

Legends of the Buddhist Saints

Apadānapāli

TRANSLATED BY
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Sela

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[389. {392.}¹ Sela²]

In the city, Haṃsavatī,

I was in charge of the roadways.³

Calling my kinsfolk together,

I spoke these words [to them back then]: (1) [3581]

“The Buddha’s⁴ been born in the world,

the Unsurpassed Field of Merit,

the Foundation for Every World,⁵

Sacrificial Recipient. (2) [3582]

The kṣatriyans and city folk,

the rich people and the brahmins,

happy, with pleasure in [their] hearts,

have⁶ formed themselves into a guild.⁷ (3) [3583]

Those on elephants,⁸ royal guards,⁹

charioteers¹⁰ and foot-soldiers¹¹

happy, with pleasure in [their] hearts,

have¹² formed themselves into a guild.¹³ (4) [3584]

The mighty lords¹⁴ and the princes,¹⁵

Vaiśyas as well as the brahmins,

happy, with pleasure in [their] hearts,

have¹⁶ formed themselves into a guild.¹⁷ (5) [3585]

¹ *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. Here BJTS reads 391, a typo.

² “Stone,” a historical monk much-mentioned in the canon and commentaries.

³ *vīthisāmi*, could also be imagined as an “owner” of roads, or “master” of roads; BJTS seems to prefer the latter, glossing, “I was the foremost person on a particular road.”

⁴ as v. 91 [3673], below, specifies that this occurred 100,000 aeons ago, the Buddha in question presumably would be Padumuttara Buddha.

⁵ *ādhāro sabbalokassa*

⁶ lit., “they”, *te*, “they [have]”

⁷ *pūgaḍhammaṇ akaṇsu te*, lit., “they did an act incorporating a guild”

⁸ *hatth’ārūḷhā*, those mounted on elephants

⁹ *anikaṭṭha*

¹⁰ *rathikā*

¹¹ *pattikārakā*

¹² lit., “they”, *te*, “they [have]”

¹³ *pūgaḍhammaṇ akaṇsu te*, lit., “they did an act incorporating a guild”

¹⁴ *uggā*

¹⁵ *rājaputtā*

¹⁶ lit., “they”, *te*, “they [have]”

¹⁷ *pūgaḍhammaṇ akaṇsu te*, lit., “they did an act incorporating a guild”

The cooks¹⁸ [and] those who dress the hair,¹⁹
the bath boys,²⁰ the garland-makers,²¹
happy, with pleasure in [their] hearts,
have²² formed themselves into a guild.²³ (6) [3586]

The dyers,²⁴ also the weavers,²⁵
the tanners,²⁶ also the bath girls,²⁷
happy, with pleasure in [their] hearts,
have²⁸ formed themselves into a guild.²⁹ (7) [3587]

The fletchers,³⁰ the leather workers,³¹
carpenters³² and workers in gold,³³
tinsmiths,³⁴ also [makers of] mats,³⁵
have³⁶ formed themselves into a guild.³⁷ (8) [3588-3589]³⁸
Hired servants³⁹ [and] musicians,⁴⁰
and numerous slaves and servants,⁴¹

¹⁸ālārikā

¹⁹kappakā

²⁰nahāpakā

²¹mālākārakā

²²te, lit., “they” “they [have]”

²³pūgadhammaṇ akaṇsu te, lit., “they did an act incorporating a guild”

²⁴rajakā

²⁵pesakārā

²⁶cchammakārā

²⁷nhāpikā

²⁸lit., “they”, te, “they [have]”

²⁹pūgadhammaṇ akaṇsu te, lit., “they did an act incorporating a guild”

³⁰usukārā, arrow-makers

³¹cchammikā

³²tacchchakārā

³³soṇṇakārā

³⁴tipulopā

³⁵kaṭṭā

³⁶lit., “they”, te, “they [have]”

³⁷pūgadhammaṇ akaṇsu te, lit., “they did an act incorporating a guild”

³⁸here, PTS and BJTS diverge. The latter presents in two verses all the material, plus some more, that appears in this one verse in PTS. BJTS [3588] reads: The fletchers, the *bhamakāras* (?)/leather workers and carpenters/happy, with pleasure in [their] hearts/have formed themselves into a guild.// BJTS [3589] reads: “The metal-smiths (*kammāro*), workers in gold/and likewise those who work in tin/happy, with pleasure in [their] hearts, have formed themselves into a guild.//” I prefer the BJTS reading here, but stick the PTS as my base text.

