Tha Ap 5 — 3. Mahākassapa

English translation by Jonathan S. Walters.

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Text

Therāpadāna

The Legends of the Theras

3. Mahākassapa

Walt 399 Walt 400a-b When the World-Chief had passed away

the people, with exalted minds,

intoxicated with delight

did pūjā for the Neutral One,

the Teacher, who was the World’s Best,

Blessed One, Padumuttara. Verse 1

Walt 400c-d Walt 401 When their religious emotion

was born, great joy arose in me.

Gathering my family and friends

I spoke these words to all of them:

“the Great Hero has passed away;

surely we should do a pūjā!” Verse 2

Walt 402 They agreed saying, “Excellent!”
which made me smile even more.
“We’ll make a meritorious pyre
over the Buddha, the World-Chief.” Verse 3

Walt 403 We made a well-made festoon work
which was one hundred hands in height,
and we raised up into the sky
a mansion fifty hands higher. Verse 4

Walt 404 Having made that festoon work there,
decorated with rows of stripes,
bringing pleasure to my own mind
I worshipped that excellent shrine. Verse 5

Walt 405 Like a blazing column of fire,
like a regal sal tree in bloom,
like Indra’s post up in the sky
it shined in the four directions. Verse 6

Walt 406 After making my mind pleased there
and doing much that was wholesome,
recalling karma from the past
I was born with the thirty gods. Verse 7

Walt 407 I possessed a divine chariot
yoked with one thousand fine horses.
That tall residence of mine there
was seven stories tall in height. Verse 8

Walt 408 It had one thousand gabled cells;
all of them were made out of gold.
It blazed by means of its own power
lighting up every direction. Verse 9

Walt 409 There were also other doorways
all made of rubies at that time.
With their light they too illumined
the four directions entirely. Verse 10

Walt 410 Those well-constructed gabled cells
produced by my past good karma
and all the gemstone doors then shined
in ten directions on all sides. Verse 11

Walt 411 When they were thus all shining forth
there was a massive effulgence.
I surpassed all the other gods;
that is the fruit of good karma. Verse 12

Walt 412 Sixty thousand aeons ago
I was the king named Ubbiddha.
Victorious on all four sides
I took the earth as residence. Verse 13

Walt 413 In that most auspicious aeon
for fully thirty times I was
a wheel-turning king with great strength
deriving from my own karma. Verse 14

Walt 413-414 Possessor of the seven jewels
I'm lord of the four continents.
And in that place my residence
was as tall as the tree of Indra. Verse 15

Walt 414-415 It was twenty-four leagues in length,
and in width it measured twelve leagues.
My city was named Rammaka;
it had strong ramparts and gateways. Verse 16

Walt 415 It was five hundred leagues in length,
in width two hundred fifty leagues.
It was crowded with groups of men
just like the thirty-three gods' city. Verse 17

Walt 416 Like needles in a needle-case
there were twenty different bazaars
where they gather, one another;
the city was very crowded. Verse 18

Walt 417 Of such a sort was my city,
with elephants, horses, chariots
and very crowded with people:
Rammaka, excellent city. Verse 19

Walt 418 Having lived there and having left
I returned to the world of gods.
In this, my final existence,
I'm born in an accomplished clan. Verse 20

Walt 419 Born into a brahmin family
I had a massive heap of gems.
Eight hundred million worth of gold
abandoned, I went forth renouncing. Verse 21

Walt 420 My defilements are now burnt up;
all new existence is destroyed.
Like elephants with broken chains,
I am living without constraint.

Walt 421 Being in Best Buddha's presence
was a very good thing for me.
The three knowledges are attained;
I have done what the Buddha taught!

Walt 422 The four analytical modes,

and these eight deliverances,

six special knowledges mastered,

I have done what the Buddha taught! Verse 22

Thus indeed Venerable Mahākassapa Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Mahākassapa Thera is finished.

Translated by Jonathan S. Walters.

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