

Index

| | |
|---|----------|
| SITALNATHA CHARITRA | 2 |
| <i>Incarnation as Padmottara.....</i> | <i>2</i> |
| <i>Description of Bhadrilapura.....</i> | <i>2</i> |
| <i>His parents</i> | <i>3</i> |
| <i>Birth.....</i> | <i>3</i> |
| <i>Birth-ceremonies</i> | <i>3</i> |
| <i>Stuti.....</i> | <i>4</i> |
| <i>Life before initiation</i> | <i>4</i> |
| <i>Initiation.....</i> | <i>5</i> |
| <i>Omniscience</i> | <i>6</i> |
| <i>The samavasarana</i> | <i>6</i> |
| <i>Stuti.....</i> | <i>6</i> |
| <i>Sermon on Samvara.....</i> | <i>7</i> |
| <i>Sasanadevatas.....</i> | <i>8</i> |
| <i>His congregation</i> | <i>8</i> |
| <i>His moksa.....</i> | <i>8</i> |

SITALNATHA CHARITRA

May the feet of the Jina^s, Sri Sitala, awakening the world like the rays of the moon awakening the night-blooming lotus, be productive of *emancipation* for you. Blessed Sitala's life, the cause of freedom from passion (coolness) of the ears of the three worlds, will be related.

Incarnation as Padmottara

There is a regal city, named Susima, in the province of Vatsa, the ornament of East Videha in the half of Puskaravaradvipa, Its king was named Padmottara, the best of all kings, like one of the Anuttaravimana-gods who had come. In him, whose command was not *transgressed*, who was devoted to *compassion* for all creatures, existed the two emotions, the 'heroic' and the 'tranquil' like full brothers. He was constantly alert in regard to dharma^{*}, like a king in regard to his treasury, making it increase by many unobstructed devices. With the thought, "I shall certainly abandon this today or tomorrow," he continued to live in *samsara* with indifference, as if living in a foreign country.

One day, he abandoned the great kingdom like a piece of stone and adopted *mendicancy* under Srastagha Suri. Observing the vows without any *transgressions*^{*}, he, wise, acquired the body-making karma of a Tirthakrt by the *sthanakas* named in the scriptures. When he had passed his whole birth, he became lord of Pranata because .of numerous special vows and numerous severe Incarnation as Sitalanatha

Description of Bhadrilapura

Now in this very Bharataksetra in Jambudvipa there is an excellent city, Bhadrilapura, fair with wealth. Its high golden wall encircled by a *moat* has the beautiful appearance of the wall of Jambudvipa encircled by the Ocean. At evening the chain of lights lighted in its rows of shops looked like a golden necklace of the Sri of the city. Because of its great wealth resembling the *quintessence* of Bhogavati and Amaravati, it became the pleasure-ground of libertines and of prominent men. Here people begging for food^{*} are fed with many kinds of food at the food-dispensaries by rich men, like their own people at a festival.

His parents

In this city was established King Drdharatha, whose circle of enemies had been defeated, who had covered the earth-circle, like the Ocean. He was extremely modest about his virtues, which were constantly described by the throng of sages, as if they were vices. He gave to beggars the wealth taken by force from his enemies, as if making atonement for the fault of theft. Kings, falling repeatedly on the ground before him, touching the ground with their bodies*, attained kingship after a long time. Even an atom of instruction in knowledge given by gurus spread in him, very intelligent, like a drop of oil in water.

His wife, named Nanda, delighting the heart, was a virtuous wife, the chief of virtuous wives, like Mandakini^s, the chief of rivers. Even rajahansis were considered to be pupils in the art of walking, as it were, of her who moved charmingly with very, very slow steps. Whenever she spoke with fragrant breath, her speech became a charm for attracting bees. The only similarity to this beautiful woman was in herself. There is nothing similar in extent to the sky. She was sewn firmly in the heart of Drdharatha by her virtues, and Drdharatha was engraved on her mind, as it were.

