Tha Ap 23 — 21. Subhūti

English translation by Jonathan S. Walters.

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Changes: Presentation only: original HTML markup reflowed into plain text; wording, numbering and source repetitions retained. No repetitions expanded.

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 Legends of the Theras

Subhūti Chapter, the Third

21. Subhūti

Walt 813 Close to the Himalayan range

on the mountain called Nisabha

my ashram is very well made,

a well-constructed hall of leaves. Verse 1

Walt 814 Famed ascetic with matted hair,

Kosiya was my name back then.

Solitary, with no second,

I did live on Nisabha then. Verse 2

Walt 815 At that time I was not eating

fruits and roots and freshly-picked leaves.

I was always subsisting on

the stuff that fell into my bowl. Verse 3

Walt 816 I disturbed no mode of living,
giving up my own life itself.
My own heart was satisfied as
I rejected all harmful ways. Verse 4

Walt 817 Whenever there arose in me
a mind heated up by passion,
reflecting on it by myself,
remaining calm I would tame it: Verse 5

Walt 818 “You’re aroused in what’s arousing,
you are defiled in what defiles,
you fool yourself in foolish things
so you should leave the forest now. Verse 6

Walt 819 This is the habitation of
the pure and stainless ascetics.
Do not sully that purity;
you ought to leave the forest now. Verse 7

Walt 820 Having become a homeless one,
you always get what is fitting.
Don’t you transgress against them both;
you ought to leave the forest now. Verse 8

Walt 821 The wood left from a funeral pyre
is not made use of anywhere:
in the village or the jungle
it’s not approved as firewood. Verse 9

Walt 822 You are just like that firebrand,
neither layman nor yet wise man.
Today you’ve departed from both

so you should leave the forest now. Verse 10

Walt 823 What then would that produce for you?
To what does this give birth for you?
Giving up my practice of faith
results in so much idleness. Verse 11

Walt 824 The wise are going to despise you
as a householder dislikes dirt.
Sages, having rooted you out
will always cast blame upon you. Verse 12

Walt 825 The wise ones will speak out against
you leaving the dispensation.
You'll receive no co-residence;
what are you going to live on then? Verse 13

Walt 826 A strong elephant will approach
an elephant who's thrice-rutting,
a tusker sixty years of age
and drive him away from the herd. Verse 14

Walt 827 Living in exile from the herd
he's not happy nor is he pleased.
Suffering with his mind depressed,
full of remorse, he will tremble. Verse 15

Walt 828 Just like that the cruel ascetics
are surely going to throw you out.
Being exiled by them you won't
feel happiness or pleasure then. Verse 16

Walt 829 If by day or by night you are
pierced through with the arrow of grief,
then you will burn with pain just like

the tusker exiled from the herd. Verse 17

Walt 830 Just as a pretty iron tool
is not taken out anywhere,
so you, without moral restraint,
won't be invited anywhere. Verse 18

Walt 831 Even if you're dwelling at home
what are you going to live on there?
You do not have a heap of wealth
from your mother and your father. Verse 19

Walt 832 Having done hard work by oneself
much sweat flows out of the body.
Thus earning a living at home,
you won't think it so excellent." Verse 20

Walt 833 In that way I carried on there
whenever my mind was defiled.
Making varied Dhamma-speeches
I warded off my evil heart. Verse 21

Walt 834 While I was living in this way
dwelling so very thoughtfully
fully thirty thousand years passed
in my forest hermitage there. Verse 22

Walt 835 Seeing my love of thoughtfulness
in seeking for the supreme goal,
Padumuttara the Buddha
then came to the place where I was. Verse 23

Walt 836 The Bright Hue of Wild Mangosteen,
Incomparable, Unmeasurable,
the Buddha, Unrivaled in Form,

walked back and forth across the sky. Verse 24

Walt 837 Like a regal sal tree in bloom,
like lightening inside of a cloud,
the Buddha, Peerless in Knowledge,
walked back and forth across the sky. Verse 25

