Tha Ap 338 — 333. {336.} Pabhaṅkara

English translation by Jonathan S. Walters.

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Text

Therāpadāna

The Legends of the Theras

333. {336.} Pabhaṅkara

Walt 2984 In deep forest which was crowded

with wild beasts there was a stupa

of Blessed Padumuttara,

the World’s Best One, the Neutral One. Verse 1

Walt 2985 Nobody dared to travel there

to pay homage to the stupa.

The stupa was broken, in ruins,

covered in grasses, sticks and vines. Verse 2

Walt 2986 I was then a forest-worker,

as were father and grandfathers.

I saw that stupa in the woods,

broken, tangled in grass and vines. Verse 3

Walt 2987-2988 Having seen the Buddha’s stupa,
I served it with a reverent heart:
“the Best Buddha’s stupa, broken,
is abandoned in the forest.
It’s not meet, not appropriate
for one who can tell right from wrong.
But I engage in other work,
not cleaning the Buddha’s stupa.” Verse 4-5

Walt 2989 Cleaning off the grasses and sticks
and vines growing on the stupa,
after worshipping it eight times,
still bent over I then went off. Verse 6

Walt 2990 Due to that karma done very well,
with intention and firm resolve,
discarding my human body,
I went to Tāvatiṁsa then. Verse 7

Walt 2991 There my well-constructed mansion
was made of gold, brightly shining.
It rose up sixty leagues in height
and it was thirty leagues in width. Verse 8

Walt 2992 And thirty different times did I
exercise rule over the gods.
And five and twenty times was I
a wheel-turning king with great strength. Verse 9

Walt 2993 Transmigrating from birth to birth,
I’m receiving great possessions.
Possessions never lack for me:
that’s the fruit of cleaning stupas. Verse 10

Walt 2994 When I’m going in the forest,
seated on an elephant’s back,
whichever direction I go,
the forest provides me refuge. Verse 11

Walt 2995 I do not see with my two eyes
any tree-stump or thorn at all.
In accordance with my karma,
it gets removed all by itself. Verse 12

Walt 2996 I do not get the itch, ringworm,
rashes, abscesses, leprosy,
epilepsy and scabies too:
that’s the fruit of cleaning stupas. Verse 13

Walt 2997 Another miracle for me:
after I had cleaned the stupa,
I was not conscious of pimples
or spots produced on my body. Verse 14

Walt 2998 Another miracle for me:
after I had cleaned the stupa,
I transmigrate in just two states:
that of a god, or of a man. Verse 15

Walt 2999 Another miracle for me:
after I had cleaned the stupa,
every place where I am living
is gold-colored and very bright. Verse 16

Walt 3000 Another miracle for me:
after I had cleaned the stupa,
displeasing things are avoided,
and things which are pleasing appear. Verse 17

Walt 3001 Another miracle for me:

after I had cleaned the stupa,

my mind is always very pure,

one-pointed, very attentive. Verse 18

Walt 3002 Another miracle for me:

after I had cleaned the stupa,

seated in a single sitting,

I achieved the arahant-state. Verse 19

Walt 3003 In the hundred thousand aeons

since I did that good karma then,

I've come to know no bad rebirth:

that's the fruit of cleaning stupas. Verse 20

Walt 3004 The four analytical modes,

and these eight deliverances,

six special knowledges mastered,

I have done what the Buddha taught! Verse 21

Thus indeed Venerable Pabhaṅkara Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Pabhaṅkara Thera is finished.

Translated by Jonathan S. Walters.

Whitman College, 2017

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