

Hemaka

Copyright © 2022 Jonathan S. Walters.

PUBLISHED BY JONATHAN S. WALTERS AND WHITMAN COLLEGE

<http://www.apadanatranslation.com>

Licensed under the Attribution, Non-Commercial, Share Alike (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>).

*Printed August 2022*

**[404. {407.}<sup>1</sup> Hemaka<sup>2</sup>]**

Near the top of a mountain slope,  
the ascetic named Anoma,  
making a well-built hermitage,  
dwelt in a hall made of leaves then. (1) [4072]

His practices<sup>3</sup> were successful;  
the goal attained<sup>4</sup> by<sup>5</sup> [his] own strength.<sup>6</sup>  
Heroic in [his] own monkhood,  
[he] was zealous, clever, a sage. (2) [4073]

Confident in his religion,<sup>7</sup>  
he was skilled in others' doctrines,<sup>8</sup>  
expert<sup>9</sup> and skillful [in reading]  
omens<sup>10</sup> on earth and in the sky. (3) [4074]

Meditating, trance-loving sage,  
he did not covet,<sup>11</sup> was grief-free,<sup>12</sup>  
happy if receiving or not,  
ate little food,<sup>13</sup> did not kill beasts.<sup>14</sup> (4) [4075]

Piyadassi, the Sambuddha,  
Chief,<sup>15</sup> Compassionate One, the Sage,  
wishing to help beings across,<sup>16</sup>  
spread<sup>17</sup> [the Teaching] with compassion.<sup>18</sup> (5) [4076]

Piyadassi, the Sage So Great,  
seeing folks who could understand,<sup>19</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Apadāna* 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.

<sup>2</sup> "Gold-er"

<sup>3</sup> *tapokammaṇ*, lit., "his ascetic practices"

<sup>4</sup> *siddhipatṭo*

<sup>5</sup> lit., "in"

<sup>6</sup> reading *sake bale* with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS *sake phale*, "in his own fruit"

<sup>7</sup> *sasamaye*, his own crowd, multitude, assembly; also season, tradition, religion

<sup>8</sup> *paravāde*

<sup>9</sup> *paṭṭho*, lit., "established." BJTS Sinh. gloss here: *prakaṭa*

<sup>10</sup> *uppādamhi*, BJTS gloss *utpāta śāstrayehi dakṣayeka*

<sup>11</sup> *alolupo*

<sup>12</sup> *vītasoko*

<sup>13</sup> *appāhāro*

<sup>14</sup> *nirārambho*, lit., "without objects [of sacrifice]," one who does not kill animals in sacrifice

<sup>15</sup> *aggo*

<sup>16</sup> BJTS gloss: across the ocean of *saṃsāra*

<sup>17</sup> *pharī*, "spread abroad" BJTS Sinh. gloss *pātira vī ya*; the term also means "thrilled [others]"

<sup>18</sup> lit., "...with compassion at that time"

<sup>19</sup> or "capable of being enlightened," *bodhaneyyaṇ pajaṇ*, BJTS reads *bodhaneyyaṇ janaṇ*, "people"

having gone is exhorting [them,]  
in a thousand universes.<sup>20</sup> (6) [4077]

With a desire to lift me up,  
he [then] approached my hermitage.  
I had not formerly seen [him,]<sup>21</sup>  
nor heard of him from anyone. (7) [4078]

Omens, dreams [and] auspicious marks  
were very clear to me [back then],  
an expert, skilled in horoscopes,<sup>22</sup>  
[both] on the earth and in the sky. (8) [4079]

After hearing of the Buddha,  
I gladdened [my] heart over him.<sup>23</sup>  
Whether eating or sitting down,  
I remember [him] all the time. (9) [4080]

When I was thus remembering,  
the Blessed One thought [of me] too.  
Joy arose in me all the time,  
when I thought about the Buddha. (10) [4081]

Returning at a later time,  
the Sage So Great came up to me.  
When he arrived<sup>24</sup> I did not know  
that he's the Buddha, the Great Sage. (11) [4082]

Full of Pity, Compassionate,  
Piyadassi, the Sage So Great,  
[then] introduced himself [to me]:  
"I am the Buddha in the world."<sup>25</sup> (12) [4083]

Coming to know the Sambuddha,  
Piyadassi, the Sage So Great,  
[filling my] own heart with pleasure,  
I spoke these words [to him back then]: (13) [4084]

"You are sitting down on other  
chairs and palanquins and deck-chairs,

---

who could understand"

<sup>20</sup>*cakkavāḷasahassamhi*, i.e., in a thousand spheres of cosmic mountains that define a world

