

The Story of an Anagami Thera

Dhammapada, Verse 218

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While residing at the Jetavana monastery, the Buddha uttered Verse (218) of this book, with reference to a thera who was an anagami.

On one occasion, the pupils of the thera asked him whether he had attained any of the Maggas; but he did not say anything although he had attained the anagami Magga, the third Magga. He kept silent because he had resolved not to talk about his attainment until he had attained Arahatsip. But the thera passed away without attaining Arahatsip, and also without saying anything about his attainment of anagami Magga Insight.

His pupils thought their teacher had passed away without attaining any of the Maggas and they felt sorry for him. They went to the Buddha and asked him where their teacher was reborn. The Buddha replied, "Bhikkhus! Your teacher, who was an anagami before he passed away, is now reborn in the abodes of the Brahmas (Suddhavasa Brahmaloaka). He did not reveal his attainment of anagami Magga because he felt ashamed that he had achieved only that much, and he was ardently striving to attain Arahatsip. Your teacher is now freed from the attachment to the sensual world (kamaloka) and would certainly rise to higher realms."

Then the Buddha spoke in verse as follows:

Verse 218: He who has developed a desire for the Ineffable (i.e., Nibbana), whose mind reaches the same, and is no longer attached to the sensual world (kamaloka), is called one who is bound upstream (uddhamsoto).

At the end of the discourse those Bhikkhus attained Arahatsip.