

Legends of the Buddhist Saints

Apadānapāli

TRANSLATED BY
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Ekadussadāyaka

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{*334, BJTS only: Ekadussadāyaka¹}

In the city, Haṃsavatī,
I was a grass-bearer [back then].
I am living by bearing grass,
and by that I feed [my] children. [2949]

The Victor, Padumuttara,
was the Master of Everything.²
Doing away with the darkness,
the World-Leader arose back then. [2950]

[While] sitting down in [my] own house,
this is what I thought at that time:
“The Buddha’s risen in the world,
[but] I lack anything to give.
I [only] have this single cloak,
I do not have [my own] donor.
Suffering is a taste of hell;³
I will [now] plant a donation.” [2951-2952]

Contemplating [it] in this way,
I brought pleasure to [my] own heart.
Taking that single piece of cloth,
I gave [it] to the Best Buddha. [2953]

Having given [that] single cloth,
I gave rise to [great] shouts of joy,
“If you are a Buddha, Wise One,
carry me across, O Great Sage.” [2954]

Padumuttara, World-Knower,
Sacrificial Recipient,
singing the praises of my gift,
[the Buddha] then gave thanks to me: [2955]

“Because of this single cloak[-gift,]
[done] with intention and resolve,

¹“One-Cloth-Donor”

²lit., “Master of All Things (*dhamma*)” (or “Master of All Teachings”). This *apadāna* is included verbatim as #419 {422} below, ascribed to a monk of the same name. Presumably following the colophonic demand for an “Ekadussika” at this point in the text, editors in the mss. tradition on which BJTS is based supplied this *apadāna* verbatim from a different part of the text, in order to fill the gap.

³*niraya-samphassa*, lit., “contact with hell” “touching of hell” “experience of hell”

he will not go to a bad place
for one hundred thousand⁴ aeons. [2956]

Thirty-six times a lord of gods,
he will exercise divine rule.
And thirty-three times he'll become
a king who turns the wheel [of law]. [2957]

There will be much regional rule,
incalculable by counting.
In the world of gods or of men,
you'll transmigrate in existence. [2958]

Good-looking and full of virtue,
with a body that's not surpassed,
you'll obtain, whenever you wish,
unwavering limitless cloth." [2959]

When he had said this, the Buddha
known by the name Supreme Lotus,⁵
the Wise One rose into the sky,
just like a swan-king in the air. [2960]

In whichever womb I'm reborn,
[whether] it's human or divine,
I have no lack of possessions:
that's the fruit of a single cloth. [2961]

With every footstep [that I take],⁶
[some] cloth is [then] produced for me.
I stand upon cloth underneath;
a canopy on top of me. [2962]

[And] today I [still] am wishing
that I could cover with [some] cloth
even the [whole] universe
with [its] forests [and its] mountains. [2963]

Just because of that single cloth,
transmigrating from birth to birth,

⁴amending *kappasatahassāni* to *kappasattasahassāni*, which keeps the meter and makes sense

⁵*jalajuttamanāma*

⁶lit., "footstep after footstep," or more literally still, "on footstep on footstep," reduced to suggest the whole series. This interpretation follows the BJTS Sinhala gloss.

I was⁷ one of golden color,
transmigrating from birth to birth.⁸ [2964]

[One] result of that single cloth:
no ruination anywhere.⁹
This one [will be my] final life;
[that] now is bearing fruit for me. [2965]

In the hundred thousand aeons
since I gave that cloth at that time,
I've come to know no bad rebirth:
that's the fruit of a single cloth. [2966]

My defilements are [now] burnt up;
all [new] existence is destroyed.
Like elephants with broken chains,
I am living without constraint. [2967]

The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! [2968]

Thus indeed Venerable Ekadussadāyaka Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Ekadussadāyaka Thera is finished.

⁷lit., "having been"

⁸the repetition of the second foot as the fourth foot does not seem to be intentional, as it carries no poetic force and leaves the verse in need of a finite verb (which I have supplied in my reading of the gerund, see previous note). But if this is an unintended mistake, it was made long ago, as all the mss. apparently witness it.

⁹lit., "not going up into destruction anywhere"