

# **Legends of the Buddhist Saints**

*Apadānapāli*

TRANSLATED BY  
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# Sovaṇṇakattarika

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*Printed September 2026*

**[427. {430.}<sup>1</sup> Sovanṇakattarika<sup>2</sup>]**

The Self-Composed One,<sup>3</sup> the Buddha,  
the Self-Tamer,<sup>4</sup> Attentive One,<sup>5</sup>  
Wandering the Path of Brahmā,<sup>6</sup>  
Delighting in Mental Relief,<sup>7</sup> (1) [4617]

the Flood-Crosser,<sup>8</sup> the Sambuddha,  
Who Loves Meditation [and] Trance,<sup>9</sup>  
the Sage, the Seated One,<sup>10</sup> Attainer,<sup>11</sup>  
Brilliant as Blue Lotus Petals:<sup>12</sup> (2) [4618]

I approached [him,] the Best Buddha,  
taking a gourd<sup>13</sup> to hold water.  
After washing the Buddha's feet,  
I gave that [water-]gourd [to him]. (3) [4619]

The Sambuddha [then] had [it] fetched,  
the Leader, Padumuttara,  
“Bringing [more] water with this [gourd,]  
place it at the soles of my feet.” (4) [4620]

Agreeing, saying, “Excellent,”  
and with respect for the Teacher,  
carrying water with the gourd,<sup>14</sup>  
I brought it to the Best Buddha. (5) [4621]

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<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>“Golden Scissors” or “Golden Walking-stick-er” or (following BJTS, and preferred) “Golden Water-jug-er”. BJTS (and PTS alt) reads the name *Soṇṇakontarika*, see below, n. to [4624]

<sup>3</sup>reading *manobhāvanīyaṃ* with BJTS for PTS *manobhāvaniyaṃ*; BJTS Sinhala gloss *sambhāvanīya vū*

<sup>4</sup>*attadantaṃ*

<sup>5</sup>*samāhitaṃ*

<sup>6</sup>*iriyamānam brahmapathe*. RD: “the path to the Br. world or the way to the highest good”

<sup>7</sup>*cchitta-vūpasame rataṃ*

<sup>8</sup>*oghatinṇaṃ*

<sup>9</sup>*jhāyi-jhana-rata*

<sup>10</sup>*upaviṭṭhaṃ*

<sup>11</sup>*samāpannaṃ*

<sup>12</sup>*indīvara-dala-pabhaṃ*

<sup>13</sup>*alābu* RD: “a long white gourd, Curcubita Lagenaris”

<sup>14</sup>reading *alābunā 'hatvā* with BJTS for PTS *lābun'āhatvā*

The Great Hero gave thanks [for that,  
quenching [the anguish in] my heart,  
“Because of giving [me] this gourd,  
let what you think be accomplished.” (6) [4622]

For fifteen<sup>15</sup> aeons [after that,  
I delighted in the gods’ world,  
and thirty times I was a king,  
a king who turns the wheel [of law]. (7) [4623]

Whether by day or else by night,  
walking back and forth or standing,  
a water pot<sup>16</sup> made out of gold  
is standing [right] in front of me. (8) [4624]

Giving a gourd to the Buddha,  
I receive a gold water-pot:  
the deed done with little trouble<sup>17</sup>  
becomes huge like that [later on]. (9) [4625]

In the hundred thousand aeons  
since I gave [him] that gourd back then,  
I’ve come to know no bad rebirth:  
that’s the fruit of [giving] a gourd. (10) [4626]

My defilements are [now] burnt up;  
all [new] existence is destroyed.  
Like elephants with broken chains,  
I am living without constraint. (11) [4627]

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! (12) [4628]

The four analytical modes,  
and these eight deliverances,

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<sup>15</sup>reading *paṇṇarasasu* with BJTS for PTS *pannarasesu*

<sup>16</sup>reading *kontaram* with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS *kattara* in [4624], [4625]. *Kattara* is a knife or a walking stick; *kattarikā* a pair of scissors; *konta* (RD) “a pennant or standard”. BJTS gloss on *kontaram* is *keṇḍiyak*, a pot or jar, ewer or can (with a spout). Cone guesses “a lance?” for this passage (see *kontara*, s.v.), but I take the BJTS reading (even though I do not find any warrant for it beyond the context), given the correspondence between the gift (a water-gourd) and the result (a water-pot made of gold).

<sup>17</sup>*appakampi kataṃ kāraṃ*, lit., “the deed done with little quaking,”

six special knowledges mastered,  
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (13) [4629]

Thus indeed Venerable Sovaṇṇakattarika<sup>18</sup> Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Sovaṇṇakattarika<sup>19</sup> Thera is finished.

The Summary:

Sakiṇṣammajjaka Thera,  
Ekadussī, thus Āsanī,  
then Kadamba [and] Korāḍa,  
Ghaṭaṇ, also Savanika,  
Succhintita, Kiṇkhanika,  
and Soṇṇa-Kattarika<sup>20</sup> too:  
there are a hundred verses here  
plus seventy-one [more verses]

The Sakiṇṣammajjaka Chapter, the Forty-Third

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<sup>18</sup>BJTS reads *Soṇṇakontarika*

<sup>19</sup>BJTS reads *Soṇṇakontarika*

<sup>20</sup>BJTS (and PTS alt.) *Soṇṇakontarika*