

# Buddhist Attitude on Meat Eating and Non-meat Eating

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## Abstract

Regarding the view on meat eating and non-meat eating the Buddha's attitude on this view is extracted from Scriptures and presented for information in this research paper. The paper is presented in three parts, namely introduction, body of text and conclusion. The Buddha's allowance of the four requisites, namely, alms, robes, monastery and medicine to be used by monks for food, clothing, shelter and health is presented in the introduction. In the body of the text examples are cited to show that the Buddha himself ate meat and fish. Furthermore it is presented that the Buddha allowed the monks to eat meat and fish which were free from three extremities. The Buddha refused to forbid monks eating meat and fish when Devadatta made a request to prescribe monks not to eat meat and fish. It is also presented what attitudes must be borne in mind in partaking nourishing alms food. Examples are cited to illustrate this point. In the conclusion it is pointed out to the Buddhists of the present age to have the right view on meat eating and Non-meat eating to be able to practice accordingly. Key words: meat eating and Non-meat eating

## Introduction

When *Gotama* became the Enlightened One, he gave the first sermon to *Pañcavaggiyas*, the five ascetics. The Buddha preached the *Pañcavaggiyas* thus, *dve me bhikkhave antā pabbajjitena na sevitabbā* 'and laid down the course of practice to follow the *Majjhimapaṭipadā*, the middle way avoiding the two extremes.' The two extremes were indulging in sensual pleasures on the right extreme and self-tormenting austerity practices on the left extremes. The Buddha preached the three practices of moral uprightness in *sīla* (moral), *samādhi* (concentration) and *paññā* (wisdom), in accordance with *Majjhimapaṭipadā*, the middle way.

For example, the Buddha prescribed the four requisites of alms foods, robes monastery and medicine for the food, clothing, shelter and health of the monks in accordance with *Majjhimapaṭipadā*. Of the four requisites, monks can partake of alms food that is offered to them that is *piṇḍiyā lopa bhojanaṃ nissāya pabbajjā*. 'If there is no donor of alms food, monks have to go alms round collecting food offered to them.' As to the

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clothing, the Buddha prescribed to wear the robes that are offered to them. If there is no donor, the monks have to collect the discarded pieces of clothes and converted them into monk robes for wearing. As to shelter, the monks can reside in monasteries or at the foot of trees at one's own will. As to health, the Buddha referred to cattle urine medicine called *pūtimutta bhesajja*. As to the excellent foods, monks are allowed to partake of *sappi* (butter), *navanita* (fresh butter), *tela* (sesame oil), *madhu* (honey), and *phāṇita* (molasses or jaggery.)

It is evident that the four requisites that monks rely on are in keeping with middle way for they are neither indulgence in sensual pleasures nor self-tormenting. The Buddha's attitude on foods can be accessed from the Buddha's instruction to go round to receive alms food in *piṇḍiya lopabhojanaṃ nissāya pabbajjā*. As an ordinary term *bhojana* was used with no qualifying words, the alms foods offered by the lay devotees would be a mixture of good and bad, fine and coarse. As the alms food was not specified, it could contain millet as well as a meal of rice. The alms curry was not also bowl could contain assorted curries like vegetable, meat and fish. Based on these observations, the Buddha who laid the middle way of practice wished the monks to partake foods which were as the foods eaten by the ordinary people.

The Buddha used the terms *bhojaṇ* for the alms foods offered by the lay devotees. But in prescribing the *vinaya* rules, the Buddha classified five kinds of *bhojaṇ*. They were *odana* (alms food), *kummāsa* (barley cake), *sattu* (rice pudding), *maccha* (fish) and *maṃsa* (meat). These kinds of alms foods were proper for receiving and the Buddha also partook of such kinds of alms foods. As to the fish and meat, the Buddha did not forbid eating fish and meat. If a question was raised whether the Buddha ate meat and fish, it is required to give an example.

In the *Pāḷi* canon, the Buddha is known to consume meat and fish which were free from three extremities and apart from the ten kinds of meat.

