

Legends of the Buddhist Saints

Apadānapāli

TRANSLATED BY
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Sakulā

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[24. Sakulā¹]

The Victor, Padumuttara,
was a Master of Everything.
[That] Leader arose in the world
one hundred thousand aeons hence. (1) [769]

For the benefit, happiness
and profit of all beings, the
Best Debater, Thoroughbred Man,²
came into³ [the world] with [its] gods. (2) [770]

Foremost Fame-Attainer,⁴ Victor,
Fortunate,⁵ Beautified by Praise,⁶
the Victor for the entire world,
Widely-Known⁷ in⁸ all directions, (3) [771]

the Uprooter of Doubt,⁹ the One
who Passed Beyond Uncertainty,¹⁰
he with an Intention-Filled Mind,¹¹
attained Supreme Awakening.¹² (4) [772]

Ultimate Man,¹³ Progenitor¹⁴
of the path that had yet to be,¹⁵
proclaimed [that which was] unproclaimed,
produced [that which was] unproduced. (5) [773]

¹a historical nun, remembered as foremost among those who possess the “divine eye” (*dibbacchakkhu*)

²*purisājañño*

³*paṭipanno*, lit “entered into” “going along”

⁴*yasaggappatto*

⁵*sirimā*, or “Resplendent One”

⁶*kittivaṇṇagato*, lit., “gone to beauty through praise;” “colored by praise”

⁷*suviṣṣuto*

⁸lit., “from,” abl.

⁹*uttiṇṇavicchikicchcho*, lit., “he by whom doubt is pulled out”

¹⁰*vītivattakathāṇkatho*, lit., “passed over saying ‘how?’”

¹¹*sampunṇamanasaṇkappo*

¹²*patto sambodhim uttamaṇ*

¹³*naruttamo*

¹⁴*uppādetā*

¹⁵*anuppannassa maggassa*, lit., “the unborn path” “the path that had not arisen”. *Uppanna* is from the same root as *uppādetā* (Producer of the unproduced”) hence a resonance between the first and second feet that is echoed in the third foot, and again in the fourth

Path-Knower,¹⁶ Path-Understander,¹⁷
Path-Proclaimer,¹⁸ the Bull of Men,
Path-Skilled, the Teacher, [the Buddha,]
was the Best of Charioteers.¹⁹ (6) [774]

The Great Compassionate Teacher,
the Leader was preaching *Dhamma*,
lifting up [all] living beings
sunk in the muck of delusion. (7) [775]

I was born in Hamsavatī,
rejoicing [all the] kṣatriyans;²⁰
I was then very beautiful,
set for wealth,²¹ held dear, resplendent. (8) [776]

I was the ravishing daughter
of great king Ānanda and thus,
sister by another mother²²
of him named Padumuttara. (9) [777]

Adorned in all [my] ornaments,
along with the royal maidens,
going up to the Great Hero,
I heard [him] preaching the *Dhamma*. (10) [778]

And then, amidst the multitudes,
the Guru of the [Whole] World²³ praised
a Buddhist nun with “divine eye,”
[and] placed her in that foremost place. (11) [779]

I was happy having heard that;
after giving the Teacher alms,
and worshipping the Sambuddha,
I aspired for the “divine eye.” (12) [780]

And then the Teacher said to me:
“Joyful one, that is well wished-for;

¹⁶*maggaññū*

¹⁷*maggavidū*

¹⁸*maggakkhāyī*

¹⁹*sārathīnaṃ varuttamo*, lit., “the excellent ultimate of charioteers”

²⁰*khattiyanandanā*

²¹*sadhanā tḥāsiṇ*

²²*vemātā bhaginī*

²³*lokaguru*

you will receive [as you] aspire,
fruit of alms for the *Dhamma*-Lamp.²⁴ (13) [781]

In one hundred thousand aeons,
arising in Okkāka's clan,
the one whose name is Gotama
will be the Teacher in the world. (14) [782]

Worthy heir to that one's *Dhamma*,
Dhamma's legitimate offspring,
the one whose name is Sakulā
will be the Teacher's follower." (15) [783]

Due to that karma done very well,
with intention and [firm] resolve,
discarding [my] human body,
I went to Tāvatiṃsa [then]. (16) [784]

In this [present] lucky aeon
Brahma's Kinsman, Greatly Famed One,
[the Buddha] known as Kassapa²⁵
was born, the Best of Debaters. (17) [785]

I was a mendicant back then,
proceeding about on my own.
While wandering around for alms,
I received some²⁶ sesame oil. (18) [786]

Having lit a lamp with that [oil],
with a mind that was very clear,
every night I attended on
the shrine²⁷ of the Best of Biped. (19) [787]

Due to that karma done very well,
with intention and [firm] resolve,
discarding [my] human body,
I went to Tāvatiṃsa [then]. (20) [788]

In whichever place I'm reborn,
in accordance with that karma,

²⁴ *dhammapadīpadānāṇaṇ phalaṇ*

²⁵ BJTS reads "Named Kassapa according to his Lineage (*gottena*)"

²⁶ *mattakaṇ*, lit., "a measure of"

²⁷ or "stupa": *cchetiyaṇ*

wherever I am wandering,
when I'm gone there, there are large lamps. (21) [789]

Through [any] wall, through [any] rock,
going beyond a mountain [top],
I [can] see whatever I wish:
that is the fruit of giving lamps. (22) [790]

I am [someone who] has pure eyes;
I am blazing forth through [my] fame;
I am faithful, wise and mindful:
that is the fruit of giving lamps. (23) [791]

And now, in [my] final rebirth,
I am born in a brahmin clan,
rich in grain and abundant wealth,
joyful [and] honored²⁸ by the king. (24) [792]

I was complete in every part,²⁹
adorned with all the ornaments.
[One time] standing in a window,
I saw the Well-Gone-One at the
city gate, Blazing Forth through Fame,
Honored by Gods and by People,
Ornamented with the [Great] Marks,
Endowed with [Eighty] Lesser Marks. (25-26) [793-794]

Happy, with a heart that was thrilled,
I chose [to seek] ordination.
After not a very long time,
I attained [my] arahantship. (27) [795]

I've mastered the superpowers
[like] the "divine ear" element.
I know the hearts of others [too,]
I have done what the Teacher taught.³⁰ (28) [796]

I remember [my] former lives;
[my] "divine eye" is purified.
Throwing off all the defilements,

²⁸lit., "given *pūjā*"

²⁹*sabbaṅgasampannā*, lit., "endowed with all limbs," i.e., "had a great body"

³⁰*satthu sāsana-kārikā*, lit., "[I am] a doer of the Teacher's dispensation"

I am³¹ purified, [I'm] stainless. (29) [797]

The Teacher's been worshipped by me;
[I have] done what the Buddha taught.
The heavy load has been laid down,
the ties to existence severed. (30) [798]

The reason for which I went forth,
from [my] home into homelessness —
I have [now] achieved that purpose:
destruction of all the fetters. (31) [799]

Then the Greatly Compassionate
One placed me in [that] foremost place:
The Supreme Man³² [said,] "Sakulā
is foremost of 'divine eye' [nuns.]" (32) [800]

My defilements are [now] burnt up;
all [new] existence is destroyed.
Like elephants with broken chains,
I am living without constraint. (33) [801]

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! (34) [802]

The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (35) [803]

Thus indeed Bhikkhunī Sakulā spoke these verses.

The legend of Sakulā Therī is finished.

³¹reading *amhi* ("I am") with BJTS for PTS *āsiṃ* ("I was" "I became")

³²*naruttamo*