AN 4.243 — Schism in the Saṅgha

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Text

Numbered Discourses 4.243

25. Perils of Offenses

Schism in the Saṅgha

At one time the Buddha was staying near Kosambī in Ghosita's monastery. Then Venerable Ānanda went up to the Buddha, bowed, and sat down to one side. The Buddha said to him, "Well, Ānanda, has that disciplinary issue been settled yet?"

"How could it be, sir? Venerable Anuruddha's protégé Bāhiya remains entirely committed to creating a schism in the Saṅgha. But Anuruddha doesn't think to say a single word about it."

"But Ānanda, since when has Anuruddha been involved in disciplinary issues in the midst of the Saṅgha? Shouldn't you, together with Sāriputta and Moggallāna, settle all disciplinary issues that come up?

A bad monk sees four reasons to relish schism in the Saṅgha. What four? Take an unethical monk, of bad qualities, filthy, with suspicious behavior, underhand, no true ascetic or spiritual practitioner—though claiming to be one—rotten inside, festering, and depraved. He thinks: 'Suppose the monks know that I'm a bad monk … If they're in harmony, they'll expel me, but if they're divided they won't.' A bad monk sees this as the first reason to relish schism in the Saṅgha.

Furthermore, a bad monk has wrong view, he's attached to an extremist view. He thinks: 'Suppose the monks know that I have wrong view … If they're in harmony they'll expel me, but if they're divided they won't.' A bad monk sees this as the second reason to relish schism in the Saṅgha.

Furthermore, a bad monk has wrong livelihood and earns a living by wrong livelihood. He thinks: 'Suppose the monks know that I have wrong livelihood … If they're in harmony they'll expel me, but if they're divided they won't.' A bad monk sees this as the third reason to relish schism in the Saṅgha.

Furthermore, a bad monk desires material things, honor, and admiration. He thinks: 'Suppose the monks know that I desire material things, honor, and admiration. If they're in harmony they won't honor, respect, revere, or venerate me, but if they're divided they will.' A bad monk sees this as the fourth reason to relish schism in the Saṅgha.

A bad monk sees these four reasons to relish schism in the Saṅgha."