### **Partaking of paṃsukūlika by the Buddha**

It was the time when the Buddha was residing at *Kūṭāgāra* hall (pinnacled hail) in *Mahāvana* forest in *Vesālī*. The Buddha paid an early visit to the wealthy the name of *Ugga* and sat at the already prepared place. The wealthy man respectfully paid obeisance to the Buddha and supplicated him to partake of varied foods and fruits. His request contained and invitation of

meat and fish offered to the Buddha. This verbal invitation is as follows. ‘Noble Buddha, your follower heard from the venerable sir that he who usually offers delicious foods acquired something noble. Exalted the Buddha, the alms curry now being offering is pork cooked with plums. Noble Buddha, accept this excellent curry in honouring your follower’. The Buddha said, *paṭiggahesi bhagavā anukampaṃ upādāya* ‘accepted in compassion’. Based on this event the Buddha is known to consume meat and fish.

It was the time when the Buddha was sojourn at *Veḷuvana* monastery in *Rājagaha*. *Uppalavaṇṇa* was a female monk, *bhikkhunī* staying in *Sāvatti* city where she went alms-round collecting alms food early in the morning. After partaking of the food, she retreated to *Andhavana* forest and sat at the foot of a tree for meditation. At the same time, the thieves, after stealing and killing the cattle, went into the same forest taking the meat. The leader of the thieves saw the Then and thought to himself thus: *Sace me puttabhātukā passissanti viheṭhissanti imaṃ bhikkhuniṃ* ‘My sons and brothers will torment the *bhikkhunī* on seeing her.’ Therefore he led them away from the *Therī*.

After having cooked the meat when he was alone the leader bundled the excellent meat in a leaf and hanged it on a branch of a tree nearby and said, *yo passati samaṇo vā brāhmano vā dinnam yeva harati* ‘Who so ever sees the food, whether he is a monk, a *brahman* or a noble person, it is already donated’. Then the leader of the thieves departed from the scene.

After her meditation, *Uppalavaṇṇa Therī* heard what the leader of the thieves said. She came back to her monastery after taking the excellent meat. She cooked the meat well and put it in an alms bowl and went to *Veḷuvana* where the Buddha was residing. But she did not find the Buddha. She found Reverend *Udāyī* who was left to look after the monastery. She asked him where the Buddha went. She was told that the Buddha went alms-round. Then she said, *imaṃ bhante maṃsaṃ bhagavato dehi* ‘Venerable, offer this excellent meat to the Buddha’. *Udāyī* said, *santappito tayā bhaginī bhagavā maṃsena* ‘sister, you have well attended to the

Buddha with the excellent meat’.

Based on the above episode, the Buddha is known to consume beef. The meat in the present episode is *paṃsukūla* meat free from three extremities. Therefore the Buddha partook of this meat.

It was the time when the Buddha was residing in the *Mahāvana* forest in *Vesālī* Kingdom. General *Sīha* was a disciple of *Nigaṇṭha*. General

Sīha approached the Buddha and discussed different kinds of doctrine by putting questions. At the end of the discussion, the General said, Exalted the Buddha, your doctrine is highly pleasing. Accept me as an Upāsakā, a devotee, who take refuge in the three *Ratanas* from this day forward till the end of life the Buddha said *anuviccakāraṃ kho sīha karohi, anuviccakāro tuṃhā disānaṃ nāta manussānaṃ sādhu hoti* ‘Sīha act after inquiring and consideration. A famous man like you should act after inquiring and consideration’.

General Sīha supplicated to the Buddha that the Buddha was quite different from the teachers of other doctrines. Then the Buddha preached Sīha the Four Noble Truths. At the end of the sermon, General Sīha attained the state of *Sotāpaṇṇa*. General Sīha invited the Buddha to visit his home to partake of alms foods together with the monks. The Buddha accepted the invitation of the general. Then he left after paying homage to the Buddha.

