



Sutta Nipata: The Group of Discourses

By K. R. Norman - translator

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It is widely accepted that the *Sutta Nipata* contains 'the earliest recorded version' of the Buddha's teaching. It is an anthology of poetry and prose - 70 titled suttas of varied instruction and temperament arranged in five chapters.

At the start are two of its most famous suttas: The Snake, in which the actions of the practising bhikkhu approaching liberation is likened to a snake that 'leaves its old worn-out skin'; and The Rhinoceros Horn, which expounds the virtue of solitude for those with serious spiritual intent.

But this anthology is full of character and characters: the Buddha condemns caste (which still blights Indian society); he engages with a varied host of questioners, from householders and brahmins to spiritual seekers, clarifying their confusions and exhorting them to pursue a path of wisdom and compassion.

Uncompromising and ancient in tone, it offers a flavour of the very early days of the Buddha's teaching and the India of his time. K. R. Norman's authoritative translation ensures clarity and immediacy of comprehension.

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- Sales Rank: #51892 in Audible
- Published on: 2016-01-15
- Format: Unabridged
- Original language: English
- Running time: 341 minutes

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