# pli-tv-bu-vb-pc46 — Visiting families before a meal

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## Text

Theravāda Collection on Monastic Law

The Great Analysis

The chapter on offenses entailing confession

The subchapter on naked ascetics

Visiting families before a meal

Origin story

First substory

At one time when the Buddha was staying at Rājagaha in the Bamboo Grove, a family that was supporting Venerable Upananda the Sakyan had invited him to a meal, and they had invited other monks too. But since Upananda was visiting other families before that meal, the other monks said to that family, “Please give the meal.”

“Please wait, sirs, until Venerable Upananda arrives.”

A second time … A third time those monks said, “Please give the meal before it is too late.”

“But we prepared the meal because of Venerable Upananda. Please wait until he arrives.”

Then, after visiting those families, Upananda arrived late, and those monks did not eat as much as they had intended. The monks of few desires complained and criticized Upananda, “How can Venerable Upananda visit families first when invited to a meal?” … “Is it true, Upananda, that you do this?”

“It’s true, sir.”

The Buddha rebuked him … “Foolish man, how can you do this? This will affect people’s confidence …” … “And, monks, this training rule should be recited like this:

First preliminary ruling

‘If a monk who has been invited to a meal visits families beforehand, he commits an offense entailing confession.’”

In this way the Buddha laid down this training rule for the monks.

Second substory

Soon afterwards a family that was supporting Upananda sent fresh food to the Sangha. They instructed that the food should be shown to Upananda and then given to the Sangha.

But on that occasion Upananda had gone to the village for alms. When those people arrived at the monastery, they asked for Upananda, and they were told where he was. They said, "Venerables, after showing it to Venerable Upananda, this fresh food is to be given to the Sangha." The monks told the Buddha, who then gave a teaching and addressed the monks: "Well then, monks, receive it and put it aside until Upananda returns."

When he heard that the Buddha had prohibited visiting families before the meal, Upananda visited them after the meal instead. As a consequence, he returned late to the monastery, and the food had to be returned to the donors.

The monks of few desires complained and criticized Upananda, "How can Venerable Upananda visit families after the meal?" … "Is it true, Upananda, that you do this?"

"It's true, sir."

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

Second preliminary ruling

'If a monk who has been invited to a meal visits families beforehand or afterwards, he commits an offense entailing confession.'"

In this way the Buddha laid down this training rule for the monks.

Third substory

Soon afterwards it was the robe-giving season. But being afraid of wrongdoing, the monks did not visit families. As a result, they only got a small amount of robe-cloth. They told the Buddha. …

"Monks, I allow you to visit families during the robe-giving season.

And so, monks, this training rule should be recited like this:

Third preliminary ruling

'If a monk who has been invited to a meal visits families beforehand or afterwards, except on an appropriate occasion, he commits an offense entailing confession. This is the appropriate occasion: it is the robe-giving season.'"

In this way the Buddha laid down this training rule for the monks.

Fourth substory

Soon afterwards the monks were making robes, and they needed a needle, thread, and scissors. But being afraid of wrongdoing, they did not visit families. They told the Buddha. …

"Monks, I allow you to visit families at a time of making robes.

And so, monks, this training rule should be recited like this:

Fourth preliminary ruling

‘If a monk who has been invited to a meal visits families beforehand or afterwards, except on an appropriate occasion, he commits an offense entailing confession. These are the appropriate occasions: it is the robe-giving season; it is a time of making robes.’”

In this way the Buddha laid down this training rule for the monks.

Fifth substory

Soon afterwards there were sick monks who needed medicines. But being afraid of wrongdoing, the monks did not visit families. They told the Buddha. …

“Monks, I allow you to visit families after informing an available monk.

And so, monks, this training rule should be recited like this:

Final ruling

‘If a monk who has been invited to a meal visits families beforehand or afterwards without informing an available monk, except on an appropriate occasion, he commits an offense entailing confession. These are the appropriate occasions: it is the robe-giving season; it is a time of making robes.’”

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. Invited: invited to eat any of the five cooked foods. To a meal: the invitation includes a meal. An available monk: he is able to inform and then enter. No available monk: he is not able to inform and then enter. Beforehand: he has not yet eaten what he has been invited to eat. Afterwards: even if he has just eaten what fits on the tip of a blade of grass from what he has been invited to eat. A family: there are four kinds of families: the aristocratic family, the brahmin family, the merchant family, the worker family. Visits families: if he enters the vicinity of someone else’s house, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. If he crosses the threshold with the first foot, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. If he crosses the threshold with the second foot, he commits an offense entailing confession. Except on an appropriate occasion: unless it is an appropriate occasion. It is the robe-giving season: for one who has not participated in the robe-making ceremony, it is the last month of the rainy season. For one who has participated in the robe-making ceremony, it is the five-month period. It is a time of making robes: when he is making robes.

Permutations

If he has been invited, and he perceives that he has, and he visits families beforehand or afterwards without informing an available monk, except on an appropriate occasion, he commits an offense entailing confession. If he has been invited, but he is unsure of it, and he visits families beforehand or afterwards without informing an available monk, except

on an appropriate occasion, he commits an offense entailing confession. If he has been invited, but he does not perceive that he has, and he visits families beforehand or afterwards without informing an available monk, except on an appropriate occasion, he commits an offense entailing confession.

If he has not been invited, but he perceives that he has, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. If he has not been invited, but he is unsure of it, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. If he has not been invited, and he does not perceive that he has, there is no offense.

Non-offenses

There is no offense: if it is an appropriate occasion; if he enters after informing an available monk; if, when there is no available monk, he enters without informing anyone; if the road passes someone else's house; if the road passes the vicinity of someone else's house; if he is going between monasteries; if he is going to a nunnery; if he is going to the dwelling place of the monastics of another religion; if he is returning to the monastery; if he is going to the house where he has been invited; if there is an emergency; if he is insane; if he is the first offender.

The training rule on visiting families before a meal, the sixth, is finished.