Tha Ap 24 — 22. Upavāna

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 Legends of the Theras

22. Upavāna

Walt 865 The Victor, Padumuttara,

Who Had Crossed Over Everything,

the Sambuddha went fully out

like a fire finished burning. Verse 1

Walt 866 Many people came together

venerating the Thus-Gone-One.

They made a well-made pyre for him

then lifted his body on it. Verse 2

Walt 867 Doing the needful with the corpse

they gathered all the relics there.

Then all the people, with their kings,

constructed the Buddha’s stupa. Verse 3

Walt 868 The first casket was made of gold,
the second was made of gemstone.
The third was made out of silver,
the fourth was made of crystal. Verse 4

Walt 869 The fifth stupa which was built there
was made of rubies fixed in glass.
The sixth was made of all the gems
with a large cat's-eye on the top. Verse 5

Walt 870 There was a railing made of gold;
its legs were made out of gemstones.
That stupa, all encased in gold,
rose up in height a full league tall. Verse 6

Walt 871 The gods then got together there
and counseled one another thus:
"we shall construct a stupa too
for the World-Chief, the Neutral One. Verse 7

Walt 872 But there are no single relics;
the body is in one lump now.
We'll enlarge this very stupa
of the Buddha, using fine gold." Verse 8

Walt 873 The gods, using the seven gems,
raised it another league taller.
That stupa, which was two leagues tall,
dispelled the darkness with its shine. Verse 9

Walt 874 The snake-gods then assembled there
and counseled one another thus:
"The people and also the gods
constructed the Buddha's stupa. Verse 10

Walt 875 Do not let us be negligent;
heedful, and with the lesser gods,
we too shall enlarge this stupa
of the World-Chief, the Neutral One.” Verse 11

Walt 876 Gathering themselves together
they covered the Buddha’s stupa
with the two types of blue sapphire
and with the jotirasa gem. Verse 12

Walt 877 At that point Buddha’s cetiya
was made entirely of gems.
In height it welled up three leagues tall
lighting up the whole universe. Verse 13

Walt 878 Then garuḷas got together
and counseled one another thus:
“The men and gods and snake-gods too
constructed the Buddha’s stupa. Verse 14

Walt 879 Do not let us be negligent;
heedful, and with the lesser gods,
we too shall enlarge this stupa
of the World-Chief, the Neutral One.” Verse 15

Walt 880 That stupa made only of gems
they gilded on the top right then.
They too increased by one whole league
the height of the Buddha’s stupa. Verse 16

Walt 881 Then rising up four leagues in height
that Buddha-stupa shined so bright.
It illumined all directions
just like the risen raying sun. Verse 17

Walt 882 Then kumbhaṇḍas got together
and counseled one another thus:
“The people and also the gods
the snake-gods and the garuḷas

Walt 883 themselves built a superb stupa
for him, the Best of the Buddhas.
Do not let us be negligent;
heedful, and with the lesser gods,

Walt 884 we too shall enlarge this stupa
of the World-Chief, the Neutral One.
We’ll cover the entire extent
of the Buddha’s stupa with gems.”

Walt 885 They too increased by one whole league
the height of the Buddha’s stupa.
Now rising up five leagues in height
that Buddha-stupa shined forth bright.

Walt 886 Then spirits got together there
and counseled one another thus:
“The people, gods, and snake-gods too,
the garūḷas and kumbhaṇḍas Verse 18

Walt 887 themselves built a superb stupa
for the World-Chief, the Neutral One.
Do not let us be negligent;
heedful, and with the lesser gods, Verse 19

Walt 888 we too shall enlarge this stupa
of the World-Chief, the Neutral One.
We’ll cover the entire extent
of Buddha’s stupa with crystal.” Verse 20

Walt 889 They too increased by one whole league
the height of the Buddha’s stupa.
Now rising up six leagues in height
that Buddha-stupa shined forth bright. Verse 21

Walt 890 Then assembled the music-nymphs
who counseled one another thus:
“Those born of Manu, and the gods,
snake-gods, kumbhaṇḍas, guyhakas Verse 22

Walt 891 all constructed Buddha’s stupa;
we’ve done nothing in that regard.
We too shall enlarge this stupa
of the World-Chief, the Neutral One.” Verse 23

