

Legends of the Buddhist Saints

Apadānapāli

TRANSLATED BY
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Girimānanda

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[394. {397.}¹ Girimānanda²]

My wife had passed away, my son
had gone to the cemetery;
on a single pyre I had burned
[my] mother, father, and brothers. (1) [3791]

I was consumed due to that grief,
I had become haggard and pale
and I was mentally deranged,³
greatly pained⁴ because of that grief. (2) [3792]

Wounded⁵ by the arrow of grief,
I went up to the forest's edge.
Eating [only] wild fruits [I found],
I dwelt at the foot of a tree. (3) [3793]

The Sambuddha named Sumedha,
the Victor, Ender of Dis-ease,
with a desire to lift me up,
did come into my presence [then]. (4) [3794]

Having heard the sound of the feet
of Sumedha, the Sage So Great,
I having lifted up [my] head
did gaze⁶ upon [him], the Great Sage.⁷ (5) [3795]

[When he], the Great Hero, approached,
[then] joy did get produced for me.
Having seen him, the World-Leader,
my mind [at last] was put at ease. (6) [3796]

Having recovered consciousness,⁸
I gave [him] a handful of leaves.

¹Apadāna numbers provided in {fancy brackets} correspond to the BJTS edition, which contains more individual poems than does the PTS edition dictating the main numbering of this translation.

²"Joy for the Mountains," a historical monk, the son of King Bimbisāra's chaplain who entered the order at Rajgir. See DPPN I: 770-771

³*cchittakkhepaṇi ccha me āsi*, lit., "there was mental derangement for me"

⁴reading *aṭṭito* with BJTS for PTS *cchakkhumā*, "one with eyes"

⁵*pareto*, lit., "overcome," "affected"

⁶reading *ullokesiṃ* with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS *ullokesi*, "he looked upon"

⁷reading *mahāmuniṃ* with BJTS for PTS *mahāmuni*

⁸*satiṃ paṭilabhivāna*, lit., "having received alertness/mindfulness"

The Blessed One [then] sat down there,
out of compassion, Eyeful One. (7) [3797]

Sitting down there, the Blessed One,
Sumedha, Leader of the World,
Buddha preached to me the Teaching
that removes the arrows of grief: (8) [3798]

“Uninvited⁹ [they’ve]¹⁰ come¹¹ from there;
not taking leave¹² [they’ve] gone from here.
As [they] have come, so [they] have gone;
what [good] is wailing about that?¹³ (9) [3799]

Just as, when rain is raining down,
people¹⁴ traveling on the road,¹⁵
taking their goods,¹⁶ are going to
[a place where] the rain’s not falling, (10) [3800]

and when the rain¹⁷ has ceased [to fall,]
they carry on¹⁸ as they had planned;¹⁹
thus your mother [and] father [too]:²⁰
what [good] is wailing about that? (11) [3801]

[We’re all] visiting strangers, guests,
wavering, driven on, shaken.
Thus your mother [and] father [too]:
what [good] is wailing about that? (12) [3802]

⁹ *anavhātā*

¹⁰ BJTS Sinhala gloss takes the implied (3rd person plural) subject here to be “the brothers, etc.” who have died

¹¹ *āguṇ*

¹² *anānuññātā*

¹³ *tattha kā paridevanā*, lit., “what is the lamentation there?” RD (*tattha*, s.v.) gives “why sorrow for this?”

¹⁴ *sattā*, lit., “beings”. BJTS glosses °*janayo*, “people”

¹⁵ *pathikā*, BJTS glosses *magī*^o

¹⁶ *sabhaṇḍā*, lit., “together with their goods”

¹⁷ reading *vasse ccha te oramite* with BJTS for PTS *vasse ete oramite*

¹⁸ or proceed, keep going: *sampayanti*

¹⁹ or “according to their wishes”

²⁰ i.e., they were here for temporary shelter, and now that the rain (= their lifespan) has ceased, they’ve continued on in their journey.

²¹ *urago*, “stomach-goer”

²² *gacchhati*, lit., “goes”

Just as a serpent²¹ slithers on,²²
abandoning its worn-out skin,²³
thus your mother [and] father [too]:
their bodies²⁴ are abandoned here. “ (13) [3803]

Understanding the Buddha’s words,
I removed²⁵ the arrow of grief.
Generating happiness, I
worshipped the Best of the Buddhas. (14) [3804]

Worshipping the Great Elephant,²⁶
I offered²⁷ Sumedha, Leader
of the World, a stalk of flowers²⁸
endowed with a heavenly scent. (15) [3805]

Having worshipped²⁹ the Sambuddha,
pressing my hands upon [my] head,
calling to mind [his] chief virtues,
I praised the Leader of the World: (16) [3806]

“Great Hero, you’re the One Who’s Crossed,³⁰
Omniscient One, the World-Leader.
You are lifting up all creatures
with [your] knowledge, O Sage So Great. (17) [3807]

