

# Upavāna

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## [22. Upavāna]

The Victor, Padumuttara,  
Who Had Crossed Over Everything,  
the Sambuddha went fully out<sup>1</sup>  
like a fire finished burning. (1) [865]

Many people came together  
venerating the Thus-Gone-One.  
They made a well-made pyre<sup>2</sup> [for him]  
[then] lifted [his] body [on it]. (2) [866]

Doing the needful with the corpse  
they gathered [all] the relics there.  
[Then] all the people, with [their] kings,  
constructed the Buddha's stupa. (3) [867]

The first [casket]<sup>3</sup> was made of gold,  
the second was made of gemstone.  
The third was made out of silver,  
the fourth was made of crystal. (4) [868]

The fifth [stupa] which was built there  
was made of rubies fixed in glass.  
The sixth was made of all the gems  
with a [large] cat's-eye<sup>4</sup> on the top. (5) [869]

There was a railing made of gold;  
[its] legs were made out of gemstones.  
That stupa, all [encased] in gold,  
[rose up] in height a [full] league tall. (6) [870]

The gods then got together there  
and counseled one another [thus]:  
“we shall construct a stupa too  
for the World-Chief, the Neutral One. (7) [871]

[But] there are no single relics;  
the body is in one lump [now].  
We'll enlarge this very stupa  
of the Buddha, using [fine] gold.” (8) [872]

<sup>1</sup>*parinibbuto*.

<sup>2</sup>*citaka*, heap, shrine

<sup>3</sup>the text does not stipulate the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth *what*, and the *cty.* sees no need to explain. Relic finds as at Pippurawa, as well as the context (in which there is clearly a single stupa) would suggest that these were reliquaries inside reliquaries inside reliquaries, each encasing the former ones like Russian nesting dolls, until the whole thing was covered with gold.

<sup>4</sup>*masāragallassa*, *masāragalla* = Sinh. *maesirigala*

The gods, using the seven gems,  
raised it another league [taller].  
That stupa, which was two leagues tall,  
dispelled the darkness [with its shine]. (9) [873]

The snake-gods<sup>5</sup> then assembled there  
and counseled one another [thus]:  
“The people and also the gods  
constructed the Buddha’s stupa. (10) [874]

Do not let us be negligent;  
heedful, [and] with the lesser gods,  
we too shall enlarge [this] stupa  
of the World-Chief, the Neutral One.” (11) [875]

Gathering themselves together  
they covered the Buddha’s stupa  
with the two types of blue sapphire<sup>6</sup>  
and with the *jotirasa* gem.<sup>7</sup> (12) [876]

At that point Buddha’s *cetiya*  
was made entirely of gems.  
In height it welled up three<sup>8</sup> leagues [tall]  
lighting up [the whole universe]. (13) [877]

[Then] *garuḷas*<sup>9</sup> got together  
and counseled one another [thus]:  
“The men and gods and snake-gods too  
constructed the Buddha’s stupa. (14) [878]

Do not let us be negligent;  
heedful, [and] with the lesser gods,  
we too shall enlarge [this] stupa  
of the World-Chief, the Neutral One.” (15) [879]

That stupa made only of gems  
they gilded on the top [right then].  
They too increased by one [whole] league  
the height of the Buddha’s stupa. (16) [880]

Then rising up four leagues [in height]

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<sup>5</sup>*nāgā*

<sup>6</sup>lit., “with *Indanīla* and *mahānīla*” = “Indra Blue” and “Great Blue”

<sup>7</sup>see above, n. to [839]

<sup>8</sup>BJTS reads thirty leagues

<sup>9</sup>PTS omits the *garuḷas*, and as a result the height of the stupa increases from five to seven leagues, skipping six. BJTS includes the *garuḷas*, which makes the numbering sequence complete. In PTS this is the *kumbhaṇḍas* rather than the *garuḷas*, but otherwise the text is the same.

