

Nissaggiya Pācittiya #6: Causing an Unrelated Layperson to Give a Robe

On this occasion the Buddha, the Blessed One, was dwelling at Sāvatti, at Jeta's Grove, in Anāthapiṇḍika's park. Furthermore, on this occasion, Venerable Upananda the Sakyan-son³²⁵ had begun giving Dhamma talks. Then a certain banker's son approached Venerable Upananda; after approaching and paying respects to Venerable Upananda, he sat to one side. When that banker's son was seated to one side, Venerable Upananda instructed, encouraged, energized, and gladdened him with a Dhamma-talk. Then that banker's son - instructed, encouraged, energized, and gladdened by Venerable Upananda's Dhamma-talk - said to Venerable Upananda, "Bhante, you may speak of what [you] need. We are able to give to the gentleman [items] such as robes, almsfood, sleeping and sitting places, supports for illness, and medicinal supplies." "Sir, if you wish to give to me, give [me] one of those cloaks." "Bhante, how can our family's sons go with [only] one cloak?"³²⁶ Bhante, wait until I go to [my] house. When [I] have gone to [my] house, I will send one of these cloaks or a more beautiful one." A second time... A third time as well, Venerable Upananda said to that banker's son, "Sir, if you wish to give to me, give [me] one of those cloaks." "Bhante, how can our family's sons go with [only] one cloak? Bhante, wait until I go to [my] house. When [I] have gone to [my] house, I will send one of these cloaks or a more beautiful one." "But, Sir, what is it with this invitation [when there is] no desire to give? You aren't giving [me] what you invited [me to ask for]."

Then that banker's son, pressured by Venerable Upananda, gave one cloak and left. People said to that banker's son, "Sir, why do you come with [only] one cloak?" Then that banker's son reported this matter to those people. People denounced, criticized, and castigated: "These Sakyan-son contemplatives have great wishes, they are not contented. It is not easy to make an appropriate invitation for them. How is that, when the banker's son was making an appropriate invitation, they will take [his] cloak?" Monks heard of those people - denouncing, criticizing, and castigating. Those monks who were of few wishes... denounced, criticized, and castigated: "How is it that Venerable Upananda will indicate [a desire for] the banker's son's robe?" Then those monks, after reprimanding Venerable Upananda in many ways, reported this matter to the Blessed One... "Is it true, Upananda, that you indicated [a desire for] the banker's son's robe?" "It is true, Blessed One." "A relative of yours, Upananda, or a non-relative?" "A non-relative, Blessed One." "A non-relative, foolish man, does not know what is proper or improper, good or bad, for a non-relative. And you, foolish man, will indicate [a desire for] an unrelated banker's son's robe? This is not, foolish man, for the faith of the faithless... And thus, monks, you may recite this training rule:

"If any monk indicates [a desire for] a robe from an unrelated male or female householder: a Nissaggiya Pācittiya."

³²⁵ Henceforth referred to simply as "Venerable Upananda."

³²⁶ Apparently the banker's son was wearing two *sāṭaka* - rendered here as "cloaks." The intended meaning may be "garment" in a more general sense, or it may be that he was wearing two cloaks.

And thus this training-rule was designated for the monks by the Blessed One.

On a [later] occasion, several monks were on the traveling-road from Sāketa to Sāvatti. On the road, bandits went out and robbed those monks. Then those monks, [thinking] “It is opposed by the Blessed One to indicate [a desire for] a robe to an unrelated male or female householder,” regretfully, did not indicate. They went to Sāvatti naked³²⁷ and bowed to the [other] monks. [Those] monks said, “Venerable, these Ājīvakas³²⁸ are wonderful³²⁹; they bow to [Buddhist] monks.” They said, “Venerable, we are not Ājīvakas, we are [Buddhist] monks.” The monks said to Venerable Upāli³³⁰, “Come, Venerable Upāli, investigate them³³¹.” Then, while they were being investigated by Venerable Upāli, those monks reported this matter [to him]. Then Venerable Upāli, after investigating those monks, said to the [other] monks, “Venerable, these are [Buddhist] monks. Give them robes.” Those monks who were of few wishes... denounced, criticized, and castigated: “How is it that monks will come naked? Isn't one to come after covering [one's body] with grass or leaves?” Then those monks, after reprimanding them in many ways, reported this matter to the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One, on account of this precedent, on account of this incident, after giving a Dhamma talk, addressed the monks: “Monks, I allow one whose robe has been stolen or lost to indicate [a desire for] a robe to an unrelated male or female householder. Whatever residence one approaches first [while naked], if there is a monastery robe, a sheet, a ground-spread, or a mattress cover belonging to the Saṅgha, then after taking that to dress in, [one should think] “After obtaining [a robe] I will give this back.” If there is not a monastery robe, a sheet, a ground-spread, or a mattress cover belonging to the Saṅgha, then one is to come after covering [one's body] with grass or leaves; one is not to come naked. If one comes [naked]: a Dukkaṭṭa offense. And thus, monks, you may recite this training-rule:

“If any monk indicates [a desire for] a robe from an unrelated male or female householder, except at the [proper] occasion: a Nissaggiya Pācittiya. Here the occasion is this: there is a monk whose robe is stolen or lost. This is the occasion here.”

Any monk: ...

Unrelated: Not connected, by mother or by father, as far as the seventh grandfather's generation.

Male householder: Anyone who lives in a house.

Female householder: Anyone who lives in a house.

³²⁷ Apparently the bandits stole all of the monks' robes, leaving them with nothing to wear.

³²⁸ One of the other religions in the time of the Buddha. The Ājīvaka monastic order was in the habit of going about naked as a religious observance.

³²⁹ *Sundara*. Lit. “beautiful.” This may be a pun related to their state of undress.

³³⁰ A well-known Vinaya expert.

³³¹ To determine whether or not they actually are Buddhist monks.

Robe: Any robe of the six [kinds of] robe[-cloth], [even] the smallest suitable for assigning.

Except at the [proper] occasion: Having set aside the [proper] occasion.

Robe is stolen: A monk's robe is stolen by government officials, bandits, rogues, or by anyone whatsoever.

Robe is lost: A monk's robe is burned by a fire, carried away by water, devoured by rats or termites, or worn out from use.

One indicates, except at the [proper] occasion: a Dukkaṭa for the undertaking. When it is obtained, it [requires] relinquishment. It is to be relinquished to a Saṅgha, a group, or an individual. And, monks, it is to be relinquished in this way.. “Bhante, this robe, which was indicated to an unrelated householder apart from the [proper] occasion, [requires] relinquishment. I relinquish it to the Saṅgha...”

Perceiving a non-relative as a non-relative, one indicates a robe, except at the [proper] occasion: a Nissaggiya Pācittiya.

In doubt about a non-relative...: a Nissaggiya Pācittiya.

Perceiving a non-relative as a relative...: a Nissaggiya Pācittiya.

Perceiving a relative as a non-relative: a Dukkaṭa offense.

In doubt about a relative: a Dukkaṭa offense.

Perceiving a relative as a relative: non-offense.

Non-offense[s]: At the [proper] occasion; for relatives; for those who have invited [one to ask]; for the sake of another; by means of one's own wealth; for one who is crazy; for the first offender.