

Legends of the Buddhist Saints

Apadānapāli

TRANSLATED BY
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Nimittavyākaraṇiya

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[467. {470.}¹ Nimittavyākaraṇiya²]

Plunged into the Himalayas,
I'm reciting mantras back the,
[and] fifty-four thousand students
attended on me [in that place]. (1) [4922]

They all learned by heart,³ true knowers,⁴
were masters of Vedic science;⁵
having come of their own accord,⁶
they dwelt in the Himalayas. (2) [4923]

The Son of a God, Greatly Famed,
falling from Tusitā [heaven],⁷
was reborn in a mother's womb,
attentive [and] remembering. (3) [4924]

When the Buddha⁸ was being born,
the ten-thousand world-system quaked,
[and] those who were blind obtained⁹ eyes,¹⁰
when the Leader was being born. (4) [4925]

This entire [great bountiful]¹¹ earth
quaked in every manner.¹²

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"Explanation of the Signs-er" or "Explanation of Omens-er"

³*adhītā* fr. *adhīyati*

⁴*vedagū*, i.e., those who have the higher or highest knowledges (*veda*) as opposed to (acc. to RD) those who are masters of "the Vedas". The protagonist, in this case, is both.

⁵*chalaṅgaṇ*, lit., "the six branches." RD: "the set of six Vedāṅgas, disciplines of Vedic science, viz. 1. kappa, 2. vyākaraṇā, 3. nirutti, 4. sikkhā, 5. chando (vicchiti), 6. joti-sattha (thus enumd at VvA 265; at PvA 97 in sequence 4, 1, 3, 2, 6, 5): D iii.269; Vv 6316; Pv ii.613; Miln 178, 236." BJTS understand this as an adjective modifying "[reading] marks," i.e., "the six branches of the science (*śāstraya*) of marks," but given the use of the term to refer to the six branches of Vedic science above ([3605] = Sela (#389 {392})), v. 24,

⁶*sakavijjāh'*

⁷lit., "body," *kāyā*, i.e., the body he was born in and bore in Tusitā heaven, a "happy body"

⁸lit., "the Sambuddha"

⁹*alatthiṃsu*, PTS alt. *aladdhiṃsu*, BJTS *alabhiṃsu* all to *labhati*

¹⁰or "vision," *cchakkhuṇ*

¹¹the lit. meaning of the term used here for "earth," *vasudhā*

¹²reading *sabbākāraṇ* with BJTS (and PTS alt as *sabbakāraṇ*, sic) for PTS *chabbikāraṇ*, ("six circumstances")

Having heard the sound of shouting,
the populace was frightened [then]. (5) [4926]

All the people came together,
and they came into my presence.
“The [great bountiful] earth has quaked,
what will this be the result of?” (6) [4927]

I answered them, “Don’t be frightened;
there is nothing for you to fear.
Let all of you be confident;
this omen portends happiness. (7) [4928]

[This great bountiful] earth quakes through
contact¹³ with [one of] eight causes.
Likewise [this] sign is [also] seen:
there’s a huge effulgence [of light]. (8) [4929]

Without a doubt a Best Buddha,
an Eyeful One, will [soon] be born!“
Having [thus] informed the people,
I spoke about the five precepts.¹⁴ (9) [4930]

Hearing of the five precepts,¹⁵ and
a Buddha’s birth, hard to obtain,
happy [and] full of excitement,¹⁶
their hair stood on end in delight.¹⁷ (10) [4931]

In the ninety-two aeons since
I explained the signs [at that time],
I’ve come to know no bad rebirth:
that is the fruit of explaining. (11) [4932]

My defilements are [now] burnt up;
all [new] existence is destroyed.
Like elephants with broken chains,
I am living without constraint. (12) [4933]

¹³PTS *samphassa*, BJTS *samphussa*, “touching on”

¹⁴*pañcchasilē*: to practice restraint from taking life, taking what is not given, sexual misconduct, false speech and becoming careless through the use of alcohol.

¹⁵*pañcchasilāni*

¹⁶*ubbegajātā sumanā*, lit., “excitement-born [and] good-minded”

¹⁷*tuṭṭhahaṭṭhā āsiṇsu te*, lit., “they were all horripilating with delight”

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! (13) [4934]

The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (14) [4935]

Thus indeed Venerable Nimittavyākaraṇiya Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Nimittavyākaraṇiya Thera is finished.

The Summary:

Sālakusumiya Thera,¹⁸
Pūjā and Nibbāpaka [too],
Setuda and Tālavanṭī,
Avaṇṭa,¹⁹ Labuja-ppada,
Pilakkha²⁰ and Paṭibhāṇī,
brahmin Veyyakaraṇaka:
exactly two hundred verses
are counted [here] by those who know.

The Sālakusumiya Chapter, the Forty-Seventh

¹⁸reading *sālakusumiya thero* with BJTS; PTS gives *Sālapupphī ccha yo thero*

¹⁹PTS reads *Avaṇṭa*

²⁰PTS reads *Pilakkhu*