

Legends of the Buddhist Saints

Apadānapāli

TRANSLATED BY
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Upavāna

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[22. Upavāna]

The Victor, Padumuttara,
Who Had Crossed Over Everything,
the Sambuddha went fully out¹
like a fire finished burning. (1) [865]

Many people came together
venerating the Thus-Gone-One.
They made a well-made pyre² [for him]
[then] lifted [his] body [on it]. (2) [866]

Doing the needful with the corpse
they gathered [all] the relics there.
[Then] all the people, with [their] kings,
constructed the Buddha's stupa. (3) [867]

The first [casket]³ was made of gold,
the second was made of gemstone.
The third was made out of silver,
the fourth was made of crystal. (4) [868]

The fifth [stupa] which was built there
was made of rubies fixed in glass.
The sixth was made of all the gems
with a [large] cat's-eye⁴ on the top. (5) [869]

There was a railing made of gold;
[its] legs were made out of gemstones.
That stupa, all [encased] in gold,
[rose up] in height a [full] league tall. (6) [870]

The gods then got together there
and counseled one another [thus]:
“we shall construct a stupa too
for the World-Chief, the Neutral One. (7) [871]

¹*parinibbuto*.

²*cchitaka*, heap, shrine

³the text does not stipulate the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth *what*, and the *cty.* sees no need to explain. Relic finds as at Pipphrawa, as well as the context (in which there is clearly a single stupa) would suggest that these were reliquaries inside reliquaries inside reliquaries, each encasing the former ones like Russian nesting dolls, until the whole thing was covered with gold.

⁴*masāragallassa*, *masāragalla* = Sinh. *maesirigala*

[But] there are no single relics;
the body is in one lump [now].
We'll enlarge this very stupa
of the Buddha, using [fine] gold." (8) [872]

The gods, using the seven gems,
raised it another league [taller].
That stupa, which was two leagues tall,
dispelled the darkness [with its shine]. (9) [873]

The snake-gods⁵ then assembled there
and counseled one another [thus]:
"The people and also the gods
constructed the Buddha's stupa. (10) [874]

Do not let us be negligent;
heedful, [and] with the lesser gods,
we too shall enlarge [this] stupa
of the World-Chief, the Neutral One." (11) [875]

Gathering themselves together
they covered the Buddha's stupa
with the two types of blue sapphire⁶
and with the *jotirasa* gem.⁷ (12) [876]

At that point Buddha's *cchetiya*
was made entirely of gems.
In height it welled up three⁸ leagues [tall]
lighting up [the whole universe]. (13) [877]

[Then] *garuḷas*⁹ got together
and counseled one another [thus]:
"The men and gods and snake-gods too
constructed the Buddha's stupa. (14) [878]

Do not let us be negligent;
heedful, [and] with the lesser gods,

⁵ *nāgā*

⁶ lit., "with *Indanīla* and *mahānīla*" = "Indra Blue" and "Great Blue"

⁷ see above, n. to [839]

⁸ BJTS reads thirty leagues

⁹ PTS omits the *garuḷas*, and as a result the height of the stupa increases from five to seven leagues, skipping six. BJTS includes the *garuḷas*, which makes the numbering sequence complete. In PTS this is the *kumbhaṇḍas* rather than the *garuḷas*, but otherwise the text is the same.

we too shall enlarge [this] stupa
of the World-Chief, the Neutral One.“ (15) [879]

That stupa made only of gems
they gilded on the top [right then].
They too increased by one [whole] league
the height of the Buddha’s stupa. (16) [880]

Then rising up four leagues [in height]
that Buddha-stupa shined [so] bright.
It illumined all directions
just like the risen raying sun. (17) [881]

[Then] *kumbhaṇḍas* got together
and counseled one another thus:
“The people and also the gods
the snake-gods and the *garuḷas* [882]

themselves built a superb stupa
for [him], the Best of the Buddhas.
Do not let us be negligent;
heedful, [and] with the lesser gods, [883]

we too shall enlarge [this] stupa
of the World-Chief, the Neutral One.
We’ll cover the entire extent
of the Buddha’s stupa with gems.“ [884]

They too increased by one [whole] league
the height of the Buddha’s stupa.
[Now] rising up five leagues [in height]
that Buddha-stupa shined forth [bright]. [885]

Then spirits¹⁰ got together there
and counseled one another [thus]:
“The people, gods, and snake-gods too,
the *garuḷas* and *kumbhaṇḍas* (18)¹¹ [886]

themselves built a superb stupa
for the World-Chief, the Neutral One.
Do not let us be negligent;
heedful, [and] with the lesser gods, (19) [887]

¹⁰*yakkhā*

¹¹PTS omits *kumbhaṇḍas* from this list, conflating them with *garuḷas*; I follow BJTS in the last two feet.

we too shall enlarge [this] stupa
of the World-Chief, the Neutral One.
We'll cover the entire extent
of Buddha's stupa with crystal." (20) [888]

They too increased by one [whole] league
the height of the Buddha's stupa.
[Now] rising up six¹² leagues [in height]
that Buddha-stupa shined forth [bright]. (21) [889]