At his home, General Sīha summoned a male attendant and said, *Gaccha tvaṃ ambhopurisa pavattamaṃsaṃ jānāhi* ‘Young man do you know naturally occurring meat? He gave instruction to buy naturally occurring meat’. After preparing excellent foods and fruits, General Sīha proffered to the Buddha and the monks to partake. On account of this, Nigaṇṭha and his followers proclaimed loudly by going round the *Vesālī* city thus;

*Ajja sīhena senāpati thulampasuṃ vadhitvā samaṇassa  
gotamassa bhattaṃ kataṃ, taṃ samaṇo gotamojānaṃ  
uddissakataṃ maṃsaṃ paribhuñjati paṭiccekammaṃ.*

‘Today general Sīha slaughters plump buffalo, cattle, goat, pig, etc. and professed alms foods to Gotama. Gotama consumed the purposely killed meats knowingly. Demerit will be obtained for consuming meats intended for him’. General Sīha also heard the shouting. One attendant came and reported to General Sīha. He said to his attendant, Young man it is improper. Venerable Nigaṇṭha and his followers wish for the disadvantage of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṃghā for long day and nights. Nigaṇṭha, without evidence, causelessly slanders the Buddha. Because of life we do not cause the slaughtering of animals purposely. Based on the general Sīha’s speech, the meats offered by General Sīha to the Buddha were naturally occurring meats. From this episode, the Buddha is known to consume meat and fish.

The journey of the Buddha and the Saṃghā to *pāvā* is described in the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* of the *Dighanikāya Mahāvagga Pāli*. The Buddha stayed at the mango-grove of Cunda, the son of goldsmith. Cunda

Upāsakā approached the Buddha. The Buddha pleased Cunda with words of *dhamma*. Upāsakā Cunda said, *adhivāsetu me bhante bhagavā svātānāya bhattaṃ siddhiṃ, bhikkhusaṃ ghena* ‘Exalted the Buddha, I supplicate the Buddha to accept alms food together with monks on the morrow’. The Buddha accepted the invitation. Cunda prepared excellent alms food in the morning of the next day. He also arranged to offer tender pork to the Buddha and the monks. The Buddha and the monks came to Cunda’s house. The Buddha said to Cunda, *yaṃ te Cunda sūkaramaddavaṃ priyattaṃ, tena maṃ parivisa, yaṃ panañña khādaṇīyaṃ bhojanīyaṃ pariyattaṃ tena bhikkhusaṃghaṃ parivīsa* ‘Donor Cunda, offer alms food with tender pork to Tathāgata and offer other alms food to the monks’. Cunda did as instructed by the Buddha.

As evident in the above example of events in *Pāḷi* Canon, the Buddha is known to consume fish and meat. The Buddha himself consumed fish and also allowed his disciple monks to consume meat and fish which were free from three extremities. This point is more evident by the Buddha’s addresses in reply to Devadatta’s requests.

### **Refusal to the Supplication of Devadatta**

Devadatta, with a large company of followers, approached the Buddha and supplicated to forbid monks eating meat and fish. The supplication was found as follows:

*Yāvajīvaṃ macchamaṃsaṃ na khādeyyuṃ.*

*Yo macchamaṃsaṃ khādeyya vajjaṃ naṃ phuseyya.*

‘Do not let monks eat flesh of any kind till the end of life. Should a monk eat meat, he incurs a penalty.’

The Buddha did not accept Devadatta’s request, the Buddha’s refusal to accept Devalatta’s request is found as follows:

*Ti koṭi parisuddhaṃ macchamaṃsaṃ,*

*addiṭṭhaṃ assutaṃ aparisaṅkitaṃ anuññātaṃ.*

‘I have allowed monks to eat fish and meat which are free from three extremities-ought not to be seen, ought not to be heard, unload some and devoid of doubt.’

### **Nourishment that is proper for monks to eat**

Among request made by Reverend Devadatta, one request was to forbid monks eating meat and fish. This request was refused by the Buddha.

The Buddha allowed monks to eat meat and fish which were free from three extremities. Based on the example in *Pāli* canon, it is known that nothing was said by the Buddha on vegetarianism and non-vegetarianism which is now extensively practiced in Myanmar. It is evident that the Buddha allowed eating meat and fish which were free from extremities and that there was no fault in eating meat and fish which were free from the extremities.

