

# 14

## How Robes Are Recycled

Accounts from the Vinaya and the Commentaries  
Culla,vagga 11.1.13 f @ V 2:290 f; DhA 2.1/1:218-220; J 157/2:23 f  
Translated by Piya Tan ©2009, 2011

### 1 Versions of the story

**1.1** There are at least three known versions of the story of how Ānanda receives 1000 robes, that is, 500 from rajah Udena's queen and her retinue, and another 500 from the rajah himself. The three versions found in the Pali textual tradition are as follows:

<u>Title</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Sutta Discovery no</u>
<b>The Rājagaha Council</b>	Cv 11.1.13-14 @ V 2:290-292	(Post-Buddha)	SD 37.14.1
<b>Sāmāvati Vatthu</b>	DhA 2.1/1:218-220	Kosambī	SD 37.14.2
<b>Guṇa Jātaka</b> <sup>1</sup>	J 157/2:23-30	Sāvattihī	SD 37.14.3

While the first two accounts centre around **the rajah Udena** interviewing Ānanda on the uses of the robes, in the third (the Guṇa Jātaka), according to the Jātaka Commentary, it is **the rajah Pasenadi of Kosala**.<sup>2</sup> However, the story seems more probable and natural with Sāmāvati (hence, with Udena, who, as a rule, disallows his queens to leave the palace without him), than with any queen of Pasenadi. [4]

**1.2** All these accounts are clearly late, reflecting a time when the rajah Udena, the king of Kosambī in the far west of the Middle Country, was patronising the monks. By that time, from clues in these accounts, the monks were already settled in large monasteries, so that there was a need for a regular supply of robes for them.

**1.3** All three stories give very close accounts on how the robes are recycled, thus:

<u>The Rājagaha Council (V)</u>	<u>Sāmāvati Vatthu (DhA)</u>	<u>Guna Jātaka (J)</u>
—	—	upper robes (worth 1000 each)
outer robes (worth not stated)	outer robes (worth 500 each)	made into outer robes
—	—	made into undergarments
given to those with worn-out robes	(same)	—
—	to those with even older robes	—
cover-sheets	(same)	(same)
floor-sheets [carpets]	(same)	(same)
covers for pillows and mattresses	—	—
foot-towels	(same)	(same)
dusters [cleaning rags]	—	—
floor-spread [spread into the floor]	(same)	wall-spread

One of the first commonalities that is clear here is that all three lists share at least half of their recycling processes, especially from old robes to cover-sheets to floor-sheets to some kind of spread (over the floor or the wall). Guṇa Jātaka refers to specific kinds of robes which clearly do not exist in the early years of the ministry when the robes were very simple. This suggests that the Jātaka account is probably the newest or latest version, which is also suggested by the “wall” spread. The early monastic living spaces were mostly in the open, caves and natural places, or simple huts in some grove. “Wall” suggests some kind of built-up lodging.

<sup>1</sup> Also called **Sīha J**, and perhaps also **Sigāla J** (eg Intro to **Tirīṭa,vaccha J**, J 259/2:314). This latter should not be confused with its namesake at J 152/2:5-9.

<sup>2</sup> Intro to **Tirīṭa,vaccha J** (J 259/2:314). DPPN, in its entry on **Guṇa J** (1937:776), apparently follow this tradition, also refers to Pasenadi; as does John Garrett Jones, in Jātaka study, *Tales and Teachings of the Buddha*, London, 1979:107.

## 2 The Vinaya account

**2.1** The oldest of these late stories is found in the Vinaya (V) account of the “council of 500” or the first council, held at Rājagaha, three months after the Buddha’s parinirvana.<sup>3</sup> The story of the 1000 robes is the second last episode of the Culla,vagga (Cv 11.1.13-14); the last episode being that of the rehabilitation of the elder Channa by the Buddha’s imposition of the “common boycott” (that is, the supreme penalty, *brahma,daṇḍa*).<sup>4</sup>

**2.2** V is located in rajah Udena’s pleasure garden, where the rajah’s concubines see Ānanda sitting under a nearby tree, and takes leave to approach him. No venue is given in the Dhammapada Commentary (DhA) account or in the Jātaka (J) account.

**2.3** After Ānanda’s inspiring instruction, the women donate their outer robes, totalling 500, to him. Apparently, here each of the 500 women gives the outer robes they were wearing (as they are all in the royal pleasure garden). In the Dhammapada Commentary (DhA) account, the rajah notices that the women are wearing only a single robe [§2.7]. In the Jātaka (J) version, the rajah questions the women why they are not wearing the robes given by him [§3.3-4].

**2.4** V presents the rajah as reacting angrily, charging that Ānanda must be a “clothes merchant, or ...opening a store,” [§1.13.3], as does J, but only in a word [§2.6], while only a mild surprise is reported in DhA [§3.4]. However, when the rajah speaks with Ānanda, he is always most civil.

