

Legends of the Buddhist Saints

Apadānapāli

TRANSLATED BY
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Ten Thousand Buddhist Nuns Headed Up by Yasovatī

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[29. Ten Thousand Buddhist Nuns Headed Up by Yasovatī¹]

One hundred thousand aeons [and]
four incalculable [aeons]
hence, Dīpaṅkara, the Victor,
the Leader of the World was born. (1) [1029]

Dīpaṅkara, the Great Hero,
the Guide, prophesied back then that
Sumedha and Sumittā would
be the same in pleasure and pain. (2) [1030]

Seeing and going about in
the world together with [its] gods,
meeting us was included in
[what Buddha] prophesied for them. (3) [1031]

“You,² [Sumedha,] will be all of
our husbands met in the future;
we’ll all be your desirable
wives, saying what is dear [to you].” (4) [1032]

All this alms-giving and morals,
meditation cultivated;
for a long time our everything
has been abandoned, O Great Sage. (5) [1033]

Scents and ointments, garlands [and] lamps,
which were fashioned out of [pure] gold,
whatever it was we wished for,
all was abandoned, O Great Sage. (6) [1034]

And other karma [we] have done,
and [every] human enjoyment,
for a long time our everything
has been abandoned, O Great Sage. (7) [1035]

Transmigrating in varied births,
much good karma³ was done by us;
experiencing [you as] husband,
transmigrating life after life, (8) [1036]

¹BJTS reads “The *Apadāna* of Ten Thousand Buddhist Nuns”

²reading *hohi* with BJTS for PTS *honti* (they will be/they are)

³*puññaṇ*, lit., “merit”

When [our] last lifetime was attained,
in the home of the Śākya prince,⁴
we arose in various clans,
attractive celestial nymphs.⁵ (9) [1037]

We've attained fame, with foremost gain;
we're worshipped⁶ and well-respected.
We are always venerated,
receiving things to eat and drink. (10) [1038]

After abandoning the home,
going⁷ forth into homelessness,
when eight months⁸ had not yet elapsed,
we all realized nirvana. (11) [1039]

Always worshipped [and] respected,
[we] receive things to eat and drink,
and clothes [and also] lodgings [too;]
[folks] bring [us] all the requisites. (12) [1040]

Our⁹ defilements are [now] burnt up;
all [new] existence is destroyed.
Like elephants with broken chains,
we are living without constraint. (13) [1041]

Being in Best Buddha's presence
was a very good thing for us.
The three knowledges are attained;
[we have] done what the Buddha taught! (14) [1042]

The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,
[we have] done what the Buddha taught! (15) [1043]

⁴°putta° lit., "son"

⁵acchcharā kāmavaṇṇinī, lit., "having the desirable appearance [like] celestial nymphs"

⁶lit., "offered pūjā"

⁷reading pabbajitvāna with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS pabbajij ("I went forth")

⁸aṭṭhamāse, BJTS reads addhamāse ("half a month")

⁹PTS just gives *pe* here, suggesting that the concluding refrain remains in the first person singular as elsewhere throughout the collection. BJTS however supplies the full verses, including the readings translated here, corrected for the plural subject.

Thus indeed ten thousand Buddhist nuns headed up by Yasovatī spoke these verses face-to-face with the Blessed One.

The legend of ten thousand Buddhist nuns headed up by Yasodharā is finished