The three extremities were personal seeing of cooking fish and meat which were intended to offer to monks, knowing of such preparation of food by word of mouth, and having doubt that such foods were prepared for monks. The Buddha forbade monks not to eat such food. The Buddha's prohibition is explained in the *Vinaya Saṅgha Aṭṭhakathā* thus: *Ti koṭi parisuddhañhi macchamaṃsaṃ hagavatā anuññātaṃ adiṭṭhaṃ asutaṃ aparisaṅkitaṃ* 'Fish and meat that are innocent of *Ti koṭi parisuddhañhi macchamaṃsaṃ*, seeing, hearing and doubt, are allowed to be consumed by monks.'

The *adiṭṭha* not seeing hear in means unseeing of fish and meat that are killed and brought to monks. *Asuta* learning means the monks did not hear that they were killed and brought. *Aparisaṅkita* 'absence of doubt' means having no doubt that fish and meat were prepared by killing purposely for offering. Fish and meat free from three extremities is the food which is free from seeing, learning and doubt. Of the three extremities, seeing and learning are apparent but doubt is not apparent. Thus doubt is further explained in the *Vinaya Saṅgha Aṭṭhakathā* as 'doubt is free from doubt by seeing' *Diṭṭhāparisaṅkita* and 'doubt by learning' *Sutāparisaṅkita*. 'Doubt free from seeing and learning' *Tadubhaya vinimutta parisāṅkita* is of three kinds.

Doubt by seeing is that monks saw people come out of the village carrying fishing nets, cudgels, bows and arrows or people roaming in the forest. On the second day people who carried cudgels, bows and arrows on the previous day offered alms foods together with fish and meat to the monks. The monks felt doubt by inference to what they saw on the previous day. This kind of doubt is *Diṭṭhā prisāṅkita*. If such a doubt is felt, the monks should receive neither fish nor meat. If the people asked the monks why they do not receive the fish and meat, they are to explain in full account. When the donors replied that these foods were prepared for themselves and for the king, etc., it is proper for the monks to receive the alms food for the food was not specially prepared for the monks. Thus the foods are free doubt and ought to be consumed by monks.

Doubt by learning is hearing of the news of people with cudgels, bows and arrows were coming out of the village or roaming in the forest. The monks have not seen actually themselves but they came to know by word of mouth. When the monks entered the village to receive alms food, these people brought cooked rice together with fish and meat. Then the monks felt doubt, that fish and meat were killed and prepared to offer to the monks. Such a doubt is called *Sutaprisaṅkita*. Such doubtful fish and meat ought not to be received by monks. When the people asked the reason why the monk did not receive the fish and meat, then the monks explained. Then the donors said that the foods were prepared for themselves, Brahmins, office or for a man of honour. Such being cleared of doubt ought to be received by monks.

The members of the monks did not see nor hear the news of people with cudgels, bows and arrow were coming out of the village or roaming in the forest. The monks feel doubt when they see people bringing cooked rice together with fish and meat to offer to the monks. Such a doubt is called *Tadubhaya vinimutta parisāṅkita* 'totally free from those two doubts'. Under such circumstances, the monks ought not to receive fish and meat. If the lay devotees tell the monks that the fish and meat they have prepared were not intended for the monks. They were prepared for themselves, village headman or relatives or friends. Or people tell that the foods are prepared for the departed or for the wedding ceremony. Under such circumstances, the doubt is cleared and the food is proper to be accepted by order.

In *Vinaya Saṅgha Aṭṭhakathā* the words supplicated by the lay devotees to remove doubt contain naturally obtained fish and meat in *pavattamaṃsaṃ vā kappiyeva labhitvā bhikkhūnaṃ atthāya saṃpadi tanti vadanti* 'As the naturally proper fish and meat are obtained, they are prepared for the monks, In this expression,' *pavattamaṃsa kappiya* means the naturally occurring proper meat and fish. In the modern usage it is discarded meat *paṃsukūla* meat smeared with dust. The majority of Myanmar people understand that *paṃsukūla* meat is the meat and fish that naturally occur.