³⁹bhatakā

⁴⁰gītakā<gītakārā. BJTS reads *cchetaka*, “boy servants,” “waifs”

⁴¹dāsa-kammakārā bahū

to the extent of their own strength,⁴²
have⁴³ formed themselves into a guild.⁴⁴ (9) [3590]

Water-bringers,⁴⁵ wood-gatherers,⁴⁶
tillers,⁴⁷ also grass-carriers,⁴⁸
to the extent of their own strength,⁴⁹
have⁵⁰ formed themselves into a guild.⁵¹ (10) [3591]

Florists⁵² and gardeners⁵³ as well,
green-grocers⁵⁴ [and] fruit-carriers,⁵⁵
to the extent of their own strength⁵⁶
have⁵⁷ formed themselves into a guild.⁵⁸ (11) [3592]

Harlots,⁵⁹ slave-girls who bring water,⁶⁰
women who sell cakes [or] sell fish,⁶¹
to the extent of their own strength,⁶²
have⁶³ formed themselves into a guild.⁶⁴ (12) [3593]

Come⁶⁵ you all, gathered together,
let us [too] form, as one, a group;⁶⁶

⁴²*yathā sakena thāmena*, “as far as their own power”

⁴³lit., “they”, *te*, “they [have]”

⁴⁴*pūgadhammaṇ akaṇsu te*, lit., “they did an act incorporating a guild”

⁴⁵*udahārā*

⁴⁶*kaṭṭhahārā*

⁴⁷*kasikā*, BJTS reads *kassakā*, “cultivators”

⁴⁸*tiṇahārā*

⁴⁹*yathā sakena thāmena*, “as far as their own power”

⁵⁰lit., “they”, *te*, “they [have]”

⁵¹*pūgadhammaṇ akaṇsu te*, lit., “they did an act incorporating a guild”

⁵²*pupphikā*

⁵³*mālikā*

⁵⁴*paṇṇikā*, dealers in leaves

⁵⁵*phalahārikā* (= females?); BJTS read *phalahārakā* (= males?)

⁵⁶*yathā sakena thāmena*, “as far as their own power”

⁵⁷lit., “they”, *te*, “they [have]”

⁵⁸*pūgadhammaṇ akaṇsu te*, lit., “they did an act incorporating a guild”

⁵⁹*gaṇikā*, “those who belong to the crowd”

⁶⁰*kumbhadāsī*, lit., “slave-girls with water pots”

⁶¹reading *pūvikā macchhakā pi ccha* (lit., “women who sell cakes and also women who sell fish”) with BJTS for PTS *pūvikā macchhakāyikā* (“women who sell cakes and women with bodies of fish”)

⁶²*yathā sakena thāmena*, “as far as their own power”

⁶³*te*, lit., “they” “they [have]”

⁶⁴*pūgadhammaṇ akaṇsu te*, lit., “they did an act incorporating a guild”

⁶⁵reading *etha* with BJTS for PTS *ete*, “they”

⁶⁶*gaṇaṇ*

let us [now] perform service⁶⁷ for
the Unsurpassed Field of Merit.“ (13) [3594]

They, having listened to my words,
formed a group [to last] for all time
[and] built⁶⁸ a well-built meeting-hall⁶⁹
for [those in] the monks’ Assembly.⁷⁰ (14) [3595]

After dedicating that hall,
elated⁷¹ with a happy mind,⁷²
surrounded by all of those [folks,]
I went up to the Sambuddha. (15) [3596]

Having approached the Sambuddha,
the Lord of the World, Bull of Men,
[and] worshipping the Teacher’s feet,
I spoke these words [to him back then]: (16) [3597]

“These three hundred people, Hero,
[together] as one [in] a group,
have appointed for you, O Sage,
this well-constructed meeting-hall.” (17) [3598]

The Eyeful One, accepting [it]
in front of the monks’ Assembly,⁷³
[the Buddha] spoke these verses [then],
in front of my three hundred [folks]: (18) [3599]

“Three hundred and this best one⁷⁴ too,
conforming⁷⁵ [together] as one,
having made this [great] achievement,⁷⁶
you all are going to enjoy [it]. (19) [3600]

⁶⁷*adhikāraṇ karissāma*

⁶⁸*kārayun*, lit., “they caused to be built”

⁶⁹*upatthāna-sālā*, a hall for meetings, assemblies, services of attendance on the monks.

⁷⁰*bhikkhusaṅghassa*

⁷¹*udaggo*

⁷²*tuṭṭhamānaso*

⁷³*bhikkhusaṅghassa purato*

⁷⁴i.e., the protagonist, acting as the *ādikammika* (“instigator”) of the offering;
cf. *Pilindavacchcha-apadāna* (#388 {391}), vv. 6, 8 [3379, 3381]

⁷⁵*anuvattiṇsu*

⁷⁶*sampattiṇ hi karitvāna*

When [your] last rebirth is attained,
you all will achieve nirvana,
the state of coolness, unsurpassed,⁷⁷
unborn, undying peacefulness.“ (20) [3601]

The Buddha prophesied like that,⁷⁸
the Omniscient One,⁷⁹ Best of Monks,⁸⁰
[and] having heard the Buddha’s words,
I declared [my own] mental bliss.⁸¹ (21) [3602]

For thirty thousand aeons I
delighted in the world of gods.
Five hundred times the lord of gods,
I exercised divine rule [there]. (22) [3603]

One thousand times I [also] was
a king who turns the wheel [of law].
While exercising divine rule
the great gods [all then] worshipped [me]. (23) [3604]

Here, in this human kingdom,⁸² [my]
relatives are my retinue.⁸³
When [my] last rebirth was attained
there was a brahmin, Vāseṭṭha,⁸⁴
with eight hundred million in wealth;⁸⁵
I was [born as] the son of him.
My [given] name [at birth] was “Sela,”
a master of Vedic science.⁸⁶ (24-25) [3605-3606]

⁷⁷*sītibhāvam anuttaraṃ*

⁷⁸*evaṃ*, lit., “thusly”

⁷⁹*sabbaññū*

⁸⁰*samañuttaro*

⁸¹*somanassaṃ pavedayin*

⁸²*raḷḷe*

⁸³*parisā honti bandhavā*. This presumably refers to the relatives in the previous existence, reborn with him as his political retinue.

