pli-tv-bi-vb-pc11 — Meeting a man in the dark

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Text

Theravāda Collection on Monastic Law

The Nuns' Analysis

The chapter on offenses entailing confession

The subchapter on the dark of the night

Meeting a man in the dark

Origin story

At one time when the Buddha was staying at Sāvatthī in Anāthapiṇḍika's Monastery, a male relative of a nun who was a pupil of Bhaddā Kāpilānī went from his own village to Sāvatthī on some business. Then, in the dark of the night and without a lamp, that nun stood and talked alone with that man.

The nuns of few desires complained and criticized her, "How could a nun do such a thing?" … "Is it true, monks, that a nun did this?"

"It's true, sir."

The Buddha rebuked her … "How could a nun do such a thing? This will affect people's confidence …" … "And, monks, the nuns should recite this training rule like this:

Final ruling

'If, in the dark of the night without a lamp, a nun stands or talks alone with a man, she commits an offense entailing confession.'"

Definitions

A: whoever … Nun: … The nun who has been given the full ordination in unanimity by both Sanghas through a legal procedure consisting of one motion and three announcements that is irreversible and fit to stand—this sort of nun is meant in this case. In the dark of the night: when the sun has set. Without a lamp: without light. A man: a human male, not a male spirit, not a male ghost, not a male animal. He understands and is capable of standing together and talking. With: together. Alone: just the man and the nun. Stands with: if she stands within arm's reach of the man, she commits an offense entailing confession. Talks with: if she stands talking within arm's reach of the man, she commits an offense entailing confession.

If she stands or talks outside of arm's reach, she commits an offense of wrong conduct. If she stands or talks with a male spirit, a male ghost, a paṇḍaka, or a male animal in human form, she commits an offense of wrong conduct.

Non-offenses

There is no offense: if she has a companion who understands; if she is not seeking privacy; if she stands or talks thinking of something else; if she is insane; if she is the first offender.

The first training rule is finished.