

# **Legends of the Buddhist Saints**

*Apadānapāli*

TRANSLATED BY  
JONATHAN S. WALTERS,  
WHITMAN COLLEGE, 2017

# Bāhiya

Jonathan S. Walters

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[533. {536.}<sup>1</sup> Bāhiya<sup>2</sup>]

One hundred thousand aeons hence  
the Leader arose [in the world],  
the Great Light,<sup>3</sup> Chief of the Three Worlds,<sup>4</sup>  
who name was Padumuttara. (1) [5839]

My mind thrilled, having heard the Sage,  
praising the virtue of a monk  
who had instant comprehension;<sup>5</sup>  
doing a deed for the Great Sage,  
having given alms for a week  
to the Sage with [his] students, I  
saluting [him], the Sambuddha,  
then aspired [to attain] that place. (2-3) [5840-5841]

The Buddha<sup>6</sup> prophesied [of] me:  
“All of you look at this brahmin,  
fallen down in front of my feet,  
broad-shouldered, contemplating [me],  
gold brahmin’s cord<sup>7</sup> on [his] torso,  
skin that’s white upon his body,  
who has pouty,<sup>8</sup> copper-red lips,  
teeth that are white, sharp and even,  
with the utmost strength of virtue,  
[his] body hair growing upward,

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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>“Outsider” or “Foreigner,” the literal meaning (fr. *bāhira*, “outside”) of a given name which is played on below (see v. 40 [5874]). A historic monk, famous for being foremost among those who immediately comprehend the Dhamma (or quick at the special powers: *hippābhiññā*. “Bāhiya” was his given name; he was called “Bāhiya the Bark-Clad” (see v. 38 [5872] below) as a result of his experiences after the shipwreck (see v. 16 [5854], below). See DPPN II:281-282

<sup>3</sup>*mahāppabho*

<sup>4</sup>*tilokaggo*

<sup>5</sup>*hippābhiññassa*, lit., “who quickly grasped the special knowledges”

<sup>6</sup>lit., “then the Buddha...”

<sup>7</sup>reading *hemayaññopavitaṅgaṃ* with BJTS for PTS *hemayaññopacchitaṅgaṃ* (“body heaped up with sacrifices of gold”?). The *yaññopavīta* (or more correctly *yaññopanīta*), lit., “sacrificial cord,” is a distinctive accoutrement of brahmin dress; the protagonist’s was gold-colored or made of gold. In the gloss on this passage BJTS does not venture a guess which, but elsewhere (see the gloss on [5701]) prefers the latter reading

<sup>8</sup>*palimba*°, lit., “hanging down”

with senses flooded by virtue,<sup>9</sup>  
with a face blossoming in joy,  
wishing for the place of the monk  
who has instant comprehension.  
In the future, a Great Hero  
will come to be, named Gotama. (4-7) [5842-5845]

Worthy heir to that one's *Dhamma*,  
*Dhamma*'s legitimate offspring,  
the one whose name is Bāhiya  
will be the Teacher's follower." (8) [5846]

Then very happy, being roused,  
for as long as [I] lived, doing  
deeds for the Sage, fallen, I went  
to heaven, as though my own home. (9) [5847]

Born as a god or as a man,  
because of the power of that  
karma, transmigrating I [then]  
enjoyed good fortune [everywhere]. (10) [5848]

Again, when Hero Kassapa's  
dispensation had reached [its] goal,  
ascending to a mountain-top,  
engaged in the Victor's teachings,<sup>10</sup> (11) [5849]

of pure morals, wise, doers  
of the Victor's dispensation,  
fallen from there, [we] five people,<sup>11</sup>  
[then] went to the world of the gods. (12) [5850]

Then I was born as Bāhiya,<sup>12</sup>  
in Bhārukacchcha,<sup>13</sup> best city.  
From there by boat I venture forth

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<sup>9</sup> reading *guṇoghāyataībhūtaṃ* with BJTS for PTS *guṇe kāyatanībhūtaṃ* ("in virtue the body [ ]"?)

<sup>10</sup> *jīnasāsaṇaṃ*, lit., "the Victor's dispensation"

<sup>11</sup> i.e., Bāhiya together with Dabbamalla, Sabhiya, Kumāra-Kassapa and Pukkusāti; see above, v. [5801]-[5802]. Reading the adjectives in this verse as plurals (to agree with *pañcchajanā*) with BJTS, for PTS singulars.