⁸⁴lit., “there was a brahmin named Vāseṭṭha”

⁸⁵lit., “with eighty ten-millions (*asīti-koṭi*) in wealth (*nicchayo*, “heaped up”)”

⁸⁶*chalaṅge pāraṃgato*, lit., “one who has reached perfection in the six branches.”
RD: “the set of six Vedāṅgas, disciplines of Vedic science, viz. 1. kappa, 2. vyākaraṇā, 3. nirutti, 4. sikkhā, 5. chando (vicchiti), 6. joti-sattha (thus enumd at VvA 265; at PvA 97 in sequence 4, 1, 3, 2, 6, 5): D iii.269; Vv 6316; Pv ii.613; Miln 178, 236.”

I, wandering about on foot,⁸⁷
waited on⁸⁸ by [my] own students,
saw⁸⁹ Keniya⁹⁰ the ascetic
with matted hair, wearing ashes,⁹¹
prepared to do a sacrifice.⁹²
[Having seen him] I spoke these words:
[Sela:]
“Bringing a wife? Going to one?”⁹³
Or have you invited the king?⁹⁴ (26-27) [3607-3608]

I want to do sacrifices⁹⁵
for brahmins who think like the gods,⁹⁶
[but] I’m not invited by kings
[and] have not found a sacrifice.” (28) [3609]

[Keniya:]
“There is no bringing brides for me;
I do not go to brides [either].
The one I’ve invited today
is Best in the world with [its] gods,
the Delighter of the Śākyaans

⁸⁷*jaṅghāvihāraṇ viccharantaṇ*, lit., “wandering while living on the legs”. BJTS understands this to refer to walking back and forth (Sinh. *sakman*), as in walking meditation, but these terms do not necessarily imply that.

⁸⁸or “honored”

⁸⁹lit., “having seen,” *disvā*

⁹⁰BJTS: Keniya. He is known in the canonical and commentarial texts, as is this meeting with Sela which resulted in the latter discovering the Buddha’s presence in Aṇaṇa and subsequently converting along with the 300 who had been his relatives at the time of the original act, co-transmigrating up to and including the final result of that act, namely arahantship. See DPPN I:663-664

⁹¹reading *jaṭā-khārika-bharitaṃ* (lit., “hair-braided [and] filled with ashes”) with BJTS for PTS *jaṭābhābhārabharitaṇ*, “heavy with the weight of the light of dreadlocks,” but both are probably mistakes for the recurring *jaṭābhārabharitaṇ* (PTS) or *jaṭābhārena bharitaṃ* (BJTS) elsewhere in the text, translated as “bearing a weight of matted hair”

⁹²*paṭiyattāhutaṇ*

⁹³Sela asks the ascetic whether his sacrifice is being performed for a wedding, whether because he is bringing a bride to live in his own house (*āvāho*) or going to live in the house of a bride (*vivāho*).

⁹⁴lit., “has the king been invited by you?”. The brahmin wonders whether the sacrifice is being performed for the king, as an alternative to performing it for a wedding.

⁹⁵*āhuti-yiṭṭhu-kāmo*, lit., “I am one with the desire to sacrifice (*yiṭṭhu[m]* = infinitive of *yajati*) sacrifices (or oblations: *āhuti*)” or “to sacrifice oblations.”

⁹⁶*brāhmaṇe deva-sammate*, lit., “brahmins who have the same opinions as the gods”

who Brings Happiness to Beings⁹⁷
out of Friendship for All Creatures;⁹⁸
these preparations are for him. (29-30) [3610-3611]

The Bright Hue of Wild Mangosteen,⁹⁹
Incomparable, Unmeasurable,
the Buddha, Unrivalled in Form,
is invited for tomorrow. (31) [3612]

Like beaten¹⁰⁰ [gold] atop a forge¹⁰¹
[burning bright] like cedar charcoal,¹⁰²
the Great Hero's like lightening bolts¹⁰³ —
I've invited him, the Buddha.¹⁰⁴ (32) [3613]

Like fire [burning] on a mountain,
like the moon on the fifteenth day,¹⁰⁵
the same color as burning reeds —
I've invited him, the Buddha. (33) [3614]

Fearless, Overcomer of Fear,¹⁰⁶
the Existence-Ender,¹⁰⁷ the Sage,
The Great Hero's like a lion —
I've invited him, the Buddha. (34) [3615]

Skillful in the Buddha's Teaching,
little to endure from others,
Great Hero's like an elephant —
I've invited him, the Buddha. (35) [3616]

⁹⁷*sattasukhāvaho*

⁹⁸*sabbasattahitāvaho*

⁹⁹lit., “radiant with the color of a *Timbarūsaka* [tree]”. The tree is *diospyros embryopteris*, Sinh. *timbiri*. The cty. specifies that the color is that of gold.

¹⁰⁰*pahaṭo*, BJTS reads *pahaṭṭho*, with the same meaning.