<sup>21</sup>lit., "had not formerly seen the Victor"

<sup>22</sup>*nakkhattapada*, lit., "[reading] constellations"

<sup>23</sup>lit., "I brought pleasure to my heart with regard to that/him"

<sup>24</sup>reading *sampatte pi* with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS *sampatto pi*, "though I had arrived"

<sup>25</sup>*sadevake*, lit., "in [the world together] with the gods"

but<sup>26</sup> you, the Seer of All Things,  
should sit<sup>27</sup> upon a gem-set throne.<sup>28</sup> (14) [4085]

At that time [someone]<sup>29</sup> created<sup>30</sup>  
a chair made out of all the gems,  
a magically-created<sup>31</sup> seat  
for Piyadassi, the Great Sage. (15) [4086]

Then I gave a rose-apple fruit,<sup>32</sup>  
as big as a jug of water,<sup>33</sup>  
to [Buddha] seated on [that] chair  
magically-fashioned out of gems. (16) [4087]

[At that time] the Great Sage ate [it],  
generating [great] mirth<sup>34</sup> for me.  
Then bringing pleasure to [my] heart,  
I saluted [him], the Teacher. (17) [4088]

But Piyadassi, Blessed One,  
the World's Best One, the Bull of Men,  
sitting upon [that] gem-set throne,  
spoke these verses [about me then]: (18) [4089]

“He who gave me [this] gem-set chair  
and [also this] ambrosial<sup>35</sup> fruit,  
I shall relate details of him;  
[all of] you listen to my words: (19) [4090]

“For seventy-seven aeons  
he'll delight in the world of gods,  
and fifty-seven times he'll be  
a king who turns the wheel [of law]. (20) [4091]

Thirty-two times the lord of gods,  
he will exercise divine rule,  
[and there will be] much local rule,  
innumerable by counting. (21) [4092]

<sup>26</sup>reading *pi* with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS 'si, “you are”

<sup>27</sup>lit., “sit!” (imperative, *nidisa*)

<sup>28</sup>*ratanāsane*

<sup>29</sup>this follows the BJTS Sinhala gloss

<sup>30</sup>*nimminivāna*, lit., “having created”

<sup>31</sup>*iddhinimittañ*, lit., “created by *iddhi* powers”

<sup>32</sup>*jambuphalañ*

<sup>33</sup>or “as large as an elephant's frontal lobe:” *kumbhamattañ*. Rose-apple is typically at most only about the size of a golf ball

<sup>34</sup>or laughter, *hāsañ janetvāna*

<sup>35</sup>*amatañ*

He will receive seats made of gems  
and also made out of rubies,  
[and] many palanquins well-made  
out of gold<sup>36</sup> [and] out of silver.<sup>37</sup> (22) [4093]

Even when walking back and forth,  
palanquins of different sorts,  
all the time will wait upon  
[this] man possessing good<sup>38</sup> karma. (23) [4094]

Huts with gables and palaces,  
and beds which are very costly,  
all of the time will come to be,  
discerning what he is thinking. (24) [4095]

[And] sixty thousand elephants,  
decked out in all the ornaments,  
*mātaṅgas* with gold headdresses,  
clothed in harnessing made of gold,  
mounted by elephant-trainers  
with lances and goads in hand,<sup>39</sup>  
are going to wait on this [man]:  
that's the fruit of a gem-set chair. (25-26) [4096-4097]

Sixty thousand horses [as well],  
decked out in all the ornaments,  
thoroughbreds of good pedigree,<sup>40</sup>  
horses from Sindh, fast vehicles,  
mounted by trainers of horses<sup>41</sup>  
wearing armor with bows in hand,  
are going to wait on this [man]:  
that's the fruit of a gem-set chair. (27-28) [4098-4099]

Sixty thousand chariots [too],  
decked out in all the ornaments,  
covered in<sup>42</sup> the skins of leopards

<sup>36</sup>here as elsewhere BJTS corrects PTS *sovaṇṇayaṇ* to *sovaṇṇamayaṇ*, despite breaking meter.

<sup>37</sup>*rūpimayaṇ* = *rūpiya-mayaṇ*

<sup>38</sup>*puñña*, lit., “meritorious”

<sup>39</sup>*tomaraṅkusapāṇihi*

<sup>40</sup>*jātiyā*, lit., “well-born” or simply “excellent,” the term connotes lineage, genealogy, caste, breed. Here it seems to substitute for “those fast like the wind” (*vātajavā*) in parallel lists (see above, [1293], [2692], [3981])

<sup>41</sup>*gāmaṇīya* usually means elephant-trainers, as in v. 26 [4097], above, but here the context makes “horse-trainer” a more suitable translation, so I have taken the same liberty taken by the poet in treating the term that way. PSI indicates that these are trainers of “elephants, etc.” (*ātun ādīn puhuṇu karana ācāryyaya*), allowing for the extended meaning in this context.