**2.5** V closes with the rajah, impressed and inspired, and decides to donate another 500 sets of robes [§1.14.10], so too in the other two stories [§2.16; §3.17].

## 3 The Dhammapada Commentary account

**3.1** The Dhammapada Commentary (DhA) account is part of the famous and longest story cycle in Buddhist literature (other than the last 10 Jatakas), that is, the tragic “story of Sāmāvati” (**Sāmāvati Vatthu**, DhA 2.1). While V and J do not name the queen, here we know it is the streamwinner, Sāmāvati, who turns to the Dharma on account of the spirituality of her own hunchbacked slave, Khujj’uttarā.<sup>5</sup>

**3.2** Only DhA mentions the rajah, upon Sāmāvati’s request, invites the Buddha to teach regularly in the palace, but the Buddha turns it down, saying that Buddhas are public teachers [§2.3]. Upon the rajah’s request, the Buddha sends Ānanda to regularly teach the queen’s women in the palace. All three accounts agree on this.

**3.3** While V does not mention the robes’ value, DhA says that each is worth 500 pieces of money [2.6]. J however says that each is worth 1000, which further supports the likelihood that it is the latest of the accounts.

**3.4** The DhA robe recycling process is close to that mentioned in V, but adds that those with the worn-out robes give theirs to others whose robes are even older, but omits “covers for pillows and mattresses” and “dusters,” all stated in V [1.3].

**3.5** DhA has a rather curious closing, where Ānanda is mentioned as receiving a fabulous amount of robes. It is hard to believe the credibility of such an account, except as some later interpolation, probably at a time when monastic robes were badly needed! Any way, even without this outlandish ending, the rest of the account is still intact and credible.

## 4 The Jātaka account

**4.1 INTRODUCTORY STORY.** The J story of the 100 robes is found as an introduction to **the Guṇa Jātaka** (J 157). In fact, it is the occasion for the Buddha’s telling that Jātaka. Here, the robes are priced at the highest, 1000 pieces of money, which supports its lateness.

**4.2 VINAYA DEVELOPMENTS.** There are also hints of awareness of later Vinaya developments. Firstly, we have the expression “the three robes, or triple robes” (*ti,cīvara*) [§3.5], reflecting the fact that

<sup>3</sup> V 2:285; VA 9 f. First reported in **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16.6.4/2:154) = SD 9.

<sup>4</sup> Cv 11.1.15-16 @ V 2:292.

<sup>5</sup> The story is given earlier in **Sāmā,vatī Vatthu** (DhA 1:208-210). See also **Laymen saints** = SD 8.6 (8.2).

the way the monks dress has evolved beyond simple rag-robes. Then, we have monastic residential terms such as “residence” (*vihāra*) and “cloister” (*pariveṇa*), both of which refer to built-up lodgings with well designed surroundings [§3.6].

The expression, “the category of use” (*paribhoga, sisa*) [§3.8] suggests the “extra gains” (*atireka, -lābha*),<sup>6</sup> that is, whatever is *allowable* beyond the basic necessary life-supports (*paccaya*) of rag-robes, almsfood, tree-foot lodging and fermented cow-urine ointment. This refers to period when the lay Buddhist supporters must be substantial, and such donations were forthcoming. In fact, the triple robes are also listed accordingly, namely, the upper robe (*saṅghāṭi*), the outer robe (*uttara, saṅga*) and the undergarment (*antara, vāsaka*) [§3.9].

**4.3 THE GUṆA JĀTAKA.** As already mentioned [4.1], the 1000-robe story is an introduction to the Guṇa Jātaka (J 157), which is related as if to vindicate that Ānanda has given half of the robes (that is, 500 sets) to a very industrious and helpful young monk, and it is he who distributes the robes to the other monks, all apparently, pupils of Ānanda [§3.19]. The Guṇa Jātaka is a tale of gratitude, which is clearly a lesson to show that Ānanda has passed the 500 robes to the helpful monk out of gratitude for his industry and devotion. Anyway, he does not keep them for himself, but distributes them accordingly [§3.20],

**4.4 UDENA OR PASENADI?** While the first two of the three accounts [1] centre around **the rajah Udena** interviewing Ānanda on the uses of the robes, in the third (the Guṇa Jātaka), according to the Jātaka Commentary, that king is **the rajah Pasenadi of Kosala**.<sup>7</sup> However, the story seems more probable and natural with Sāmāvatī—hence, with Udena, who, as a rule, disallows his queens to leave the palace without him—than with any queen of Pasenadi.

