

Legends of the Buddhist Saints

Apadānapāli

TRANSLATED BY
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Pupphathūpiya

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[122. Pupphathūpiya¹]

In the Himalayan region,²
there's a mountain named Lambaka.³
I was dwelling at its center,
a brahmin master of mantras. (1) [1776]

[At that time] five thousand students
were constantly surrounding me.
They [all] rose earlier [than I],
[and were likewise] skilled in mantras. (2) [1777]

“[Teacher], you should know the fact⁴ that
Buddha has been born in the world,
bearing thirty-two great marks and
eighty lesser marks upon him.
The aura of the Best Victor,
fathom-wide, shines just like the sun.” (3) [1778]⁵

After hearing [his] students' words,
the brahmin master of mantras,
setting out from [his own] ashram,
[then] asked directions, [that] brahmin:
“In which region is [he] living,
the Great Hero, the World-Leader? (4) [1779]⁶

I will worship that direction⁷
[and] the Victor, Without Rival.
And happy, with a happy heart,
I will worship⁸ the Thus-Gone-One. (5) [1780]

¹“Flower-Stupa-er”

²or “Close to the Himalayan range”

³perhaps fr. *lambati*, to hand down, “Pendulous”. #1, #345{348} also take place on this mountain.

⁴lit., “you [plural] should know the fact through us that”. I follow the BJTS Sinhala gloss in taking this as a statement made by the students to the teacher (i.e., the rebirth precursor of the arahant). The second person plural imperative is used as a form of respectful address, so the sense is less direct than the command appears in English. The Sinhala gloss reads, “it would be good if you were to gain understanding from our words that...”

⁵PTS and BJTS agree in presenting this as a six-footed verse

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⁷reading *tāhaṃ disaṃ namassissaṃ* (BJTS) for *na hi disvāna passissaṃ* (“not seeing I will look,” PTS).

⁸BJTS reads this verb as *pūjesiṃ*, past tense “I did *pūjā*,” but here, given the context, I prefer the PTS reading *pūjessaṃ*, the future tense (sort of).

Come [now, you] students, let us go;
let us see [him], the Thus-Gone-One.
Having worshipped the Teacher's feet,
we will hear his dispensation."⁹ (6) [1781]

One day after I had set out,
I contracted a [bad] illness.
I laid down beneath a *sal* [tree],
in [great] pain due to that illness. (7) [1782]

Assembling all the students [then]
I asked them questions in this way:
"of what sort is the virtue of
the World's Lord, the Supreme Buddha?" (8) [1783]

[Then] questioned by me they explained
the Best Buddha [most] thoroughly,¹⁰
as well as they could see him [then]
[and] showed him to me face-to-face. (9) [1784]

After hearing [the students'] words,
I brought [my] own heart pleasure [then].
Having built a floral stupa
I passed away [right] on the spot. (10) [1785]

They, after burning my body,
came into the Buddha's presence.
Pressing hands together [for him,]
they [all] worshipped the Teacher [then]. (11) [1786]

Having made a floral stupa
for the Well-Gone-One, the Great Sage,
for one hundred thousand aeons,
I've come to know no bad rebirth. (12) [1787]

In the forty-thousandth aeon
there were sixteen Kṣatriyan [men].
[All] were known as Aggisamā,¹¹
wheel-turning kings with great power. (13) [1788]

⁹lit., "the Victor's dispensation"

¹⁰reading *sakaccchchaṃ* (BJTS) for *kukkuṭṭhaṃ* (PTS)

¹¹"Same as Fire"

In the twenty-thousandth aeon,
thirty-eight rulers of the earth
were kings who turned the wheel [of law,
and [all were] named Ghatāsana.¹² (14) [1789]

The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (15) [1790]

Thus indeed Venerable Pupphathūpiya Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Pupphathūpiya Thera is finished.

¹²“Seated in Ghee” “Ghee-Throned”