<sup>12</sup> reading *bāhiyo* with BJTS for PTS *bāhiko*

<sup>13</sup> = Bharukacchcha, a seaport from which merchants traveled abroad, modern Broach in Kathiawar. See DPPN II: 365

on the ocean full of danger.<sup>14</sup> (13) [5851]

After going for a few days  
from there, the boat was broken up;<sup>15</sup>  
then I fell into<sup>16</sup> [the ocean],  
awful, fearful, sea-monster-mine.<sup>17</sup> (14) [5852]

At that time, after [much] struggling,  
having crossed over the ocean,  
disoriented,<sup>18</sup> I arrived  
at the good seaport Suppāra.<sup>19</sup> (15) [5853]

Having dressed<sup>20</sup> in robes made of bark,  
I entered the village for alms.  
Then a man [there], delighted, said,  
“This is an arahant who’s come;<sup>21</sup>  
honoring him<sup>22</sup> with food [and] drink,  
with clothes and [also] with a bed,  
and [furthermore] with medicine,  
we’ll be happy [through that karma].” (16-17) [5854-5855]

Receiving [that], then going back,  
[thus] honored and worshipped by them,<sup>23</sup>  
wrongly I gave rise to the thought  
[that] “this one is an arahant.” (18) [5856]

Afterward, discerning my mind,

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<sup>14</sup> *appasiddhiyaṇ*, one BJTS alt. reads more correctly *appasiddhikaṇ*, “of little welfare” = “dangerous”

<sup>15</sup> following BJTS Sinhala gloss, which apparently takes *abhijjhittha* (for PTS *abhijjhittha*) as aor. of *bhijjati*, passive form if *bhindati*, to break, i.e., be broken up.

<sup>16</sup> lit., “was fallen into”

<sup>17</sup> *bhīṣanake ghore...makarākare*

<sup>18</sup> reading *mandamedhiko* with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS *mandavedhito* (“stupid [or slow or lazy] and trembling” “a little trembling”). BJTS Sinh. gloss *manda vū vāṭahīm nuvaṇa āttem*, lit., “with intelligence in application (or intelligibility) that was slow (or lazy, or stupid)” and adds that this was due to the struggling in the ocean

<sup>19</sup> *suppārapaṭṭanam varaṇ*. Suppāra or Suppāraka (Skt. Sūrpāraka) is identified with the modern town of Sopāra in the Thāna district, to the north of Bombay, and figured in many Pāli texts, especially with regard to sea-crossings. See DPPN II: 1222-1223.

<sup>20</sup> because he lost his clothes in the shipwreck and subsequent travails

<sup>21</sup> *idhāgato*, lit., “who has come here”

<sup>22</sup> lit., “this one”

<sup>23</sup> *tehi sakkatapūjitaṇ*

the non-returner god<sup>24</sup> reproached:<sup>25</sup>  
“You don’t know the path, the method;<sup>26</sup>  
how could you be an arahant?” (19) [5857]

Reproached by him I was then moved;  
I questioned him back [in this way]:  
“Who, or where in the world are they,  
[those] supreme men, the arahants?” (20) [5858]

“Of Vast Wisdom,<sup>27</sup> Greatly Very Wise,<sup>28</sup> the  
Victor, in Śrāvasti, in Kosala’s palace,  
the Śākya’s Son, the Arahant, Undefined One  
is preaching *Dhamma* for reaching arahantship.” (21-22) [5859]<sup>29</sup>

Then having heard [that] word of him [I was] well-gladdened,  
very astonished like a pauper finding treasure,  
mind thrilled [for] ultimate arahantship, [and] to  
know<sup>30</sup> the Good-Looking One,<sup>31</sup> the Limitless Pasture.<sup>32</sup> (23-24) [5860]

Delighting at that time, departing for the Teacher,<sup>33</sup>  
always I see the Victor whose Face is Stainless.<sup>34</sup>  
Approaching the delightful grove named Vijita,<sup>35</sup>  
I questioned brahmins, “Where is the World’s Delighter?”<sup>36</sup> (25-26) [5861]

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<sup>24</sup>*pubbadevatā*, lit., “a former god,” which acc. to RD means an *asura*, “a titan,” but I follow BJTS Sinh. gloss in taking this to be the former monastic companion who had become a non-returner, coming down from the world of Brahmā to chastise his former companion, an allusion back to v. [5800] and [5801] in the parallel *apadāna* of Dabbamalla Thera (#531 {534}, vv. 32, 33)

<sup>25</sup>lit., “having reproached” “reproaching”

<sup>26</sup>or “the path to the method,” or “the path of expedient means” *na tvaṇ upāyamag-gaṇṇu*, lit., “you are not a knower of the path, the method.”

