Tha Ap 537 — 532. {535.} Kumāra-Kassapa

English translation by Jonathan S. Walters.

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Text

Therāpadāna

The Legends of the Theras

532. {535.} Kumāra-Kassapa

Walt 5811 One hundred thousand aeons hence

the Leader arose in the world,

the Hero, Friend of Every World,

who name was Padumuttara. Verse 1

Walt 5812-5813 Being a brahmin at that time,

distinguished, a Vedic master,

wandering during siesta,

I saw the Leader of the World,

explaining the Four Noble Truths,

awakening the world with gods,

praising in the multitude the

top of those with varied discourse. Verse 2-3

Walt 5814-5816 At that time, with a gladdened heart,
inviting him, the Thus-Gone-One,
decorating a pavilion
with bolts of cloth diversely dyed,
lit up by various gemstones,
I fed him with the monks in it.
Having fed them all for a week
diverse, foremost and tasty food,
worshipping him and followers
with flowers of various hues,
falling down in front of his feet,
I aspired to attain that place. Verse 4-6

Walt 5617-5819 Then the Excellent Sage, Sole Hoard
of the Taste of Compassion, said:
“Look at that excellent brahmin,
with face and eyes like lotuses,
possessing much joy and delight,
his body hair growing upward,
his large eyes extremely mirthful,
greedy for my dispensation,
fallen down in front of my feet,
happily turned toward one purpose:
he’s wishing for that foremost place
of preachers with varied discourse. Verse 7-9

Walt 5820 In one hundred thousand aeons,
arising in Okkāka’s clan,
the one whose name is Gotama
will be the Teacher in the world. Verse 10

Walt 5821 Worthy heir to that one’s Dhamma,

Dhamma’s legitimate offspring,
named Kumāra-Kassapa, he
will be the Teacher’s follower. Verse 11

Walt 5822 Through the power of that cloth with
varied flowers and gems as well,
he will attain the foremost place
of preachers with varied discourse.” Verse 12

Walt 5823 Due to that karma done very well,
with intention and firm resolve,
discarding my human body,
I went to Tāvatiṁsa then. Verse 13

Walt 5824 Touring the space of existence
like an actor upon the stage,
the son of a deer named Sākhā,
I entered the womb of a doe. Verse 14

Walt 5825 And then while I was in the womb,
my mother’s turn to die stood nigh.
Turned out by Sākhā, my mother
went to Nigrodha for refuge. Verse 15

Walt 5826 By that deer-king Nigrodha, she
was released from her pending death.
Sacrificing his life instead,
Nigrodha then advised me thus: Verse 16

Walt 5827 “Only Nigrodha should be served;
don’t keep company with Sākhā.
Better death in Nirodha‘s care
than life in the care of Sākhā.” Verse 17

Walt 5828 Instructed by that advice of the deer-king,

my mother and I, because of his advice,
to the delightful Tusitā heaven came
as though we had gone abroad, taking our house. Verse 18-19

Walt 5829 Again, when Hero Kassapa's
dispensation had reached its goal,
ascending to a mountain-top
engaged in the Victor's teachings, Verse 20

Walt 5830 now, in Rājagaha city,
I was born in a wealthy clan.
My mother, with me in her womb,
had gone forth into homelessness. Verse 21

Walt 5831 Finding out that she was pregnant,
they approached Devadatta then.
He said, "let all of you banish
this Buddhist nun who is evil." Verse 22

Walt 5832 Now she too being shown mercy
by the Lord of Sages, Victor,
my mother's living happily
in a convent for Buddhist nuns. Verse 23

Walt 5833 Finding that out, the Kosala
earth-protector supported me,
with the care given to a prince,
and by name I was "Kassapa." Verse 24

Walt 5834-5835 Because there was "Great Kassapa,"
I was known as "Boy Kassapa."
Hearing Buddha's preaching that the
body's the same as an anthill,
because of that my mind was freed

from attachment altogether.

After taming King Pāyāsi,

I then attained that foremost place. Verse 25-26

Walt 5836 My defilements are now burnt up;

all new existence is destroyed.

Like elephants with broken chains,

I am living without constraint. Verse 27

Walt 5837 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! Verse 28

Walt 5838 The four analytical modes,

and these eight deliverances,

six special knowledges mastered,

I have done what the Buddha taught! Verse 29

Thus indeed Venerable Kumāra-Kassapa Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Kumāra-Kassapa Thera is finished.

Translated by Jonathan S. Walters.

Whitman College, 2017

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