Tha Ap 538 — 533. {536.} Bāhiya

English translation by Jonathan S. Walters.

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Text

Therāpadāna

The Legends of the Theras

533. {536.} Bāhiya

Walt 5839 One hundred thousand aeons hence

the Leader arose in the world,

the Great Light, Chief of the Three Worlds,

who name was Padumuttara. Verse 1

Walt 5840-5841 My mind thrilled, having heard the Sage,

praising the virtue of a monk

who had instant comprehension;

doing a deed for the Great Sage,

having given alms for a week

to the Sage with his students, I

saluting him, the Sambuddha,

then aspired to attain that place. Verse 2-3

Walt 5842-5845 The Buddha prophesied of me:
“All of you look at this brahmin,
fallen down in front of my feet,
broad-shouldered, contemplating me,
gold brahmin’s cord on his torso,
skin that’s white upon his body,
who has pouty, copper-red lips,
teeth that are white, sharp and even,
with the utmost strength of virtue,
his body hair growing upward,
with senses flooded by virtue,
with a face blossoming in joy,
wishing for the place of the monk
who has instant comprehension.
In the future, a Great Hero
will come to be, named Gotama. Verse 4-7

Walt 5846 Worthy heir to that one’s Dhamma,
Dhamma’s legitimate offspring,
the one whose name is Bāhiya
will be the Teacher’s follower.” Verse 8

Walt 5847 Then very happy, being roused,
for as long as I lived, doing
deeds for the Sage, fallen, I went
to heaven, as though my own home. Verse 9

Walt 5848 Born as a god or as a man,
because of the power of that
karma, transmigrating I then
enjoyed good fortune everywhere. Verse 10

Walt 5849 Again, when Hero Kassapa's
dispensation had reached its goal,
ascending to a mountain-top,
engaged in the Victor's teachings, Verse 11

Walt 5850 of pure morals, wise, doers
of the Victor's dispensation,
fallen from there, we five people,
then went to the world of the gods. Verse 12

Walt 5851 Then I was born as Bāhiya,
in Bhārukaccha, best city.
From there by boat I venture forth
on the ocean full of danger. Verse 13

Walt 5852 After going for a few days
from there, the boat was broken up;
then I fell into the ocean,
awful, fearful, sea-monster-mine. Verse 14

Walt 5853 At that time, after much struggling,
having crossed over the ocean,
disoriented, I arrived
at the good seaport Suppāra. Verse 15

Walt 5854-5855 Having dressed in robes made of bark,
I entered the village for alms.
Then a man there, delighted, said,
"This is an arahant who's come;
honoring him with food and drink,
with clothes and also with a bed,
and furthermore with medicine,
we'll be happy through that karma." Verse 16-17

Walt 5856 Receiving that, then going back,
thus honored and worshipped by them,
wrongly I gave rise to the thought
that “this one is an arahant.” Verse 18

Walt 5857 Afterward, discerning my mind,
the non-returner god reproached:
“You don’t know the path, the method;
how could you be an arahant?” Verse 19

Walt 5858 Reproached by him I was then moved;
I questioned him back in this way:
“Who, or where in the world are they,
those supreme men, the arahants?” Verse 20

Walt 5859 “Of Vast Wisdom, Greatly Very Wise, the
Victor, in Śrāvasti, in Kosala’s palace,
the Śākyas’ Son, the Arahant, Undefiled One
is preaching Dhamma for reaching arahantship.” Verse 21-22

Walt 5860 Then having heard that word of him I was well-gladdened,
very astonished like a pauper finding treasure,
mind thrilled for ultimate arahantship, and to
know the Good-Looking One, the Limitless Pasture. Verse 23-24

Walt 5861 Delighting at that time, departing for the Teacher,
always I see the Victor whose Face is Stainless.
Approaching the delightful grove named Vijita,
I questioned brahmins, “Where is the World’s Delighter?” Verse 25-26

Walt 5862 Then they replied, “the One Worshipped by Men and Gods
has entered the city wishing to eat some food;
very quickly indeed, zealous to see the Sage,
approach and worship him, the Foremost of People. Verse 27-28

Walt 5863-5864 And then, having gone speedily
to Śrāvasti, the best city,
I saw the Buddha wandering
for alms, without greed or desire,
bowl in hand, eyes undistracted,
as though dividing ambrosia,
like the abode of good fortune,
face bearing the blaze of the sun. Verse 29-30

Walt 5865 Coming together, bowing down,
I then spoke these words to him there:
“O Gotama, be the refuge
for one who’s lost on the wrong road.” Verse 31

Walt 5866 The Seventh Sage said this to me:
“I’m wandering on my alms-round
to help living beings cross; not
the time to tell you the Dhamma.” Verse 32

Walt 5867 Again and again I asked the
Buddha, being greedy for Dhamma.
He then preached the Dhamma to me,
the state that is deep and empty. Verse 33

Walt 5868 Hearing his Teaching, I attained
the destruction of the outflows,
my lifespan obliterated.
O! the Teacher’s mercifulness! Verse 34

Walt 5869 My defilements are now burnt up;
all new existence is destroyed.
Like elephants with broken chains,
I am living without constraint. Verse 35

Walt 5870 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 36

Walt 5871 The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,
I have done what the Buddha taught! Verse 37

Walt 5872 Thus prophesied the elder named
Bāhiya Dārucīriya.
He fell down on a garbage heap
when he had been gored by a cow. Verse 38

Walt 5873 Having detailed his own former
conduct, he who was very wise,
that hero fully passed away
in Śrāvasti, supreme city. Verse 39

Walt 5874-5875 Then departing from the city,
the Seventh Sage, having seen him—
the wise one who wore robes of wood,
outsider come to the outside,
now fallen onto the safe ground,
like the fallen flag of Indra,
lifespan gone, defilements gone, a
doer of the Victor’s teachings— Verse 40-41

Walt 5876 the Teacher said to followers
who delighted in the teachings:
“get, and having taken it burn,
the body of your fellow monk. Verse 42

Walt 5877 Build a stupa and worship it;

this great wise one reached nirvana,

foremost in instant comprehension,

follower who heeded my words. Verse 43

Walt 5878 One word in a verse, hearing which,

one becomes calm, is better than

even a thousand verses, if

they possess words without meaning. Verse 44

Walt 5879 Where the waters and the earth, the

fire and the wind have no footing,

there the stars are not shining, and

the sun remains invisible;

the moon does not shed light there, and

darkness is not to be found there. Verse 45,.46a-b

Walt 5880 And when one knows that place oneself,

a sage, a brahmin with wisdom,

he’s freed from form and formlessness,

from happiness and suffering.”

Thus he spoke, the Buddha, the Lord,

the Sage, Refuge of the Three Worlds. Verse 46c-d,.47

Thus indeed Venerable Bāhiya Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Bāhiya Thera is finished.

Translated by Jonathan S. Walters.

Whitman College, 2017

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