Birth

Now in Pranata-heaven, King Padmottara's *jiva* completed his life of twenty *sagaropamas*. On the sixth day of the black half of Radha, when the moon was in Purvasadha, King Padmottara's *jiva* fell and descended into Nanda's womb. Then the Lady Nanda, comfortably asleep, saw the fourteen great dreams which indicate the birth of a Tirthankara^s. On the twelfth day of the black half of Magha, when the moon was in Purvasadha, Sri Nanda bore a gold colored son, marked with a *srivatsa*^{s,*}

Birth-ceremonies

Then the fifty-six Dikkumaris the eight living in the lower world, the eight belonging to the upper world, the eight from each of the directions of Rucaka, the four from the intermediate points, and the four from the center of *Rucakadvipa* whose thrones had shaken, came and performed the birth-rites. Sakra, too, came there very quickly, took the Master himself and, surrounded by gods, went to the peak of Mt. Sumeru. Holding the Lord on his lap, the Lord-of-the-sky sat down on the lion-throne on Atipandukambala. Then Acyuta and the other Indras sprinkled the Lord with water brought from the Ocean, rivers, pools, etc. Then Sakra placed the Lord on

Isana's lap and bathed him then with water spurting from the tips of the horns of the crystal bulls created (by Sakra). After he had anointed the Lord of the World with divine unguents and had worshipped him with ornaments, etc., Sakra began a hymn of praise as follows:

Stuti

“O moon to the Ocean of Milk in the form of the Iksvaku-family, hail! O sun for driving away the deep sleep of the *delusion* of the world, hail! I hope my eyes, tongue, and arms may be eternal to see you, to praise you, and to worship you. O Master, lord of the tenth *congregation**, these flowers are laid at your lotus-feet, but the fruit has fallen to me. You have descended to the human world, like a new cloud, giving exceeding joy to *souls* burned by the heat of pain. Today may living creatures have new prosperity from the sight of you, O Lord, like trees from spring. The days which have been purified by the sight of you, those are days to me, but other days are like a night of the black fortnight. People's bad karma is constantly sewn together, as it were, by the soul; now let it be forced loose by you quickly, like iron by a loadstone. Whether I am here or in heaven, or somewhere else, may I be your vehicle, carrying you alone in my heart.”

After he had so praised the tenth Arhat Dasasateksana (Sakra) took him, carried him and placed him at Nanda's side, according to custom.

Life before initiation

Then Drdharatha made a festival with releases from prison, etc.; for the purifying birth of such persons is for the *emancipation* of the world. The name 'sitala' was given to him because the King's body, when it was hot, became cool at Nanda's touch, while he was in the womb.

Attended by gods in the form of boys, the Lord of the World increased in size daily, like the waves of the Ocean attended by Indras of the Veladharins. The Supreme Lord gradually traversed childhood and reached youth from childhood, like a traveler reaching a city from a village.

Ninety bows tall, with arms reaching to his knees, the Lord looked like a tree with large creepers hanging at its sides. Though he was indifferent to objects of the senses, requested by his parents, the Lord took a bride, like an elephant* taking a ball of food.* When twenty-five thousand purvas* had passed, Lord Sri Sitala took the

Kingdom from, courtesy to his father. Possessing unequalled strength of arm the Lord ruled his ancestral kingdom fittingly for fifty thousand purvas.

Initiation

Then the Lord's mind became disgusted with living in *samsara*, and the thrones of the Lokantika-gods shook. The gods were enlightened by clairvoyant knowledge to this effect; "In the southern half of Bharata in the continent Jambudvipa, the Blessed One, the tenth Arhat, is desirous of the vow. Therefore we shall now urge him, for that is always our duty." After reflecting so, the gods, the Sarasvatas, etc., came from Brahmaloaka, bowed to the Master, and announced: "O Lord, found a *congregation* from *compassion* toward all in this Ocean of existence difficult to cross in the absence of a congregation, like a forest-stream without a ford."