¹⁰¹*ukkāmukha*°, the “mouth” (receiving or discharging end) of a furnace or forge, a goldsmith's smelting pot.

¹⁰²*khadiraṅgārasannibha*. *Khadira* is Sinh. *kihiri*, *Acacia Sundra*, English “red cutch” or “khayer.” The tree produces impressive spikes of yellow flowers but is known primarily for its timber and use in making charcoal.

¹⁰³*vijjūpamo*

¹⁰⁴lit., “he, the Buddha, is the one invited by me”

¹⁰⁵i.e., when it is full, *puṇṇamāse va cchandimā*

¹⁰⁶*bhayātīto* = *bhaya* + *atīta*, lit., “he in whom fear is overcome/surpassed/int he past” or “the one free of fear”

¹⁰⁷*bhavantakaraṇo*, “he who makes an end of existence”

Skilled in doing the Great Teaching,¹⁰⁸
the Unmatched,¹⁰⁹ Buddha-elephant,
the Great Hero is like a bull —
I’ve invited him, the Buddha. (36) [3617]

Of Endless Beauty,¹¹⁰ Boundless Fame,
Bearing all the Various Marks,
the Great Hero is like Indra¹¹¹ —
I’ve invited him, the Buddha. (37) [3618]

Strong One,¹¹² Whose Group is Powerful,¹¹³
Majestic One,¹¹⁴ Hard to Approach,¹¹⁵
The Great Hero is like Brahmā¹¹⁶ —
I’ve invited him, the Buddha. (38) [3619]

Teaching-Reacher,¹¹⁷ Ten-Powered One,¹¹⁸
Master of Surpassing Power,¹¹⁹
the Great Hero is like the earth —
I’ve invited him, the Buddha. (39) [3620]

Full of waves [called] morality,
churning knowledge of the Teaching,
the Great Hero is like the sea —
I’ve invited him, the Buddha. (40) [3621]

Hard to Approach,¹²⁰ Hard to Subdue,¹²¹
Unshaken,¹²² Risen Up,¹²³ Lofty,¹²⁴

¹⁰⁸*Saddhammācchāraḥ kusalo*

¹⁰⁹*asādiso*

¹¹⁰*anantavaṇṇo*, could also be “unending color”

¹¹¹*sakkūpamo*, “like Śakra [Indra, the king of the gods]”

¹¹²*patāpī*

¹¹³*vasīgaṇī*

¹¹⁴*tejasī* (BJTS reads *tejassī*)

¹¹⁵*durāsado*

¹¹⁶“God,” the creator deity, the lord of all (*sahampatī*)

¹¹⁷reading *pattadhammo* with BJTS for PTS *mahantadhammo*, “he who had a big Teaching”

¹¹⁸*dasabalo*

¹¹⁹*balātibalapārago* (BJTS reads *°pāragū*), lit., “one who has gone beyond the power-surpassing power”

¹²⁰*durāsado*

¹²¹*duppasaho*

¹²²*acchalo*

¹²³*uggato*

¹²⁴*brahā*

the Great Hero's like Mt. Meru¹²⁵ —
I've invited him, the Buddha. (41) [3622]

Of Endless Knowledge, Impartial,¹²⁶
Unmeasurable,¹²⁷ Gone to the Top,¹²⁸
the Great Hero is like the sky —
I've invited him, the Buddha. (42) [3623]

Support¹²⁹ for Those with Fears [and] Frights,
Protection¹³⁰ for Refuge-Seekers,¹³¹
the Great Hero Provides Comfort¹³² —
I've invited him, the Buddha. (43) [3624]

The Abode¹³³ of Wisdom and Spells,¹³⁴
Merit-Field for happiness-Seekers¹³⁵
the Great Hero, the Mine of Gems —
I've invited him, the Buddha. (44) [3625]

¹²⁵*nerūpamo*, i.e., "is like the cosmic mountain."

¹²⁶*asamasamo*, "the same [even] in difference." This epithet could be read as the grammatical negative of the compound *samasama*, lit., "exactly the same" or "evenly even" (or, according to Sinhala usage of the same term, "Equal"), which is also used as a Buddha-epithet above, v. 57 of #388 {391} (*Pilindavacchcha-apadāna*) = [3430]. *Asama* also means "stone," a synonym for Sela's own name, so we could read this as meaning "The Same as Stone," though the relationship of that quality to the nature of the sky would then prove problematic. A better alt. reading, suggested to me by H.M. Wijerathna, is "the Same as the Unmatched Ones," ("the same as those of whom no one is an equal"), i.e., the previous Buddhas.

¹²⁷*atulo*. Pronounce as contraction "unmeas'able to preserve meter"

¹²⁸*aggataṇ gato*

¹²⁹*patitṭhā*, support, resting place

¹³⁰*tāṇo*

¹³¹*saraṇagāmināṇ*, of those going for refuge

¹³²*assāssako*

¹³³*āsayo*

¹³⁴*buddhi-mantānaṇ* (intelligence and mantras)

¹³⁵happiness need to be contracted "happ'ness" in recitation, to preserve meter.