Pasenadi’s chief queen, **Mallikā**, is renowned for her knowledge of the Dharma, with which she is known to skillfully instruct her husband, rajah Pasenadi.<sup>8</sup> When both Mallikā and Pasenadi’s other queen, Vāsabha, khattiyā, wish to learn the Dhamma, he informs the Buddha who asks Ānanda to visit the palace regularly and instruct them. Mallikā is a good pupil devoted to her practice, but Vāsabha, khattiyā is not so conscientious (DhA 1:382 f). There is no account relating to their offering robes as recounted in the other two stories.

A third reason showing that it is unlikely that the “1000-robe” story is related to Pasenadi is that he is a very faithful devotee of the Buddha,<sup>9</sup> who is so determined to outdo others in giving alms to the sangha, that he succeeds in making the “incomparable gift” (*asadisa, dāna*), given only to the Buddha, and only once in his and the giver’s life-times.<sup>10</sup> It comprises four priceless gifts, namely, a white parasol, a couch, a stand and a footstool.<sup>11</sup> In other words, Pasenadi is the Buddha’s chief royal supporter.<sup>12</sup> Such a pre-eminent and generous donor surely would not mind giving even a thousand robes.

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<sup>6</sup> See **Anaṅgaṇa S** (M 5) = SD 37.7 (3.2); **Anubuddha S** (S 47.3) = SD 24.6a (2.3.1(2)).

<sup>7</sup> Intro to **Tirīṭṭa, vaccha J** (J 259/2:314). DPPN, in its entry on **Guṇa J** (1937:776), apparently foll this tradition, also refers to Pasenadi; as does John Garrett Jones, in Jātaka study, *Tales and Teachings of the Buddha*, London, 1979:107.

<sup>8</sup> See eg **(Piya) Mallikā S** (S 3.8 = U 5.1) where Pasenadi asks her if there is anyone else dearer than she herself (hoping like Shakespeare’s *King Lear* asking his daughters whom they love the most). Mallikā wisely replies that “There is no one dearer to me than myself, but is there, maharajah, anyone dearer to you than yourself?” The rajah has to agree with her! (S 3.8/1:75 = U 5.1/47) = SD 38.7.

<sup>9</sup> See eg **Dhamma, cetiya S** (M 89/2:118-125) = SD 64.10.

<sup>10</sup> See **Asadisa, dāna Vatthu** (DhA 13.10/3:182-192) = SD 22.10b.

<sup>11</sup> DA 2:653 f; DhA 3.10/3:183-186; VvA 5.

<sup>12</sup> That is, after the death of Bimbisāra, a streamwinner and the Buddha’s chief royal supporter. See **Velāma S** (A 9.20) @ SD 16.6 (2.2).

## 1

## SD 37.14.1 (V)

## The 500 Robes

Culla,vagga 11.1.13-14 @ Vinaya 2:290-292

The royal harem visits Ānanda

**13.1** Now at that time, rajah Udena was amusing himself in pleasure-garden with his concubines. Then the rajah's concubines heard:

“It is said that our teacher, master Ānanda, is sitting at the foot of a tree not far away.”

Then, the rajah's concubine approached the rajah Udena and said this to him:

“It is said that our teacher, master Ānanda, is sitting at the foot of a tree not far away. Your majesty, we wish to see master Ānanda.”

“Well, then, see the recluse Ānanda!”

The women give 500 robes to Ānanda

**13.2** Then the rajah's concubines approached the venerable Ānanda, saluted him, and then sat down at one side. Sitting thus at one side, the venerable Ānanda instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened<sup>13</sup> with a talk on the Dharma.

Then the rajah's concubines, having been instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened with a Dharma talk by venerable Ānanda, gave venerable Ānanda 500 sets of outer robes.

Then the rajah's concubines, having rejoiced and approved of venerable Ānanda's words, rose from their seat, saluted him, departed by keeping him to the right, and approached rajah Udena.

The rajah questions about the 500 robes

**13.3** Now, rajah Udena saw his concubines returning from afar. Seeing the concubines, he said to them:

“What now, have you see the recluse Ānanda?”

“We have, your majesty, seen the recluse Ānanda.”

“So, did you give anything to the recluse Ānanda?”

“Your majesty, we gave venerable Ānanda 500 sets of outer robes.”

Rajah Udena was annoyed, vexed, and was outraged, saying,<sup>14</sup>

“How can this recluse Ānanda accept so many robes? Is the recluse Ānanda becoming a clothes merchant, or is he opening a store?”<sup>15</sup>

How the robes are recycled

**14.1** Then rajah Udena went up to venerable Ānanda, and exchanged greetings with him. When the cordial exchanges were concluded, he sat down at one side.