Walt 892 They constructed seven railings
and made the legs for it as well.
Then that stupa the music-nymphs
made fully encased in fine gold. Verse 24

Walt 893 Now rising seven leagues in height
that Buddha-stupa shined forth bright.
One could not tell the day from night;
there always was its strong bright light. Verse 25

Walt 894 Its brilliance actually out-shined
the moon and the sun and the stars.
By day that lamp was blazing forth
for a hundred leagues all around. Verse 26

Walt 895 At that time, whichever people
were worshipping that stupa there
did not have to climb that stupa;
they were just held up in the air. Verse 27

Walt 896 Their flags or wreaths of flowers there
were offered up into the air
by spirit Abhisammata
who had been placed there by the gods. Verse 28

Walt 897 They could not see the spirit there;
they see the wreaths just flying by.
Seeing them go by in this way,
all of them go on to good states. Verse 29

Walt 898 People with faith in Buddha's words,
and pleased in the dispensation,
wishing to see the miracle
are worshipping that stupa there. Verse 30

Walt 899 At that time I was a speaker
and I lived in Haṁsavatī.
Seeing those delighted people
this good thought then occurred to me: Verse 31

Walt 900 "He is lofty, the Blessed One,
who has a relic-womb like this;
these people are very happy
doing their rites with devotion. Verse 32

Walt 901 I too shall do a ritual
for the World-Chief, the Neutral One,
and in the future, I shall be
one of the heirs to his doctrines." Verse 33

Walt 902 I had my upper garment washed
by one whose job was washing clothes
and having stuck it on bamboo
I raised a flag up in the sky. Verse 34

Walt 903 Grabbing it, Abhisammata
raised up my flag into the sky.
Seeing it flutter in the wind,
among those folks I smiled a lot. Verse 35

Walt 904 Bringing pleasure to my mind there
I then approached a Buddhist monk.
Worshipping that monk I inquired
what that flag's result would become. Verse 36

Walt 905 He told me of religious joy,
generating great bliss for me.
"You always will experience
the fruit of your gift of that flag." Verse 37

Walt 906 He said, "The army, with four parts—
tusker, soldier, chariot, horse—
will wait on you permanently;
that is the fruit of a flag-gift. Verse 38

Walt 907 Sixty thousand instruments and
well-decorated kettle-drums
will attend you permanently;
that is the fruit of a flag-gift. Verse 39

Walt 908 And women too, all well-made-up
numbering eighty-six thousand,
with varied clothes and ornaments,
wearing earrings bearing gemstones, Verse 40

Walt 909 with long eyelashes, lovely smiles
and slim waists, pleasant to look at
will wait upon you constantly:
that is the fruit of a flag-gift. Verse 41

Walt 910 You'll delight in the world of gods
for thirty thousand aeons hence.
Eighty times as the king of gods
you will exercise divine rule. Verse 42

Walt 911 A thousand times you're going to be
a king who turns the wheel of law,
and you will have much local rule
innumerable by counting. Verse 43

Walt 912 In one hundred thousand aeons,
arising in Okkāka's clan,
the one whose name is Gotama
will be the Teacher in the world. Verse 44

Walt 913 Falling down from the world of gods,
incited by your wholesome roots,
and bound up with your good karma
you will be Brahma's kinsman then. Verse 45

Walt 914 Discarding eight hundred million
and many slaves and workers too,
you will renounce in the teaching
of Gotama the Blessed One. Verse 46

Walt 915 Satisfying the Sambuddha,
Gotama, the Bull of Śākyas,
you'll be known as Upavāna
a follower of the Teacher." Verse 47

Walt 916 Karma done a hundred thousand
aeons hence showed me its fruit here:
well-liberated, arrow-quick,
I have destroyed my defilements. Verse 48

Walt 917 When I was a wheel-turning king,

lord over the four continents,

for three leagues in all directions

flags were always seen by me then. Verse 49

Walt 918 In the hundred thousand aeons

since I did that good karma then,

I’ve come to know no bad rebirth;

that is the fruit of a flag-gift. Verse 50

Walt 919 The four analytical modes,

and these eight deliverances,

six special knowledges mastered,

I have done what the Buddha taught! Verse 51

Thus indeed Venerable Upavāna Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Upavāna Thera is finished.

Translated by Jonathan S. Walters.

Whitman College, 2017

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