

Legends of the Buddhist Saints

Apadānapāli

TRANSLATED BY
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Pañcadīpikā

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[9. Pañcchadīpikā¹]

In the city, Haṃsavatī,
I was a wanderer back then.
From hermitage to hermitage,
I wandered desiring the good.² (1) [91]

One day when the moon was waning,³
I saw the supreme Bodhi [Tree].
Bringing pleasure to [my] heart there,
I sat down at that Bodhi's roots. (2) [92]

Standing with a heart of reverence,
hands pressed together on [my] head,
knowing mental happiness [there,]
I then reflected in this way: (3) [93]

“If [he] has limitless virtue,
is unique, without a rival,
let Buddha show me a marvel;
let him make this Bodhi [Tree] shine.” (4) [94]

When I made that aspiration,
the Bodhi Tree did then blaze up.
It shined forth in all directions,
displaying⁴ every good color.⁵ (5) [95]

Seven nights and days I sat there,
at the roots of that Bodhi [Tree],
[and] when the seventh day arrived,
I made an offering⁶ of lamps. (6) [96]

Setting them around my seat [there,]
I [proceeded to] light five lamps.
[And] then my lamps [all remained] lit,
until the sun did rise [again]. (7) [97]

¹“Five-Lamp-er”

²lit., “for the sake of wholesome [karma].”

³*kālapakkhamhi divase*, lit., “on a day in the waning-moon [half of the month],” perhaps to be taken as the moonless fortnight (Sinhala *māse poya*) or the night of the new moon (Sinhala *amāvaka poya*).

⁴lit., “it was”.

⁵or “all the color of gold” (*sabbasovaṇṇayā*).

⁶*pūjā*.

Due to that karma done very well,
with intention and [firm] resolve,
discarding [my] human body,
I went to Tāvatiṃsa [then]. (8) [98]

There my well-made divine mansion
was known as “Pañcchadīpī”⁷ then.
It was a hundred leagues in height,
[and] sixty leagues in width back then.⁸ (9) [99]

Uncountable numbers of lamps
are burning in my surroundings.
The divine world is [then] lit up
with lamp-light, up to its edges.⁹ (10) [100]

If when standing looking eastward,
I should desire to see [something],
above, below, also across,
I see everything with [my] eyes. (11) [101]

As far as I should wish to see,¹⁰
things well done and things not well done,¹¹
there’s no obstruction [to my sight]
in the trees and the mountains there. (12) [102]

I was fixed in the chief queen’s place
of eighty kings among the gods.
I was fixed in the chief queen’s place
of one hundred wheel-turning kings. (13) [103]

In whichever womb I’m reborn,
[whether] it’s human or divine,
in my surroundings, a [whole] lakh
of lamps are burning [there] for me. (14) [104]

Fallen from the world of the gods,
being born in a mother’s womb,

⁷“Five Lamps”

⁸BJTS reads “sixty leagues in height” and “thirty leagues in width”. In the parallel text #15, below, this is the reading of both PTS and BJTS, but here PTS gives “a hundred” and “sixty” so I have retained that difference in the translation.

⁹lit., “as far as [its extent]”.

¹⁰reading *daṭṭhum* (BJTS, PTS alt) for *dasuṇ* (PTS). PTS reads *daṭṭhuṇ* in the parallel text (#15), below.

¹¹BJTS reads “good rebirths and bad rebirths”.

while I was in that mother's womb,
my eyes were open all the time.¹² (15) [105]

Due to my having good karma,¹³
an [entire] hundred thousand lamps
are lit in the lying-in room:
that's the fruit of [giving] five lamps. (16) [106]

When my final rebirth occurred,
I turned [my] mind away [from lust].
I attained the unaging [and]
undying cool state, nirvana. (17) [107]

[When] I was [but] seven years old,
I attained [my] arahantship.
Discerning [my] virtue, Buddha
Gotama ordained [me right then]. (18) [108]

Meditating on a platform,¹⁴
beneath a tree, in palaces,
in caves or empty buildings [then]
five lamps are burning [there] for me. (19) [109]

My divine eye is purified;
I am skilled in concentration.
I excel in special knowledges:
that's the fruit of [giving] five lamps. (20) [110]

Every achievement is achieved;
[my] duty's done, [I'm] undefiled.
With five lamps I'm worshipping [your]
feet, Great Hero, o Eyeful One. (21) [111]

In the hundred thousand aeons
since I gave [him] those lamps back then,
I've come to know no bad rebirth:
that's the fruit of [giving] five lamps. (22) [112]

My defilements are [now] burnt up;
all [new] existence is destroyed.

¹²lit., "my eyes are not closing"

¹³lit., "because of [my] being endowed with meritorious karma".

¹⁴or "pavilion"

Like elephants with broken chains,
I am living without constraint. (23) [113]

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! (24) [114]

The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (25) [115]

Thus indeed Bhikkhunī Pañcchadīpikā spoke these verses.

The legend of Pañcchadīpikā Therī is finished.