The term *pavattamaṃsa* is used in the *Vinaya Saṅgha Aṭṭhakathā* for fish and meat which are free from three extremities. *Matamaṃsa* (dead meat) is used in the *Vimativinodanī Ṭīkā Matamaṃsa* is explained in the *Ṭīkā* as *Pavatta maṃsanti āpaṇādīsu pavattaṃ vikkāyikaṃ matamaṃsaṃ* 'The dead meat that occurs in markets and that can be bought is called

*matamaṃsam*'. In the present day such meat is called 'meat on block'. Such kind of fish and meat is proper for monks.

In the present society, people have the custom of offering alms foods to the monks for a number of reasons. Some offer alms foods to monks at homes. Some offer alms foods to monks at monasteries. In such offerings, meat and fish are specially prepared for monks. Regarding this matter it is explained in *Vinaya Saṅgaha Aṭṭhakathā*.

At one monastery, the monks do not know that the meat and fish are specially prepared for them but the monks from other monastery know this. The meat and fish are improper for the monks who know and proper for the monks who do not know. If the monks at one monastery know that the fish and meat are purposely prepared for them and the monks from the other monastery do not know this. Under such circumstance, the meat and fish are improper for monks who know and proper for the monks at the other monastery who have no knowledge of the prepared food. In another case, the monks from the monastery receiving alms food and the monks from the other monastery know that the fish and meat are prepared intending for the monks residing at the monastery where alms foods are offered. Then the fish and meat are improper for the monks residing at both monasteries. In brief it is proper if unknown and improper if the source is known.

A person purposely kills an animal and the cooked meat is offered to a monk in his alms bowl and the monk knowingly accepts the alms and the offers to another monk. The monk receiving the alms food partakes of the food as he believes the morality and integrity of the first monk. These monks are not guilty of breaking the *Vinaya* rules. The first monk who receives the alms food knowingly is not guilty for he does not consume the alms food. The second monk is not also guilty for he does not know the origin of the alms foods. This case is explained in the *Vinaya Saṅgaha Aṭṭhakathā*.

### **Nourishment that is improper for monks to eat**

Regarding eating meat and fish, the Buddha forbids eating of meat which is not free from three conditions and allows eating meat and fish which are free from conditions and other foods without prohibition. Monks accept all offering and partake of them. Although the Buddha restricted the monks in consuming alms foods, ten kinds of meat were prohibited not to be consumed by monks in prescribing the *Vinaya* rules. The ten kinds of meat prescribed not to be eaten by monks are human flesh, elephant meat,



horse meat, dog meat, snake meat, lion meat, tiger meat, and leopard meat, bear meat, and yak meat.

Of the ten kinds of forbidden meat, human flesh was forbidden for it was of one's kind. The meats of elephant and horse were forbidden because they were royal adornments. It might incur the wrath of the king. Dog meat and snake meat were forbidden for they were loathsome. Moreover the female dragon, Supassa, supplicated to the Buddha that monks might be harmed by the *nāgas* who did not believe in the Three *Ratanas*. The meats of lion, tiger, leopard, bear and yak were forbidden to eat because the monks might be harmed by these wild animals.

Regarding the ten kinds of meat, not only meat but also bone, blood, liquid and aroma from those animals must not be consumed by monks. It is explained in the *Vinaya Saṅgaha Aṭṭhakathā* as *Imesaṃ manussādīnaṃ dasannaṃ maṃsampi aṭṭhi pilohitampi lomampi sabbaṃ na vaṭṭati* 'Of the ten kinds of meat, if flesh, bone, etc. are eaten by a monk knowingly or unknowingly, he incurs *Vinaya* offence'. It is described in the *Vinaya Saṅgaha Aṭṭhakathā* that the monk must confess his guilt to expiate the offence thus, *imesu pana akappiya maṃsesu aṭṭhi ādisu vā yaṃkiñci ṇatvā vā añatvā vā khādantassa āpattiyeva. Yadā jānāti, tadā desetabbā*.

