pli-tv-bi-vb-pc51 — Entering a monks’ monastery

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Text

Theravāda Collection on Monastic Law

The Nuns’ Analysis

The chapter on offenses entailing confession

The subchapter on monasteries

Entering a monks’ monastery

Origin story

First substory

At one time when the Buddha was staying at Sāvatthī in Anāthapiṇḍika’s Monastery, a number of monks dressed only in sarongs were making robes in a certain village monastery. Nuns entered that monastery without asking permission and approached those monks. The monks complained and criticized them, “How can nuns enter a monastery without asking permission?” … “Is it true, monks, that nuns did that?”

“It’s true, sir.”

The Buddha rebuked them … “How can nuns do that? This will affect people’s confidence …” … “And, monks, the nuns should recite this training rule like this:

First preliminary ruling

‘If a nun enters a monastery without asking permission, she commits an offense entailing confession.’”

In this way the Buddha laid down this training rule for the nuns.

Second substory

Soon afterwards those monks left that monastery. But even though the nuns had heard that the monks had left, they did not go there. Soon the monks returned. When the nuns heard that this was the case, they asked permission and then entered that monastery. They approached the monks and bowed down to them. The monks then said to them, “Sisters, why didn’t you sweep the monastery, or put out water for drinking or water for washing?”

“The Buddha has laid down a training rule that we may not enter a monastery without asking permission. That’s why we didn’t do it.”

They told the Buddha. Soon afterwards the Buddha had the Sangha gathered and addressed the monks: “Monks, when a monk is available, a nun should enter a monastery only after asking permission. And so, monks, the nuns should recite this training rule like this:

Second preliminary ruling

‘If a nun, when a monk is available, enters a monastery without asking permission, she commits an offense entailing confession.’”

In this way the Buddha laid down this training rule for the nuns.

Third substory

After leaving that monastery once more, the monks returned yet again. Thinking that the monks were still away, the nuns entered the monastery without asking permission. The nuns became anxious, thinking, “We have entered a monastery without asking permission, even though a monk was available. And the Buddha has laid down a training rule against this. Could it be that we have committed an offense entailing confession?”

They told the Buddha. Soon afterwards he gave a teaching and addressed the monks: “And so, monks, the nuns should recite this training rule like this:

Final ruling

‘If a nun, knowing that there are monks in a monastery, enters it without asking permission, 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. Knowing: she knows it by herself or others have told her or they have told her. There are monks in a monastery: even where monks stay at the foot of a tree. Enters it without asking permission: if she crosses the boundary of an enclosed monastery without asking permission of a monk or a novice monk or a monastery worker, she commits an offense entailing confession. If she enters the vicinity of an unenclosed monastery, she commits an offense entailing confession.

Permutations

If there are monks in a monastery, and she perceives that there are, and she enters it without asking permission of an available monk, she commits an offense entailing confession. If there are monks in a monastery, but she is unsure of it, and she enters it without asking permission of an available monk, she commits an offense of wrong conduct. If there are monks in a monastery, but she does not perceive that there are, and she enters it without asking permission of an available monk, there is no offense.

If there are no monks in a monastery, but she perceives that there are, she commits an offense of wrong conduct. If there are no monks in a monastery, but she is unsure of it,

she commits an offense of wrong conduct. If there are no monks in a monastery, and she does not perceive that there are, there is no offense.

Non-offenses

There is no offense: if she enters after asking permission of an available monk; if, when there is no available monk, she enters without asking permission; if she goes while looking at the head of a nun in front of her; if she is going to where the nuns have gathered; if a path goes through the monastery; if she is sick; if there is an emergency; if she is insane; if she is the first offender.

The first training rule is finished.