

Legends of the Buddhist Saints

Apadānapāli

TRANSLATED BY
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Ñāṇathavika

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[431. {434.}¹ *Ñāṇathavika*²]

I saw the Ultimate Biped,
shining like a dinner-plate tree,³
blazing forth like a tree of lamps,
glittering as though [made of] gold. (1) [4664]

Putting aside [my] water-pot,⁴
[my] robes of bark and [my] ewer,⁵
placing deer-hide on one shoulder,
I [then] praised [him,] the Best Buddha: (2) [4665]

“Great Sage, shedding⁶ the knowledge-light,⁷
which dispels confusion-darkness
[produced by] the delusion-web,
you’re the One who has Crossed Over. (3) [4666]

O Unexcelled One,⁸ you lift up
this world in its entirety;⁹
there is not in its whole extent¹⁰
a simile¹¹ for your knowledge. (4) [4667]

Due to that knowledge, the Buddha¹²
is known as¹³ “the Omniscient One.”¹⁴

¹Apadāna numbers provided in {fancy brackets} correspond to the BJTS edition, which contains more individual poems than does the PTS edition dictating the main numbering of this translation.

²“Knowledge-Praiser”

³*kaṇṇikāra*, *kaṇikāra* = Sinhala *kinihiriya*, *Pterospermum acerifolium*, produces a brilliant mass of yellow flowers; Engl. a.k.a. *karnikar*, bayur tree, maple-leaf bayur, caniyar (now archaic?), dinner-plate tree; Bodhi tree of Siddhattha Buddha.

⁴*kamaṇḍaluṇ*, a long-spouted jar for carrying water used by non-Buddhist ascetics

⁵*kuṇḍikaṇ*, also a pot used for water, sometimes synonymous with a *kamaṇḍalu* but here distinguished as a separate type.

⁶*dassayitvā*, lit., “having shown” “having displayed” “having diffused”

⁷reading *ñāṇālokaṃ* with BJTS for PTS *ñāṇalokaṇ* (“the world of knowledge”)

⁸reading *anuttara* (voc.) with BJTS for PTS *anuttaraṇ* (acc.). The BJTS reading has the adjective modify “you” (Buddha); the PTS reading has it modify “world”

⁹*sabbāvantāṇ*, fr. *sabbāvant*, “all, entire;” BJTS gloss *siyalu sattvayan sahita* (“with all its creatures”)

¹⁰*yāvatā ccha gato gati*, lit., “as far as going goes,” BJTS Sinh. gloss *yāmtāk da ētāk* (“however far, to that extent”)

¹¹*upamā n’atthi*, “analogy” “metaphor” “likeness”

¹²reading *buddho* with BJTS for PTS *bhotvā* (= *hutvā* ?)

¹³*pavuccchati*, lit., “is called” “is said to be” “is pronounced”

¹⁴*sabbaññū ti*

Great Hero, I'm worshipping him,
the Unobstructed,¹⁵ All-Knower."¹⁶ (5) [4668]

In the hundred thousand aeons
since I praised the Best of Buddhas,
I've come to know no bad rebirth:
that's the fruit of praising knowledge. (6) [4669]

My defilements are [now] burnt up;
all [new] existence is destroyed.
Like elephants with broken chains,
I am living without constraint. (7) [4670]

Being in Best Buddha's presence
was a very good thing for me.
The three knowledges are attained;
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (8) [4671]

The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (9) [4672]

Thus indeed Venerable Ñāṇathavika Thera spoke these verses.
The legend of Ñāṇathavika Thera is finished.

¹⁵reading *anāvaram* with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS *anāsavaṇ* ("Undeified")

¹⁶*sabbaññutaṇ*