Tha Ap 2 — The Legend of the Lonely Buddhas

English translation by Jonathan S. Walters.

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Completeness: COMPLETE. All text of this pinned standalone English article, including header, verse/reference numbering, closing lines and footer, is preserved. Tha Ap 562–563 have no Walters articles in this edition; no whole-canon claim.

Text

Therāpadāna

The Legend of the Lonely Buddhas

Now listen to the legend of the Lonely Buddhas:

Walt 82 The Sage of Vedeha, his body bent, asked

the Thus-Gone-One dwelling in Jetavana,

“Indeed there are those called the Lonely Buddhas;

through what causes do they become so, Wise One?” Verse 1

Walt 83 Then spoke the Omniscient, Outstanding, Great Sage,

to lucky Ānanda with his honeyed voice,

“Who performed service among former Buddhas,

but didn’t get freed in their dispensations, Verse 2

Walt 84 because that is the means to awaken, wise,

they with sharp knowing, through knowledge and power,

because of their wishes and also great strength,

reach the Awakening of Lonely Buddhas. Verse 3

Walt 85 In every world, with the exception of me,
there is no equal for the Lonely Buddhas.
I will describe a piece of the excellent
character of those Buddhas, the Great Sages.” Verse 4

Walt 86 All of you, with well-pleased minds, aspiring for
the unsurpassed medicine, hear, by yourselves,
the excellent sayings, which are short and sweet,
of those Great Sages who were Lonely Buddhas, Verse 5

Walt 87 which are explanations of generations
of Lonely Buddhas who gathered together,
and a story of dispassion for danger,
and likewise how they achieved Awakening. Verse 6

Walt 88 With awareness detached from passionate things,
mind not delighting in delights in the world,
abandoning obstacles, throbbing conquered,
thereby indeed they achieved Awakening. Verse 7

Walt 89 Putting away the stick among all beings,
not causing harm to a single one of them,
with a loving mind, friendly, compassionate,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 8

Walt 90 Putting away the stick among all beings,
not causing harm to a single one of them,
not wishing for sons, let alone companions,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 9

Walt 91 Affections arise for one with connections;
this dis-ease proceeds in line with affections.
Seeing the danger that’s born of affections,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 10

Walt 92 Feeling compassion for friends and companions,
one puts off the goal, mind tied to their problems;
seeing that fearfulness in intimacy,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 11

Walt 93 One who is attentive to sons and to wives
is entangled like a large bamboo thicket.
Not stuck to others, like a new bamboo shoot,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 12

Walt 94 Just as a deer, not ensnared, goes for pasture
in the forest according to its wishes,
a knowing man looks after independence;
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 13

Walt 95 Resting, standing, going, wandering there is
some invitation amidst one’s companions.
Looking after independence most don’t want,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 14

Walt 96 Amidst one’s companions there is delighting
in sports, and there is abundant love for sons.
Though hating separation from what’s held dear,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 15

Walt 97 Global in outlook, one is causing no harm,
being happy with whatever comes one’s way;
an endurer of troubles, not stiff with fear,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 16

Walt 98 Even some who have gone forth are ill-disposed;
likewise some householders living in the house.
Being unconcerned about others’ children,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 17

Walt 99 Shedding the attributes of life in the house
like an ebony tree whose leaves have fallen,
the hero severs the ties to household life;
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 18

Walt 100 If one should obtain a clever companion,
a co-wanderer who lives well and is wise,
after having overcome every trouble,
one would wander with that one, thrilled and mindful. Verse 19

Walt 101 If one should not get a clever companion,
a co-wanderer who lives well and is wise,
then like a king quitting a conquered kingdom,
one should wander alone, like tuskers in the woods. Verse 20

Walt 102 Truly we’re praising success with companions;
those who are better or equal should be served.
Not getting those, not enjoying sinful things,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 21

Walt 103 Seeing shiny bangles made out of fine gold,
which have been well-made by the son of a smith,\
banging together when two are on one arm
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 22

Walt 104 “Like that, with another, there will be for me,
meaningless chatter or ill-tempered bad speech;”
seeing that as a danger for the future,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 23

Walt 105 Sense pleasures are varied, sweet and delightful;
they churn up the mind with their varying form.
Seeing danger in the strands of sense pleasure,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 24

Walt 106 “For me this is calamity, misfortune;
a sickness, a sharp arrow, a fearsome thing.”
Seeing this fear in the strands of sense pleasure,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 25

Walt 107 Freezing cold and scorching heat, hunger and thirst,
wind and hot weather and gadflies and serpents:
having vanquished even all of those problems,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 26

Walt 108 Just as a noble elephant with a full-
grown spotted body, abandoning the herd,
might dwell in the woods, however it wishes,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 27

Walt 109 “One who is fond of company cannot touch
liberation, even temporarily.”
Heeding with care those words of the Sun’s Kinsman,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 28

Walt 110 Freed from incessant wrangling of opinions,
gaining the way, getting the path, with the thought,
“I know I am not to be led by others,”
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 29

Walt 111 Freed from greed, without deceit, and thirst-free,
lacking hypocrisy, fault- and folly-free,
becoming intention-free in the whole world,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 30

