

Legends of the Buddhist Saints

Apadānapāli

TRANSLATED BY
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Rādhā

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[536. {539.}¹ Rādha²]

The Victor, Padumuttara,
the Sage, Knower of Every World,
the One who had [Five] Eyes, arose
a hundred thousand aeons hence. (1) [5956]³
The Admonisher,⁴ Instructor,⁵
Crosser-Over⁶ of all that breathe,
Skilled at Preaching,⁷ [he], the Buddha,
caused many folks to cross [the flood]. (2) [5957]

Merciful,⁸ Compassionate One,⁹
Well-Wisher¹⁰ of all that breathe, he
established in the five precepts
all the rivals who had arrived. (3) [5958]

In this way he was Unconfused¹¹
and Very Well-Known¹² by rivals,
Ornamented¹³ by arahants
who were masters [and] neutral ones. (4) [5959]

The [body of the] Sage So Great
rose up fifty-eight cubits¹⁴ [tall];

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, see DPPN II: 730-731

³this and the following five verses also appear, verbatim, as the first six verses of Dabbamalla's *apadāna* (#531 {534}, above; [5769]-[5774]), and also of Mahākoṭṭhita's *apadāna* (#534 {537}, above; [5881]-[5886]), and also of Uruvela-Kassapa's *apadāna* (#535 {538}, above; [5911]-[5916])

⁴ovādako

⁵viññāpako

⁶tārako

⁷desanākusalo

⁸anukampako

⁹kāruṇiko

¹⁰hitesi

¹¹nirākulaṇ

¹²suññātaṇ, or "empty [of ill-will]," which is BJTS Sinhala gloss reading; I construe the epithet as *su* + *ñāta*

¹³vicchittaṇ

¹⁴*ratanāna-aṭṭha-paññāsaṇ uggato*. A *ratana* (Sinh. *riyan*) is figured as twelve-fingers (*aṅgula*), according to Sinh-Eng Dictionary about eighteen inches. The claim here then is that Padumuttara Buddha was 1044 inches (or 87 feet) tall.

he was Valuable Like Gold,¹⁵
Bearing the Thirty-Two Great Marks. (5) [5960]

[People's] lifespan at that time was
[fully] one hundred thousand years.
Remaining [in the world] so long,
he ferried many folks across. (6) [5961]

I then [lived] in Hamsavatī,
brahmin master of the mantras.
Approaching the Excellent Man,¹⁶
I heard the preaching of *Dhamma*, (7) [5962]

the Great Hero, the [World-]Leader,
Confident among Multitudes,¹⁷
appointing¹⁸ a monk with quick wit,¹⁹
in that [quality's] foremost place. (8) [5963]

After doing deeds at that time
for the Leader and Assembly,
having bowed [my] head at [his] feet,
I aspired [to attain] that place. (9) [5964]

With his lovely voice²⁰ conveying
away [all] defilements [and] stains,
he as Shiny as Gold Ingots,²¹
the Blessed One then said to me,
“May you be happy and long-lived;
your intention is accomplished.
Hugely²² [fruitful] for you [will be]
[this] deed done for the monks²³ and me. (10-11) [5965-5966]

¹⁵*kañcchanagghiyasaṅkāso*, lit., “like a gold valuable thing” or “like a gold festoon work”

¹⁶*naravaraṇ*

¹⁷*parisāsu visārado*

¹⁸*paññāpentaṇ*

¹⁹*paṭṭibhāneyyakaṇ bhikkhuṇ*

²⁰or “sound”: *sarena*

²¹*siṅgīnikkhasamappabho*. °*Nikkha*° can mean gold coins, or a particular weight of gold, cf. *nekkha*. “Gold Ingots” similarly evokes both the weight of the gold and the [minted] coin or bar that contains that weight

²²*atīva vipulaṇ*

²³lit., “with the Assembly”