<sup>42</sup>*sannaddhā*, RD: fastened, bound; put on, clothed (with), armed, accoutred. The term has a wide

and likewise tigers,<sup>43</sup> flags hoisted,  
 mounted by animal-trainers<sup>44</sup>  
 wearing armor with bows in hand,  
 will constantly wait on this [man]:  
 that's the fruit of a gem-set chair. (29-30) [4100-4101]

Sixty thousand milch-cows [as well,]  
 red in color,<sup>45</sup> best of the best,<sup>46</sup>  
 will give birth to [many good] calves:  
 that's the fruit of a gem-set chair. (31) [4102]

Sixty thousand women [as well],  
 decked out in all the ornaments,  
 with varied clothes and jewelry  
 and wearing earrings made of gems,  
 with long eyelashes, lovely smiles<sup>47</sup>  
 and slim waists, pleasant to look at,<sup>48</sup>  
 constantly will wait on this [man]:  
 that's the fruit of a gem-set chair. (32-33) [4103-4104]

Eighteen hundred aeons [from now,]  
 the Eyeful One named Gotama,  
 doing away with the darkness,  
 will be the Buddha in the world. (34) [4105]

enough range to leave open the possibility that rather than covered in the hides of these big cats, the poet imagines the chariots pulled by leopards and tigers, which would make sense of the specification below that they are also mounted by animal-trainers, in this case perhaps leopard- and tiger-trainers, paralleling the elephant-trainers who mount the elephants and the horse-trainers who mount the horses.

<sup>43</sup>*dīpā*, fr. *dīpī*, leopard. Both RD and PSI give cart covered with a tiger skin as one of the meanings of *dīpā*, and the same (i.e., covered with a tiger skin) for *veyyagghā*, but here the “and also too” (*atho pi*) connecting the two terms clearly indicates that they are not simple synonyms, but rather two types of decorated or armored carts: those covered with leopard skins (*dīpā*) and those covered with tiger skins (*veyyagghā*).

<sup>44</sup>*gāmaṇīya* usually means elephant-trainers, as in v. 26 [4097], above, but as noted in the note on v. [4099], above, the meaning is more elastic to include other animals too. Here I opt for the most open translation, given the possibility that at least horses in addition to elephants would have been imagined pulling the 60,000 chariots. It is even possible that the poet imagines the chariots as pulled by leopards and tigers, rather than merely covered in their hides, in which case “big-cat-trainers” would be the best translation here.

<sup>45</sup>*rohaññā*, a common epithet of cows. BJTS however reads *dohaññā*, apparently fr. *doha*, milking.

<sup>46</sup>the text reads *puṅgavusabhā*, “bulls among bulls,” which would seem odd as an epithet of cows except that both terms are used regularly in the sense of “best”. I follow BJTS (*atīśreṣṭha*) in this reading, though one is tempted to take the second foot as implying that there were (actually male) “bulls” together with the cows.

<sup>47</sup>hasulā = ?

<sup>48</sup>RD gives “good hips,” referring to this text. I don't see the warrant, and take the term *susaññā* from *saññā*, sense, perception, as does BJTS

Coming to look at him, [this man]  
will go forth having nothing.  
Satisfying the Teacher, he'll  
delight in the dispensation. (35) [4106]

Having listened to his Teaching,  
he will destroy the defilements.  
Knowing well all the defilements,  
he'll reach nirvana, undefiled. (36) [4107]

Vigorous effort's the yoked ox  
carrying perfect peace for me.<sup>49</sup>  
Wishing for ultimate meaning,  
I dwell in the dispensation. (37) [4108]

This is the final time for me;  
[my] last rebirth is proceeding.<sup>50</sup>  
All defilements are exhausted;  
now there will be no more rebirth. (38) [4109]

My defilements are [now] burnt up;  
all [new] existence is destroyed.  
Like elephants with broken chains,  
I am living without constraint. (39) [4110]

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! (40) [4111]

The four analytical modes,  
and these eight deliverances,  
six special knowledges mastered,  
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (41) [4112]

Thus indeed Venerable Hemaka Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Hemaka Thera is finished.

---

<sup>49</sup>*viriyaṃ me dhurodhaṃ yagakkhemādhivāhanaṃ*, cf. SN 79

<sup>50</sup>*carimo vattate bhavo*