Ud 8.5 — With Cunda

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Heartfelt Sayings 8.5

With Cunda

So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was wandering in the land of the Mallas together with a large Saṅgha when he arrived at Pāvā. There he stayed in Cunda the smith's mango grove.

Cunda heard that the Buddha had arrived and was staying in his mango grove. Then he went to the Buddha, bowed, and sat down to one side. The Buddha educated, encouraged, fired up, and inspired him with a Dhamma talk. Then Cunda said to the Buddha, "Sir, would the Buddha, together with the mendicant Saṅgha, please accept tomorrow's meal from me?" The Buddha consented with silence.

Then, knowing that the Buddha had consented, Cunda rose from his seat, bowed, and respectfully circled the Buddha, keeping him on his right, before leaving. And when the night had passed Cunda had delicious fresh and cooked foods prepared in his own home, and plenty of pork on the turn. Then he had the Buddha informed of the time, saying, "Sir, it's time. The meal is ready."

Then the Buddha robed up in the morning and, taking his bowl and robe, went to the home of Cunda together with the mendicant Saṅgha, where he sat down on the seat spread out and addressed Cunda, "Cunda, please serve me with the pork on the turn that you've prepared. And serve the mendicant Saṅgha with the other foods." "Yes, sir," replied Cunda, and did as he was asked.

Then the Buddha addressed Cunda, "Cunda, any pork on the turn that's left over, you should bury it in a pit. I don't see anyone in this world—with its gods, Māras, and divinities, this population with its ascetics and brahmins, its gods and humans—who could properly digest it except the Realized One." "Yes, sir," replied Cunda. He did as he was asked, then came back to the Buddha, bowed, and sat down to one side. Then the Buddha educated, encouraged, fired up, and inspired him with a Dhamma talk, after which he rose from his seat and left.

After the Buddha had eaten Cunda's meal, he fell severely ill with bloody dysentery, struck by dreadful pains, close to death. But he endured unbothered, with mindfulness and situational awareness.

Then the Buddha said to Venerable Ānanda, "Come, Ānanda, let's go to Kusinārā." "Yes, sir," Ānanda replied.

I've heard that after eating

the meal of Cunda the smith,

the attentive one fell severely ill,

with pains, close to death.

A severe sickness struck the Teacher

who had eaten the pork on the turn.

While still purging the Buddha said:

"I'll go to the citadel of Kusinārā."

Then the Buddha left the road and went to the root of a certain tree, where he addressed Ānanda, "Go on then, Ānanda, fold my outer robe in four and spread it out for me. I am tired and will sit down." "Yes, sir," replied Ānanda, and did as he was asked. The Buddha sat down on the seat spread out, and said to Venerable Ānanda, "Go on then, Ānanda, fetch me some water. I am thirsty and will drink."

When he said this, Venerable Ānanda said to the Buddha, "Sir, just now around five hundred carts have passed by. The shallow water has been churned up by their wheels, and it flows cloudy and murky. The Kakutthā River is not far away, with clear, sweet, cool water, clean, with smooth banks, delightful. There the Buddha can drink and cool his limbs."

For a second time … For a third time, the Buddha said to Ānanda, "Go on then, Ānanda, fetch me some water. I am thirsty and will drink." "Yes, sir," replied Ānanda. Taking his bowl he went to the river. Now, though the shallow water in that river had been churned up by wheels, and flowed cloudy and murky, when Ānanda approached it flowed transparent, clear, and unclouded.

Then Venerable Ānanda thought, "Oh lord, how incredible, how amazing! The Realized One has such psychic power and might! For though the shallow water in that river had been churned up by wheels, and flowed cloudy and murky, when I approached it flowed transparent, clear, and unclouded." Gathering a bowl of drinking water he went back to the Buddha, and said to him, "It's incredible, sir, it's amazing! The Realized One has such psychic power and might! For though the shallow water in that river had been churned up by wheels, and flowed cloudy and murky, when I approached it flowed transparent, clear, and unclouded. Drink the water, Blessed One! Drink the water, Holy One!"

So the Buddha drank the water. Then the Buddha together with a large Saṅgha of mendicants went to the Kakutthā River. He plunged into the river and bathed and drank. And when he had emerged, he went to the mango grove, where he addressed Venerable Cundaka, "Go on then, Cundaka, fold my outer robe in four and spread it out for me. I am tired and will lie down."

"Yes, sir," replied Cundaka, and did as he was asked. And then the Buddha laid down in the lion's posture—on the right side, placing one foot on top of the other—mindful and aware,

and focused on the time of getting up. But Cundaka sat down right there in front of the Buddha.

Having gone to Kakutthā Creek,

whose water was transparent, sweet, and clear,

the Teacher, being tired, plunged in,

the Realized One, without compare in the world.

And after bathing and drinking the Teacher emerged.

Before the group of mendicants, in the middle, the Buddha,

the Teacher who rolled forth the present dispensation,

the great seer went to the mango grove.

He addressed the mendicant named Cundaka:

“Spread out my folded robe so I can lie down.”

The evolved one urged Cunda,

who quickly spread the folded robe.

The Teacher lay down so tired,

while Cunda sat there before him.

Then the Buddha said to Venerable Ānanda, “Now it may happen, Ānanda, that others may give rise to some regret for Cunda the smith: ‘It’s your loss, respectable Cunda, it’s your misfortune, in that the Realized One was fully quenched after eating his last almsmeal from you.’ You should dispel remorse in Cunda the smith like this:

‘You’re fortunate, respectable Cunda, you’re so very fortunate, in that the Realized One was fully quenched after eating his last almsmeal from you. I have heard and learned this in the presence of the Buddha. There are two almsmeal offerings that have identical fruit and result, and are more fruitful and beneficial than other almsmeal offerings. What two? The almsmeal after eating which a Realized One awakens to the supreme perfect awakening; and the almsmeal after eating which he becomes fully extinguished in the element of extinguishment with no residue. These two almsmeal offerings have identical fruit and result, and are more fruitful and beneficial than other almsmeal offerings.

You’ve accumulated a deed that leads to long life, beauty, happiness, glory, heaven, and sovereignty.’ You should dispel remorse in Cunda the smith like this.”

Then, understanding this matter, on that occasion the Buddha expressed this heartfelt sentiment:

“A giver’s merit grows;

enmity doesn’t build up when you have self-control.

A skillful person gives up bad things—

with the end of greed, hate, and delusion, they’re quenched.”