Walt 838 Not frightened, like the king of beasts;
prideful like an elephant-king;
playful as a tiger-king he
walked back and forth across the sky. Verse 26

Walt 839 Shining like a coin made of gold
or even like glowing embers,
like a wish-fulfilling gem he
walked back and forth across the sky. Verse 27

Walt 840 Like Mount Kailās in purity,
like the moon on the fifteenth day,
like the blazing midday sun he
walked back and forth across the sky. Verse 28

Walt 841 Seeing him walk across the sky
at that time I thought in this way:
“Is this creature some sort of god?
If not, is this one just a man? Verse 29

Walt 842 I’ve never heard of nor have seen
a man as great as this one seems.
Surely he knows secret mantras;
I think this must be the Teacher.” Verse 30

Walt 843 Having thought about it like that
I brought pleasure to my own heart.
And I then gathered together

various flowers and perfumes. Verse 31

Walt 844 Spreading out a seat of flowers
I then spoke these words to Buddha,
Good-Hearted One, the Mind's Delight,
the Charioteer of Men, the Top: Verse 32

Walt 845 "O Hero, I've spread out this seat
which is a fitting one for you.
Bringing laughter to my own heart
please sit on this seat of flowers." Verse 33

Walt 846 The Blessed One did sit down there
unfrightened like a lion-king,
and the Buddha remained a week
on that excellent floral seat. Verse 34

Walt 847 Worshipping him I stood right there
for all those seven nights and days.
Rising up from meditation
the Teacher, Best One in the World, Verse 35

Walt 848 declaring my karmic result
then did speak these words to me there:
"Practice Buddha-recollection,
it's the supreme meditation. Verse 36

Walt 849 Cultivating this mindfulness
will be fulfilling mentally.
For thirty thousand aeons you
will delight in the world of gods. Verse 37

Walt 850 Eighty times as the king of gods
you will exercise divine rule.
A thousand times you're going to be

wheel-turning king of a country. Verse 38

Walt 851 And you will have much local rule
innumerable by counting.
You'll experience all of that:
fruit of Buddha-recollection. Verse 39

Walt 852 Transmigrating from birth to birth
you will receive many riches.
In wealth never deficiency:
fruit of Buddha-recollection. Verse 40

Walt 853 In one hundred thousand aeons,
arising in Okkāka's clan,
the one whose name is Gotama
will be the Teacher in the world. Verse 41

Walt 854 Discarding eight hundred million
and many slaves and workers too,
you'll renounce in the great Teaching
of Gotama the Blessed One. Verse 42

Walt 855 Satisfying the Sambuddha,
Gotama, the Bull of Śākyas,
you will be known as Subhūti,
a follower of the Teacher. Verse 43

Walt 856 Seated in the monks' assembly
he'll fix you in two foremost spots:
in the group of gift-receivers,
and also of forest-dwellers." Verse 44

Walt 857 Having said this, the Sambuddha
who was named for the lotus flower,
the Hero flew into the sky

just like a swan-king in the air. Verse 45

Walt 858 Thus instructed by the World-Chief
and having praised the Thus-Gone-One,
satisfied I always practiced
supreme Buddha-recollection. Verse 46

Walt 859 Due to that karma done very well
with intention and firm resolve,
discarding my human body
I went to Tāvatiṁsa then. Verse 47

Walt 860 Eighty times as the king of gods
I did exercise divine rule,
and too a thousand times I was
a wheel-turning monarch then. Verse 48

Walt 861 And I did have much local rule
innumerable by counting.
I experienced supreme success:
fruit of Buddha-recollection. Verse 49

Walt 862 Transmigrating from birth to birth
I did receive many riches.
In wealth never deficiency:
fruit of Buddha-recollection. Verse 50

Walt 863 In the hundred thousand aeons
since I performed that good karma,
I've come to know no bad rebirth;
fruit of Buddha-recollection. Verse 51

Walt 864 The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,

I have done what the Buddha taught! Verse 52

Thus indeed Venerable Subhūti Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Subhūti Thera is finished.

Translated by Jonathan S. Walters.

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