pli-tv-bu-vb-pc67 — Traveling with a woman

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Text

Theravāda Collection on Monastic Law

The Great Analysis

The chapter on offenses entailing confession

The subchapter on containing living beings

Traveling with a woman

Origin story

At one time when the Buddha was staying at Sāvatthī in Anāthapiṇḍika's Monastery, a monk who was traveling through the Kosalan country on his way to Sāvatthī walked through the gateway of a certain village. A woman who had had an argument with her husband walked through the same gateway. When she saw that monk, she asked him, "Venerable, where are you going?"

"I'm going to Sāvatthī."

"May I go with you?"

"Sure."

Soon afterwards that woman's husband also left that village. He asked around, "Have you seen such-and-such a woman?"

"She's walking along with a monastic."

He then followed after them, caught that monk, and gave him a beating. The monk sat down fuming at the foot of a tree. And the woman said to her husband, "This monk didn't make me go; I was the one who went with him. He's innocent. Go and ask his forgiveness." And he did so.

That monk then went to Sāvatthī where he told the monks what had happened. The monks of few desires complained and criticized him, "How could a monk travel by arrangement with a woman?" … "Is it true, monk, that you did this?"

"It's true, sir."

The Buddha rebuked him … "Foolish man, how could do this? This will affect people's confidence …" … "And, monks, this training rule should be recited like this:

Final ruling

‘If a monk travels by arrangement with a woman, even just to the next inhabited area, he commits an offense entailing 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. A woman: a human female, not a female spirit, not a female ghost, not a female animal. She understands and is capable of discerning good and bad speech, what is decent and what is indecent. With: together. By arrangement: if he makes an arrangement like this: he says, “Let’s go,” and she replies, “Yes, let’s go, venerable;” or she says, “Let’s go, venerable,” and he replies, “Yes, let’s go;” or he says, “Let’s go today,” “Let’s go tomorrow,” or “Let’s go the day after tomorrow,” then he commits an offense of wrong conduct. Even just to the next inhabited area: when the inhabited areas are a chicken’s flight apart, then for every next inhabited area he commits an offense entailing confession. When it is an uninhabited area, a wilderness, then for every six kilometers he commits an offense entailing confession.

Permutations

If it is a woman, and he perceives her as such, and he travels by arrangement with her, even just to the next inhabited area, he commits an offense entailing confession. If it is a woman, but he is unsure of it, and he travels by arrangement with her, even just to the next inhabited area, he commits an offense entailing confession. If it is a woman, but he does not perceive her as such, and he travels by arrangement with her, even just to the next inhabited area, he commits an offense entailing confession.

If the monk makes an arrangement, but the woman does not express her agreement, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. If he travels by arrangement with a female spirit, with a female ghost, with a paṇḍaka, with a female animal in the form of a woman, even just to the next inhabited area, he commits an offense of wrong conduct.

If it is not a woman, but he perceives them as such, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. If it is not a woman, but he is unsure of it, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. If it is not a woman, and he does not perceive them as such, there is no offense.

Non-offenses

There is no offense: if he goes, but not by arrangement; if the woman has made an arrangement, but he has not expressed his agreement; if he goes, but not according to the arrangement; if there is an emergency; if he is insane; if he is the first offender.

The training rule on traveling with a woman, the seventh, is finished.