Therefore the monks who fear of breaking *Vinaya* rules should receive meat and fish after enquiring the origin of the meat. While taking foods enquiry should be made first before standing to consume meat or fish. It is not easy to distinguish between proper and improper meats. The meat of yak or Tibetan bull looks like beef. The leopard meat looks like benison. Therefore the ancient teachers explain in the *Vinaya Saṅgaha Aṭṭhakathā* that meats should be inquired about their origin before Consuming.

In the above mentioned *Pāḷi* texts, only bone, blood, liquid and aroma are directly described but no mention is made of milk. Therefore milk seems to be proper for monks to consume. It is explained in the *Vinaya Saṅgaha Aṭṭhakathā* thus, *khīrādīsu akappiyaṃ nāmanatthi*. In milks it is proper for monks. There is no improper milk for monks. In this *Pāḷi* text, the proper milk is not clearly described. Thus it seems to imply that human milk, elephant milk, tiger milk, etc. are all proper for monks. However, proper milks are found to be explained in the *Pācittiya Pāḷi* of *Vinaya Piṭaka* as *khīraṃ nāma gokhīraṃ vā ajīkā khīraṃ vā mahisaṃ ciraṃ vā yesaṃ maṃsaṃ kappati, tesam khīraṃ* 'Milk is milk originating from the

animals whose meats are proper such as cattle milk, goat milk.’ Thus milk from human, elephant, horse, etc. is improper for monks and milk from cattle, goat, buffalo, etc. is proper for monks to Consume.

The Buddha classified nourishment into five kinds of *Bhojana*, food. Although the Buddha allowed monks to eat the food and nourishment just like lay people, the Buddha prescribed *Vinaya* rules on the ten kinds of meat which were forbidden.

### **The attitudes that monks should bear in mind in eating nourishment**

In taking nourishment, proper reasons for taking nourishment must be kept in mind. It is explained in *Apaṇṇaka Sutta* of *Rathakāra Vagga*, *Tikanipāta* of *Aṅguttara Nikāya*. Taking nourishment is not for amusements, arrogance, adornment, good physical appearance but for sustenance of the body, to keep away hunger and to practise holy *dhamma*. Thus it is to consume while contemplating the *paccavekkhaṇā*. *Paccavekkhaṇā Pāḷi* for contemplating in taking nourishment can be found for monks in a small text on rules of conduct which was compiled by Mandalay Mahāvisuddhāyon Sayadaw. The way of contemplating *paccavekkhaṇā* for monks and *sāmaṇeras* in using the four requisites is found to be explained thus:

*Paccavekkhaṇā Pāḷi* is found to be translated into Myanmar in *Nissaya* way - word for word translation. On rendering into Myanmar prose it conveys the following meaning: ‘Alms foods, etc. are consumed by contemplating with wisdom for suitable reasons. Alms, etc. are consumed not for frolicking like village children, not for physical prowess like boxers and wrestlers, not for beautifying like court courtesans and not for physical fitness and beauty like acrobats and dancers. Food is consumed just enough for sustenance of the body, just to allay tiredness, just enough to practise *Sāsana Brahmācariya* and *Magga Brahmācariya*. Nourishment like food is consumed to get rid of the old suffering and to prevent the cause of new suffering. May I have a sufficient, innocent and peaceful life by contemplating thus in take nourishment like alms food’.

Taking nourishment is one of the five pleasures relating to senses. It is the sensual pleasure of taste. The Buddha preached in *Pāsarāsi Sutta* in

the *Mūlapaṇṇāsa Pāḷi* of *Majjhimanikāya* that there is only fruit lessness and ruin for those who are forgetful in sensual pleasures without exercising wisdom. Furthermore Buddha preached in *Puttamaṃsūpama Sutta* of *Nidāna Vagga* how to cultivate mental attitude in taking nourishment like food by citing the following example.

