Thi Ap 28 — 28. Yasodharā

English translation by Jonathan S. Walters.

Source: https://suttacentral.net/thi-ap28/en/walters

Source revision: 2d9ca8da858f94302ed6783e2717bf73d651881b

License: CC-BY-NC-SA-3.0-US — https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/us/

License URL: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/us/

Copyright: No separate copyright declaration in source; publication attribution: Whitman College, 2017.

License notice: Translated by Jonathan S. Walters. Whitman College, 2017 Legends of the Buddhist Saints (Apadāna) is released under the Attribution, Non-Commercial, Share Alike license. This is the first-ever complete translation of Apadāna into a Western language. For more information, visit apadanatranslation.org Prepared for SuttaCentral by Ayya Vimala. Source footer links: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/us/ ; http://apadanatranslation.org/

Changes: Presentation only: original HTML markup reflowed into plain text; wording, numbering and source repetitions retained. No repetitions expanded.

Completeness: COMPLETE. All text of this pinned standalone English article, including header, verse/reference numbering, closing lines and footer, is preserved. Tha Ap 562–563 have no Walters articles in this edition; no whole-canon claim.

Text

Therīpadāna

The Legends of the Therīs

28. Yasodharā

Walt 952 At one time the Leader of Men

was staying in a mountain cave

in the city, Rajagaha,

which was lovely and prosperous.

Walt 953 This is what was reasoned out then

by the nun named Yasodharā,

who was dwelling in that city,

inside a lovely convent there:

Walt 954 "Nanda, Rahula and Bhadda;

likewise the two chief followers;

Suddhodana Maharaja,

and Gotamī Pajāpatī;

Walt 955 the great theras of great renown;
and the therīs with great powers:
they've gone to peaceful nirvana,
traceless like the flame of a lamp.

Walt 956 While the World's Lord still is living,
I'll travel that peaceful path too."
And having reasoned all that out,
she foresaw the end of her life.

Walt 957 Foreseeing that life's aggregates
would be destroyed that very day,
she set out from her own ashram,
carrying her robe and her bowl.

Walt 958 Honored by one hundred thousand
nuns, the nun named Yasodharā,
greatly powerful, greatly wise,
then went up to the Sambuddha. Verse 1

Walt 959 Having worshipped the Sambuddha,
at the wheel-marked soles of his feet,
sitting off to one side of him,
she spoke these words to the Teacher: Verse 2

Walt 960 "I'm seventy-eight years old now,
the last of old age has arrived;
I'm reporting to the Great Sage:
I've attained sainthood in a cave. Verse 3

Walt 961 Old age has ripened for me now;
verily my life's a trifle.
Giving all you up I will go:
my refuge is made in myself. Verse 4

Walt 962 In the final days of old age,
death breaks the body into bits;
today at nighttime, Great Hero,
I shall achieve my nirvana. Verse 5

Walt 963 Where there's no birth, no growing old,
nor sickness and death, O Great Sage,
I'm going to the great city
which, unconditioned, has no death. Verse 6

Walt 964 Throughout this vast multitude here,
all these revering the Teacher,
know that every imperfection
is forgiven face-to-face, Sage. Verse 7

Walt 965 Transmigrating in existence,
if I have ever disturbed you,
I’m announcing it, Great Hero;
please forgive my imperfection. Verse 8

Walt 966 After hearing that speech of hers,
the Lord of Sages then said this:
“What better can I say to you,
when you’re going to nirvana?