<sup>13</sup> “The Blessed One then instructed (*sandassetvā*), inspired (*samādapetvā*), roused (*samuttejetvā*) and gladdened (*sampahamsetvā*)...with a Dharma talk.” This action sequence reflects the basic structure of the Buddha's teaching method: (1) the Dharma is shown; (2) the listener/s are filled with enthusiasm; (3) they are fired with commitment; and (4) filled with joy. The Comys (eg DA 1:293; cf VA 1:65; MA 2:35) explain that by instructing, the Buddha dispels the listener's **delusion**; by inspiring him, **heedlessness** is dispelled; by rousing him, **indolence** is dispelled; and by gladdening, brings the practice to a **conclusion**. In short, when we teach Dharma to benefit others, we should do our best to **bring instruction, inspiration, motivation and joy** to the listener. These four qualities are, in fact, the sixth or last of the ideal skills of a Dharma speaker. See SD 11.4 Intro (4) & also L S Cousins, in his review of *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha* (tr Ñānamoli) in JBE 4 1997:272, gives a slightly different listing of the above. On *ācikkhanti deseti*, etc, see also A 4.92.5(4a) n = SD 14.11b.

<sup>14</sup> *Rājā udeno ujjhāyati khiyyati vipāceti.*

<sup>15</sup> *Kathañ hi nāma samaṇo ānando tāva bahum cīvaram paṭiggahessati. Dussa,vāñijjam vā samaṇo ānando karis-sati, paggāhika,sālam vā pasāressatī ti.*

Sitting thus at one side, rajah Udena said this to venerable Ānanda,

“Master Ānanda, did our concubines come here?”

“Maharajah, your concubines did come here today.”

**14.2** “And what did they give to master Ānanda?”

“Maharajah, they gave me 500 sets of outer robes.”

**14.3** “But what is master Ānanda going to do with so many robes?”

“Maharajah, we distribute them to monks with robes that are worn out.”

**14.4** “But, master Ānanda, what then do you do with the old worn-out robes?”

“We turn them into cover-sheets.”<sup>16</sup>

**14.5** “What then, master Ānanda, do you do with the old cover-sheets?”

“We turn them into floor-sheets [carpets],<sup>17</sup> maharajah.”

**14.6** “What then, master Ānanda, do you do with the old floor-sheets?”

“We turn them into covers for pillows and mattresses.”<sup>18</sup>

**14.7** “What then, master Ānanda, do you do with the old covers?”

“We turn them into foot-towels, maharajah.”

**14.8** “What then, master Ānanda, do you do with the old foot-towels?”

“We turn them into dusters,<sup>19</sup> maharajah.”

**14.9** “What then, master Ānanda, do you do with the old dusters?”

“Maharajah, having *shredded* them up, we knead them into the mud, and then we will spread them out on the flooring.”

**14.10** Then rajah Udena thought,

“These recluses, sons of the Shakya, proceed very wisely; nothing is wasted!”

So he gave venerable Ānanda another set of 500 pieces of cloth.

And this was how a thousand sets of outer robes accrued upon venerable Ānanda.

## 2

### SD 37.14.2 (DhA)

## Sāmāvatī Vatthu

The Story of Sāmāvatī | DhA 2.1/1:218-220

How robes are recycled

### Sāmāvatī requests for regular Dharma teaching

[Earlier on, queen Māgandiyā had schemed to give the rajah Udena the impression that Sāmāvatī was trying to kill him. When the plot was exposed, and Sāmāvatī vindicated, the rajah sought her forgiveness, and granted her a boon. (DhA 1:211-217)]

**1** The rajah approached the Buddha and took refuge. Then he invited the sangha of monks headed by the Buddha for a week of great alms-offering. He addressed Sāmāvatī,

“Rise and choose your boon!”

“Maharajah, I have no need of things like silver, but grant me this boon. Please arrange that the Teacher comes here regularly with five hundred monks, so that I can hear the Dharma.”

**2** The rajah, having saluted the Teacher, said:

“Bhante, please come here regularly with five hundred monks, so that we can hear the Dharma.”

<sup>16</sup> “Cover-sheets,” *uttara-t,tharaṇa*, ie, covers for beds, chairs, or carriage-seats (V 2:291,27; J 4:431,21, 6:36,7, 4:354,6; VA 776,3 ≠ 666,24 ad V 3:212,21).

<sup>17</sup> *Bhūma-t,tharaṇa*.

<sup>18</sup> “Covers for pillows and mattresses,” *bhisi-c,chavi*.

<sup>19</sup> “Dusters,” *rajōharaṇa*, or cleaning rags.

3 “Maharajah, Buddhas do not regularly give the Dharma in only one place. The public often requests to meet the Teacher.”<sup>20</sup>

4 “In that case, bhante, please send one monk.”

The teacher sent the elder Ānanda.

5 From then on, he went to the royal family regularly, bringing with him 500 monks. Then the queen fed the elder and his retinue, and listened to the Dharma.

### Ānanda receives receives 500 robes

6 One day, having heard the elder’s Dharma talk, inspired with faith, they gave a Dharma offering of 500 outer robes. Each of the outer robes is worth 500 pieces of money.

7 The rajah, seeing them wearing only one robe, asked,  
“Where are your outer robes?”

8 “We gave them to our master.”