You cut off all perplexity
and also doubt, O Sage So Great.
You’re imparting the path³¹ to me
through your knowledge, O Eyeful One. (18) [3808]

²³reading *santacchaṃ* with BJTS for PTS *santanuṃ*, “its body”

²⁴the Pāli is singular, *santanuṃ*

²⁵*vivajjayiṇ*, lit., “forsook” “abandoned”

²⁶*mahāgaṇ*, i.e., the Buddha

²⁷lit., “did *pūjā* with”

²⁸the text is corrupt as regards the object given, apparently an attempt at explaining the “Giri” part of the protagonist’s name. I follow BJTS (and PTS alt) in reading *girimāñjarīṃ apūjayiṃ*, “I did *pūjā* with a stalk of *giri* [flowers],” even though it breaks meter (BJTS corrects to *pūjayiṃ girimāñjarīṃ*). BJTS glosses *giri* as *girinil mal*, on which see note to [2256]. *Giri* means “mountain,” so perhaps the reference is to a stalk of flowers (*māñjarī*) growing on a mountain? PTS reads *girapañjaliṇ* (“pressing together of the hands in honor of his words”?) offering alternatives *giramañcchira* (?) and *giripañjarīṇ* (fr. *pañjara*, a cage?), none of which satisfyingly corresponds to the adjective supplied this offering, “endowed with a heavenly scent.”

²⁹lit., “done *pūjā* to”

³⁰reading *nittiṇṇo* with BJTS for PTS *nitthiṇṇo*

³¹*maggāṇ*

Arahants with the goal attained,³²
six-knowledge-holders, powerful,³³
wise ones who travel in the sky,
are surrounding you all the time. (19) [3809]

[Your] followers are bearing fruit,³⁴
those attained³⁵ and those being trained;³⁶
your followers are blossoming
like lotus [flowers] at sunrise.³⁷ (20) [3810]

As the ocean³⁸ is unperturbed,
unequaled, difficult to cross,
thus [too] are you, O Eyeful One,
Endowed with Knowledge, Infinite.“ (21) [3811]

Having worshipped the World’s Victor,³⁹
the Eyeful One, he of Great Fame,
praising each of the directions,
crouched over⁴⁰ I went off [from there]. (22) [3812]

Falling from the world of the gods,⁴¹
transmigrating from birth to birth,
I came out of [my] mother’s womb,
attentive [and] remembering. (23) [3813]

Having departed from the house,
I went forth into homelessness.
Zealous,⁴² also intelligent,
I pastured in meditation.⁴³ (24) [3814]

³²*siddhipattā*

³³*chaḷabhiññā mahiddhikā*, lit., possessors of the six special knowledges who have great (magical, *iddhi*) power.“

³⁴*phalaṭṭhā*, lit., “stationed in fruition” (RD), “fixed in the fruits [of the path],” i.e., on the way to nirvana

³⁵*paṭipannā*, i.e., arahants

³⁶*sekhā*, i.e., those still in training

³⁷*sūrodaye va padumā*

³⁸reading *yathā samuddo* with BJTS for PTS *mahāsamuddo*

³⁹*lokaḷinaṇ*

⁴⁰taking *paṭikuṭiko* (BJTS reads *pati*°) as fr. *paṭikuṭati* “to crouch,” “to bend over”. This may mean that he went off still bowing in reverence, or else that he went off on all fours. Here BJTS leaves the term unglossed

⁴¹where he presumably went after the lifetime just recounted

⁴²*ātāpī*, lit., “burning”

⁴³*paṭisallāna-gocaro*, “I sustained myself/fed one retirement into solitude for meditation”

Having put forth [great] exertion,⁴⁴
having gladdened the Sage So Great,
I thereafter am wandering,
like the moon freed from a cloud-bank.⁴⁵ (25) [3815]

I'm [now] intent on seclusion,⁴⁶
calmed,⁴⁷ devoid of grounds for rebirth;⁴⁸
knowing well all the defilements,
I am [now] living, undefiled. (26) [3816]

In the thirty thousand aeons
since I worshipped⁴⁹ the Buddha [then],
I've come to know no bad rebirth:
that's the fruit of Buddha-*pūjā*. (27) [3817]

My defilements are [now] burnt up;
all [new] existence is destroyed.
All defilements are exhausted;
now there will be no more rebirth. (28) [3818]

Being in Best Buddha's presence
was a very good thing for me.
The three knowledges are attained;
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (29) [3819]

The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (30) [3820]

Thus indeed Venerable Girimānanda Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Girimānanda Thera is finished.

⁴⁴*padhānaṃ padahitvāna*, lit., "having exerted [myself] in exertion"

⁴⁵*cchando v'abbhaghaṇā mutto*

⁴⁶*vivekaṃ anuyutto*

⁴⁷*upasanto*

⁴⁸*nirūpadhi*

⁴⁹lit., "did *pūjā*"