

Legends of the Buddhist Saints

Apadānapāli

TRANSLATED BY
JONATHAN S. WALTERS,
WHITMAN COLLEGE, 2017

Todeyya

Jonathan S. Walters

Copyright © 2026 Jonathan S. Walters.

PUBLISHED BY JONATHAN S. WALTERS AND WHITMAN COLLEGE

<https://apadanatranslation.com>

Licensed under the Attribution, Non-Commercial, Share Alike (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>).

Printed September 2026

[405. {408.}¹ Todeyya²]

In Ketumati, best city,
there was a king named Vijaya,³
a hero, endowed with great strength,⁴
inhabiting [that] city then. (1) [4113]

Because of that king's indolence,
wild men of the forest⁵ rose up.
They were spies,⁶ and men with foul mouths;⁷
they laid waste to the country then. (2) [4114]

When the borderlands angered [him],
the king⁸ then quickly assembled
[his] dependents⁹ and officers,¹⁰
to restrain¹¹ [all those] enemies. (3) [4115]

Elephant-riders,¹² sentinels,¹³
champions,¹⁴ shield-bearing soldiers,¹⁵

¹Apadāna 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.

²a historical monk, follower of Bāvarī whose questions to the Buddha, and his answers, are recorded as the *Todeyya-māṇava-pucchchā*. See SN v. 1006, 1088-1091; cf. DPPN I:1038 (read SN. for S. in the references)

³"Conqueror," reading the name with BJTS (and PTS alt., and Cty) for PTS Ajitañjaya, "Unconquered Vanquisher".

⁴*sūro vikkamasampanno*

⁵*aṭaviyo*

⁶PTS *occharā*, BJTS (and PTS alt.) *otārā*, both meaning someone who seeks out or investigates in a bad way, people who pry or spy; BJTS gloss = "searching for holes". The implication is that they violate others, perhaps as thieves who steal what they discover.

⁷*tuṇḍikā* from *tuṇḍa*, "beak," RD: "peckers" and cf. *ahituṇḍika*, snake charmer. BJTS gloss: *mukharayō*, bold speakers, noisy, foul-mouthed. The implication, whatever the exact meaning, is certainly that they were louts.

⁸*arindamo*, lit., "tamer of enemies"

⁹*bhate*

¹⁰all the mss. apparently read *balatthe* for *balatṭhe*, military officers, royal guard; BJTS glosses the term as *balasenaṅga*, "the officers' branch of the army"

¹¹reading *niggāhayī* with BJTS for PTS *niggāhayiṇ*, "I restrained". The verb means "to hold back," "restrain" "control" "censure" "rebuke" or "rebuff"

¹²PTS *hatthārūḷhā*, BJTS (and PTS alt.) *hatthārohā*

¹³*anikaṭṭhā*

¹⁴or "heroes:" *sūrā*

¹⁵*cchammayodhino*, RD: "soldiers in cuirass"

¹⁶*dhanuggahā*

archers¹⁶ and mighty noblemen:¹⁷
they all assembled at that time. (4) [4116]

The cooks¹⁸ [and] those who dress the hair,¹⁹
the bath boys,²⁰ the garland-makers,²¹
heroes²² [and] conquering soldiers:²³
they all assembled at that time. (5) [4117]

The swordsmen²⁴ as well as the waiters,²⁵
bowmen and people in armor,
hunters²⁶ and conquering soldiers:²⁷
they all assembled at that time. (6) [4118]

*Mātaṅgas*²⁸ rutting in three ways²⁹
[and] tuskers sixty years of age,
adorned with headdresses of gold:
they all assembled at that time. (7) [4119]

The soldiers³⁰ who have done the job,³¹
enduring³² cold [as well as] heat,
also excrement-removal:³³
they all assembled at that time. (8) [4120]

¹⁷*uggā*

¹⁸*ālārikā*

¹⁹*kappakā*

²⁰*nahāpakā*

²¹*mālākarakā*

²²*sūrā*

²³*vijitasāṅgāmā*

²⁴or “sword-bearers”: *khaggahatthā*, lit., “those with swords in [their] hands”

²⁵*purisā*. BJTS takes this with *khaggahatthā*, swordsmen, but the “*ccha*” as well as the list-like structure of the whole passage lead me to take these as referring to two different classes of people who assembled, in this case swordsmen and “men,” that is (acc. to RD) attendants or waiters.

