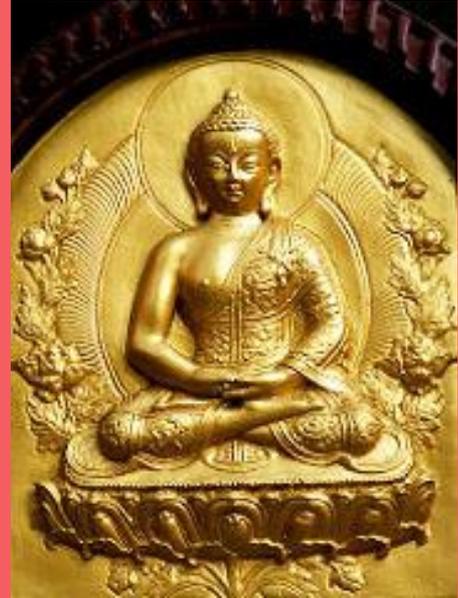


Stories of the Buddha



by FGS Buddha Memorial Center



Saving Angulimala

[Angulimala:] "While walking, contemplative, you say, 'I have stopped.' But when I have stopped you say I haven't. I ask you the meaning of this: How have you stopped? How haven't I?"

[The Buddha:] "I have stopped, Angulimala, once & for all, having cast off violence toward all living beings. You, though, are unrestrained toward beings. That's how I've stopped and you haven't."

[Angulimala:] "At long last a greatly revered great seer for my sake has come to the great forest. Having heard your verse in line with the Dhamma, I will go about having abandoned evil."

So saying, the bandit hurled his sword & weapons over a cliff into a chasm, a pit. Then the bandit paid homage to the feet of the One Well-gone, and right there requested the Going-forth. The Awakened One, the compassionate great seer, the teacher of the world, along with its devas, said to him then: "Come, bhikkhu." That in itself was bhikkhuhood for him. -- *Theragatha: Verses of the Elder Monks - Angulimala (Verse 866-870)*

Angulimala, which means "finger necklace", slaughtered people randomly. He did so because his evil teacher told him that killing a thousand people, and forming a necklace using a finger from each of his victims, would allow him to attain enlightenment. Having already killed 999 people, he intended to kill his mother to complete his task. When the Buddha heard about this, he felt compassion and went looking for Angulimala with the aim of guiding him toward the right path. When Angulimala saw the Buddha coming, he held up his knife with the intention of killing the Buddha but was unable to approach him. The Buddha then taught Angulimala the Dharma, after which he repented his wrongdoings and took refuge in the Buddha. Angulimala's transformation from being evil to being kindhearted is similar to the saying, "Put down the butcher's knife and one instantly becomes a Buddha."

(Source: [FGS Buddha Memorial Center](#))