After saying this, the Lokantika-gods went to Brahmaloaka and Sitala Swamin gave gifts for a year. 'At the end of this giving, the Indras, whose thrones had shaken, made Lord Sitala's initiation-kalyana-bath. Then the Blessed Lord, the ornament of the three worlds, anointed, with garments and ornaments put on, supported on his arm by Bidaujas, his umbrella, *chauris*, etc. held by other Indras, ascended a jewel of a *palanquin* named Candraprabha. Attended by thousands of gods, asuras, and kings he went to a grove of his own city, named Sahasramravana. Then the Lord, who wished to cross *samsara*, devoted to reaching emancipation, at once took off his ornaments, etc., like a burden. Wearing a garment of devadusya placed on his shoulder by Sakra, the Lord of the World tore out his hair in five handfuls. When Sakra had thrown the hair in the Ocean of Milk, had returned and restrained the tumult and stood like a door-keeper with folded-hands, the Lord and one thousand kings, observing a two days' fast, made a promise of abstention from *censurable* activities, in the presence of gods, asuras, and kings, in the afternoon of the twelfth day of the black half of Magha, the moon being in Purvasadha. The Lord's fourth knowledge, called 'mind-reading,' arose. The gods, etc. bowed and went to their respective abodes.

The next day Lord Sitala broke his fast with rice-pudding in the house of King Punarvasu in Ristapura. Then the five things, the stream of treasure, etc., were made by the gods, and furthermore King Punarvasu made a golden platform there. Observing numerous special vows, enduring trials, Lord Sitala wandered for three months as an ordinary *ascetic*.

Omniscience

The Teacher of the World went again to Sahasramravana and stood there in pratima beneath a wavy-leaved fig tree. After he had mounted the second pure meditation*, like a soldier a rampart, the Teacher of the World destroyed the ghatikarmas like enemies. On the fourteenth day of the black half of Pausa, when the moon was in Purvasadha, Sitala Swamin's *omniscience* arose.

The samavasarana

Then the Indras of the gods and asuras made a *samavasarana* with three four-doored walls made of jewels, gold, and silver. The Lord entered it by the east door and *circumambulated* the caitya-tree which was one thousand and eighty bows high. Saying, "Homage to the *congregation**, " the Lord seated himself on the eastern throne, and the gods placed his images in the other directions. Then the others, the gods, etc., stood in their proper places, as eager for the Master's voice as peacocks for thunder. Then Vajradhara (Sakra) bowed to Sitala Swamin, touching the ground with his head, and recited a hymn of praise, his hands folded submissively:

Stuti

"O Lord of the Three Worlds, they are fortunate who purify themselves by bathing repeatedly in the water of the copious light from the nails of your lotus-feet. This Bharata is adorned by you like the sky by the sun, like a pool by a *hansa*, like a city by a king. In the interval between two congregations *dharma** was overcome by wrong belief, like light by darkness in the interval between the setting of the sun and the rising of the moon. This world has become blind, its eyes devoid of *discernment*, and goes on wrong paths everywhere, as if confused about direction. False *dharma* has been adopted by the perplexed people with the idea that it is *dharma*, false gods with the idea that they are gods, and false gurus with the idea that they are gurus. You, an Ocean of *compassion* by nature, because of its (accumulated) merit have descended to this world ready to fall into the pit of hell. The serpent of *wrong-belief* has been powerful in the world for a long time (but) only until the nectar of your speech flows out. Now the world will have *right-belief* by the departure of *wrong-belief*, O Lord, just as you had *omniscience* by the destruction of the destructive karmas."

When Sakra had become silent after this hymn of praise, the Blessed Lord Sitala delivered a sermon in a voice sweet as nectar.

Sermon on Samvara

“In *samsara* everything is *transient*, the cause of various pains. Therefore one must strive for moksa. Moreover, moksa would come from samvara. The *obstruction* of all channels (*ashrava*) is called samvara. It again is divided into *dravya* and *bhava*.* That which cuts off the acquisition of karmic matter is *dravyasamvara*. The *abandonment* of occupation with the causes of existence is *bhavasamvara*. Whatever means can block any channel must be used by intelligent persons for its *obstruction*. One should block *anger*, conceit, *deceit*, and *greed* by *forbearance*, *humility*, *sincerity*, and lack of *desire*, respectively. By means of complete self-control the wise man should destroy objects of the senses which create arrogance from lack of self-control and which resemble poison.