¹³⁶*assāsaka*, "breathing," "having breath," by extension "breathing easily," or "he who makes others breath easily". I follow BJTS Sinhala gloss in thus translating the epithet (Sinh. *āsvāsillak*)

¹³⁷*veda-kara*, "the one who makes religious feeling, religious joy, enthusiasm, emotion." *Veda* is a wide-ranging term derived from *vid (hence also "knowledge," "science," cf. *vijā*), and of course designates the revealed poetry of the brahmins. In that latter context (whereby we could read the term, "Doer of the Veda" or even Maker of the Veda, "another possible meaning), the literal meaning of *assāsaka* (see previous note) is especially interesting, for "Breathing" or even "the Breath" similarly evokes a theme very dear to Brahmanical thought and scripture.

Comforter,¹³⁶ the Awe-Inspirer,¹³⁷
Giver of the Fruit of Monkhood,
the Great Hero is like a cloud¹³⁸ —
I’ve invited him, the Buddha. (45) [3626]

The Eye of the World,¹³⁹ the Hero,¹⁴⁰
Dispeller of Every Darkness,¹⁴¹
the Great Hero is like the sun —
I’ve invited him, the Buddha. (46) [3627]

Sage, Seer of the Nature¹⁴² of
Emancipations from Objects,¹⁴³
the Great Hero is like the moon —
I’ve invited him, the Buddha. (47) [3628]

Venerable,¹⁴⁴ Raised up in the World,
Adorned with the Auspicious Marks,
Unmeasurable, the Great Sage —
I’ve invited him, the Buddha. [3629]¹⁴⁵

The One Whose Knowledge is Boundless,¹⁴⁶
Morality beyond Compare,¹⁴⁷
whose freedom has no parallel,¹⁴⁸
I’ve invited him, the Buddha. (48) [3630]

Whose courage¹⁴⁹ has no parallel,
whose firmness is unthinkable,¹⁵⁰

¹³⁸*meghūpamo*, especially a storm-cloud

¹³⁹reading *lokacchakkhu* with BJTS for PTS *loke samussito* (“elevated in the world,” also a reasonable epithet for both the Buddha and the sun)

¹⁴⁰*vīro*

¹⁴¹reading *sabbatamavinodano* with BJTS for PTS *sabbantamavinodano*

¹⁴²reading *sabhāva-dassano* with BJTS for PTS *sabhāva rasako*, “the Original Taste”

¹⁴³*ārammaṇa-vimuttisu*, the (multiple) forms of release from the objects of the world and of the senses, including mental objects

¹⁴⁴contract to “ven’rable” for recitation, to keep the meter

¹⁴⁵this verse does not appear in PTS. BJTS reads: *Vuddho samussito loke/lakkhaṇehi alaṅkato/appameyyo mahāvīro*/*so me Buddho nimantito//

¹⁴⁶*Yassa ñāṇam appameyyaṇ*, lit., “of whom knowledge is without end/limit/measure”

¹⁴⁷*sīlaṇ yassa anūpamaṇ*, lit., “the morality of whom is without comparison/metaphor”

¹⁴⁸*vimutti asadisā*

¹⁴⁹BJTS (and PTS alt., *diti* [sic?]) reading *yassa dhiti* (“whose energy/steadfastness/courage”) for PTS *yassa pīti* (whose joy”), also a likable epithet for both the Buddha

¹⁵⁰*thāmo yas*“sa *acchintīyo*

he whose exertion is the best —
I’ve invited him, the Buddha. (49) [3631]

Passion, hatred, stupidity
and every poison is destroyed;
the Great Hero is like a drug¹⁵¹ —
I’ve invited him, the Buddha. (50) [3632]

There’s removal of the darkness
of all pain, defilement, disease;
the Great Hero’s like a doctor —
I’ve invited him, the Buddha. (51) [3633]

“Friend, this sound is hard to obtain,
which has been said [here], “the Buddha”.
Hearing “the Buddha,” “the Buddha,”
you all should be joyful like me.”¹⁵² (52) [3634]

[Sela:]
Not keeping my joy inside [me]
it poured forth [to those] outside [me].
I, being [full of] joyful thoughts,¹⁵³
spoke these words [to him at that time]: (53) [3635]

“Well then where is that Blessed One,
the World’s Best One, the Bull of Men?
Having gone where will I see [this]
Giver of the Fruit of Monkhood?” (54) [3636]

[He,] taking hold of [my] right arm,¹⁵⁴
thrilled, with [his] hands pressed together,
showed to me the King of Teachings,¹⁵⁵
who Removes the Arrows of Grief. (55) [3637]

¹⁵¹reading *agadūpama*, “like a medicine” with BJTS for PTS *agarūpama* (“like [something which is] not heavy”?)

¹⁵²lit., “you all should produce joy with me: BJTS gloss prefers to read the *me* as modifying the saying of “Buddha,” i.e., “my saying of...” I take it, instead, as an instrumental connected with the second person plural imperative, a subtle reminder that though Sela is addressed as a singular “you” in the first two feet of this verse, he is surrounded by a large group of three hundred followers. The meaning could also be “you all should produce joy for me”.