Then assembled the music-nymphs¹³
[who] counseled one another [thus]:
"Those born of Manu, and the gods,
snake-gods, kumbhaṇḍas, guyhakas^{*14} (22) [890]

all constructed Buddha's stupa;
we've done nothing in that regard.
We too shall enlarge [this] stupa
of the World-Chief, the Neutral One." (23) [891]

They constructed seven railings
[and] made the legs [for it as well].
Then that stupa the music-nymphs
made fully [encased] in [fine] gold. (24) [892]

[Now] rising seven leagues [in height]
that Buddha-stupa shined forth [bright].
One could not tell the day from night;
there always was [its strong] bright light. (25) [893]

Its brilliance actually out-shined
the moon and the sun and the stars.
By day that lamp was blazing forth
for a hundred leagues [all] around. (26) [894]

At that time, whichever people
were worshipping that stupa [there]
did not have to climb¹⁵ that stupa;
they were [just] held up in the air. (27) [895]

¹²PTS reads five, in keeping with its elision of the *garuḷas*

¹³*gandhabbā*

¹⁴BJTS and PTS alt. reads *garuḷā* for *guyhakā*

¹⁵an allusion to the practice that seems to have been current at the early post-Aśokan stupas, namely climbing the railing attached to the sides of the stupa in order to circumambulate and place offerings upon its dome.

Their flags or wreaths of flowers [there]
were offered up [into the air]
by spirit¹⁶ Abhisammata
who had been placed [there] by the gods. (28) [896]

They could not see the spirit¹⁷ [there];
they see the wreaths [just] flying by.
Seeing them go by in this way,
all of them go on to good states. (29) [897]

People with faith in Buddha's words,
and pleased in the dispensation,
wishing to see the miracle
are worshipping that stupa [there]. (30) [898]

At that time I was a speaker
[and I] lived in Hamsavati.
Seeing those delighted people
this [good] thought then occurred to me: (31) [899]

"He is lofty, the Blessed One,
who has a relic-womb¹⁸ like this;
these people are very happy
doing their rites with devotion. (32) [900]

I too shall do a ritual
for the World-Chief, the Neutral One,
and in the future, I shall be
one of the heirs to¹⁹ his doctrines." (33) [901]

I had my upper garment washed
by one whose job was washing clothes
[and] having stuck it on bamboo
I raised a flag up in the sky. (34) [902]

Grabbing it, Abhisammata
raised up my flag into the sky.
Seeing it²⁰ flutter in the wind,
among those folks I smiled a lot. (35) [903]

¹⁶yakkha

¹⁷yakkha

¹⁸i.e., stupa.

¹⁹lit., "in".

²⁰lit., "the flag".

Bringing pleasure to [my] mind there
I [then] approached a [Buddhist] monk.
Worshipping that monk I inquired
what that flag's result would become. (36) [904]

He told me of religious joy,
generating [great] bliss for me.
“You always will experience
the fruit of [your gift of] that flag.” (37) [905]

[He said], “The army, with four parts —
tusker, soldier, chariot, horse —
will wait on you permanently;
that is the fruit of a flag-gift. (38) [906]

Sixty thousand instruments²¹ [and]
well-decorated kettle-drums²²
will attend you permanently;
that is the fruit of a flag-gift. (39) [907]

And women [too, all] well-made-up
numbering eighty-six thousand,
with varied clothes and ornaments,
wearing earrings bearing gemstones, (40) [908]

with long eyelashes, lovely smiles²³
and slim waists, pleasant to look at²⁴
will wait upon you constantly:
that is the fruit of a flag-gift. (41) [909]

You'll delight in the world of gods
for thirty thousand aeons [hence].
Eighty times as the king of gods
you will exercise divine rule. (42) [910]

A thousand times you're going to be
a king who turns the wheel [of law],

²¹*turiya*, musical instruments

²²*bheri*

²³*hasulā* = ? Cf. RD *hasula*, s.v., which following Kern treats this as a corrupted reading of *bhamuka*, “eyebrows” or “thick eyebrows”, often found in combination with the term for “long eyelashes” (*aḷārapamha*).

²⁴RD 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

[and you will have] much local rule
innumerable by counting. (43) [911]

In one hundred thousand aeons,
arising in Okkāka's clan,
the one whose name is Gotama
will be the Teacher in the world. (44) [912]

Falling down from the world of gods,
incited by [your] wholesome roots,
[and] bound up with your good karma
you will be Brahma's kinsman [then]. (45) [913]

Discarding eight hundred million
[and] many slaves [and] workers [too],
you will renounce in the teaching
of Gotama the Blessed One. (46) [914]

Satisfying the Sambuddha,
Gotama, the Bull of Śākya,
you'll be known as Upavāna
a follower of the Teacher." (47) [915]

Karma done a hundred thousand
[aeons hence] showed me [its] fruit here:
well-liberated, arrow-quick,
I have destroyed my defilements. (48) [916]

When I was a wheel-turning king,
lord over the four continents,
for three leagues in all directions
flags were always seen by me [then]. (49) [917]

In the hundred thousand aeons
since I did that [good] karma then,
I've come to know no bad rebirth;
that is the fruit of a flag-gift. (50) [918]

The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (51) [919]

Thus indeed Venerable Upavāna Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Upavāna Thera is finished.