pli-tv-bu-vb-pc39 — Asking for fine foods

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Text

Theravāda Collection on Monastic Law

The Great Analysis

The chapter on offenses entailing confession

The subchapter on eating

Asking for fine foods

Origin story

First substory

At one time when the Buddha was staying at Sāvatthī in Anāthapiṇḍika's Monastery, the monks from the group of six were eating fine foods that they had requested for themselves. People complained and criticized them, "How can the Sakyan monastics eat fine foods that they have requested for themselves? Who doesn't like nice food? Who doesn't prefer tasty food?"

The monks heard the complaints of those people, and the monks of few desires complained and criticized those monks, "How can the monks from the group of six eat fine foods that they have requested for themselves?" … "Is it true, monks, that you do this?"

"It's true, sir."

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

Preliminary ruling

'If a monk asks for any of these kinds of fine foods for himself—that is, ghee, butter, oil, honey, syrup, fish, meat, milk, and curd—and then eats it, he commits an offense entailing confession.'"

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

Second substory

At one time a number of monks were sick. The monks who were looking after them asked, "I hope you're bearing up? I hope you're getting better?"

“Previously we ate fine foods that we had requested ourselves, and then we were comfortable. But now that the Buddha has prohibited this, we don’t request because we’re afraid of wrongdoing. And because of that we’re not comfortable.”

They told the Buddha. Soon afterwards he gave a teaching and addressed the monks:

“Monks, I allow a sick monk to eat fine foods that he has requested for himself.

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

Final ruling

‘If a monk who is not sick asks for any of these kinds of fine foods for himself—that is, ghee, butter, oil, honey, syrup, fish, meat, milk, and curd—and then eats it, he commits an offense entailing confession.’”

Definitions

These kinds of fine foods: Ghee: ghee from cows, ghee from goats, ghee from buffaloes, or ghee from whatever animal whose meat is allowable. Butter: butter from those same animals. Oil: sesame oil, mustard oil, honey-tree oil, castor oil, oil from fat. Honey: honey from bees. Syrup: from sugarcane. Fish: what lives in water is what is meant. Meat: the meat of those animals whose meat is allowable. Milk: milk from cows, milk from goats, milk from buffaloes, or milk from whatever animal whose meat is allowable. Curd: curd from those same animals. 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. Any of these kinds of fine foods: such kinds of fine foods. Who is not sick: who is comfortable without fine foods. Who is sick: who is not comfortable without fine foods.

If he is not sick and he requests for himself, then for the effort there is an act of wrong conduct. When he receives it with the intention of eating it, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. For every mouthful swallowed, he commits an offense entailing confession.

Permutations

If he is not sick, and he does not perceive himself as sick, and he eats fine foods that he has requested for himself, he commits an offense entailing confession. If he is not sick, but he is unsure of it, and he eats fine foods that he has requested for himself, he commits an offense entailing confession. If he is not sick, but he perceives himself as sick, and he eats fine foods that he has requested for himself, he commits an offense entailing confession.

If he is sick, but he does not perceive himself as sick, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. If he is sick, but he is unsure of it, he commits an offense of wrong conduct. If he is sick, and he perceives himself as sick, there is no offense.

Non-offenses

There is no offense: if he is sick; if he asked for it when he was sick, but eats it when he is no longer sick; if he eats the leftovers from one who is sick; if it is from relatives; if it is from

those who have given an invitation; if it is for the benefit of someone else; if it is by means of his own property; if he is insane; if he is the first offender.

The training rule on asking for fine foods, the ninth, is finished.