¹⁵³*pītimato santo*

¹⁵⁴*paggayha dakkhiṇaṇ bāhuṇ*

¹⁵⁵*dhammarājaṇ*

[Keniya:]

“Do you see¹⁵⁶ this massive forest,
risen up like a great storm cloud,
dark blue just like collyrium,
as visible as the ocean?¹⁵⁷ (56) [3638]

The Buddha [now] is dwelling there,
the Untamed-Tamer,¹⁵⁸ the [Great] Sage,
instructing those who can be trained,
making known Awakening’s parts.¹⁵⁹ (57) [3639]

[Sela:]

Like the thirsty [seeking] water,
like the hungry [looking for] food,
like a cow greedy for [its] calf,
I went in search of the Victor. (58) [3640]

Knowing manners and good conduct¹⁶⁰
I did teach to my own students
going into Buddha’s presence,
restraint in line with the Teaching.¹⁶¹ (59) [3641]

‘Blessed Ones are Hard to Approach,
like lions wandering alone,
walking carefully, step by step,¹⁶²
come [along after me], O men. (60) [3642]

As fearful as a snake’s venom,
like a lion, king of the beasts,
like a rutting tusked elephant,
thus Buddhas are Hard to Approach. (61) [3643]

¹⁵⁶reading *passas’ etaṃ* with BJTS for *passass’ etaṃ*

¹⁵⁷*sāgaraṃ viya dissantaṃ*

¹⁵⁸*adantadamako* could mean either “tamer of the untamed” or “tamer who is untamed;” I leave the ambiguity open with the hyphen, admitting here my preference for “tamer of the untamed” (which is also the BJTS reading, cf RD on *dametar*), and recommend pronunciation in chanting which through stress on the first term in the compound, and tone, can emphasize that the Buddha is one who tames those who are untamed/feral.

¹⁵⁹*bodhento bodhapakkhiye*, which BJTS glosses as the (37) aspects or qualities of Awakening or Enlightenment (*bodha*, here = *bodhi*, see RD s.v.)

¹⁶⁰*ācchāra-upacchāraññū*

¹⁶¹*dhammanucchchavasaṇvaraṇ* (BJTS reads *dhammanucchchavi°*)

¹⁶²*pade padaṇ nikkhipantā*, lit., “carefully placing [your feet] step by step”

O men, neglecting [any need]
[that you may have] to cough or sneeze,
walking carefully, step by step,¹⁶³
go into the Buddha's presence. (62) [3644]

Buddhas are Hard to Go Up To,¹⁶⁴
they're Ones who Relish Solitude,
make Little Sound,¹⁶⁵ Hard to Approach,
Revered [in the world] with its gods. (63) [3645]

When¹⁶⁶ I am asking [him] questions,
or exchanging friendly greetings,
then you all should make little sound;
stand [there] as though [you were] sages.¹⁶⁷ (64) [3646]

Which Great Teaching he is preaching,¹⁶⁸
peaceful, leading to nirvana,
listen to the meaning with care,¹⁶⁹
happily hearing the Teaching.¹⁷⁰ (65) [3647]

Having approached the Sambuddha
I exchanged greetings with the Sage.
[While I was] conversing with¹⁷¹ him,
I looked out for [Great Man's] marks.¹⁷² (66) [3648]

I can see thirty of the marks,
doubting only two of the marks:
through his powers¹⁷³ the Sage showed me
[his] penis enclosed in a sheath.¹⁷⁴ (67) [3649]

[And then the Buddha] placed his tongue

¹⁶³*pade padaṇ nikkhipantā*, lit., "carefully placing [your feet] step by step"

¹⁶⁴*durūpansaṅkamā*

¹⁶⁵*appasaddā*

¹⁶⁶reading *yadā* 'haṃ with BJTS for PTS *yāvāhaṇ*, "as far as I..."

¹⁶⁷*munibhūtā va*, i.e., silently

¹⁶⁸reading *deseti* with BJTS for PTS *desesi*, "you preach"

¹⁶⁹*nisāmetha*

¹⁷⁰lit., "the Great Teaching," *saddhammasavanaṇ sukhaṇ*

¹⁷¹*kathaṇ vītisāretvā*

¹⁷²i.e., the thirty-two auspicious marks on the body of a *mahāpurusa*, which signal that he will either be a Buddha or a wheel-turning monarch.

¹⁷³reading *iddhiyā** with BJTS for PTS *itthiyā* ("to a woman," sic!)*

¹⁷⁴*kosohitaṇ vatthaguyhaṇ*, BJTS reads *kosohitavattthaguyhaṇ*

into [his] ear¹⁷⁵ and on his nose.
The Victor touched [his] forehead's tip¹⁷⁶
[and] covered it all [with his tongue]. (68) [3650]

I, seeing his auspicious marks,
fulfilling [all] the attributes,
concluding¹⁷⁷ that, "he's a Buddha,"
I went forth with [all] my students. (69) [3651]

I went forth into homelessness,
together with the three hundred.
When eight months [still] had not elapsed,
we all realized nirvana.¹⁷⁸ (70) [3652]

Together¹⁷⁹ doing [good] karma
for the Unsurpassed Merit-Field,
together we transmigrated,
together we turned [from the world]. (71) [3653]

I gave¹⁸⁰ rafters¹⁸¹ [for that new hall],
remaining¹⁸² within the guild's rule.¹⁸³
Due to that deed, well done [by me],
I'm receiving eight good results.¹⁸⁴ (72) [3654]

