pli-tv-bu-vb-ss11 — Siding with a schismatic

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Text

Theravāda Collection on Monastic Law

The Great Analysis

The chapter on offenses entailing suspension

Siding with a schismatic

Origin story

At one time the Buddha was staying at Rājagaha in the Bamboo Grove, the squirrel sanctuary. At that time Devadatta was pursuing schism in the Sangha, a break in authority. The monks were saying, “Devadatta speaks contrary to the Teaching and the training. How can he pursue schism in the Sangha?”

But Kokālika, Kaṭamodakatissaka, Khaṇḍadeviyāputta, and Samuddadatta said to those monks, “No, venerables, Devadatta speaks in accordance with the Teaching and the training. And he speaks with our consent and approval. He knows about us and speaks for us, and we approve of this.”

The monks of few desires complained and criticized them, “How can these monks support Devadatta’s pursuit of schism in the Sangha?”

They rebuked those monks in many ways and then told the Buddha. Soon afterwards he had the Sangha gathered and questioned the monks: “Is it true, monks, that there are monks who support this?”

“It’s true, sir.”

The Buddha rebuked them … “Monks, how can those foolish men support this? This will affect people’s confidence …” … “And, monks, this training rule should be recited like this:

Final ruling

‘That monk may have one, two, or three monks who side with him and support him, and they may say, “Venerables, don’t correct this monk. He speaks in accordance with the Teaching and the training. And he speaks with our consent and approval. He knows about us and speaks for us, and we approve of this.” The monks should correct those monks like this: “No, venerables, this monk speaks contrary to the Teaching and the training. And don’t consent to schism in the Sangha. Stay with the Sangha, for a united Sangha—in concord, in harmony, having a joint recitation—is at ease.” If those monks continue as before, the monks should press them up to three times to make them stop. If they then

stop, all is well. If they do not stop, they commit an offense entailing suspension.’”

Definitions

That: that monk who is pursuing schism in the Sangha. May have monks: may have other monks. Who side with him: they have the same view, the same belief, the same persuasion as he does. Who support him: they praise him and take his side. One, two, or three: there is one, or two, or three. They may say, “Venerables, don’t correct this monk. He speaks in accordance with the Teaching and the training. And he speaks with our consent and approval. He knows about us and speaks for us, and we approve of this.” Those monks: those monks who side with him. The monks:

other monks who see it or hear about it. They should correct them like this:

“No, venerables, this monk speaks contrary to the Teaching and the training. And don’t consent to schism in the Sangha. Stay with the Sangha, for a united Sangha—in concord, in harmony, having a joint recitation—is at ease.”

And they should correct them a second and a third time. If they stop, all is well. If they do not stop, they commit an offense of wrong conduct. If those who hear about it do not say anything, they commit an offense of wrong conduct.

Those monks, even if they have to be pulled into the Sangha, should be corrected like this:

“No, venerables, this monk speaks contrary to the Teaching and the training. And don’t consent to schism in the Sangha. Stay with the Sangha, for a united Sangha—in concord, in harmony, having a joint recitation—is at ease.”

They should correct them a second and a third time. If they stop, all is well. If they do not stop, they commit an offense of wrong conduct.

Should press them:

“And, monks, they should be pressed like this. A competent and capable monk should inform the Sangha:

‘Please, venerables, I ask the Sangha to listen. Monks so-and-so and so-and-so are siding with and supporting monk so-and-so who is pursuing schism in the Sangha. And they keep on doing it. If the Sangha is ready, it should press monks so-and-so and so-and-so to make them stop. This is the motion.

Please, venerables, I ask the Sangha to listen. Monks so-and-so and so-and-so are siding with and supporting monk so-and-so who is pursuing schism in the Sangha. And they keep on doing it. The Sangha presses monks so-and-so and so-and-so to make them stop. Any monk who approves of pressing monks so-and-so and so-and-so to make them stop should remain silent. Any monk who doesn’t approve should speak up.

For the second time, I speak on this matter. … For the third time, I speak on this matter. Please, venerables, I ask the Sangha to listen. Monks so-and-so and so-and-so are siding with and supporting monk so-and-so who is pursuing schism in the Sangha. And they keep on doing it. The Sangha presses monks so-and-so and so-and-so to make them stop. Any

monk who approves of pressing monks so-and-so and so-and-so to make them stop should remain silent. Any monk who doesn't approve should speak up.

The Sangha has pressed monks so-and-so and so-and-so to make them stop. The Sangha approves and is therefore silent. I will remember it thus.'"

After the motion, they commit an offense of wrong conduct. After each of the first two announcements, they commit a serious offense. When the last announcement is finished, they commit an offense entailing suspension. For those who commit the offense entailing suspension, the offense of wrong conduct and the serious offenses are annulled. Two or three may be pressed together, but not more than that.

They commit an offense entailing suspension: ... Therefore, too, it is called an offense entailing suspension.

Permutations

If it is a legitimate legal procedure, and they perceive it as such, and they do not stop, they commit an offense entailing suspension.

If it is a legitimate legal procedure, but they are unsure of it, and they do not stop, they commit an offense entailing suspension.

If it is a legitimate legal procedure, but they perceive it as illegitimate, and they do not stop, they commit an offense entailing suspension.

If it is an illegitimate legal procedure, but they perceive it as legitimate, they commit an offense of wrong conduct.

If it is an illegitimate legal procedure, but they are unsure of it, they commit an offense of wrong conduct.

If it is an illegitimate legal procedure, and they perceive it as such, they commit an offense of wrong conduct.

Non-offenses

There is no offense: if they have not been pressed; if they stop; if they are insane; if they are deranged; if they are overwhelmed by pain; if they are the first offenders.

The training rule on siding with a schismatic, the eleventh, is finished.