying aspects of Nagarjuna's poem, offering full explanations of difficult concepts. A structural outline and Tibetan line index allow reader to quickly locate quotes used in other Tibetan works; notes and a glossary round out this "must-read" text for serious-minded students and practitioners of Mahayana Buddhism.

This is a very nice translation of the traditional text. However, equally important is the exceptional comments by Kyabje Kangyur Rinpoche & the supplemental information, including an index, glossary, notes and a structure of the teachings in this text. This book well surpassed my expectations of a good translation of an important text.

Nagarjuna's letter to a Friend is an easy reading approach to basics in Tibetan Buddhism. Presentation in hardcover makes it comfortable, and content is quite clear on what to follow in one's life and what to disregard in order to follow the Path.

Nagarjuna means to me the greatest and more profound thinker that ever walked this earth. His analysis of reality, his observations, his logic and dialectic has convinced me of his incredible talent and insights. As an advice, his writings are mainly in stanzas and must be read very slow and every word has its hidden meaning! This is a deep philosopher with an astonishing view of reality, with a very different approach to those we are familiar with! I recommend ALL his texts and writing. I have read most of them and revise them once in a while. Unfortunately, I'm not an scholar on this field. Nagarjuna makes me dream with Nalanda University and all the explosion of ideas that existed there 2000 years ago, same ideas and doubts we question and try to understand today!

In this letter the great Nagarjuna describes and summarizes the Buddha's teachings about the Shravakayana and Mahayana from the Sutra perspective. His clear and simple writing, although archaic in some verses, with a general ascetic approach, makes the text accessible to any Buddhist practitioner, and the Kangyur Rinpoche's comments dispels any doubt. A beautiful hardcover presentation with the original Tibetan text, a contextualizing introduction, besides explanatory notes in the back.

The content of this book, written hundreds of years ago, is as relevant today as when it was first written. This translation is easy to follow and very inspiring with clear direction on what to do to live a meaningful life.

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