I'm worshipped¹⁸⁵ in [all] directions,
and I have food that's ambrosial;
I'm the support of everyone;¹⁸⁶
I don't experience¹⁸⁷ terror.¹⁸⁸ (73) [3655]

¹⁷⁵ *kaṇṇasote*, "on his auditory organ"

¹⁷⁶ reading *patamasi nalāṭantaṃ* with BJTS for PTS *paṭṭimasanalāṭaṇ taṇ*

¹⁷⁷ *niṭṭhaṇ gantvā*, lit., "having gone (come) to the conclusion"

¹⁷⁸ *sabbe patt' amha nibbutiṇ*

¹⁷⁹ *ekato*, lit., "as one"

¹⁸⁰ lit., "having given"

¹⁸¹ reading *gopānasīyo* with BJTS for PTS *gopānāsī*

¹⁸² reading *vasī* with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS *vasiṇ*

¹⁸³ *pūgadhamme*

¹⁸⁴ *hetu*, lit., causes; I follow BJTS gloss in understanding these as *ānisaṃsas* (Sinh. *anusas aṭak labami*). BJTS explains the use of *hetu* (which may be *metri causa*) as "making that good deed, [that is] that karma, the reason." I count the eight here as: (1) worshipped everywhere, (2) ambrosial food, (3) supported by everyone, (4) no terrors, (5) no diseases, (6) long life, (7) fine skin, (8) chosen or wished-for residences.

¹⁸⁵ *pūjito*

¹⁸⁶ reading *patiṭṭhā homi sabbesaṃ* with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS *patiṭṭhā bhosiṇ sabbesaṇ*

¹⁸⁷ lit., "have," "find"

I don't get [any] diseases,
and I protect [my] long life-span.
I am one with exquisite skin,
I live in dwellings [that I] choose.¹⁸⁹ (74) [3656]

Remaining¹⁹⁰ within the guild's rule,¹⁹¹
the rafters I gave¹⁹² [numbered] eight.
Following the eighth¹⁹³ [I received]
analysis¹⁹⁴ with¹⁹⁵ Arahantship. (75) [3657]

All accomplishments accomplished,¹⁹⁶
duties complete,¹⁹⁷ defilement-free,¹⁹⁸
[I] am your son [today], Great Sage,
[and] "Eight Rafters"¹⁹⁹ is [now my] name. (76) [3658]

Remaining²⁰⁰ within the guild's rule,²⁰¹
the pillars²⁰² I gave²⁰³ [numbered] five.
Due to that deed, well done [by me],
I'm receiving five good results.²⁰⁴ (77) [3659]

I remain unshaken by love,²⁰⁵
I do not lack for possessions,²⁰⁶

¹⁸⁸ *tāso*

¹⁸⁹ *āvāse patthite vase*

¹⁹⁰ reading *vasī* with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS *vasiṇ*

¹⁹¹ *pūgadhamme*

¹⁹² lit., "having given"

¹⁹³ or, "in addition to those eight"

¹⁹⁴ *paṭisambhidā*, i.e., mastery of the (four) analytical modes, a mark of arahantship

¹⁹⁵ lit., "and". The *ccha* here connects the two separate *ānisaṃsas* into one, referred to in the final foot with the singular pronoun *etaṇ*

¹⁹⁶ *sabbavositavosāno*, lit., "being one who has accomplished all accomplishments," "being an arahant"

¹⁹⁷ *katakcchcho*, i.e., "being an arahant"

¹⁹⁸ *anāsavo*, i.e., "being an arahant"

¹⁹⁹ *aṭṭhagopānasī nāma*

²⁰⁰ reading *vasī* with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS *vasiṇ*

²⁰¹ *pūgadhamme*

²⁰² *thamhāni*

²⁰³ lit., "having given"

²⁰⁴ *hetu*, lit., causes; I follow BJTS in understanding these as *ānisaṃsas* (Sinh. *anusas pahak labami*). I count the five here as: (1) unshaken by love, (2) wealthy, (3) one whose words are taken well, causing no offense, (4) mind not out of control, unshaken, and (5) arahantship (unstained, respectful, obedient, duties complete, undefiled follower of the Buddha).

²⁰⁵ *acchalo homi mettāya*

²⁰⁶ *anūnabhogavā*

I'm one whose words are taken well,²⁰⁷
[and] likewise I cause no offense.²⁰⁸ (78) [3660]

My mind is not out of control,²⁰⁹
I'm not shaken by anything,
unstained in the dispensation,²¹⁰
due to that deed, well done [by me]. (79) [3661]

I'm respectful,²¹¹ obedient,²¹²
duties complete,²¹³ defilement-free;²¹⁴
I'm your follower, Great Hero,
a venerated monk,²¹⁵ O Sage. (80) [3662]

Making a well-made palanquin,
I [then] dedicated²¹⁶ that hall.
Due to that deed, well done [by me],
I'm receiving five good results.²¹⁷ (81) [3663]

I'm born in an eminent clan,²¹⁸
I become a very rich man,²¹⁹
I'm one who achieves all success,²²⁰
I am not plagued with²²¹ avarice.²²² (82) [3664]

