

Pācittiya #33: Eating Before Another Meal

On this occasion the Buddha, the Blessed One, was dwelling at Vesāli, at the Great Grove, in the peaked-roof hall. Furthermore, on this occasion, in Vesāli, a succession of meals consisting of excellent food had been arranged. Then a certain destitute laborer thought, “This is no minor thing, that these people respectfully prepare food; what if I were to also prepare food?” Then that destitute laborer approached Kirapatika⁵³¹; after approaching, he said to Kirapatika, “Young Sir, I wish to prepare a meal for the community of monks headed by the Buddha. Give me my wages.” Kirapatika was also a faithful devotee. Then Kirapatika gave far beyond the laborer's wage to him. Then that destitute laborer approached the Blessed One; after approaching and paying respects to the Blessed One, he sat to one side. Seated to one side, the destitute laborer said to the Blessed One, “Bhante, let the Blessed One along with the community of monks consent to a meal from me for tomorrow.” “Sir, the community of monks is large. Do you understand?” “Bhante, let the community of monks be large. Many jujube fruits have been prepared by me; they will be filled by an amenable mixture of jujube fruits⁵³².” The Blessed One consented by being silent.

Then that destitute laborer, after ascertaining the Blessed One's acceptance, rising from his seat, and paying respects to and venerating the Blessed One, left. The monks heard, “It seems the community of monks headed by the Buddha has been invited by a destitute laborer for [the meal] tomorrow; they will be filled by an amenable mixture of jujube fruits.” Having gone for alms very early [the next day], they ate.⁵³³ People heard, “It seems the community of monks headed by the Buddha has been invited by a destitute laborer.” They brought an abundant variety of food to the destitute laborer. Then the destitute laborer, having prepared a variety of superb food, at the end of the night announced the time [of the meal] to the Blessed One: “Bhante, it is time; the meal is finished.”

Then the Blessed One, after dressing in the morning and taking his bowl and robe, approached the dwelling of the destitute laborer; having approached, he sat on the designated seat, along with the community of monks. Then the destitute laborer served the monks in the refectory. The monks said, “Give a small amount, sir. Give a small amount, sir.” “Bhantes, don't receive small amounts thinking 'This is a destitute laborer'. An abundant variety of food has been prepared by me. Bhantes, receive as much as you need.” “Sir, that is not the reason we receive small amounts. Instead, having gone for alms very early, we [already] ate; therefore we receive small amounts [now].”

Then that destitute laborer denounced, criticized, and castigated: “How is it that the Auspicious Ones, when invited by me, will eat elsewhere? Am I not able to give as much

⁵³¹ DPPN gives this as the man's proper name, whereas BMC renders it as “supervisor”. Whichever it is, this word appears nowhere else in the texts.

⁵³² *Badaramissa peyyā*. The rendering used here is *peyyā* (amenable) *missa* (mixed) *badara* (jujube fruit).

⁵³³ This sentence appears to be out of chronological order, and would make more sense at the end of the paragraph.

as is needed?” Monks heard of that destitute laborer – denouncing, criticizing, and castigating. Those monks who were of few wishes... denounced, criticized, and castigated: “How is it that monks, invited to one place, will eat elsewhere?” ... “Is it true, monks, that monks invited to one place ate elsewhere?” “It is true, Blessed One.” The Buddha, the Blessed One, reprimanded... “How is it, monks, that these foolish men when invited to one place, will eat elsewhere? This is not, foolish men, for the faith of the faithless... And thus, monks, you may recite this training rule:

“In eating before another meal: a Pācittiya.”

And thus this training rule was designated for the monks by the Blessed One.

On a [later] occasion, a certain monk was sick. Another monk, after taking almsfood and approaching that monk, said, “Eat, Venerable.” “Enough, Venerable; I am expected for a meal.” Almsfood was brought for that monk in the afternoon. The monk did not eat as he considered appropriate. They reported this matter to the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One, on account of this issue, on account of this incident, after giving a Dhamma talk, announced to the monks: “Monks, I allow eating before another meal by a sick monk. And thus, monks, you may recite this training rule:

“In eating before another meal, except at the [proper] occasion: a Pācittiya. Here the occasion is this: an occasion of illness - this is the occasion here.”