Walt 967 Now display your superpowers,
doer of my dispensation;
let doubt in the dispensation
be cut off for all assemblies.” Verse 9

Walt 968 Having heard the words of the Sage,
the Buddhist nun, Yasodharā,
worshipping the King of Sages,
then spoke this speech to the Buddha:

Walt 969 "I am Yasodharā, Hero;
in the home I was your chief queen,
born in the clan of the Śākyas,
established among the women. Verse 10

Walt 970 In your household, O Hero, I
was the leader, the lord of all
of the women there, who numbered
one hundred thousand ninety six. Verse 11

Walt 971 All of those women, endowed with
the virtues of beauty and grace,
youthful and well-spoken, revere
me, like people revere the gods. Verse 12

Walt 972 Leader of a thousand maidens
in the home of the Śākyan Son,
they’re the same in pleasure and pain,
like gods in the garden named “Joy.” Verse 13

Walt 973 Beyond the essence of desire,
fixed as the essence of beauty,
they’re unmatched in terms of beauty,
other than by the World’s Leader.” Verse 14

Walt 974 Speaking words beginning with these,
having risen into the sky,
Yasodharā displayed diverse
powers, with Buddha’s permission.

Walt 975 Worshipping the Sambuddha, she
showed the Teacher superpowers.
She displayed great superpowers,
diverse, having various forms. Verse 15

Body big as the universe,
she made the continent up north
her head; eastern, western her wings;
and made India her torso; Verse 16

Walt 976 tail feathers: the southern ocean;
other feathers: varied rivers;
her eyes were the moon and the sun,
her crest was cosmic Mount Meru. Verse 17

Walt 977 In her beak, mountain at world's end,
she carried a tree with its roots.
Coming up to him, fanning him,
she's worshipping the World's Leader. Verse 18

Walt 978 She made herself an elephant,
likewise a horse, mountain, ocean,
the moon and the sun, Mount Meru,
and Śakra, the king of the gods. Verse 19

Walt 979 She covered the thousand-fold world
with blooming lotus, and then said,
"I am Yasodharā, Hero;
I worship your feet, Eyeful One." Verse 20

Walt 980 And making Brahma's form appear,
she preached the doctrine of merit;
"I am Yasodharā, Hero;
I worship your feet, Eyeful One." Verse 21

Walt 981 I've mastered the superpowers
like the "divine ear" element.
I'm also a master, Great Sage,
of the knowledge in others' hearts. Verse 22

Walt 982 I remember my former lives;
my “divine eye” is purified.
All the defilements are destroyed;
I will not be reborn again. Verse 23

Walt 983 In meaning and in the Teaching,
etymology and preaching,
this knowledge of mine was produced
in your presence, O Great Hero. Verse 24

Walt 984 My meeting with all the Buddhas,
the World-Lords, was well-seen by you;
my extensive service to them
was for the sake of you, Great Sage. Verse 25

Walt 985 O Sage, recall the good karma,
which formerly was done by me;
that merit was heaped up by me
for the sake of you, Great Hero. Verse 26

Walt 986 I kept from misconduct, hindered
the nine impossible places;
I have sacrificed life itself
for the sake of you, Great Hero. Verse 27

Walt 987 I gave myself to be a wife,
several tens of billions of times.
I was not distressed about that,
for the sake of you, O Great Sage. Verse 28

Walt 988 I gave myself to do service,
several tens of billions of times.
I was not distressed about that,
for the sake of you, O Great Sage. Verse 29

Walt 989 I gave myself to provide food,
several tens of billions of times.
I was not distressed about that,
for the sake of you, O Great Sage. Verse 30

Walt 990 I have given you all my lives,
several tens of billions of times.
I'll liberate myself from fear,
giving up my life once more. Verse 31

Walt 991 Great Sage, for your sake I do not
conceal the things of a woman,
numerous clothes of varied types,
ornaments affixed to my limbs. Verse 32

Walt 992 Wealth and grain have been given up,
villages and also small towns,
fields and sons and daughters as well
have been given up, O Great Sage. Verse 33

Walt 993 Elephants, horses, also cows,
slaves as well as servant-women
are given up beyond all count
for the sake of you, O Great Sage. Verse 34

Walt 994 Whatever I am told to give
as alms to beggars, I give that;
I don't witness any distress
from giving the ultimate gift. Verse 35

Walt 995 I have experienced dis-ease
of diverse types, beyond all count,
in this much-varied existence
for the sake of you, Great Hero. Verse 36

Walt 996 Attaining comforts, I don’t thrill;
I don’t get distressed by troubles.
Everywhere I remain balanced
for the sake of you, O Great Sage. Verse 37

