

Legends of the Buddhist Saints

Apadānapāli

TRANSLATED BY
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Bhisadāyaka

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[65. Bhisadāyaka¹]

The [Sambuddha] named Vessabhu,
the third Sage [born in that aeon,]²
plunging³ into a forest grove
lived [there], the Ultimate Person. (1) [1377]

Taking [some] lotus roots and stems,⁴
I⁵ went into Buddha's presence
and gave that [food] to the Buddha
[feeling well-] pleased by [my] own hands. (2) [1378]

And feeling the touch of the hand
of Vessabhu the One Most Wise,
I was happy beyond compare;
could anything ever top that?⁶ (3) [1379]

My final [life] is taking place;
all existence is [now] destroyed.
When I was an elephant king
I planted wholesome [seeds back then]. (4) [1380]

In the thirty-one aeons since
I did that [good] karma back then,
I've come to know no bad rebirth:
that's the fruit of a lotus root. (5) [1381]

In the thirteenth aeon [ago]
there were sixteen lords of people,
kings [all known as] Samodhāna
wheel-turning monarchs with great strength. (6) [1382]

¹"Lotus-root Donor"

²this follows BJTS Sinhala gloss and the cty, which explains that Vessabhu was born in that aeon [thirty-one aeons ago] after Vipassi and then Sikhi

³reading *ogayha* (BJTS) for *oggayha* (PTS). Cty also reads *oggayha*, but glosses it with the proper gerund (*ogahetvā*), which it clarifies to mean "he entered" (*pāvisi*).

⁴*bhisa* refers to the lotus root or "potato" (Sinh. *ala*) found under the mud; *muḷāla* refers to the lotus "stem" (Sinh. *daṇḍu*, dictionary gives *dāli*). The former is starchy and crunchy; the latter is like a green vegetable. Both are delicious staples of village diets to this day.

⁵the cty explains that he had been born in an elephant's womb at that time. Cf. v. [1380], below.

⁶this rather loose translation follows the Sinhala gloss. The last two pādas would literally be: "I was happy, I didn't experience the same [happiness before], beyond that what would be?"

The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (7) [1383]

Thus indeed Venerable Bhisadāyaka Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Bhisadāyaka Thera is finished.