

Legends of the Buddhist Saints

Apadānapāli

TRANSLATED BY
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Bhojanadāyaka

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[312. Bhojanadāyaka¹]

Of good birth like a *sal* tree's² bough,
rising up like a drumstick tree,³
[streaking] the sky like Indra's bolt,⁴
the Victor was always shining. (1) [2771]

With a mind that was very clear,
I donated edibles to
him, the God Over Other Gods,
Vessabhu [Buddha], the Great Sage. (2) [2772]

The Self-Become, Unconquered One,
the Buddha, gave me thanks⁵ for that:
“let it be born as fruit for you,
as [you're] reborn in existence.”⁶ (3) [2773]

In the thirty-one aeons since
I gave that gift [to him] back then,
I've come to know no bad rebirth:
that is the fruit of [giving] food. (4) [2774]

In the twenty-five aeon hence
there was one man, Amittabhā,⁷
a wheel-turning king with great strength,
possessor of the seven gems. (5) [2775]

¹“Food Donor”

²= *sāla*, *shorea robusta*

³*sobhañjana*. RD (sole cchitation J v. 405) says *Hyperanthica moringa*, but that designation seems to be known only here and in cchitations of this dictionary. The proper designation of the tree (Sinh. *murunga*) is *Moringaceae moringa* (it is the only genus of that larger family, with thirteen species indigenous to Africa and Asia). English “Drumstick Tree” “Horseradish tree” (due to horseradish-like flavor of the roots,) “Benzoil Tree” for an oil extracted from its seeds, produces clusters of fragrant pale yellowish flowers followed by a long seedpod which is eaten as a vegetable across the Indian world (in which it grows easily; broken branches will bear fruit within a year of replanting, and it grows for the light, tall and lanky, such that it's demise is often the result of its size, whether through breaking off or becoming a nuisance)

⁴*indalaṭṭhi*, i.e., lightening (or the rainbow, in which case translating “[painting] the sky like Inda's bow” would preserve the play in the original, which parallels this simile with the comparison to the *sal* branch or sprout [also *ṛlaṭṭhi*] in the first line). Cone has an entry on *indalaṭṭhi*, based on Ap witness alone, which similarly leaves the ambiguity between rainbow and lightening unresolved.

⁵*anumodi*

⁶lit., “in existence,” in the cycle of reincarnation, *bhave*

⁷“Light for the Friendless”

The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (6) [2776]

Thus indeed Venerable Bhojanadāyaka Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Bhojanadāyaka Thera is finished.