Snp 1.2 — Sn 1:2 Dhaniya the Cattleman

English translation by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.

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

Completeness: ABBREVIATED. Every source-unit character is preserved, including introductions, notes and verse structure. Thanissaro's collection-level note explicitly states that repetitions were cut: https://www.dhammatalks.org/suttas/about.html. This is evidence about the translation method, not an assertion that every individual unit contains an omission; no repetitions reconstructed.

Text

1:2 Dhaniya the Cattleman

Dhaniya the cattleman:1

“The rice is cooked,

my milking done.

I live with my people

along the banks of the Mahi;

my hut is roofed, my fire lit:

So if you want, rain-god,

go ahead & rain.”

The Buddha:

“Free from anger,

my rigidity gone,2

I live for one night

along the banks of the Mahi;

my hut’s roof is open, my fire out.3

So if you want, rain-god,

go ahead & rain.”

Dhaniya:

“No mosquitoes or gadflies

are to be found.

The cows range in the marshy meadow

where the grasses flourish.

They could stand the rain if it came:

So if you want, rain-god,

go ahead & rain.”

The Buddha:

“A raft, well-made,

has been lashed together.4

Having crossed over,

gone to the far shore,

I’ve subdued the flood.

No need for a raft

is to be found5:

So if you want, rain-god,

go ahead & rain.”

Dhaniya:

“My wife is composed, not wanton,

is charming, has lived with me long.

I hear no evil about her at all:

So if you want, rain-god,

go ahead & rain.”

The Buddha:

“My mind is composed, released,

has long been nurtured, well tamed.

No evil is to be found in me:

So if you want, rain-god,

go ahead & rain.”

Dhaniya:

“I support myself on my earnings.

My sons live in harmony,

free from disease.

I hear no evil about them at all:

So if you want, rain-god,

go ahead & rain.”

The Buddha:

“I’m in no one’s employ,6

I wander the whole world

on the reward [of my Awakening].

No need for earnings

is to be found:

So if you want, rain-god,

go ahead & rain.”

Dhaniya:

“There are cows, young bulls,

cows in calf, & breeding cows,

& a great bull, the leader of the herd:

So if you want, rain-god,

go ahead & rain.”

The Buddha:

“There are no cows, no young bulls,

no cows in calf or breeding cows,

no great bull, the leader of the herd7:

So if you want, rain-god,

go ahead & rain.”

Dhaniya:

“The stakes are dug-in, immovable.

The new muñja-grass halters, well-woven,

not even young bulls could break:

So if you want, rain-god,

go ahead & rain.”

The Buddha:

“Having broken my bonds

like a great bull,

like a great elephant

tearing a rotting vine,8

I never again

will lie in the womb:

So if you want, rain-god,

go ahead & rain.”9

The great cloud rained down

straightaway,

filling the lowlands & high.

Hearing the rain-god pour down,
Dhaniya said:

“How great our gain
that we’ve gazed
on the Blessed One!
We go to him,
the One with Eyes,10
for refuge.
May you be our teacher, Great Sage.
My wife & I are composed.
Let’s follow the holy life
under the One Well-Gone.
Gone to the far shore
of aging & death,
let’s put an end
to suffering & stress.”

Māra:11
“Those with children
delight
because of their children.
Those with cattle
delight
because of their cows.
A person’s delight
comes from acquisitions,
for a person with no acquisitions
doesn’t delight.”

The Buddha:
“Those with children

grieve

precisely because of their children.

Those with cattle

grieve

precisely because of their cows.

A person's grief

comes from acquisitions,

for a person with no acquisitions

doesn't grieve."12

vv.18–34

Notes

1. Dhaniya Gopa: literally, One Whose Wealth is in Cattle. According to SnA, his herd consisted of 30,000 head of cattle.

2. The first line in the Buddha's verse plays on words in the first line of Dhaniya's. "Free from anger" (akkodhano) plays on "rice is cooked" (pakkodano); and "rigidity" (khilo) plays on "milk" (khīro).

3. "Open" means having a mind not covered or concealed by craving, defilement, or ignorance. This image is also used at Ud 5:5 and Sn 4:4. "My fire out" refers to the fires of passion, aversion, & delusion; birth, aging, & death; sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair. See SN 35:28; Iti 93; and The Mind Like Fire Unbound.

4. The raft stands for the noble eightfold path. See MN 22 and SN 35:197.

5. As this verse doesn't seem to be a direct response to the preceding one, SnA suggests that we are missing part of the conversation here. An alternative possibility is that the Buddha is engaging in word play—the word "crossed over" (tiṇṇa) being a pun on Dhaniya's reference to grass (tiṇa).

6. According to SnA, the Buddha is not in anyone else's employ nor even in his own employ—i.e., he is not in the employ of craving.

7. The Buddha may be speaking literally here—he has no cattle, so there is no way that a heavy rain could cause him harm—but he may also be speaking metaphorically. See SN 4:19 and Thag 1:1.

8. See MN 66.

9. This verse is quoted in the Milinda Pañhā.

10. On the theme of the Buddha as “One with Eyes,” see DN 16, note 44. See also, Sn 2:12, note 2.

11. According to SnA, Māra suddenly comes on the scene to try—unsuccessfully—to prevent Dhaniya and his wife from going forth. His verses here, together with the Buddha’s response, are also found at SN 4:8.

12. See Sn 3:12, note 2.

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: SN 4:8; AN 3:35; AN 3:110; AN 7:6-7; Ud 2:10; Thig 1:1