

Legends of the Buddhist Saints

Apadānapāli

TRANSLATED BY
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Pañcadīpikā

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[15. Pañcchadīpikā¹]

In the city, Haṃsavatī,
I was a wanderer back then.
From ashram to monastery,
I wandered desiring the good. (1) [190]

One day when the moon was waning,
I saw the supreme Bodhi [Tree].
Bringing pleasure to [my] heart there,
I sat down at that Bodhi's roots. (2) [191]

Standing, with a heart of reverence,
hands pressed together on [my] head,
knowing mental happiness [there,]
I then reflected in this way: (3) [192]

"If [he] has limitless virtue,
is unique, without a rival,
let Buddha show me a marvel;
let him make this Bodhi [Tree] shine." (4) [193]

When I made that aspiration,
the Bodhi Tree did then blaze up.
It shined forth in all directions,
displaying² every good color. (5) [194]

Seven nights and days I sat there,
at the roots of that Bodhi [Tree],
[and] when the seventh day arrived,
I made an offering of lamps. (6) [195]

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) [196]

Due to that karma done very well,
with intention and [firm] resolve,

¹"Five-Lamp-er." With some very minor changes, this is identical to *Therī-apadāna* #9, above, ascribed to a nun of the same name. I have not repeated all the footnotes here, but have altered the translation slightly to indicate the minor differences between the two texts, and have retained footnotes indicating differences in the BJTS version, as appropriate.

²lit., "it was".

discarding [my] human body,
I went to Tāvatiṃsa [then]. (8) [197]

There my well-made divine mansion
was known as “Pañcchadīpī”³ then.
It was [full] sixty leagues in height,
[and] thirty leagues in width back then. (9) [198]

Uncountable numbers of lamps
are burning in my surroundings.
The divine world is [then] lit up
with lamp-light, up to its edges.⁴ (10) [199]

If when standing looking eastward,
I should desire to see [something],
above, below, also across,
I see everything with [my] eyes. (11) [200]

As far as I should wish to see,
things well done and things not well done,⁵
there’s no obstruction [to my sight]
in the trees and the mountains there. (12) [201]

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) [202]

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) [203]

Fallen from the world of the gods,
I was born in a mother’s womb.
While I was in that mother’s womb
my eyes were open all the time. (15) [204]

Due to my having good karma,
an [entire] hundred thousand lamps

³“Five Lamps”

⁴lit., “as far as [its extent]”.

⁵BJTS reads “good rebirths and bad rebirths”.

are lit in the lying-in room:⁶
that's the fruit of [giving] five lamps. (16) [205]

When my final rebirth occurred,
I turned [my] mind away [from lust].
I attained the unaging [and]
undying cool state, nirvana. (17) [206]

[When] I was [but] seven years old,
I attained [my] arahantship.
The Buddha ordained [me right then]:
that's the fruit of [giving] five lamps. (18) [207]

Meditating on a platform,⁷
beneath a tree, in empty spots,⁸
a lamp is always burning there:
that's the fruit of [giving] five lamps. (19) [208]

My "divine eye" is purified;
I am skilled in concentration.
I excel in special knowledges:
that's the fruit of [giving] five lamps. (20) [209]

Every achievement is achieved;
[my] duty's done, [I'm] undefiled.
Five Lamps is [now] worshipping [your]
feet, Great Hero, o Eyeful One. (21) [210]

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) [211]

My defilements are [now] burnt up;
all [new] existence is destroyed.
Like elephants with broken chains,
I am living without constraint. (23) [212]

Being in Best Buddha's presence
was a very good thing for me.

⁶both PTS and BJTS read *sūtikāgehe* for *sūtighare* in the parallel verse in #9, but I take the meaning to be the same so have not altered the translation.

⁷or "pavilion"

⁸lit., "in empty buildings"

The three knowledges are attained;
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (24) [213]

The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (25) [214]

Thus indeed Bhikkhunī Pañcchadīpikā spoke these verses.

The legend of Pañcchadīpikā Therī is finished.