²⁶or “tribals,” *luddā*, BJTS gloss *vāddō*

²⁷*vijitasāṅgāmā*. The repetition of the term opens the possibility that in this verse and the previous one it is used as a qualifier of “hero” and “hunter,” but I follow BJTS Sinhala gloss in treating them as separate classes of people.

²⁸see n. to #1, v. 25 [164].

²⁹i.e., showing their rut in their eyes, ears, and genitals. See cty, p. 288.

³⁰*yodhājīvā*, lit., “those who live as warriors”

³¹*katakammā*

³²*khamā*

³³PTS *ukkārūharaṇassa*, BJTS *ukkaraharaṇassa*, both with the same meaning. I suppose this refers to latrine duty in army camps, or else those who clean up animal feces, but is open to a variety of interpretations (and livelier translations, e.g., “and even shoveling up shit”)

The sound of conchs, the sound of drums,
and thus the sound of trumpets;³⁴
they being gladdened by those [sounds]
did all assemble at that time. (9) [4121]

Those who crush and those who injure³⁵
with tridents³⁶ [and] knives³⁷ [and] mantras,³⁸
suits of armor, also lances:
they all assembled at that time. (10) [4122]

Dressing in a suit of armor³⁹
that king, victory-less victor,⁴⁰
impaled on tridents at that time
sixty thousand living beings. (11) [4123]

The people then let out the cry,⁴¹
“Alas! the king is unrighteous.
When will there [ever] be an end
for one who is roasting in hell?”⁴² (12) [4124]

On the bed I then tossed and turned,⁴³
[as though]⁴⁴ I’m lying down⁴⁵ in hell:⁴⁶

³⁴PTS *uddhavasaddakaṇ*, “the sound of upper [itches?],” BJTS reads *udhamasaddakaṇ* (?) and glosses the term *kālam haḍa*, “the sound of trumpets,” which I follow here. Cone says this reading is “probably wrong” and suggests the possibility that the correct reading is *uddhaka*, which RD (and *Abhidānappadīpikā*) defines as a sort of drum

³⁵reading *koṭṭayantā nipātentā* with BJTS for PTS *koṭṭentānaṇ nivattantā*, “turning back of the crushers (?)”?

³⁶*trisūla*^o

³⁷*konti*^o

³⁸*mantehi*. Cone, following RD (whose uncertain entry would yield “leather shields”), treats *kontimantehi* as a *tatpurusa* rather than *danda* compound, taking the term as “leather-worker’s sharp knife”. I follow BJTS in seeing “mantra” as a kind of injurious weapon, too.

³⁹BJTS reading is considerably different: *kimevāt’ nisāmetvā*, “having observed ‘what now?’” (?), a reading it glosses, “having asked, ‘what punishment is appropriate (according to the law)?’”

⁴⁰reading *ajitaṇ jino* with BJTS for PTS *Ajitañjaya*, “that king [named] Ajitañjaya,” which as noted in the note to v. 1 [4113], above, BJTS rejects (giving Vijaya as the king’s name). But these first two feet are in any event confused and problematic).