A married couple with a small baby son was making a difficult journey with inadequate provision. Before the end of the journey, they ran short of provisions. The three were in danger of perishing. They thought of ways to escape from this difficulty. The married couple came to conceive the idea to continue their journey by consuming the flesh of their baby son. So they killed the baby and cut the flesh into strips and pieces. Then they continued their journey. They ate the flesh of their baby while journeying. At the same time they beat also their chest and wept saying, where is the only baby son of ours?

The Buddha halted the narration here and asked the following questions:

*taṃ kiṃ maññata bhikkhave apinu te davāya vā āhāraṃ āhāreyyuṃ.*

‘Monks, do the couples take the nourishment for amusement?’

*madāya vā āhāraṃ āhāreyyuṃ.*

‘Do they consume for arrogance?’

*mañṭanāya vā āhāraṃ āhāreyyuṃ.*

‘Do they consume for adornment?’

*vibhūsanāya vā āhāraṃ āhāreyyuṃ.*

‘Do they consume for beautifying?’

The monks answered it was not for these reasons. Then the Buddha asked another questions, *nanu te bhikkhave yāvadeva kantārassa nittharanatthāya āhāraṃ āhāreyyuṃ* ‘Monks, the couple takes the

nourishment just enough to complete the difficult journey, isn't it so'. The monks supplicated, *evaṃ bhante* 'Venerable, it is right'. Then the Buddha told the monks to keep the attitude of the example in mind as *eva meva dvāhaṃ bhikkhave kabaḷīkāro āhāro datthabbo* 'The mental attitude must be borne in mind as in the example in taking nourishment'.

According to the Buddha's preaching in this instance in taking nourishment, it must not be for amusement, arrogance and body beatification as if one is eating the flesh one's son. The consumption of nourishment must be borne in mind just to allay hunger and to be able to perform noble practices, by departing from the craving for tooter.

In summing up, the Buddha allowed monks to receive and eat alms, curries and snakes that are daily consumed by lay devotees. But the Buddha wished monks to contemplate with mindfulness, full awareness and *paccavekkhaṇā ñāṇa* in taking nourishment.

### Conclusion

The Buddha laid little stress on the classification of food that could be consumed. *Āpat* from the ten kinds of meat, the Buddha allowed monks to eat all kinds of food which are free from three extremities seeing, hearing and doubt. Although the Buddha did not lay much importance on the classification of food, much importance was placed on the mental attitude and aim of taking nourishment.

On occasions the Buddha prescribed *Vinaya* rules. According to *Vinaya* rules, monks are allowed to eat meat and fish which are free from three conditions and apart from ten kinds of meat. The Buddha did not deliver any sermon relating to eating meat and fish by lay people. According to the teaching of the Buddha in *Sutta Pāṇātipāto vadhachedabandhanaṃ* and other teachings, meat of animal killed by oneself, meat of animal caused to be killed, stolen meat, etc. are impure and meat not free from *akusala* ought to be avoided. Only purified meat and meat without blemish ought to be eaten. To be free from offence, monks eat meats which are free from three conditions just like lay people ought to

choose and eat meats which are free from three conditions. Avoiding ten kinds of meat by monks is to avoid eating meat of one's kind, to ward off danger of predator animals, etc. As for the lay people it is especially suitable to avoid meat after carefully considering what meats to avoid.

Nowadays, some Buddhists practice vegetarianism by avoiding meat and fish. Such people tend to have low opinion of those who do not practice vegetarianism as persons who are destitute of loving-kindness. Those who do not practice vegetarianism also censure vegetarians as persons who practice what the Buddha does not forbade and who adopt the practice advocated by Devadatta. Those are the persons who are arguing based on their conviction and practice.

Although those persons have opinion that eating meat and fish or not eating meat and fish is an important matter, the Buddha did not pay attention to on meat eating and non-meat eating. The Buddha only preached to eat foods including meat and fish with mindfulness that it needs considering with wisdom, and that food should be consumed with good reasons without indulging in the craving of taste.

From such studying, one will gain analytical wisdom to enable to take nourishment in accordance with the Buddha's wish.

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