

# Dhammasavaniya

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[336. {339.}<sup>1</sup> Dhammasavaniya<sup>2</sup>]

The Victor, Padumuttara,  
was the Master of Everything.<sup>3</sup>  
[While] preaching the Four Noble Truths,  
he ferried many folks across. (1) [3042]

A matted-haired ascetic<sup>4</sup> then,  
I practiced fierce austerities.<sup>5</sup>  
Throwing off [my] clothes made of bark,  
I traveled in the sky back then. (2) [3043]

Then I was unable to fly<sup>6</sup>  
over [him], the Best of Buddhas.  
Like a bird hitting<sup>7</sup> a mountain,  
I did not get to journey on.<sup>8</sup> (3) [3044]

My movement had not formerly  
been obstructed in such a way;<sup>9</sup>  
as though rising up<sup>10</sup> from water,  
I easily<sup>11</sup> flew<sup>12</sup> through the sky. (4) [3045]

“A lofty human being must<sup>13</sup>  
be sitting underneath [me now].  
It’s good<sup>14</sup> for me to search for him;  
I might obtain something worthwhile.”<sup>15</sup> (5) [3046]

Then descending from the sky, I  
heard the sound of the Teacher,

<sup>1</sup>*Apadāna* numbers provided in {fancy brackets} correspond to the BJTS edition, which contains more individual poems than does the PTS edition dictating the main numbering of this translation.

<sup>2</sup>“Dharma-Hearer” or “Hearer of the Teaching”

<sup>3</sup>lit., “Master of All Things (*dhamma*)” (or “Master of All Teachings”)

<sup>4</sup>*jaṭṭhila*, an ascetic who wears his hair in a matted braid (*jaṭṭhā*)

<sup>5</sup>lit., “I was one who practices fierce austerities,” reading *ugga-tāpano* with BJTS (and PTS alternative) for PTS *uggata-āpaṇa*, “rising over the bazaar”

<sup>6</sup>lit., “to go”

<sup>7</sup>*āsajja*, lit., “having hit/struck”

<sup>8</sup>lit., “I did not receive a journey”. BJTS (and PTS alt.) reads *na ālabhiṃ* for PTS *na labhe*; the grammar is clearer but the meaning is the same.

<sup>9</sup>lit., “this obstruction of movement had not formerly transpired for me”

<sup>10</sup>reading *dake yathā ummujjivā* with BJTS for PTS *dake yathā ummisitvā* (“as though opening one’s eyes in the water”)

<sup>11</sup>*evaṃ*, lit., “thus,” “in this way”

<sup>12</sup>lit., “am going” (“went”)

<sup>13</sup>lit., “will” (*bhavissati*, future tense)

<sup>14</sup>*handa me*, “well then for me”

<sup>15</sup>lit., “I might obtain a thing of value”

who was preaching impermanence;  
I learned that [lesson] at that time. (6) [3047]

Learning to see<sup>16</sup> impermanence  
I went back to my hermitage.  
Dwelling there the rest of my life,  
I passed away [right] on the spot. (7) [3048]

In [my] subsequent existence,  
I recalled hearing that Teaching.  
Due to that karma done very well,  
I went to Tāvatiṃsa [then]. (8) [3049]

For thirty thousand aeons I  
delighted in the world of gods.  
And I exercised divine rule,  
one more than fifty [different] times. (9) [3050]

And seventy-one [different] times  
I was a wheel-turning monarch.  
There was [also] much local rule,  
innumerable by counting. (10) [3051]

[Then] seated in my father's house,  
a monk with senses [well-]controlled,  
illustrating [the truth] in verse,<sup>17</sup>  
spoke of things as impermanent.<sup>18</sup> (11) [3052]

Remembering that perception,  
transmigrating from birth to birth,  
I [still] did not perceive the end,  
nirvana, everlasting state. (12) [3053]

“In flux indeed is all that is;  
things come to be [and then] decay.  
They arise [and then] they dissolve;  
their cessation<sup>19</sup> is happiness.” (13) [3054]<sup>20</sup>

After hearing [him say] that verse,<sup>21</sup>  
I recalled my past perception.

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<sup>16</sup>lit., “the perception of”

<sup>17</sup>reading *gāthāya* with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS *kathāya*, “through [his] speech”

<sup>18</sup>BJTS reads, more straightforwardly, *aniccataṃ udāhari*, “[then] spoke about impermanence”

<sup>19</sup>reading *vūpasamo* with BJTS for PTS *vūpasamo*

<sup>20</sup>cf. S iv.28; A i.152, 299

<sup>21</sup>*saha gāthaṃ sunitavāna*, lit., “after hearing [his sermon] together with that verse” or “in conjunction with that verse”

Seated in a single sitting,  
I achieved the arahant-state. (14) [3055]

Being [only] seven years old,  
I attained [my] arahantship.  
Recognizing [my] virtue the  
Buddha, Eyeful One ordained me. (15) [3056]

Even though I was a [mere] boy,  
I finished what needs to be done.  
Today what do I need to do  
in the Śākya's dispensation?<sup>22</sup> (16) [3057]

In the hundred thousand aeons  
since I did that [good] karma then,  
I've come to know no bad rebirth:  
the fruit in hearing the Teaching.<sup>23</sup> (17) [3058]

The four analytical modes,  
and these eight deliverances,  
six special knowledges mastered,  
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (18) [3059]

Thus indeed Venerable Dhammasavaniya Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Dhammasavaniya Thera is finished.

<sup>22</sup>lit., "in the dispensation of the Śākya Son"

<sup>23</sup>*saddhammasavane phalaṃ*, lit., "the fruit in the Great Teaching"