Walt 997 After experiencing both
pleasure and pain along the way,
the Great Sage reached Awakening,
the Teaching for which Buddha strived. Verse 38

Walt 998 By you and by me there was much
meeting with the other World-Lords,
whether you’re the god Brahmā or
Gotama Buddha, World’s Leader. Verse 39

Walt 999 I performed a lot of service,
for the sake of you, O Great Sage;
while you sought the Buddha's Teaching,
I was always your attendant. Verse 40

Walt 1000 One hundred thousand aeons and
four incalculable aeons
hence, Dīpaṅkara, Great Hero,
the Leader of the World was born. Verse 41

Walt 1001 Someplace in a nearby country,
inviting him, the Thus-Gone-One,
happy-minded folks are cleaning
the road on which he is coming. Verse 42

Walt 1002 At that time there was a brahmin
known by the name of Sumedha.
He was making the road ready
for the All-Seer who was coming. Verse 43

Walt 1003 At that time I was a maiden,
born in a brahmin family,
known by the name of Sumittā.
I went up to that gathering. Verse 44

Walt 1004 With eight handfuls of blue lotus
for offering to the Teacher,
in the midst of all the people
I saw that fierce ascetic sage. Verse 45

Walt 1005 Seeing him, seated atop bark,
surpassing and captivating,
then I thought like this to myself:
“this life of mine is bearing fruit.” Verse 46

Walt 1006 At that time I saw that sage’s
effort which was then bearing fruit;
due to previous karma, my
heart was pleased in the Sambuddha. Verse 47

Walt 1007 Making my heart even more pleased,
I said, “O lofty-minded sage,
seeing no other gift to give,
I’m giving flowers to you, sage. Verse 48

Walt 1008 There are five handfuls for you, sage;
the remaining three are for me.
Let there be success through this gift
for your Awakening, O sage.” Verse 49

Walt 1009 The Fourth Recitation Portion
Then that sage, taking the flowers,
for the sake of Awakening,
worshipped amidst the people the

Famed One, Great Sage who was coming. Verse 50

Walt 1010 The Great Sage named Dīpaṅkara,
seeing him amidst the people,
prophesied future Buddhahood
for that sage with a lofty mind. Verse 51

Walt 1011 The Great Sage named Dīpāṅkara
then prophesied that my karma
would for numberless aeons hence
be exalted, that Sage So Great: Verse 52

“She will be a like-minded wife,
with karma and conduct like yours;
through this karma she’ll be loving
for the sake of you, O great sage. Verse 53

Walt 1012 Nice looking and much beloved,
desirable, speaking sweet words,
she will be a loving woman,
and an heir among your doctrines. Verse 54

Walt 1013 Just as masters are protecting
the goods that they accumulate,
so this one likewise will protect
all of the things that are wholesome. Verse 55

Walt 1014 Compassionate for future you,
she will fulfill the perfections.
Like a lion freed from a cage,
she will achieve Awakening.” Verse 56

Walt 1015 Rejoicing about Buddha’s speech,
I lived behaving in that way
the Buddha prophesied for me

numberless aeons ago. Verse 57

Walt 1016 I brought pleasure to my mind when
that karma was well done by me;
I experienced countless wombs,
divine as well as human ones. Verse 58

Walt 1017 Undergoing pleasure and pain,
among gods and human beings,
when my last rebirth was attained,
I was born in the Śākyan clan. Verse 59

Walt 1018 Beautiful and very wealthy,
famous and likewise virtuous;
endowed with every attainment,
I'm much-honored among the clans. Verse 60

Walt 1019 Riches, fame, hospitality,
and indulgence in worldly things –
they do not agitate my mind;
I have no fear from anything. Verse 61

I was appointed to attend
on what the Blessed One had said
within the harem of the king
in the kṣatriyan city then. Verse 62

I'm a woman who's a servant,
and one who feels pleasure and pain,
a woman who declares the facts,
a woman who's compassionate. Verse 63