In [whichever] village [I] wish
my palanquin comes to a rest,²²³

²⁰⁷ *adeyyavacchano homi*

²⁰⁸ *na dhaṇsemi yathā ahaṇ*

²⁰⁹ reading *abhantaṃ mānaṣaṃ mama* with BJTS (*bhanta* = swerving, wavering, unsteady, used of a cart that is out of control) for PTS *āgataṃ mānaṣaṃ mamaṇ* (alt. *mama*), "my mind is come". PTS also gives *asantaṇ* (lacking peace, disturbed) as an alternate reading, which would be preferable to *āgataṇ*

²¹⁰ *vimalo homi sāsane*

²¹¹ *sagāraṇo*

²¹² *sappaṭiṣso*

²¹³ *katakkicchcho*, i.e., "being an arahant"

²¹⁴ *anāsavo*, i.e., "being an arahant"

²¹⁵ *bhikkhu taṇ vandaṭe*, lit., "a monk who is venerated"

²¹⁶ *paññāpeṣ' ahaṇ*

²¹⁷ *hetu*, lit., causes; I follow BJTS in understanding these as *ānisaṃsas* (Sinh. *anusas pahak labami*). I count the five here as: (1) good birth, (2) great wealth, (3) all success, (4) lack of stinginess or greed, (5) magic palanquin.

²¹⁸ *uccchche kule*

²¹⁹ *maḥābhogo bhavāmi*

²²⁰ reading *sabbasampattiko homi* with BJTS for PTS *sabbasampāttiko*

²²¹ lit., "not found for me" "I do not know" "I do not experience"

²²² *macchcheraṇ* = *macchchariyaṇ*²

²²³ *upatiṭṭhati*, lit., "stands [there]," "comes to stand fast"

by means of that best palanquin,
I travel according to wish. (83) [3665]

Because of that palanquin-gift,
I removed all of [my] darkness.
Sage, this monk,²²⁴ empowered with all
special knowledges,²²⁵ worships you. (84) [3666]

I performed all of [my] duties
[and] the duties of others [too].²²⁶
Because of that well-done deed, I
entered the city of no fear.²²⁷ (85) [3667]

I gave food [to the Buddha and]
also [that] well-completed hall.
Due to that deed, well done [by me],
I arrived at that best of states.²²⁸ (86) [3668]

Those who are tamers in the world,
tame these elephants [and] horses.
Employing varied punishments²²⁹
they tame by means of cruelty.²³⁰ (87) [3669]

Not like that,²³¹ O Great Hero, do
you tame men [and] women [here].
Not using force,²³² without weapons,²³³
you tame in the supreme taming.²³⁴ (88) [3670]

Praising the virtues²³⁵ of giving,
[you are] skilled in preaching, O Sage;

²²⁴*thero*, “elder”

²²⁵*sabbâbhiññā-balapatto*

²²⁶*para-kiccchchatta-kiccchchāni*, “duties which are to be done by others”. I follow BJTS gloss in reading the compound accordingly; it could also be read to mean that he performed his own duties including duties involving service to others.

²²⁷*pāvisim abhayaṇ puraṇ*, that is, nirvana.

²²⁸Reading *seṭṭhattaṃ* (lit., “bestness”) with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS *seṭṭhan taṇ*

²²⁹*karetvā* (BJTS reads *karitvā*) *kāraṇā nānā*

²³⁰reading *dāruṇena damenti te* with BJTS for PTS *dāruṇe na damenti te*, “they do not tame the cruel ones.”

²³¹reading *na h’evaṃ* with BJTS for PTS *na heva*

²³²*adaṇḍena*

²³³*asatthena*

²³⁴*uttame dame*

²³⁵reading *vaṇṇe kittento* with BJTS for PTS *vaṇṇaṇ kittento*, “praising the virtue”

addressing a single question²³⁶
you freed the three hundred, O Sage. (89) [3671]

We're tamed by the charioteer,²³⁷
well-freed,²³⁸ undefiled,²³⁹ empowered
by all the special knowledges,
quenched²⁴⁰ in destroying the bases.²⁴¹ (90) [3672]

In the hundred thousand aeons
since I gave that gift at that time,
every fear has been overcome:
that's the fruit of giving a hall. (91) [3673]

My being in Buddha's presence²⁴²
was a very good thing for me.
The three knowledges are attained;
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (92) [3674]

My defilements are [now] burnt up;
all [new] existence is destroyed.
Like elephants with broken chains,
I am living without constraint. (93) [3675]

The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (94) [3676]

Thus indeed Venerable Sela Thera spoke these verses.
The legend of Sela Thera is finished.

²³⁶reading *ekapañhaṃ* with BJTS for PTS *ekapañhe*, "single questions"

²³⁷*sārathinā*. *Sārathī*, coachman or charioteer, also connotes a trainer of horses, one who keeps the horses under control.

²³⁸*suvimiuttā*

²³⁹*anāsavā*

²⁴⁰*nibbutā*, lit., "blown out," "cooled off," i.e., in nirvana.

²⁴¹*upadhikkhaye*, i.e., "in the destruction of the substratum of rebirth,." *Upadhi* (clinging to rebirth, the reason for rebirth, the obstacle to nirvana) is classified in various lists of *upadhis* (plural), such as clinging, wrong views, defilements, karma, bad conduct, etc.

²⁴²BJTS agrees with PTS here in presenting this variant on the standard refrain verse