

Legends of the Buddhist Saints

Apadānapāli

TRANSLATED BY
JONATHAN S. WALTERS,
WHITMAN COLLEGE, 2017

Taraṇiya

Jonathan S. Walters

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[485. {488.}¹ Tarāṇiya²]

Atthadassi, the Blessed One,
the Self-Become One, World-Leader,
the Thus-Gone-One then came up to
the banks of river Vinatā.³ (1) [5177]

A water-dwelling⁴ tortoise then,
[I had] come out from the water.
I went up to the World-Leader,
the Buddha; he desired to cross. (2) [5178]

“Let the Buddha climb onto me,
O Atthadassi, O Great Sage;
I will carry you across; you
are the Ender of Suffering.” (3) [5179]

Discerning what I was thinking,
Atthadassi, the Greatly Famed,
after climbing onto my back,
stood [there], the Leader of the World. (4) [5180]

As far back as I remember,⁵
ever since I reached discretion,⁶
I have not had such happiness
as when his soles [then] touched⁷ [my back]. (5) [5181]

After crossing, the Sambuddha,
Atthadassi, the Greatly Famed,
remaining on the river bank,
spoke these verses [about me then]: (6) [5182]

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“Ferryman”. Cf. #204, #270, #280 for parallel apadānas of monks with this name.

³PTS reads CChinatā. BJTS reads Vinakā°, PTS alt. Vinatā is the spelling preferred by DPPN (see II:883), and used without divergence between PTS and BJTS in #380 {383}, v. 1 = [3292]; cf. also #511 {514} v. 1 = [5473], below.. Malalasekera says it was presumably in the Himalayas.

⁴kacchchapo vārigoccharo

⁵yato sarāmi attānaṃ, lit., “starting from when I remember myself”

⁶or “since I reached puberty,” yato patto ‘smi viññuta, lit., “starting from when I reached puberty;”

⁷reading phuṭṭhe pādātale yathā with BJTS for PTS yathā pādātale muni

“Just as I ferry folks across
the stream of doubt which is the mind,
this turtle king, full of merit,
ferries me across [the river]. (7) [5183]

Through this Buddha-ferrying and
practice of loving-heartedness,
for eighteen hundred aeons he
will delight in the world of gods. (8) [5184]

Coming [back] here from the gods’ world,
incited by [his] wholesome roots,
sitting down on a single seat,
he’ll cross over the stream of doubt. (9) [5185]

As with a seed which is planted,
in a field which is bountiful:⁸
when it rains,⁹ with proper support,¹⁰
fruit pleases the cultivator;
so too [within] this Buddha-field,
preached by the Sammāsambuddha:
when it rains,¹¹ with proper support,
the fruit will be pleasing to me.” (10-11) [5186-5187]

I am one bent on exertion,
calmed,¹² devoid of grounds for rebirth,¹³
knowing well all the defilements,
I am [now] living, undefiled. (12) [5188]

In the eighteen hundred aeons
since I did that karma back then,

⁸*bhaddake*, or “lucky” “fortunate” etc

⁹BJS *pavacchante* (cf. *pavecchante*, the reading in [5004] below, note *pavacchante* as PTS alt. there [v, 5 of #499, Ekapattadāyaka]; RD = “give, bestow,” PSI “[rainwater] falls down”) for PTS *pavassante*, more straightforwardly “when raining”

¹⁰*sammādhāre* (loc. abs. construction)

¹¹here PTS also reads *pavecchante*, which may exploit the more literal meaning of that term (acc. to RD), give, bestow; “when proper support is provided”. However, in the parallel verses below (5-6 of #499, Ekapattadāyaka, PTS reads *pavassante*). “Raining” is a frequent metaphor for *Dhamma*-preaching, and it would be possible to construe the second *pāda* that way, “when it rains the preaching of the Sammāsambuddha, with proper support...”

¹²*upasanto*

¹³*nirūpadhi*

I've come to know no bad rebirth:
that is the fruit of ferrying. (13) [5189]

My defilements are [now] burnt up;
all [new] existence is destroyed.
Like elephants with broken chains,
I am living without constraint. (14) [5190]

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! (15) [5191]

The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (16) [5192]

Thus indeed Venerable Taraṇiya Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Taraṇiya Thera is finished.