that Buddha-stupa shined [so] bright.  
It illumined all directions  
just like the risen raying sun. (17) [881]

[Then] *kumbhaṇḍas* got together  
and counseled one another thus:  
“The people and also the gods  
the snake-gods and the *garuḷas* [882]

themselves built a superb stupa  
for [him], the Best of the Buddhas.  
Do not let us be negligent;  
heedful, [and] with the lesser gods, [883]

we too shall enlarge [this] stupa  
of the World-Chief, the Neutral One.  
We’ll cover the entire extent  
of the Buddha’s stupa with gems.” [884]

They too increased by one [whole] league  
the height of the Buddha’s stupa.  
[Now] rising up five leagues [in height]  
that Buddha-stupa shined forth [bright]. [885]

Then spirits<sup>10</sup> got together there  
and counseled one another [thus]:  
“The people, gods, and snake-gods too,  
the *garuḷas* and *kumbhaṇḍas* (18)<sup>11</sup> [886]

themselves built a superb stupa  
for the World-Chief, the Neutral One.  
Do not let us be negligent;  
heedful, [and] with the lesser gods, (19) [887]

we too shall enlarge [this] stupa  
of the World-Chief, the Neutral One.  
We’ll cover the entire extent  
of Buddha’s stupa with crystal.” (20) [888]

They too increased by one [whole] league  
the height of the Buddha’s stupa.  
[Now] rising up six<sup>12</sup> leagues [in height]  
that Buddha-stupa shined forth [bright]. (21) [889]

<sup>10</sup>*yakkhā*

<sup>11</sup>PTS omits *kumbhaṇḍas* from this list, conflating them with *garuḷas*; I follow BJTS in the last two feet.

<sup>12</sup>PTS reads five, in keeping with its elision of the *garuḷas*

Then assembled the music-nymphs<sup>13</sup>  
 [who] counseled one another [thus]:  
 “Those born of Manu, and the gods,  
 snake-gods, kumbhaṇḍas, guyhakas\*<sup>14</sup> (22) [890]

all constructed Buddha’s stupa;  
 we’ve done nothing in that regard.  
 We too shall enlarge [this] stupa  
 of the World-Chief, the Neutral One.” (23) [891]

They constructed seven railings  
 [and] made the legs [for it as well].  
 Then that stupa the music-nymphs  
 made fully [encased] in [fine] gold. (24) [892]

[Now] rising seven leagues [in height]  
 that Buddha-stupa shined forth [bright].  
 One could not tell the day from night;  
 there always was [its strong] bright light. (25) [893]

Its brilliance actually out-shined  
 the moon and the sun and the stars.  
 By day that lamp was blazing forth  
 for a hundred leagues [all] around. (26) [894]

At that time, whichever people  
 were worshipping that stupa [there]  
 did not have to climb<sup>15</sup> that stupa;  
 they were [just] held up in the air. (27) [895]

Their flags or wreaths of flowers [there]  
 were offered up [into the air]  
 by spirit<sup>16</sup> Abhisammata  
 who had been placed [there] by the gods. (28) [896]

They could not see the spirit<sup>17</sup> [there];  
 they see the wreaths [just] flying by.  
 Seeing them go by in this way,  
 all of them go on to good states. (29) [897]

People with faith in Buddha’s words,

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<sup>13</sup>*gandhabbā*

<sup>14</sup>BJTS and PTS alt. reads *garuḷā* for *guyhakā*

<sup>15</sup>an allusion to the practice that seems to have been current at the early post-Aśokan stupas, namely climbing the railing attached to the sides of the stupa in order to circumambulate and place offerings upon its dome.