<sup>27</sup>*pahūtapaṇṇo*

<sup>28</sup>reading *varabhūrimedhaso* with BJTS for PTS *varabhūrimedhaso*

<sup>29</sup>PTS construes (and numbers) the deity’s answer and subsequent reflection by the protagonist and his inquiring of Brahmins the location of the Buddha as eight verses with feet of six syllables; BJTS (correctly I think) construes (and numbers) this passage as four verses with feet of twelve syllables, recognizing that they are composed in a more elaborate and noticeably different meter, which I’ve tried to emulate here.

<sup>30</sup>lit., “see,” etymological cousin of *sudassanaṇ* (“Good-Looking”); “to see the one who’s good to see”. Here I am reading BJTS *daṭṭhum anantagoccharaṇ* (and following BJTS Sinh. gloss) for PTS *duṭṭhamanantagoccharaṇ* (“pasture at the end of evil minds”)

<sup>31</sup>*sudassanaṇ*, i.e. “the Buddha”

<sup>32</sup>*anantagoccharaṇ*

<sup>33</sup>PTS *satthuno* (dative), BJTS *sattharaṇ* (accusative)

<sup>34</sup>*vimalānanaṇ*

<sup>35</sup>“Victory”

<sup>36</sup>*lokanandano*

Then they replied, “the One Worshipped by Men [and] Gods<sup>37</sup>  
has entered the city wishing to eat some food;<sup>38</sup>  
very quickly indeed,<sup>39</sup> zealous to see the Sage,  
approach and worship him, the Foremost of People.<sup>40</sup> (27-28) [5862]

[And] then, having gone speedily  
to Śrāvastī, the best city,  
I saw the [Buddha] wandering  
for alms, without greed or desire,  
bowl in hand, eyes undistracted,  
as though dividing ambrosia,<sup>41</sup>  
like the abode of good fortune,<sup>42</sup>  
face bearing the blaze of the sun. (29-30) [5863-5864]

Coming together, bowing down,  
I [then] spoke these words to him [there]:  
“O Gotama, be the refuge  
for one who’s lost on the wrong road.” (31) [5865]

The Seventh Sage said this [to me]:  
“I’m wandering on [my] alms-round  
to help living beings cross; not  
the time to tell you the *Dhamma*.” (32) [5866]

Again [and] again I asked the  
Buddha, being greedy for *Dhamma*.  
He then preached the *Dhamma* to me,  
the state that is deep and empty. (33) [5867]

Hearing his Teaching, I attained  
the destruction of the outflows,<sup>43</sup>  
[my] lifespan obliterated.  
O!<sup>44</sup> the Teacher’s mercifulness!<sup>45</sup> (34) [5868]

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<sup>37</sup> *naradevavandito*

<sup>38</sup> reading *asanesanāsayo* (*asana-esana-āsayo*), lit., “he who has a wish to eat [some] food” with BJTS for PTS (and BJTS alt.) *asanesanāya so* (“he in order to eat some food”)

<sup>39</sup> reading *sa ve hi khippaṃ* with BJTS for PTS *saso va khippaṃ* (“quick as a rabbit”)

<sup>40</sup> *aggapuggalaṃ*

<sup>41</sup> reading *bhājāyantaṃ viyāmataṃ* with BJTS for PTS *bhājāyantaṃ idhāmataṃ* (“dividing ambrosia here”)

<sup>42</sup> *sirinilayasāṅkāsaṇ*

<sup>43</sup> *āsavakkhayaṇ*, i.e., arahantship

<sup>44</sup> reading *aho* with BJTS for PTS *atho*

<sup>45</sup> reading *anukampako* with BJTS for PTS *anukampito*

My defilements are [now] burnt up;  
all [new] existence is destroyed.  
Like elephants with broken chains,  
I am living without constraint. (35) [5869]