In one hundred thousand aeons,
arising in Okkāka's clan,
the one whose name is Gotama
will be the Teacher in the world. (12) [5967]

Worthy heir to that one's *Dhamma*,
Dhamma's legitimate offspring,
the one given the name Rādha
will be the Teacher's follower." (13) [5968]

Glad by reason of your virtue,²⁴
the Śākyas' Son, the Bull of Men,
the Leader's going to appoint [you]
foremost of those who have quick wit." (14) [5969]

After hearing that I was thrilled,
[and] then for as long as [I] lived,
mindful, loving-hearted [and] wise,
I waited on²⁵ [him], the Victor. (15) [5970]

Due to that karma done very well,
with intention and [firm] resolve,
discarding [my] human body,
I went to Tāvatiṃsa [then]. (16) [5971]

Three hundred times [the lord of gods,]
I exercised divine rule [there],
and [then] five hundred times I was
a king who turns the wheel [of law]. (17) [5972]

[There was also] much local rule,
innumerable by counting.
Through the power of that karma,
I was happy in every place. (18) [5973]

When [my] last rebirth was attained,
I was born in a brahmin clan,
poor,²⁶ [and] wanting for clothes and food,

²⁴reading *sa te hetugūṇe tuṭṭho* with BJTS for PTS sake *hetugūṇe tuṭṭho* (which could be "happy by reason of [his] own virtue")

²⁵*paricchariṇ*, "waited on" "attended to"

²⁶PTS reads *vippakule n'iddhe*; BJTS reads *vippakule 'niddhe*; both convey the same meaning.

in Rajgir, ultimate city.²⁷ (19) [5974]

I gave a ladle's worth of food
to Sāriputta, neutral one,
when [I] was old and decrepit,
and I came to [his] hermitage. (20) [5975]

Nobody was ordaining²⁸ me,
being old [and] of failing strength;²⁹
due to that, old and discolored,
I was sorrow[ful] at that time. (21) [5976]

Having seen me, Great Compassion,³⁰
the Sage So Great said [this] to me:
“What meaning has this sorrow, son?
Tell me of your mental anguish.” (22) [5977]

“I’m not getting ordained, Hero,
in your well-preached dispensation;
thus I’m miserable with grief;
be [my] refuge, O Leader.” (23) [5978]

Then calling the monks together,
the Seventh Sage questioned [them thus]:
“Let them speak, those who remember
the service of this one [for us].” (24) [5979]

Sāriputta spoke at that time:
“I remember his deed [for us].
He gave a ladleful of food
to me [then] wandering for alms.” (25) [5980]

Excellent, Excellent, grateful
Sāriputta! [Now] you ordain
this [man, an] elderly brahmin;
he’s going to be a thoroughbred.³¹ (26) [5981]

Then [I] got to go forth [and got]

²⁷*giribbajapuruttame*. Giribbaja or Girivraja is another name for Rajgir (also for Vāṅkagiri; see DPPN I:770)

²⁸*pabbajenti*, lit., “giving me the ‘going forth’”

²⁹*dubbalathāmaṇṇa*, lit., “of bad strength [and] vigor”

³⁰*mahākāruṇiko*

³¹*hessat’ ājāniyo ayaṇ*

ordained with proper ritual.³²

In a short time [I then] attained
destruction of the defilements.³³ (27) [5982]

Thrilled [and] mindful, I'm listening
carefully to the Sage's words.
Then the Victor placed me in the
foremost place of those with quick wit. (28) [5983]

My defilements are [now] burnt up;
all [new] existence is destroyed.
Like elephants with broken chains,
I am living without constraint. (29) [5984]

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! (30) [5985]

The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (31) [5986]

Thus indeed Venerable Rādhā Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Rādhā Thera is finished.

³²*kammavācchupsampadaṇ*, "higher ordination according to monastic rites"

³³or of the outflows, *āsavaṅkhaṇaṇ*, i.e., "I attained my arahantship"