<sup>16</sup>*yakkha*

<sup>17</sup>*yakkha*

and pleased in the dispensation,  
wishing to see the miracle  
are worshipping that stupa [there]. (30) [898]

At that time I was a speaker  
[and I] lived in Hamsavati.  
Seeing those delighted people  
this [good] thought then occurred to me: (31) [899]

“He is lofty, the Blessed One,  
who has a relic-womb<sup>18</sup> like this;  
these people are very happy  
doing their rites with devotion. (32) [900]

I too shall do a ritual  
for the World-Chief, the Neutral One,  
and in the future, I shall be  
one of the heirs to<sup>19</sup> his doctrines.” (33) [901]

I had my upper garment washed  
by one whose job was washing clothes  
[and] having stuck it on bamboo  
I raised a flag up in the sky. (34) [902]

Grabbing it, Abhisammata  
raised up my flag into the sky.  
Seeing it<sup>20</sup> flutter in the wind,  
among those folks I smiled a lot. (35) [903]

Bringing pleasure to [my] mind there  
I [then] approached a [Buddhist] monk.  
Worshipping that monk I inquired  
what that flag’s result would become. (36) [904]

He told me of religious joy,  
generating [great] bliss for me.  
“You always will experience  
the fruit of [your gift of] that flag.” (37) [905]

[He said], “The army, with four parts —  
tusker, soldier, chariot, horse —  
will wait on you permanently;  
that is the fruit of a flag-gift. (38) [906]

<sup>18</sup>i.e., stupa.

<sup>19</sup>lit., “in”.

<sup>20</sup>lit., “the flag”.

Sixty thousand instruments<sup>21</sup> [and]  
well-decorated kettle-drums<sup>22</sup>  
will attend you permanently;  
that is the fruit of a flag-gift. (39) [907]

And women [too, all] well-made-up  
numbering eighty-six thousand,  
with varied clothes and ornaments,  
wearing earrings bearing gemstones, (40) [908]

with long eyelashes, lovely smiles<sup>23</sup>  
and slim waists, pleasant to look at<sup>24</sup>  
will wait upon you constantly:  
that is the fruit of a flag-gift. (41) [909]

You'll delight in the world of gods  
for thirty thousand aeons [hence].  
Eighty times as the king of gods  
you will exercise divine rule. (42) [910]

A thousand times you're going to be  
a king who turns the wheel [of law],  
[and you will have] much local rule  
innumerable by counting. (43) [911]

In one hundred thousand aeons,  
arising in Okkāka's clan,  
the one whose name is Gotama  
will be the Teacher in the world. (44) [912]

Falling down from the world of gods,  
incited by [your] wholesome roots,  
[and] bound up with your good karma  
you will be Brahma's kinsman [then]. (45) [913]

Discarding eight hundred million  
[and] many slaves [and] workers [too],  
you will renounce in the teaching  
of Gotama the Blessed One. (46) [914]

Satisfying the Sambuddha,

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<sup>21</sup>*turiya*, musical instruments

<sup>22</sup>*bheri*

<sup>23</sup>*hasulā* = ? Cf. RD *hasula*, s.v., which following Kern treats this as a corrupted reading of *bhamuka*, “eyebrows” or “thick eyebrows”, often found in combination with the term for “long eyelashes” (*aḷārapamha*).

<sup>24</sup>RD gives “good hips,” referring to this text. I don't see the warrant, and take the term *susaññā* from *saññā*, sense, perception, as does BJTS



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Gotama, the Bull of Śākya,  
you'll be known as Upavāna  
a follower of the Teacher." (47) [915]

Karma done a hundred thousand  
[aeons hence] showed me [its] fruit here:  
well-liberated, arrow-quick,  
I have destroyed my defilements. (48) [916]

When I was a wheel-turning king,  
lord over the four continents,  
for three leagues in all directions  
flags were always seen by me [then]. (49) [917]

In the hundred thousand aeons  
since I did that [good] karma then,  
I've come to know no bad rebirth;  
that is the fruit of a flag-gift. (50) [918]

The four analytical modes,  
and these eight deliverances,  
six special knowledges mastered,  
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (51) [919]

Thus indeed Venerable Upavāna Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Upavāna Thera is finished.