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! (36) [5870]

The four analytical modes,  
and these eight deliverances,  
six special knowledges mastered,  
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (37) [5871]

Thus<sup>46</sup> prophesied the elder [named]  
Bāhiya Dārucchīriya.<sup>47</sup>  
He fell down on a garbage heap<sup>48</sup>  
when he had been gored<sup>49</sup> by a cow. (38) [5872]

Having detailed his own former  
conduct, he who was very wise,  
that hero fully passed away<sup>50</sup>  
in Śrāvastī, supreme city. (39) [5873]

[Then] departing from the city,  
the Seventh Sage, having seen him —  
the wise one who wore robes of wood,  
outsider come to the outside,<sup>51</sup>  
now fallen onto the safe ground,<sup>52</sup>  
like the fallen flag of Indra,

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<sup>46</sup>This eulogy of Bāhiya, spoken by the Buddha after the former's refrain (and *parinibbāna*) is unusual, though not unique, in *Apadāna*; cf. *Gotamī-therī-apadāna*, below (#17 of *Therī-apadāna*)

<sup>47</sup>"Bāhiya the Bark-Clad" (or "Wood-Clad")

<sup>48</sup>he was searching for a rag-robe at the time

<sup>49</sup>reading *bhūtāviṭṭhāya* (= °āviddhāya) with BJTS for PTS °*adhiṭṭhāya* ("while standing on")

<sup>50</sup>*parinibbāyi*

<sup>51</sup>*bāhiyaṇ bāhitāgamaṇ*, or "Bāhiya come from the outside," or "Bāhiya come to the outside," a play on the literal meaning of the monk's name, reduplicating the alliteration of the previous foot (*dārucchīradharaṇ dhīraṇ*)

<sup>52</sup>reading *bhūmiyaṇ patitaṇ dantaṇ* with BJTS for PTS *bhumiyaṇ. Danta-bhūmi*, "the safe ground" or "the place which is (or for) the tamed," refers to nirvana; see RD s.v.

lifespan gone, defilements gone,<sup>53</sup> a  
doer of the Victor's teachings<sup>54</sup> — (40-41) [5874-5875]

the Teacher said to followers  
who delighted in the teachings:<sup>55</sup>  
“get, and having taken [it] burn,  
the body of your fellow monk.<sup>56</sup> (42) [5876]

Build a stupa [and] worship<sup>57</sup> it;  
this great wise one reached nirvana,  
foremost in<sup>58</sup> instant comprehension,  
follower who heeded my words. (43) [5877]

One word in a verse, hearing which,  
one becomes calm, is better than  
even a thousand verses, if  
they possess words without meaning.<sup>59</sup> (44) [5878]

Where the waters and the earth, the  
fire and the wind have no footing,  
there the stars are not shining, [and]  
the sun [remains] invisible;  
the moon does not shed light there, [and]  
darkness is not to be found there. (45, 46a-b) [5879]<sup>60</sup>

And when one knows [that place] oneself,  
a sage, a brahmin with wisdom,  
he's freed from form and formlessness,  
from happiness and suffering.“  
Thus [he] spoke, [the Buddha], the Lord,  
the Sage, Refuge of the Three Worlds. (46c-d, 47) [5880]

Thus indeed Venerable Bāhiya Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Bāhiya Thera is finished.

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<sup>53</sup> *gatāyusaṃ gataklesaṃ*; note the Skt. spelling of *kilesa*, in both BJTS and PTS

<sup>54</sup> *jīnasāsanakārakaṇ*, lit., “a doer of the Victor's dispensation”

<sup>55</sup> *sāvake sāsane rate*

<sup>56</sup> *sabrahmacchārino*, lit., “of he who lived the holy life [with you]” or “of your fellow celibate”

<sup>57</sup> lit., “do *pūjā*”

<sup>58</sup> lit “of those who possess....”

<sup>59</sup> or “without profit,” *anattapadasaṃhitā*. This is *Dhammapada*, v. 101

<sup>60</sup> the first two feet here = D.1.223 = S. i.15. BJTS treats this and the following as two verses with six feet each (as are the corresponding verses in D. and S.); PTS treats them as three verses with four feet each.