

The Ariya Path



Buddha delivered the First Sermon Dhammasekkya (Eightfold Noble Path) & Anatta Latkhana (No Self)

Dear Dhamma Friends:

In Dhammapada verse No. 273 and 274, to five hundred Bhikkhu's, Buddha said to them that Bhikkhu should not be discussing about the paths that are not relevant to them; the only path that is relevant to them is the Noble Eightfold Path and the four Noble Truth. Bhikkhu's are those who took to the ascetic homeless life-style to strive for the cessation of suffering, escape from the *Samsara*.

Verse 273. Of paths, the Path of Eight Constituents is the noblest of truths; the Four Noble Truths are the noblest; of the dhammas, the absence of craving (i.e., Nibbana) is the noblest; of the two-legged beings, the All-Seeing Buddha is the noblest.

Verse 274. This is the only Path, and there is none other for the purity of vision. Follow this Path; it will bewilder Mara.

- Q.** Here we have a good question. Is Bhikkhuhood is prerequisite to gaining Arahatsip?
- R.** In my humble opinion, yes. To strive for an Arahatsip, one must first be a Monk; one must first show that he (she) has been freed of any worldly attachment and sensual pleasure. Then and only then, you can strive for

Arahatship. This is supported by Dhammapada Verse No. 79

The King Mahakappina, while he was the King, first attained Sotapanna fruition; later after entering the Samgha order, he attained Arahat fruition. **Queen Anoja** first attained Sotapanna fruition, while she was the Queen, and later after entering Bhikkhuni order, she attained Arahatship. The same were true with the one thousand ministers and their wives.



Verse 79

The Story of Thera Mahakappina

While residing at the Jetavana monastery, the Buddha uttered Verse (79) of this hook, with reference to Thera Mahakappina.

Mahakappina was king of Kukkutavati. He had a queen named Anoja; he also had one thousand ministers to help him rule the country. One day, the king accompanied by those one thousand ministers, was out in the park. There, they met some merchants from Savatthi. On learning about the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Samgha from these merchants, the king and his ministers immediately set out for Savatthi.

On that day, when the Buddha surveyed the world with his supernormal power, he saw in his vision, Mahakappina and his ministers coming towards Savatthi. He also knew that they were due for arahatship. The Buddha went to a place one hundred and twenty yojanas away from Savatthi to meet them. There, he waited for them under a banyan tree on the bank of the river Candabhaga. King Mahakappina and his ministers came to the place where the Buddha was waiting for them. When they saw the Buddha, with six-colored rays radiating from his body, they approached the Buddha and paid homage

to him. The Buddha then delivered a discourse to them. After listening to the discourse, **the king and all his ministers attained Sotapatti Fruition**, and they asked the Buddha to permit them to join the Order. The Buddha, reflecting on their past and finding that they had made offerings of yellow robes in a past existence, said to them, "**Ehi bhikkhu**", and they all became bhikkhus.

Meanwhile, **Queen Anoja**, learning about the king's departure for Savatthi, **sent for the wives of the one thousand ministers**, and together with them followed the king's trail. They too came to the place where the Buddha was and seeing the Buddha with a halo of six colors, paid homage to him. All this time, the Buddha by exercising his supernormal power had made the king and his ministers invisible so that their wives did not see them. The queen therefore enquired where the king and his ministers were. The Buddha told the queen and her party to wait for a while and that the king would soon come with his ministers. The Buddha then delivered another discourse; at the end of this discourse, **the king and his ministers attained arahatship**; the queen and the wives of the ministers attained Sotapatti Fruition. At that instant, the queen and her party saw the newly admitted bhikkhus and recognized them as their former husbands.

The ladies also asked permission from the Buddha **to enter the Order of Bhikkhunis**; so, they were directed to go ahead to Savatthi. There they entered the Order and **very soon, they also attained arahatship**. The Buddha then returned to the Jetavana monastery accompanied by one thousand bhikkhus.

At the Jetavana monastery, Thera Mahakappina while resting during the night or during the day would often say, "Oh, what happiness!" (Aho Sukham). The bhikkhus, hearing him saying this so many times a day told the Buddha about it. To them the Buddha replied, "My son Kappina having had the taste of the Dhamma lives happily with a serene mind; he is saying these words of exultation repeatedly with reference to Nibbana.

Then the Buddha spoke in verse as follows:

Verse 79. He who drinks in the Dhamma lives happily with a serene mind; the wise man always takes delight in the Dhamma (Bodhipakkhiya Dhamma) expounded by the Noble Ones (ariyas).

In this world, the only path to Ariya is the Path of Eight Constituents is the noblest of truths; and the Four Noble Truths are the noblest.



Verses 273 to 276

The Story of Five Hundred Bhikkhus

While residing at the Jetavana monastery, the Buddha uttered Verses (273) to (276) of this book, with reference to five hundred bhikkhus

Five hundred bhikkhus, after accompanying the Buddha to a village, returned to the Jetavana monastery. In the evening they talked about the trip, especially the nature of the land, whether it was level or hilly, clayey or stony, etc. The Buddha came to them in the midst of their conversation and said to them, "Bhikkhus, the path you are talking about is external to you; a bhikkhu should only be concerned with the path of the Noble Ones (ariyas) and strive to do what should be done for the attainment of the Ariya Path (Magga) that leads to the realization of the Perfect Peace (Nibbana)."

Then the Buddha spoke in verse as follows:

Verse 273. Of paths, the Path of Eight Constituents is the noblest of truths; the Four Noble Truths are the noblest; of the dhammas, the absence of craving (i.e., Nibbana) is the noblest; of the two-legged beings, the All-Seeing Buddha is the noblest.

Verse 274. This is the only Path, and there is none other for the purity of vision. Follow this Path; it will bewilder Mara.

Verse 275. Following this Path, you will make an end of dukkha. Having myself known the Path which can lead to the removal of the thorns of moral defilements, I have shown you the Path.

Verse 276. You yourselves should make the effort; the Tathagatas (Buddhas) only can show the way. Those who practice the Tranquility and Insight Meditation are freed from the bond of Mara.

At the end of the discourse those five hundred bhikkhus attained arahatship.

Dhamma friends, I found no case where a lay disciple attained Arahathship without first enter the Bhikkhu (Bhikkhuni) order.

May you are find the [Ariya Path](#).



Ananta Metta.

Maung Paw