And thus this training rule was designated for the monks by the Blessed One.

On a [later] occasion, after preparing a meal with a robe, people invited monks at an occasion of robe-giving, [thinking] “After feeding them, we will clothe [them] with a robe.” The monks – regretfully – did not consent, [thinking] “Eating before another meal is opposed by the Blessed One.” They reported this matter to the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One, on account of this issue, on account of this incident, after giving a Dhamma talk, announced to the monks: “Monks, I allow eating before another meal at an occasion of robe-giving. And thus, monks, you may recite this training rule:

“In a group meal, except at the [proper] occasion: a Pācittiya. Here the occasion is this: an occasion of illness, [or] an occasion of robe-giving - this is the occasion here.”

And thus this training rule was designated for the monks by the Blessed One.

On a [later] occasion, people invited robe-making monks with a meal. The monks – regretfully – did not consent, [thinking] “Eating before another meal is opposed by the Blessed One.” They reported this matter to the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One, on account of this issue, on account of this incident, after giving a Dhamma talk, announced to the monks: “Monks, I allow eating before another meal at an occasion of robe-making. And thus, monks, you may recite this training rule:

“In a group meal, except at the [proper] occasion: a Pācittiya offense. Here the occasion is this: an occasion of illness, an occasion of robe-giving, [or] an occasion of robe-making - this is the occasion here.”

And thus this training rule was designated for the monks by the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One, having dressed in the morning, having taken his robe and bowl, approached a certain family with Venerable Ānanda as his accompanying contemplative. Having approached, he sat on a designated seat. Then those people gave a meal to the Blessed One and to Venerable Ānanda. Regretfully, Venerable Ānanda did not accept. “Take it, Ānanda.”⁵³⁴ “Enough, Blessed One; I am expected for a meal.” “Therefore, Ānanda, having transferred⁵³⁵ [that meal], take [this meal].”

Eating before another meal: When one has been invited to a meal composed of any of the five [kinds of] food; and, after setting aside [that meal], one eats another meal composed of any of the five kinds of food; that is called “Eating before another meal.”

Except at the [proper] occasion: Having set aside the [proper] occasion.

An occasion of illness: When one is not able to eat as much as one needs in one sitting, an “illness-occasion” [meal] can be eaten.

An occasion of robe-giving: When the Kaṭhina has not been spread, the last month of the Rains; [or] when the Kaṭhina has been spread, the five months [of Kaṭhina privileges]: a “robe-giving-occasion” [meal] can be eaten.

An occasion of robe-making: When a robe is being made, a “robe-making-occasion” [meal] can be eaten.

[Thinking] “Apart from the [proper] occasion, I will eat” one receives [food]: a Dukkaṭa offense.

Every intake: a Pācittiya offense.

Perceiving it as eating before another meal when it is eating before another meal, one eats except at the [proper] occasion: a Pācittiya offense.

In doubt when it is eating before another meal...: a Pācittiya offense.

Perceiving it as not eating before another meal when it is eating before another meal...: a Pācittiya offense.

Perceiving it as eating before another meal when it is not eating before another meal: a Dukkaṭa offense.

⁵³⁴ Presumably this is the Buddha speaking.

⁵³⁵ *Vikappetvā*. This verb usually means “assigned” or “arranged” - ie, assigned it to another monk, or arranged for another monk to take one's place. “Transferred” is used here to preserve the meaning without excessive verbosity.

In doubt when it is not eating before another meal: a Dukkaṭa offense.

Perceiving it as not eating before another meal when it is not eating before another meal: non-offense.

Non-offense[s]: One eats after transferring [the previous invitation]; when invited to two or three [meals], one eats at [only] one; one eats at successive⁵³⁶ invitations; when invited by an entire village, one eats anywhere in that village; when invited by an entire guild, one eats anywhere in that guild; when being invited, one says “I will get food”⁵³⁷; a constant supply of food; a meal by ticket; on the fortnight; on the lunar observance day; on the first day of the fortnight; having set aside the five edibles, everything [else] is a non-offense; by one who is crazy; by the first offender.

⁵³⁶ *Paṭipāṭiyā*.

⁵³⁷ I.e., if one tells the inviter that one intends to get food before coming to their meal.