

Legends of the Buddhist Saints

Apadānapāli

TRANSLATED BY
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Koliyavessa

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Printed September 2026

[42. Koliyavessa]

I had a walkway constructed
for the Sage, Anomadassi,
the World's Best One, the Neutral One
by having it smeared with plaster. (1) [1140]

[Then] I spread upon that walkway
flowers of various colors.
Making an awning in the sky
I fed the Buddha, Supreme One. (2) [1141]

Having pressed my hands together,
worshipping the One With Good Vows,
at that time I dedicated
a long hall to the Blessed One. (3) [1142]

Discerning what I was thinking,
the Teacher, Best One in the World,
the Blessed One, the Eyeful One
accepted [it,] pitying [me]. (4) [1143]

Accepting it, the Sambuddha,
Best Recipient in the World¹
seated in the monks' Assembly
spoke these verses [about me then]: (5) [1144]

"I shall relate details of him,
who [now] with [such] a happy heart
donated this long hall to me;
[all of] you listen to my words: (6) [1145]

When it is the time of death for
this one endowed with good² karma,
a chariot will then appear,
a thousand horses yoked [to it]. (7) [1146]

By that conveyance [then] this man
will go up to the world of gods.
The gods are going to [all] rejoice
when that wholesome birth occurs [there]. (8) [1147]

¹*dakkhineyyo sadevake*, lit "he who is worthy of gifts [in the world] with its gods"

²lit., "meritorious"

He'll inhabit a mansion [there],
the best mansion, very costly,
smeared with clay [that's full of] gemstones
[and] supplied with fine gabled cells. (9) [1148]

He will [then] delight in heaven
for [full] thirty thousand aeons.
He will be the king of the gods
for [those] thirty thousand aeons. (10) [1149]

Seventy seven times he'll be
a king who turns the wheel [of law].
They all will have a single name,
"Yasodhara," and be the same. (11) [1150]

Experiencing the two-fold bliss,
heaping up³ a heap of merit,
he will be a wheel-turning king
in the twenty-eighth aeon [hence]. (12) [1151]

And [he'll have] a superb mansion,
constructed by Vissakamma.⁴
Even when alone he'll hear the
ten sounds, living in that city. (13) [1152]

Uncountable aeons later
he'll be the king of a country,
king of the earth with great power;
his name will [then] be Okkāka. (14) [1153]

And she⁵ who is most excellent
of [his] sixteen thousand women
will give birth to nine sons [of his,]
Kṣatriyan [princes] of good birth. (15) [1154]

That Kṣatriyan woman will die
after [her] nine sons have been born.
Then he will take as [his] chief queen
a young and beloved maiden. (16) [1155]

³ reading *cchinitvā* (BJTS, PTS alt) for *vinditvā* (PTS), even though the latter, in the sense of "gains," amounts to much the same thing.

⁴ See above, v. [749] and n.

⁵ reading *ccha sā* (BJTS) for *mayā* (PTS).

Satisfying [King] Okkāka,
that maiden will receive a boon.
As the boon that she receives she'll
have the [nine] sons go forth [from there]. (17) [1156]

After going forth they all will
go into the Himalayas.⁶
Scared of dividing the clan they
will all cohabit with sisters. (18) [1157]

And one [among] those girls will be
afflicted⁷ with [bad] diseases.
Saying, 'don't ruin our family,'
the Kṣatriyans will bury [her]. (19) [1158]

A king,⁸ having carried [her] off
will [afterwards] live [well] with her.
And from that time there'll be the group,
"arising in Okkāka's clan". (20) [1159]

The progeny of them will be
those known as "Koliya" at birth.
There they will magically produce
vast quantities of human food. (21) [1160]

Having fallen from that body
[this one] will go up to heaven.
There he'll gain a superb mansion
which is delightful to the mind. (22) [1161]

Having fallen down from heaven,
incited by [his] wholesome roots,
having gone to a human state
he will be known as Soṇa [then]. (23) [1162]

Resolved, with strenuous effort⁹
in the Teacher's dispensation,
knowing well all the defilements,
he'll reach nirvana, undefiled. (24) [1163]

⁶lit., "will go to the ultimate mountain" (*naguttamaṃ*, cf. v. [1121] and n.)

⁷reading *parikkhatā* (BJTS) for *purakkhatā* ("placed in front of," PTS)

⁸lit., "[Another] kṣatriyan." BJTS Sinhala gloss says his name was Rāma, and the girl's name was Piya.

⁹*āraddha-viriya*

The Blessed One, Boundless Vision,
Gotama the Bull of the Śākyas,
Privileged Knower,¹⁰ the Great Hero,
will place [him]¹¹ in a foremost place.“ (25) [1164]

[hiatus?]¹²

Tamed in the ultimate taming,
my heart is [now] well-directed,
[and] my burden has been laid down:
I’ve reached nirvana, undefiled. (26) [1165]

Shiny-Bodied,¹³ Great Elephant,
Unfrightened like a lion[-king],
seated in the monks’ Assembly,
[he] placed me in the foremost place. (27) [1166]

The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (28) [1167]

Thus indeed Venerable Soṇa Koḷiyavessa Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Koḷiyavessa Thera is finished.

¹⁰*visesa-ññu* = “the distinguished/extraordinary/superior knower;” could also be read as: “the knower of distinctions/variety/difference.”

¹¹reading *ṭhapessati* (BJTS) for *ṭhapesi maṇ* (“he placed me,” PTS)

¹²some of the manuscripts contain here a largely unintelligible verse which appears to be a corruption of a verse found in *Theragāthāṭṭhakathā* (see BJTS I:168), varying widely among themselves. Both PTS and BJTS consign it to a note and do not recognize it as part of the text. The Burmese 6th Council edition includes a sensible verse, but one not found in the mss (given at BJTS I:168). Hew does not even mention it. I also omit it, but call the reader’s attention to the abrupt shift in the text. Given other *apadānas* of this ilk, we would expect some sort of transitional verse(s) between the previous Buddha’s prediction and the present arahant’s rhapsody of achievement. Then again, it may be worth noting that the author(s) considered this unnecessary, having somewhat uncharacteristically put a great deal of the narrative into the voice of the Buddha making his prediction. Still, what is especially jarring in the text as received is the lack of an indication even of which foremost place it was.

¹³Āṅgīrasa