Walt 112 Avoiding, not consorting with an evil
companion, who is blind to the goal, who gets
into trouble, who intends things, is slothful,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 31

Walt 113 One should consort with someone noble, a friend,
very learned, Dhamma-bearer, skilled preacher.
Discerning one's own goals, removing all doubt,
one should wander alone, like a rhino's horn. Verse 32

Walt 114 Not embellishing, not looking after sport
nor delights, pleasures, happiness in the world;
abstaining from adornment, telling the truth,
one should wander alone, like a rhino's horn. Verse 33

Walt 115 Having given up sense pleasures completely,
including sons and wives, father and mother,
wealth and grain and also all one's relatives,
one should wander alone, like a rhino's horn. Verse 34

Walt 116 Mindful, discerning, "this is an attachment;
the happiness here is trifling, little fun;
here there is much suffering, this is a shaft,"
one should wander alone, like a rhino's horn. Verse 35

Walt 117 Having broken to bits one's own hindrances,
like a fish breaking a net in the water,
like fire that does not return to what is burnt,
one should wander alone, like a rhino's horn. Verse 36

Walt 118 With eyes cast downward, not just goofing around,
having senses guarded and mind protected,
not filled with desire, not burning as though fire,
one should wander alone, like a rhino's horn. Verse 37

Walt 119 Discarding the attributes of household life,
just like a coral tree with fallen-off leaves,
departing the house wearing the saffron robe,
one should wander alone, like a rhino's horn. Verse 38

Walt 120 Not greedy for good tastes, not wavering, not
feeding others, on unbroken begging rounds,
with a mind that’s not bound to this clan or that,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 39

Walt 121 Abandoning the five hindrances of mind,
having pushed away all of the defilements,
independent, affection and hate removed,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 40

Walt 122 Putting happiness and suffering behind,
and even in the past, mental joy and pain;
attaining equanimity, calm and pure,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 41

Walt 123 With strenuous effort to reach the best goal,
with mind unstuck and behavior attentive,
with firm exertion, having strength and power,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 42

Walt 124 Not quitting solitude or meditation,
always living among things by the Teaching,
grasping the danger within existences,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 43

Walt 125 Aspiring to destroy craving, not lazy,
not foolish, learned, possessing mindfulness,
probing the Teaching, restrained, energetic,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 44

Walt 126 Not terrified, like a lion hearing sounds;
unentangled, as is the wind in a net;
not smeared, like a pink lotus by the water,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 45

Walt 127 Having overcome, like a strong-toothed lion,
the king of beasts, wandering victorious,
one should make use of lodgings that are remote,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 46

Walt 128 Practicing love, equanimity, pity,
release, or joy for others at the right time,
being unobstructed by the entire world,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 47

Walt 129 Quitting passion and hatred and delusion,
having broken to bits one’s own hindrances,
not trembling at the moment when life’s destroyed,
one should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 48

Walt 130 They associate, they embrace with some motive;
friends without motives are hard to find these days.
Wise about self-interest, people aren’t pure.
One should wander alone, like a rhino’s horn. Verse 49

Walt 131 With Pure Morals and With Very Pure Wisdom,
Attentive, Applying Selves to Mindfulness,
Insightful, Seeing the Teaching’s Distinction,
Knowing the Aspects of Path and of Wisdom, Verse 50

Walt 132 in a Victor’s dispensation practicing
merit, aspiration and thus gaining signs,
Wise Ones who don’t go on to have followers
become Lonely Victors, those Self-Become Ones. Verse 51

Walt 133 With Vast Dhamma, and Many Dhamma-Bodies,
Mind-Lords, Crossing the Flood of All Suffering,
With Thrilled Minds, Seers of the Ultimate Goal,
Analogues of Lions, Like a Rhino’s Horn, Verse 52

Walt 134 With Tranquil Senses, With Tranquil Minds, Composed,
Acting Mindfully for neighboring beings,
Lamps shining the light of ultimate truth here,
these Lonely Buddhas are constantly honored. Verse 53

Walt 135 All Obstacles Abandoned, Lords of People,
Lamps of the World, Shedding Light Like Heaps of Gold,
Free of Doubt and Good for the World to Look At,
these Lonely Buddhas are constantly honored. Verse 54

Walt 136 The clever sayings of the Lonely Buddhas
are circulating in the world with its gods.
Having heard, those who don't act that way are fools;
they spin in suffering again and again. Verse 55

Walt 137 The clever sayings of the Lonely Buddhas
are as sweet as if they were flowing honey.
Having heard, those who practice accordingly
become seers of the Four Truths, very wise. Verse 56

Walt 138 These lofty verses spoken by those Victors,
Lonely Buddhas, gone forth into homelessness,
were made known, for apprehending the Teaching,
by the Śākyan Lion, the Ultimate Man. Verse 57

Walt 139 With pity for the world, these transformations
of those Self-Become Ones, the Lonely Buddhas,
were made known by him, the Self-Become Lion,
for increasing emotion and connection. Verse 58

The Legend of the Lonely Buddhas is finished.

Translated by Jonathan S. Walters.

Whitman College, 2017

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