Buddhas numbering five billion,
and another nine billion more —
I provided vast alms to them,

those Buddhas, Gods Over the Gods. Verse 64

Listen to my words, O great king:
I’m constantly doing service
to eleven billion others,
and fifty billion Buddhas more. Verse 65

I provided vast alms to them,
those Buddhas, Gods Over the Gods;
listen to my words, O great king:
I’m constantly doing service. Verse 66

Twenty billion other Buddhas
and another thirty billion –
I provided vast alms to them,
those Buddhas, Gods Over the Gods. Verse 67

Listen to my words, O great king:
I’m constantly doing service
to forty billion Buddhas more,
and another fifty billion. Verse 68

I provided vast alms to them,
those Buddhas, Gods Over the Gods;
listen to my words, O great king:
I’m constantly doing service. Verse 69

Sixty billion other Buddhas,
another seventy billion –
I provided vast alms to them,
those Buddhas, Gods Over the Gods. Verse 70

Listen to my words, O great king:
I’m constantly doing service
to eighty billion Buddhas more,

and another ninety billion. Verse 71

I provided vast alms to them,
those Buddhas, Gods Over the Gods;
listen to my words, O great king:
I’m constantly doing service. Verse 72

There have been a million million
who were Chief Leaders of the World;
I provided vast alms to them,
those Buddhas, Gods Over the Gods. Verse 73

Listen to my words, O great king:
I’m constantly doing service
to another ninety trillion
who were Leaders of the World too. Verse 74

I provided vast alms to them,
those Buddhas, Gods Over the Gods;
listen to my words, O great king:
I’m constantly doing service Verse 75

to Great Sages whose number was
eight hundred and fifty trillion,
and seven hundred eighty-five
billion additional Buddhas. Verse 76

I provided vast alms to them,
those Buddhas, Gods Over the Gods;
listen to my words, O great king:
I’m constantly doing service. Verse 77

Lonely Buddhas, passion removed,
six hundred and forty million;
listen to my words, O great king:

I’m constantly doing service. Verse 78

Countless followers of Buddhas,
free of defilements, and stainless;
listen to my words, O great king:
I’m constantly doing service. Verse 79

I always practice the Teaching
of those practiced in the teachings,
at ease practicing the Teaching,
in this world and in the other. Verse 80

Well-practiced, the Teaching-practice;
that practice is not ill-practiced.
I’m at ease practicing Teaching,
in this world and in the other. Verse 81

Walt 1020 Disgusted with transmigration,
I went forth into homelessness,
surrounded by thousands of nuns,
after renouncing with nothing. Verse 82

Walt 1021 After abandoning my home,
I went forth into homelessness.
When eight months had not yet elapsed
I attained the Four Noble Truths. Verse 83

Walt 1022 Like the waves upon the ocean,
folks are bringing many varied
monastic robes and alms to eat,
requisites as well as lodgings. Verse 84

Walt 1023 My defilements are now burnt up;
all new existence is destroyed.
Like elephants with broken chains,

I am living without constraint. Verse 85

Walt 1024 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! Verse 86

Walt 1025 The four analytical modes,

and these eight deliverances,

six special knowledges mastered,

I have done what the Buddha taught! Verse 87

Walt 1026 Thus many sorts of suffering

and many types of happiness;

the pure life now has been achieved,

I have obtained all achievements.

Walt 1027 The woman who’s giving herself

for the merit of the Great Sage

attains companionship with him,

and unconditioned nirvana.

Walt 1028 The past is thoroughly destroyed,

and the present and the future;

all of my karma is destroyed:

I worship your feet, Eyeful One.”

Thus indeed Bhikkhunī Yasodharā spoke these verses.

The legend of Yasodharā Therī is finished

Translated by Jonathan S. Walters.

Whitman College, 2017

Legends of the Buddhist Saints (Apadāna) is released under the Attribution, Non-Commercial, Share Alike license.

This is the first-ever complete translation of Apadāna into a Western language.

For more information, visit apadanatranslation.org

Prepared for SuttaCentral by Ayya Vimala.