“Did he take them all?”

“Yes, he took them all.”

### The rajah questions Ānanda

9 The king then approached the elder, saluted him, and then asked him about the outer robes that have been given to him, and hearing that he had taken them all, said:

“Bhante, isn’t that a great number of robes? What will you do with that many?”

“Maharajah, having kept as many as we need for ourselves, we will give the rest to those monks whose robes are worn out.”

10 “What will they do with their own worn-out robes?”

“They will give them to those whose robes are even more worn out.”

11 “What will they do with their even more worn out robes?”

“They will make cover-sheets<sup>21</sup> of them.”

12 “What will they do with their old cover-sheets?”

“They will make floor-sheets [carpets]<sup>22</sup> of them.”

13 “What will they do with the old floor-sheets?”

“They will make foot-towels of them.”

14 “What will they do with the old foot-towels?”

“They will cut them into small pieces, mix with mortar, and plaster the walls with them.”<sup>23</sup>

15 “Bhante, although this much has been given to the masters, nothing is lost!”

“Yes, maharajah.”

16 The king was so inspired with faith that he had another 500 pieces of robes brought and placed at the elder’s feet.

### Commentarial remark

17 The elder, it is said that received 500 times, cloth worth 500 each, in batches of 500, placed at his feet. He received a thousand times batches of 1000 robes, cloth worth 1000 each, placed at his feet. He received batches of 100,000 robes, cloth worth 100,000 each, placed at his feet.

It is impossible to count what he received by way of one, two, three, four, five, or ten, and so on.

It is said that when the Tathagata has passed into parinirvana, the elder travelled all over Jambu,dīpa [India], giving his very own robes and bowls to the monks in all the monasteries. — — —

<sup>20</sup> *Mahā,rāja, buddhānaṃ nāma ekasmiṃ thāne nibaddhaṃ gantuṃ na vaṭṭati, mahā,jano satthāraṃ āgaman’athāya paccāsīsatī ti.*

<sup>21</sup> *Paccattharaṇa*, ie spreads or covers for bed, cushions, seats etc.

<sup>22</sup> *Bhumma-ṭ,tharaṇa.*

<sup>23</sup> *Khaṇḍākhaṇḍikāṃ koṭṭetvā mattikāya madditvā bhittim limpissantī ti.*

## 3

## SD 37.14.3 (J)

## Guṇa Jātaka

The Birth-story on Virtue<sup>24</sup> | J 157/2:23-30

Theme: How Ānanda received 1000 robes

Ānanda teaches the royal harem

1 “He dismisses as he desires...” (*yena kāmam paṇāmetī ’ti*). This was spoken by the Teacher, while staying in Jeta, vana, in connection with the elder Ānanda’s receiving of a thousand robes.

2 The story of the elder’s speaking the Dharma to the royal harem has been given above in **the Mahā, sāra Jātaka** (J 92).<sup>25</sup> As the elder teaches the Dharma to the royal harem, thus [24] he was given a thousand robes worth a thousand pieces of money. Five hundred came from the rajah, while five hundred was given by the queens.

3 They all set aside their robes, and the next day gave them to the elder Ānanda, while they themselves wore the old robes, and went to where the rajah was having his breakfast.

The rajah questions about the robes

4 The rajah asked: “I’ve given you robes worth a thousand each. Why are you not wearing them?”

“Your majesty, we have given them to the elder Ānanda.”

“All taken by the elder Ānanda...?”

“Yes, your majesty.”

5 “The fully self-awakened Buddha only allows the three robes (*ti, cīvāra*). Has the elder Ānanda become a cloth merchant, to have taken so many robes?”

6 Angry with the elder Ānanda, the rajah, after breakfast, went to the monastic residence (*vihāra*) and entered the elder’s cloister.<sup>26</sup> After saluting the elder, he sat down, and asked:

“Bhante, do the women in our house learn or listen the Dharma in your presence?”

“Yes, maharajah, they learn whatever they ought to, they hear whatever they ought to.”

7 “What, do they only listen to you, or do they give you upper robes and undergarments, to you, too?”

“Today, maharajah, they gave five hundred robes worth a thousand each.”

“You took them all, bhante?”

“Yes, maharajah.”

8 “But, bhante, does not the Teacher allow only the three robes?”

“Yes, maharajah, three robes are allowed for each monk, but there is also an allowance under the category of ‘use’ (*paribhoga*). For, it is not forbidden to receiving what is offered.”<sup>27</sup>

Ānanda details the recycling of the robes

9 Therefore, I accepted the robes, from which I gave to those others whose robes (*cīvāra*) are old.”

“But when these monks have received the robes from you, what they do with the old robes?”