⁴¹reading *saddaṇ mānusakā’ kaṃsu* with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS *saddaṇ amānus’ ākāsuṇ*, “non-humans made (sic, taking *ākāsuṇ* as 3rd pl. aor. of *karoti* on the model of *ākāsi*, 3rd sing. aor; it would more likely come fr. *ākāsatī*, i.e., “shined”) the sound”

⁴²*niraye paccchamānassa*

⁴³*tuvattento*, causative, lit., “being made to turn” (as opposed to the indicative sense of the same verb, translated at [1487], [1597] as “snuggle” and at [4058] as “nestle”)

⁴⁴this follows the BJTS gloss “(men)”

I do not sleep by day and night;
they torture me with a trident. (13) [4125]

“What good is⁴⁷ [this] careless kingship,
[these] vehicles [or this] army?
They aren’t able to support [me];
they terrify me all the time. (14) [4126]

What good are [these] sons [and these] wives,
[as well as this] entire kingship?
Well then why don’t I [now] go forth?
I will cleanse the road to rebirth. (15) [4127]

Disregarding [all my] wealth [and]
fighting battles I abandoned
[my] sixty thousand elephants
decked out in all the ornaments,
mātaṅgas with gold headdresses,
clothed in harnessing made of gold,
mounted by elephant-trainers
with lances and goads in [their] hands.⁴⁸
Frightened by [my] own [bad] karma,
I went out into homelessness. (16-18a-b) [4128-4129]⁴⁹

[My] sixty thousand horses [too],
decked out in all the ornaments,
thoroughbreds of good pedigree,⁵⁰
horses from Sindh, fast vehicles,
mounted by trainers of horses⁵¹
wearing armor with bows in hand —

⁴⁵reading *sayāmi* (“I lie down”) with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS *vasāmi* (“I am living”). PTS also offers *passāmi* (“I am seeing”) as another alt.

⁴⁶*vasāmi niraye*

⁴⁷lit., “what [for me] with...?”

⁴⁸*tomaraṅkusapāṇi*

⁴⁹BJTS presents [4129] as a six-footed verses; PTS includes the last two feet of the verse [4129e-f] as the first two feet of v. 18 (a-b).

⁵⁰*jātiyā*, lit., “well-born” or simply “excellent,” the term connotes lineage, genealogy, caste, breed. Here it seems to substitute for “those fast like the wind” (*vātajavā*) in parallel lists (see above, [1293], [2692], [3981])

⁵¹*gāmaṇiya* usually means elephant-trainers, as in v. 26 [4097], above, but here the context makes “horse-trainer” a more suitable translation, so I have taken the same liberty taken by the poet in treating the term that way. PSI indicates that these are trainers of “elephants, etc.” (*ātun ādīn puhūṇu karana ācchāryaya*), allowing for the extended meaning in this context.

having abandoned all of them,
I went out into homelessness. (18c-d-20a-b) [4130-4131]

Sixty thousand chariots [too],
decked out in all the ornaments,
covered in⁵² the skins of leopards
and likewise tigers,⁵³ flags hoisted —
having abandoned all of them,
I went forth into homelessness. (20c-d-21) [4132]⁵⁴

Sixty thousand milch-cows [as well],
[and] all the metal pails for milk⁵⁵ —
eliminating even them,
I went forth into homelessness. (22) [4133]

[My] sixty thousand women [too],
decked out in all the ornaments,
with varied clothes and jewelry
and wearing earrings made of gems,
with long eyelashes, lovely smiles⁵⁶
and slim waists, pleasant to look at⁵⁷ —
abandoning them as they wept,
I went forth into homelessness. (23-24) [4134-4135]

[And] sixty thousand villages,
completely full in all regards —
throwing away that [whole] kingship,
I went forth into homelessness. (25) [4136]

⁵²*sannaddhā*, RD: fastened, bound; put on, clothed (with), armed, accoutred. The term has a wide enough range to leave open the possibility that rather than covered in the hides of these big cats, the poet imagines the chariots pulled by leopards and tigers, which would make sense of the specification below that they are also mounted by animal-trainers, in this case perhaps leopard- and tiger-trainers, paralleling the elephant-trainers who mount the elephants and the horse-trainers who mount the horses.

