Tha Ap 540 — 535. {538.} Uruvelakassapa

English translation by Jonathan S. Walters.

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Text

Therāpadāna

The Legends of the Theras

535. {538.} Uruvelakassapa

Walt 5911 The Victor, Padumuttara,

the Sage, Knower of Every World,

the One who had Five Eyes, arose

a hundred thousand aeons hence. Verse 1

Walt 5912 The Admonisher, Instructor,

Crosser-Over of all that breathe,

Skilled at Preaching, he, the Buddha,

caused many folks to cross the flood. Verse 2

Walt 5913 Merciful, Compassionate One,

Well-Wisher of all that breathe, he

established in the five precepts

all the rivals who had arrived. Verse 3

Walt 5914 In this way he was Unconfused
and Very Well-Known by rivals,
Ornamented by arahants
who were masters and neutral ones. Verse 4

Walt 5915 The body of the Sage So Great
rose up fifty-eight cubits tall;
he was Valuable Like Gold,
Bearing the Thirty-Two Great Marks. Verse 5

Walt 5916 People’s lifespan at that time was
fully one hundred thousand years.
Remaining in the world so long,
he ferried many folks across. Verse 6

Walt 5917 I then lived in Haṁsavatī,
A brahmin held in high regard.
Approaching the Torch for the World,
I heard the preaching of Dhamma. Verse 7

Walt 5918 One of the Great Man’s followers
had an extensive retinue.
I was thrilled after hearing him
being placed in that foremost place. Verse 8

Walt 5919 Inviting him, the Great Victor,
I gave an almsgiving to him,
along with my large entourage,
including a thousand brahmins. Verse 9

Walt 5920 Giving a massive almsgiving,
having saluted the Leader,
happy, standing off at one side,
I spoke these words to him just then: Verse 10

Walt 5921 “Hero, due to my faith in you
and by virtue of serving you,
let me have a large retinue
while transmigrating here and there.” Verse 11

Walt 5922-5923 Buddha, the Cuckoo-Voiced Teacher,
Elephant-Trumpet-Sounding One,
spoke to the retinue just then:
“All of you look at this brahmin,
with big arms, the color of gold,
with face and eyes like lotuses,
his body hair growing upward,
happy, with faith in my virtue. Verse 12-13

Walt 5924 This one’s aspiring to the place
of the monk with a lion’s roar.
Very far into the future,
he’ll receive that delightful place. Verse 14

Walt 5925 In one hundred thousand aeons,
arising in Okkāka’s clan,
the one whose name is Gotama
will be the Teacher in the world. Verse 15

Walt 5926 Worthy heir to that one’s Dhamma,
Dhamma’s legitimate offspring,
the one whose name is Kassapa
will be the Teacher’s follower.” Verse 16

Walt 5927 Then ninety-two aeons ago,
there was a Teacher, Unsurpassed,
Beyond Compare, Unrivaled One:
Phussa, Chief Leader of the World. Verse 17

Walt 5928 That one, having slain all darkness,
untangling the great tangle,
rained forth the rain of deathlessness,
refreshing the world with its gods. Verse 18

Walt 5929 In the city of Benares,
reborn the king's sons at that time,
we were three brothers, all of us,
in the confidence of the king. Verse 19

Walt 5930 Strong, with heroic limbs and looks,
we're undefeated in battle.
Then troubled in the borderlands,
the lord of the earth said to us: Verse 20

Walt 5931 "Come, going to the borderlands,
cleaning up that forest army,
having pacified my kingdom,
come back again," is what he said. Verse 21

Walt 5932 Afterward we said to the king:
"If you'll give leave to us to serve
the Buddha, Leader of the World,
then we'll clean up your enemies." Verse 22

Walt 5933 Then we, having obtained our wish,
sent out by the earth's protector,
making the borderlands weapon-
free, we came up to him again. Verse 23

Walt 5934 Having asked the king to let us
serve the Teacher, the World-Leader,
getting the Excellent Sage, we
worshipped him as long as we lived. Verse 24

Walt 5935-5937 Giving very expensive cloth,
and abundant tasty alms food,
and lodgings which were delightful,
and beneficial medicines
to the Sage with the monks, neutral
toward birth because of the Teaching,
We, moral and compassionate,
minds engaged in meditation,
with loving hearts, having waited
on the World-Leader all the time,
when the World-Chief reached nirvana,
worshipping with all of our strength, Verse 25-27

Walt 5938 fallen from there, gone to heaven,
all three of us experienced
great happiness when in that place:
that's the fruit of Buddha-pūjā. Verse 28

Walt 5939 Like an illusionist on stage
showing himself as very large,
thus touring in existence I
became the king of Videha. Verse 29

Walt 5940-5942 At the word of naked Guṇa,
become dependent on wrong views,
I got onto an evil path.
Not heeding the advice given
by my daughter known as Rujā,
I later being much-advised
by the brahmin named Nārada,
giving up Guṇa's evil views,

having fulfilled with distinction
the ten wholesome ways of acting,
abandoning my body, I
went to heaven with a palace. Verse 30-32

Walt 5943 When my last rebirth was attained,
I was a kinsman of Brahmā,
born in Benares with great wealth,
in a large brahmin family. Verse 33

Walt 5944 Fearing death, illness and old age,
and abandoning my great wealth,
seeking the path to nirvana,
I went forth as a Jaṭila. Verse 34

Walt 5945 And then those two brothers of mine
also went forth along with me.
Having built in Uruvelā
a hermitage, I then lived there. Verse 35

Walt 5946 Named “Kassapa” through my lineage,
since I dwelt in Uruvelā,
I was therefore known by the name
of “Uruvela Kassapa.” Verse 36

Walt 5947 My brother lived near the river;
he was named “Nadī Kassapa.”
The other lived close to Gāyā;
by name he’s “Gāyā Kassapa”. Verse 37

Walt 5948 Two hundred for Nadīkassapa,
and three for the middle brother.
No less than five hundred for me,
students who all then followed me. Verse 38

Walt 5949 Then the Buddha, approaching me,
the World-Chief, Charioteer of Men,
doing various miracles,
he led me on the correct path. Verse 39

Walt 5950 I was ordained, “come monk,” along
with a lakh in my retinue;
I attained my arahantship,
together with all of them too. Verse 40

Walt 5951 They and also many others
were students attending on me.
I was able to instruct them,
as the Seventh Sage advised me. Verse 41

Walt 5952 He placed me in the foremost place
of those with a large retinue.
O! the deed done for the Buddha
certainly bore its fruit for me. Verse 42

Walt 5953 My defilements are now burnt up;
all new existence is destroyed.
Like elephants with broken chains,
I am living without constraint. Verse 43

Walt 5954 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 44

Walt 5955 The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,
I have done what the Buddha taught! Verse 45

Thus indeed Venerable Uruvelakassapa Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Uruvelakassapa Thera is finished.

Translated by Jonathan S. Walters.

Whitman College, 2017

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