One should subdue activities by the three *controls*, negligence⁵¹⁷ by *vigilance*, and should gain complete self-control by destruction of *censurable* activity. One who is eager for samvara should overcome wrong belief by right belief, and painful and evil meditation* by pure firmness of mind. Just as dust certainly enters the open doors of a many-doored house located at a cross-roads and, when it has entered, is stuck by contact with oil by absorption with it, but it would not enter nor would it be stuck if the doors were closed; or, just as water would enter a tank by all its openings, but would not enter at all if these were closed; or, just as water would enter a boat by cracks, but not even a little would enter if the crack had been stopped up; so, when doors of the channels, activity, etc., are blocked up everywhere, there is no entrance of karmic matter into a *soul* possessing abundance of samvara. From samvara there is blocking up of the doors of the channels. Furthermore, samvara is known to have many divisions, likewise, from *forbearance*, etc. Whatever samvara there is in the *gunasthanas*, it is called blocking of wrong belief from the non-rising of wrong belief in those in the higher stages.⁵¹⁸ Also in *partial-control* (*desavirati*), etc.,⁵¹⁹ there is blocking of lack of self-control. In *apramatta*, *samyata*, etc.,⁵²⁰ it is considered blocking of negligence. In *prasantamoha* and *ksinamoha*, etc.,⁵²¹ there would be blocking of the passions, and a complete blocking of activity would exist in the *ayogikevalagunasthana*.⁵²² The wise man should go to the end of existence thus shut up by samvara, like a sea-trader across the Ocean in a boat free from cracks.”

Many people were enlightened by the lord’s sermon. Some took the vow of *mendicancy* and some the lay-vows. The Lord had

eighty-one ganabhrts, Ananda, etc. At the end of the Lord's sermon Ananda delivered a sermon. The lords of gods, asuras, and men bowed to the Lord of the World and went to their respective abodes at the end of Ananda's sermon.

Sasanadevatas

Originating in that tirtha, a Yaksa, named Brahma, three-eyed, four-faced, with a lotus-seat, white, with four right arms of which three held a citron^b, hammer, and noose, and one was in the position bestowing fearlessness, and with four left arms holding an *ichneumon*, club, goad, and rosary; and Asoka likewise originating there, the color of green gram, with a cloud for a vehicle, one right arm holding a noose and the other in boon-granting position; and one left arm holding a fruit and the other a goad, these two became the messenger-deities of the tenth Arhat. Attended by these two, Lord Sitala wandered for twenty-five thousand purvas* less three months.

His congregation

One hundred thousand monks, one hundred thousand and six nuns, fourteen hundred who knew the fourteen purvas, seventy-two hundred who had clairvoyant knowledge, seventy-five hundred who had mind-reading knowledge, seven thousand omniscient, twelve thousand with the art of transformation, fifty-eight hundred disputants, two hundred and eighty-nine thousand laymen, and four hundred and fifty-eight thousand laywomen formed the lord's retinue as he wandered.

His moksa

When the time for *emancipation* had arrived, the Lord went to Mt. Sammeta and together with a thousand saints began a fast. At the end of a month, on the second day of the black half of Vaisakha, the moon being in Purvasadha, the Master and the saints reached emancipation. Twenty-five thousand parvas as prince, fifty thousand as director of the earth, twenty-five thousand in practicing *mendicancy*; so the total age of Lord Sitala was a hundred thousand purvas.* Nine crores of *sagaropamas* elapsed between the nirvana^s of Suvidhi Swamin and that of Sitala Swamin. The lords of the gods (the Indras) celebrated fittingly a magnificent festival of the emancipation of Sri Sitala who had attained emancipation with the munis; and went again to their respective worlds.

Emancipation will surely result to the one meditating on these biographies of eight Tirthankaras beginning with Sri Sambhava to be meditated⁵²³ upon.