⁵³*dīpā*, fr. *dīpī*, leopard. Both RD and PSI give cart covered with a tiger skin as one of the meanings of *dīpā*, and the same (i.e., covered with a tiger skin) for *veyyagghā*, but here the “and also too” (*atho pi*) connecting the two terms clearly indicates that they are not simple synonyms, but rather two types of decorated or armored carts: those covered with leopard skins (*dīpā*) and those covered with tiger skins (*veyyagghā*).

⁵⁴BJTS presents this as a six-footed verse; it spans two verses in BJTS

⁵⁵*sabbā kaṇṣūpadhāraṇā*

⁵⁶*hasulā* = ?

⁵⁷RD 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

Having gone out from the city,
I approached the Himalayas.
On Bhāgīrathī⁵⁸ River's banks,
I constructed a hermitage. (26) [4137]

Having built a hall out of leaves
I made [myself] a heated room;⁵⁹
bent on exertion,⁶⁰ resolute,⁶¹
I'm living in my hermitage. (27) [4138]

Terror does not arise in me;
I don't see frights or fearful [things]
when meditating under trees,
in pavilions⁶² or empty homes. (28) [4139]

The Sambuddha named Sumedha,
Chief, Compassionate One, the Sage,
blazing with the light of knowledge,
arose in the world at that time. (29) [4140]

There was a powerful spirit⁶³
living near my hermitage [then].
When the Best Buddha came to be,
he then announced [that fact] to me: (30) [4141]

"A Buddha's risen in the world,
an Eyeful One named Sumedha;
he's [helping] all the folk to cross;
he will ferry you across too." (31) [4142]

After hearing the spirit's words,
all the time I was⁶⁴ deeply moved;⁶⁵
thinking, "A Buddha! A Buddha!"
I made my hermitage ready. (32) [4143]

After chopping wood for the fire
and smoothing out [my] sleeping mat,

⁵⁸this is the BJTS spelling (here as *Bhāgirathi*, sic). PTS reads *Bhāgīrasī*

⁵⁹PTS *aggyāgāraṇ*, BJTS *aggyāgāraṇ*

⁶⁰*āraddhaviriyo*

⁶¹*pahitatto*

⁶²*maṇḍape*

⁶³*yakkho āsi mahiddhiko*, lit., "a spirit with great *iddhi*"

⁶⁴*āsi*, lit., "there was [for me]"

⁶⁵*saṇviggo*, fr. *saṇvega*

having worshipped my hermitage,
I went out from the forest [then]. (33) [4144]

Taking sandalwood from village
to village, city to city,
searching for [him], the God of Gods,
I then came up to [him], the Guide. (34) [4145]

At that moment, the Blessed One,
Sumedha, Leader of the World,
was preaching the Four [Noble] Truths,
enlightening the people then. (35) [4146]

Pressing both my hands together
with⁶⁶ the sandalwood on my head,
having greeted the Sambuddha,
I spoke these verses [to him then]: (36) [4147]

“When jasmine trees⁶⁷ are flowering
[their] scents are diffused around them;⁶⁸
Hero, with the scent of virtue you
permeate every⁶⁹ direction. (37) [4148]

When the *sal* trees⁷⁰ are flowering,
champak,⁷¹ ironwood,⁷² *vanika*,⁷³

⁶⁶lit., “making” “placing”

⁶⁷*vassike*

⁶⁸*santike*, i.e., in their immediate vicinity

⁶⁹contract to ev’ry when chanting, to keep the meter

⁷⁰*sālesu*, *shorea robusta*

⁷¹the *cchampaka* (Sinh. *sapu*) tree is *Magnolia champaca*, formerly classified as *michelia champaca*. English names for the tree include Champak, Joy Perfume Tree, Yellow Jade Orchid Tree and Fragrant Himalayan Champaca. It was the Bodhi tree of the seventeenth Buddha of the *Buddhavaṃsa*, Atthadassi. It has highly fragrant cream to yellowish-colored blossoms.

