pli-tv-bu-vb-np30 — Diverting an offering intended for the Sangha

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Text

Theravāda Collection on Monastic Law

The Great Analysis

The chapter on relinquishment

The subchapter on almsbowls

Diverting an offering intended for the Sangha

Origin story

At one time when the Buddha was staying at Sāvatthī in Anāthapiṇḍika's Monastery, an association had prepared a meal together with robe-cloth for the Sangha, intending to offer the robe-cloth after giving the meal.

But the monks from the group of six went to that association and said, "Please give this robe-cloth to us."

"Venerables, we can't do that. We've prepared our annual alms-offering together with robe-cloth for the Sangha."

"The Sangha has many donors and supporters. But since we're staying here, we look to you for support. If you don't give to us, who will? So give us the robe-cloth." Being pressured by the monks from the group of six, that association gave the prepared robe-cloth to them and served the food to the Sangha.

The monks who knew that a meal together with robe-cloth had been prepared for the Sangha, but who did not know that the robe-cloth had been given to the monks from the group of six, said, "Please dedicate the robe-cloth."

"There isn't any. The monks from the group of six have diverted to themselves the robe-cloth we had prepared."

The monks of few desires complained and criticized those monks, "How could the monks from the group of six divert to themselves things they knew were intended for the Sangha?"

After rebuking those monks in many ways, they told the Buddha. Soon afterwards he had the Sangha gathered and questioned the monks: "Is it true, monks, that you did this?"

“It’s true, sir.”

The Buddha rebuked them … “Foolish men, how could you do this? This will affect people’s confidence …” … “And, monks, this training rule should be recited like this:

Final ruling

‘If a monk diverts to himself material support that he knows was intended for the Sangha, he commits an offense entailing relinquishment and confession.’”

Definitions

A: whoever … Monk: … The monk who has been given the full ordination by a unanimous Sangha through a legal procedure consisting of one motion and three announcements that is irreversible and fit to stand—this sort of monk is meant in this case. He knows: he knows by himself or others have told him or the donor has told him. For the Sangha: given to the Sangha, given up to the Sangha. Material support: robe-cloth, almsfood, a dwelling, and medicinal supplies; even a bit of bath powder, a tooth cleaner, or a piece of string. Intended: they have said, “We’ll give,” “We’ll prepare.” If he diverts it to himself, then for the effort there is an act of wrong conduct. When he gets it, it becomes subject to relinquishment.

It should be relinquished to a sangha, a group, or an individual. “And, monks, it should be relinquished like this. …” (To be expanded as in Bu NP 1:3.2.5–3.2.29, with appropriate substitutions.)

“Venerables, this thing, which I diverted to myself knowing that it was intended for the Sangha, is to be relinquished. I relinquish it to the Sangha.” … “the Sangha should give …” “you should give …” “I give this back to you.”

Permutations

If it was intended for the Sangha and he perceives it as such, and he diverts it to himself, he commits an offense entailing relinquishment and confession. If it was intended for the Sangha, but he is unsure of it, and he diverts it to himself, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. If it was intended for the Sangha, but he does not perceive it as such, and he diverts it to himself, there is no offense.

If it was intended for one Sangha and he diverts it to another Sangha or to a shrine, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. If it was intended for one shrine and he diverts it to another shrine or to a sangha or to an individual, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. If it was intended for an individual and he diverts it to another individual or to a sangha or to a shrine, he commits an offense of wrong conduct.

If it was not intended for the Sangha, but he perceives it as such, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. If it was not intended for the Sangha, but he is unsure of it, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. If it was not intended for the Sangha and he does not perceive it as such, there is no offense.

Non-offenses

There is no offense: if being asked, “Where may we give?” he says, “Give where your gift will be useful;” “Give where it goes toward repairs;” “Give where it will last for a long time;” “Give where you feel inspired;” if he is insane; if he is the first offender.

The training rule on diverting an offering intended for the Sangha, the tenth, is finished.

The third subchapter on almsbowls is finished.

This is the summary:

“Two on bowls, and tonics,

Rainy season, the fifth on a gift;

Oneself, having woven, haste,

Risky, and with the Sangha.”

“Venerables, the thirty rules on relinquishment and confession have been recited. In regard to this I ask you, ‘Are you pure in this?’ A second time I ask, ‘Are you pure in this?’ A third time I ask, ‘Are you pure in this?’ You are pure in this and therefore silent. I will remember it thus.”

The chapter on offenses entailing relinquishment is finished.

The canonical text beginning with the offenses entailing expulsion is finished.