“The old upper robes (*saṅghāṭi*) are made into outer robes (*uttarā, saṅga*).”<sup>28</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Also called **Sīha J**, and perhaps also **Sigāla J** (eg J 2:314). This latter should not be confused with its namesake at J 152/2:5-9.

<sup>25</sup> J 92/1:381-387; cf Cv 11.1.13-14 @ V 2.290-292 = SD 37.14.1.

<sup>26</sup> *Pariveṇa*: “This appears to be not the cells or rooms of the monks or nuns, nor vaguely the precinct of a monastery, but the more public part of the building, the central hall or quadrangle, esp when roofed or partly roofed” (PTC). This term clearly refers to a monastery that was a more organized, larger, more built-up, and more crowded than the early park-monastery (*ārāma*).

<sup>27</sup> *Āma, mahārāja, bhagavatā ekassa bhikkhuno ti, cīvaram eva paribhoga, sīsena anuññātā, paṭiggahaṇam pana avāritā,*

<sup>28</sup> Thai monks would as a rule wear the *saṅghāṭi* folded lengthwise over their left shoulders for ritual occasions. The actual robe that they would generally wear when fully dressed is the *uttara, saṅga*. Forest monks, however, often

10 “What do you do with the old outer robes?”

“They are made into undergarments [sarongs] (*antara,vāsaka*).”

11 “What do you do with the old undergarments?”

“They are made into cover-sheets.”<sup>29</sup>

12 “What do you do with the old cover-sheets?”

“They are made into floor-sheets [carpets].”<sup>30</sup> [25]

14 “What do you do with the old floor-sheets?”

“We make them into foot-towels.”

15 “What do you do with the old foot-towels?”

“Maharajah, it is not proper to waste what is given by the faithful. Therefore, we break up the old foot-towels with a sharp knife, mix them with clay, and plaster them over the walls of our lodgings.”<sup>31</sup>

16 “Bhante, nothing given by them, right down to the foot-towels, have been lost!”

“Yes, maharajah, nothing given to us are lost, but out to good use somehow.”

### The rajah gives another 500 robes

17 The rajah was pleased, overcome with joy. He had a further five hundred robes brought and placed before the elder. Having heard the elder’s thanksgiving, he saluted him, and keeping him to his right, departed.

18 The first five hundred robes the elder received he gave to those monks with worn-out robes.

19 Now, there were five hundred resident pupils, and amongst them was a young monk who was of great help in doing such work as sweeping the cloister; serving the food and drinks; providing the tooth-stick and mouth-rinsing water, and washing water; looking after the toilets, the steam-room, and the lodgings; and doing all the works for treating the hand, legs, and the back.

On account of such devotion, that he is of such great help, the elder handed over all five hundred robes that he had received only to him.<sup>32</sup>

### Ānanda’s gratitude

20 He distributed all the robes amongst his own colleagues under the same preceptor.<sup>33</sup> The monks who received these robes cut them all up, and dyed them in the colour of the cassia flowers.<sup>34</sup> Girt and dressed, they went up to the Teacher, saluted the Teacher, and having sat down on one side, said:

“Bhante, is it possible that a noble disciple who is a streamwinner make a gift by looking at the face?”<sup>35</sup>

“No, bhikshus, a noble disciple who is a streamwinner does not make a gift by looking at the face.”

double up both these robes and wear them that way, esp in cold weather. It makes better sense here to take it that it is the *uttara,saṅga* that is worn lengthwise over the left shoulder when fully dressed, while the *saṅghāṭi* is the single robe they wear. Underneath is of course the undergarment and usually also a special monastic vest.

<sup>29</sup> *Paccattharaṇa*, ie spreads or covers for bed, cushions, seats etc.

<sup>30</sup> *Bhumma-t,tharaṇa*.

<sup>31</sup> *Mahārāja, saddhā,deyyaṃ nāma vinipātetuṃ na labbhati, tasmā porāṇa,pāda,puñchanam vāsiyā koṭṭetvā mat-tikāya makkhetvā senāsanesu mattikā,lepanam karissantī ti.*

<sup>32</sup> *Thero pacchā laddhāni pañca sātaka,satāni “ayaṃ me bahūpakārō ti yutta,vasena sabbāni tass’eva adāsi.*

<sup>33</sup> *So’pi sabbe te sātake bhājetvā attano samān’upajjhāyānam adāsi.* I have rendered *samān’upajjhāyānam* as “amongst his own colleagues under the same preceptor.” *Samāna* here means “the same, identical (ie sharing something common).”

