

Pācittiya #7: Teaching More than Six Sentences of Dhamma to a Woman

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 Udāyin was frequenting families; he approached many families. Then Venerable Udāyin, having dressed in the morning, having taken his bowl and robe, approached a certain family. On this occasion the lady of the house was seated at the settlement's gate, and the house's daughter-in-law was seated at the house's door. Then Venerable Udāyin approached the lady of the house; having approached, he taught Dhamma close to her ear. Then the house's daughter-in-law thought, "What, is this contemplative [my] mother-in-law's lover, or does he speak inappropriately?"

Then Venerable Udāyin, having taught Dhamma close to the lady of the house's ear, approached the daughter-in-law; having approached the daughter-in-law, he taught Dhamma close to her ear. Then the lady of the house thought, "What, is this contemplative [my] daughter-in-law's lover, or does he speak inappropriately?" Then Venerable Udāyin, having taught Dhamma close to the daughter-in-law's ear, left. Then the lady of house said to [her] daughter-in-law, "Hey you⁴²⁶, what did that contemplative say to you?" "He taught me Dhamma, Lady. However, what did he say to the Lady?" "He also taught Dhamma to me." They denounced, criticized, and castigated: "How is it that Sir Udāyin will teach Dhamma close to a woman's ear! Is the Dhamma not to be taught openly and distinctly?"

Monks heard of those women denouncing, criticizing, and castigating. Those monks who were of few wishes... denounced, criticized, and castigated: "How is that Venerable Udāyin will teach Dhamma to a woman!" Then those monks, having reprimanded Venerable Udāyin in various ways, reported this matter to the Blessed One... "Is it true that you, Udāyin, taught Dhamma to a woman?" "It is true, Blessed One." The Buddha, the Blessed One, reprimanded... "How is that you, foolish man, will teach Dhamma to a woman! This is not, foolish man, for the faith of the faithless... And thus, monks, you may recite this training rule:

"If any monk teaches Dhamma to a woman: a Pācittiya."

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

On a [later] occasion female lay disciples, having seen monks, said, "Please, may the gentlemen teach Dhamma." "Sister, it is not allowed to teach Dhamma to a woman." "Please, may the gentlemen teach five or six sentences of Dhamma, it is possible to understand Dhamma even with just that much." "Sister, it is not allowed to teach Dhamma to a woman." Regretfully, they did not teach. The lay disciples denounced,

⁴²⁶ *Je.* This is a very rude title to use when addressing a woman, frequently used when speaking to prostitutes and slaves.

criticized, and castigated: “How is that the gentlemen, being begged by us, will not teach Dhamma!” Monks heard of those lay disciples denouncing, criticizing, and castigating. Then those monks reported this matter to the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One, on account of this issue, on account of this incident, having given a Dhamma talk, announced to the monks: “Monks, I allow [you] to teach five or six sentences of Dhamma. And thus, monks, you may recite this training rule:

“If any monk teaches more than five or six sentences of Dhamma to a woman: a Pācittiya.”

And thus this training rule was designated for the monks by the Blessed One. On a [later] occasion, group-of-six monks, [thinking] “It is allowed by the Blessed One to teach five or six sentences of Dhamma to a woman,” having caused an unknowledgeable man to sit nearby, taught more than five or six sentences of Dhamma to a woman. Those monks who were of few wishes... irritated and annoyed, complained, “How is that group-of-six monks, having caused an unknowledgeable man to sit nearby, will teach more than five or six sentences of Dhamma to a woman!”

Then those monks, having reprimanded the group-of-six monks in various ways, reported this matter to the Blessed One... “Is it true, monks, that you, having caused an unknowledgeable man to sit nearby, taught more than five or six sentences of Dhamma to a woman?” “It is true, Blessed One.” The Buddha, the Blessed One, reprimanded... “How is that you, foolish men, having caused an unknowledgeable man to sit nearby, will teach more than five or six sentences of Dhamma to a woman! This is not, foolish men, for the faith of the faithless... And thus, monks, you may recite this training rule:

“If any monk teaches more than five or six sentences of Dhamma to a woman, except with a knowledgeable man [present]: a Pācittiya.”

Any monk: ...

Woman: A human woman; not a spirit, not a ghost, not an animal; knowledgeable, competent to know well-spoken and ill-spoken, obscene⁴²⁷ and not-obscene.

More than five or six sentences: Exceeding five or six sentences.

Dhamma: Spoken by the Buddha, spoken by a disciple, spoken by a sage, spoken by a deva; connected with benefit, connected with Dhamma.

Teaches: One teaches by word, in each word there is a Pācittiya offense. One teaches by syllable, in each syllable there is a Pācittiya offense.

⁴²⁷ *Duṭṭhulla*. Corrupted, depraved, obscene.

Except with a knowledgeable man [present]: Having set aside [the presence of] a knowledgeable male person. “Knowledgeable male person” means he is competent to know well-spoken and ill-spoken, obscene and not-obscene.

Perceiving a woman as a woman, one teaches more than five or six sentences of Dhamma, except with a knowledgeable man [present]: a Pācittiya offense.

In doubt about a woman...: a Pācittiya offense.

Perceiving a woman as a non-woman...: a Pācittiya offense.

One teaches more than five or six sentences of Dhamma, except with a knowledgeable man [present], to a female spirit, a female ghost, a *paṇḍaka*, or to a female animal: a Dukkaṭa offense.

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

In doubt about a non-woman: a Dukkaṭa offense.

Perceiving a non-woman as a non-woman: non-offense.

Non-offense[s]: With a knowledgeable man [present]; one teaches five or six sentences; one teaches less than five or six sentences; having stood up, one sits down again and teaches; the woman, having stood up, sits down again, and one teaches then; one teaches to another woman; one asks a question; when questioned, one speaks an answer; a woman listens when one is speaking for the sake of another; for one who is crazy; for the first offender.