⁷²*nāga* = Sinhala *nā*, ironwood, *Mesua Ferrea* Linn, Bodhi tree of Mangala, Sumana, Revata, Sobhita buddhas; national tree of Sri Lanka. It has brilliant, fragrant white flowers containing four petals each, as well as a red fruit eaten by birds.

⁷³*vanike*, Sinh. gloss *kōmbu*. RD: *vanika* = *vanaka*, of the forest, only in the cpd. *nāgavanika*, = “of the elephant forest,” = a hunter. BJTS glosses *nāga*° as *nā* (ironwood), so *vanika* here must refer to another kind of flowering plant.

⁷⁴*atimuttaka*. RD: a plant, *Gaertnera Racemosa* = *Hiptage*, *hiptage benghalensis*, stout, high-climbing vine, now invasive species in Florida, scented pink-white flowers, medicinal uses. BJTS glosses Sinh. *yohombu* (Bot. Dict. = *yohombu vāla* = *yon tumba*, an annual creeper, *Trichodesma zeylanicum*).

⁷⁵*ketaka*, *Pandanus odoratissima*, Sinhala *vāṭakē* or *vāṭakeyiyā*.

hiptage vines,⁷⁴ and and [also] screw-pine,⁷⁵
[their scents] get diffused with the wind. (38) [4149]

Having smelled your [perfume-like] scent,
I came here from Himalaya.
I worship you,⁷⁶ O Sage So Great,
World's Best One, O One of Great Fame." (39) [4150]

I anointed the World-Leader,
Sumedha, with good sandalwood.
Bringing pleasure to [my] own heart
I stood silently at that time. (40) [4151]

The Blessed One named Sumedha,
the World's Best One, the Bull of Men,
seated in the monks' Assembly
spoke these verses [about me then]: (41) [4152]

"This one who praised my virtues and
who worshipped me⁷⁷ with sandalwood,
I shall relate details of him;
[all of] you listen to my words: (42) [4153]

For twenty-five aeons he is
going to be a handsome man
who speaks welcome words, pious⁷⁸
[and] upright, full of great power.⁷⁹ (43) [4154]

In the twenty-sixth aeon he
will delight in the world of gods.
A thousand times he'll be a king,
a king who turns the wheel [of law]. (44) [4155]

Thirty-three times the lord of gods,
he will exercise divine rule,
[and there will be] much local rule,
innumerable by counting. (45) [4156]

Being fallen from there, this man
will go on to the human state.

⁷⁶lit., "I do *pūjā*"

⁷⁷lit., "did *pūjā*"

⁷⁸*brahmā* (III)

⁷⁹*patāpavā*

Bound up with [his] good⁸⁰ karma he's
going to be Brahma's kinsman.⁸¹ (46) [4157]

Learned, knowing⁸² [all] the mantras,
a master of the three Vedas,
endowed with three auspicious marks
[will be] the brahmin, Bāvarī. (47) [4158]

Having become that man's student,
he'll be a master of mantras.
Going up to the Sambuddha,
Gotama, Bull of the Śākyas,
having asked [him] subtle questions,
cultivating the straight [path, he]
knowing well all the defilements,
will reach nirvana, undefiled." (48-49) [4159-4160]

The three fires⁸³ are blown out in me;
all [new] existence is destroyed;
knowing well all the defilements,
I am [now] living, undefiled. (50) [4161]

My defilements are [now] burnt up;
all [new] existence is destroyed.
Like elephants with broken chains,
I am living without constraint. (51) [4162]

Being in Best Buddha's presence
was a very good thing for me.
The three knowledges are attained;
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (52) [4163]

The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (53) [4164]

Thus indeed Venerable Todeyya Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Todeyya Thera is finished.

⁸⁰*puñña*, lit., "meritorious"

⁸¹i.e., a brahmin by caste

⁸²lit., "bearing," °*dharo*

⁸³the cty here explains these as the fires of *rāga* (lust), *dosa* (anger) and *moha* (ignorance, folly)