<sup>34</sup> *Evam sabbe’pi te laddha’sātakā bhikkhū sātake chinditvā rajitvā kaṇikāra,puppha,vaṇṇāni.*

<sup>35</sup> *Bhante, sotāpannassa ariya,sāvakkassa mukh’olokana,dānam nāma atthī ti.* The phrase *mukh’olokana* (vl *mukh’ullokana*) lit “looking at the face” (J 1:96, 2:25, 26, 193, 3:287, 385), DPL & PED: cheerful, bright, willing (often said of a servant). From *Agga,sāvakā Vatthu* (DhA 1.8), it is clear from the context that “personal inclination, bias or favouritism” is meant (DhA 1.8/1:96). At DhA 2:193, Burlingame actually tr it as “favouritism” (DhA:B 2:212,34), while W H D Rouse has “respector of persons” (J 2:18,51+56). I have chosen to keep it idiomatic. With appreciative thanks of Ven Anandajoti for his feedback, email 23 Nov 2011.

**21** “Bhante, our preceptor, the Treasurer of the Dharma, gave five hundred robes worth a thousand to just a young monk, and he has divided them amongst us.”<sup>36</sup>

“Ānanda, bhikkhus, did not give the alms by way of looking at the face. [26] But that monk was of great help to him. As such, on account of his own benefit, by virtue of the help, on account of the virtue, by virtue of the devotion, by way of reciprocating the helpfulness, he gave (those robes) by way of joyful gratitude.”<sup>37</sup>

**22** For the ancient wise, saying, ‘One good turn deserves another.’<sup>38</sup> On being asked, he related the past:

## THE BIRTH-STORY ON VIRTUE

### A lion stuck in the mud

**23** “In the past, when Brahma, datta was ruling in Benares, the Bodhisattva was a lion living in a hill-side cave. One day, he came out from the cave and looked at the foot of the hill. Now, the foot of the hill was encircled by a great lake.

**24** On a certain high ground, on the surface of some solid mud-bank, there grew some soft green grass. Over that spot, hare, deer and other light animals would wander about eating the grass.<sup>39</sup>

**25** That day, a deer was wandered there to feed. The lion thought: ‘I will catch that deer!’

From the hill-top, he charged down with a lion’s speed. The deer, stricken with the fear of death, scurried off with a shriek.

**26** The lion, on account of its speed, was unable to slow down. He fell into the mud-bank and sank, unable to extricate himself. He stayed there with his four leg sunk like posts. For seven days, he remained there without food.

### Saved by a jackal

**27** Then a jackal, seeking a prey saw him and fled out of fear. The lion, calling him, cried out: ‘Master Jackal, don’t flee! I’m stuck fast in the mud! Save me my life!’<sup>40</sup>

**28** The jackal went before the lion and said,

‘I would draw you out, but having done so, I fear that you would eat me!’

**29** ‘Fear not! I will not eat you. I will do something about your great virtue. So please pull me out by some means!’

**30** The jackal accepted the promise. Pushing away the mud around all his four legs, he then dug four channels [27] towards the water. The water flowed in and softened the mud.

**31** At that moment, the jackal pushed his own head right under the lion’s belly.

“Exert yourself, sir!’ and making a loud sound, he pushed hard his belly with his head. The lion, straining his strength, sprang out of the mud and stood on solid ground.

### The grateful lion

**32** After resting a moment, the lion went into the lake and washed off the mud. Having bathed, and so was free from anxiety. Then he killed a buffalo, and sinking his teeth into it, tore out some meat, and said, ‘Eat, friend!’

He let the jackal eat first. After that, he himself took his own meal.

<sup>36</sup> *Bhante, amhākaṃ upajjhāyena dhamma, bhaṇḍāgārika-t, therena sahaṣṣ’agghanikānaṃ sātakānaṃ pañca satāni ekass’eva dahara, bhikkhuno dinnāni, so pana attanā laddhe bhājetvā amhākaṃ adāsī ti.* Here, “the Treasurer of the Dharma” (*dhamma, bhaṇḍāgārika*) refers to Ānanda, who is a streamwinner at that time.

<sup>37</sup> *So pan’assa bhikkhu bahūpakāro, tasmā attano upakārassa upakāra, vasena guṇa, vasena yutta, vasena “upakārassa nāma paccupakāro kātuṃ vaṭṭatī ti kataññu, katavedi, bhāvena adāsī.*

<sup>38</sup> *Attano upakārānañ ñeva paccupakāraṃ kariṃsū ti,* lit “What is of benefit to one, one should work to reciprocate it.”

<sup>39</sup> *Sasakā c’eva hariṇ’ādayo ca sallahuka, migā kaddama, matthake vicarantā tāni khādanti.*

<sup>40</sup> *Jīvitam me dehi,* lit “Give me my life!”

**33** Then the jackal took a piece of meat in his mouth.

‘What is that for, friend?’

‘There is a female slave. This portion is for her.’

**34** The lion said, ‘Take!’

Then he himself having taken some meat for the lioness, said:

‘Come, friend, let us stay on the hill (for a while). Then, we will go to the dwelling-place of our female friends. Having said that they went there and let her eat the meat. Then he comforted the jackal and his mate, saying,

‘Now I will watch over you.’

