pli-tv-bu-vb-pc29 — Eating food prepared on a nun’s instruction

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Text

Theravāda Collection on Monastic Law

The Great Analysis

The chapter on offenses entailing confession

The subchapter on the instruction

Eating food prepared on a nun’s instruction

Origin story

First substory

At one time the Buddha was staying at Rājagaha in the Bamboo Grove, the squirrel sanctuary. At that time the nun Thullanandā was associating with a family from which she received a regular meal.

Now on one occasion the head of that family had invited some senior monks. On the same day, the nun Thullanandā robed up in the morning, took her bowl and robe, and went to that family. And she asked the head of the family, “Why have you prepared so much food?”

“‘Cause, venerable, I’ve invited the senior monks.”

“But who are those senior monks?”

“Venerable Sāriputta, Venerable Mahāmoggallāna, Venerable Mahākaccāna, Venerable Mahākoṭṭhika, Venerable Mahākappina, Venerable Mahācunda, Venerable Anuruddha, Venerable Revata, Venerable Upāli, Venerable Ānanda, and Venerable Rāhula.”

“But why do you invite such inferior monks instead of the great ones?”

“Who are these great monks?” “Venerable Devadatta, Venerable Kokālika, Venerable Kaṭamodakatissaka, Venerable Khaṇḍadeviyāputta, and Venerable Samuddadatta.”

While this conversation was taking place, the senior monks entered. Thullanandā said, “Is it true that you’ve invited these great monks?”

“Just before you called them inferior and now you call them great.” And he threw her out of the house and made an end of her regular meal.

The monks of few desires complained and criticized Devadatta, “How could Devadatta eat almsfood knowing that a nun had it prepared?” … “Is it true, Devadatta, that you did this?”

“It’s true, sir.”

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

Preliminary ruling

‘If a monk eats almsfood knowing that a nun had it prepared, he commits an offense entailing confession.’”

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

Second substory

Soon afterwards a monk who had earlier left Rājagaha returned to see his family. Because it was a long time since he had last returned, people prepared food for him respectfully. And the nun who was associating with that family said to them, “Give food to that monk.” The monk thought, “The Buddha has prohibited us from eating almsfood knowing that a nun had it prepared,” and being afraid of wrongdoing, he did not accept it. And because he was unable to walk for alms, he missed his meal.

After returning to the monastery, he told the monks what had happened, and they in turn told the Buddha.

Soon afterwards the Buddha gave a teaching and addressed the monks:

“Monks, I allow you to eat almsfood knowing that a nun had it prepared if the householder had intended to prepare it anyway.

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

Final ruling

‘If a monk eats almsfood knowing that a nun had it prepared, except if the householder had intended to prepare it anyway, he commits an offense entailing confession.’”

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. Knowing: he knows by himself or others have told him or the nun has told him. A nun: she has been given the full ordination by both Sanghas. Has it prepared: if she says to those who do not already want to give or want to prepare, “This monk is a reciter,” “This monk is learned,” “This monk is an expert on the discourses,” “This monk is an expert on the Monastic Law,” “This monk is an expounder of the Teaching;” “Give to this monk,” “Prepare for this monk”—this is called “has it prepared”. Almsfood: any of the five cooked foods. Except if the householder had intended to prepare it anyway: unless the householder had intended to prepare it. The householder had intended to prepare it: they are relatives or they have

invited or they give regularly.

If he receives it with the intention of eating it, except if the householder had intended to prepare it anyway, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. For every mouthful swallowed, he commits an offense entailing confession.

Permutations

If a nun had it prepared, and he perceives it as such, and he eats it, except if the householder had intended to prepare it anyway, he commits an offense entailing confession. If a nun had it prepared, but he is unsure of it, and he eats it, except if the householder had intended to prepare it anyway, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. If a nun had it prepared, but he does not perceive it as such, and he eats it, except if the householder had intended to prepare it anyway, there is no offense.

If a nun who is fully ordained only on one side had it prepared, and he eats it, except if the householder had intended to prepare it anyway, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. If a nun did not have it prepared, but he perceives it as such, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. If a nun did not have it prepared, but he is unsure of it, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. If a nun did not have it prepared, and he does not perceive it as such, there is no offense.

Non-offenses

There is no offense: if the householder had intended to prepare it anyway; if a trainee nun has it prepared; if a novice nun has it prepared; if it is anything apart from the five cooked foods; if he is insane; if he is the first offender.

The training rule on eating food prepared on a nun’s instruction, the ninth, is finished.