### The lioness and the she-jackal

**35** Then he led them to his own dwelling-place, and let them live in another cave at the entrance of his own.

**36** Leaving the lioness and the she-jackal behind, they went on looking for prey together.<sup>41</sup>

They killed various animals and ate them right there, and brought some back for the other two.

**37** As time passed, the lioness had two cubs, and so did the she-jackal. They all lived together in harmony.

**38** Then one day, the lioness thought:

‘The lion is extremely fond of the jackal, the she-jackal, and their young. Surely he must be having an affair with the she-jackal, which explains all this affection! What now if I vex and terrify her, so that I drive her away from here.

**39** While the lion and the jackal were away looking for prey, the lioness vexed and terrified the she-jackal, thus:

‘Why do you live [28] here? Why do you not run away?’

Her sons, too, terrified the she-jackal’s sons.

### The jackal’s complain

**40** The she-jackal told the jackal about the matter, saying,

‘I’m not sure whether she has done this at the lion’s bidding. If we stay here any longer, we might perish! Let us go back to our own dwelling-place.’

**41** The jackal, having heard this, went up to the lion and said,

‘Master, we have lived a long time with you. Those who stay too long become disliked. While we were away seeking prey, the lioness vexed the she-jackal, saying,

“Why do you live here? Why do you not run away?” Her sons, too, terrified the little jackals.

Whoever does not like another staying with one should simply say, “Leave now, go away!” without the need of such vexation.’<sup>42</sup>

**42** Then he uttered this first verse:

*Yena kāmam paṇāmeti  
dhammo bala,vataṃ migī  
unna,dantī vijānāhi  
jātaṃ saraṇato bhayan ti.*

She dismisses as she desires,  
this is the nature of a powerful lioness,  
the one with sharp teeth: know you this,  
that fear has arisen from refuge! [29] 13

### The lion’s gratitude and wisdom

**43** Having heard these words, the lion said to the lioness:

‘My dear, do you recall that time when I was away looking for prey, and then came back with the jackal and the she-jackal?’

<sup>41</sup> *Te tato paṭṭhāya gocarāya gacchantā sīhiṇ ca siṅgāliṇ ca thapetvā siṅgālena saddhim gantvā.*

<sup>42</sup> *Yo nāma yassa attano santike vāsam na roceti, tena so ‘yāhī ti nīharitabbo’va, viheṭhanam nāma kim atthiyan ti*

‘Yes, I remember,’ said the lioness.

**44** ‘Now do you know why I did not return for seven days?’

‘No, I do not, master.’

‘My dear, thinking I would catch a deer, but by mistake I was stuck fast in the mud. For seven days I was unable to free myself, and so remained there without food. Now it was on account of this jackal that my life was saved. This is my friend, my life-saver.<sup>43</sup>

**45** He is able to stand in true friendship; he is no weak friend!<sup>44</sup>

From now on, please do not look down on my friend, his wife, and his children like this.<sup>45</sup>

**46** Having said that, he spoke this second verse:

*Api ce'pi dubbalo mitto  
mitta,dhammesu tiṭṭhati  
so ñātako ca bandhu ca  
so mitto so ca me sakhā  
dāṭhini mātimaññittho  
siṅgālo mama pāṇa,do'ti*

Even if he is a friend, not strong,  
he stand in friendship true:  
he is a relative, a kinsman,  
a friend is he, and a companion to me—  
O lioness with sharp teeth, look not down on  
the jackal, my life-saver.

**14**

**47** The lioness, hearing these words, begged for pardon from the she-jackal. From then on, she lives in harmony with them and their children. The young lions, too, sported together in mutual joy. Even after their parents [30] have passed on, they lived on delighting in their friendship, joyful with one another. It is said that for seven generation, their friendship remained unbroken.<sup>46</sup>

### The closing connections

**48** When the teacher had brought this Dharma teaching to its conclusion, he declared the truths and identified the births,

‘At that time, the jackal was Ānanda, and the lion was I myself.’

**49** At the end of the truths, some became streamwinners, some once-returners, some non-returners, some arhats.”

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<sup>43</sup> *Bhadde, ahaṃ 'ekam migam gaṇhissāmi ti virajjhivā kalale laggo, tato nikkhamitum asakkonto sattāham nir-āhāro aṭṭhāsīm, svāam imam siṅgālam nissāya jīvitaṃ labhiṃ, ayam me jīvita,dāyako sahāyo.*

<sup>44</sup> *Mitta,dhamme ṭhātuṃ samattho hi mitto dubbalo nāma n'atthi.*

<sup>45</sup> *Ito paṭṭhāya mayham sahāyassa ca sahāyikāya ca puttakānañ ca eva,rūpaṃ avamānaṃ mā akāsī ti.*

<sup>46</sup> *Tesaṃ kira satta,kula,parivaṭṭe abhijjamānā metti agamāsi.*