AN 7.43 — Graduation (2nd)

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Text

Numbered Discourses 7.43

4. Deities

Graduation (2nd)

So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying near Kosambī in Ghosita's monastery.

Then Venerable Ānanda robed up in the morning and, taking his bowl and robe, entered Kosambī for alms. Then it occurred to him, "It's too early to wander for alms in Kosambī. Why don't I visit the monastery for the wanderers of other religions?"

Then he went to the monastery for the wanderers of other religions and exchanged greetings with the wanderers there. When the greetings and polite conversation were over, he sat down to one side.

Now at that time while those wanderers of other religions were sitting together this discussion came up among them, "Reverends, anyone who lives the full and pure spiritual life for twelve years is qualified to be called a 'graduate mendicant'."

Ānanda neither approved nor rejected that statement of the wanderers of other religions. He rose from his seat, thinking, "I will learn the meaning of this statement from the Buddha himself."

Then Ānanda wandered for alms in Kosambī. After the meal, on his return from almsround, he went to the Buddha, bowed, sat down to one side, and told him what had happened, adding:

"Sir, in this teaching and training can we describe a mendicant as a 'graduate' solely because they have completed a certain number of years?"

"No, Ānanda, we cannot. These are the seven qualifications for graduation that I make known after realizing them with my own insight.

What seven? It's when someone is faithful, conscientious, prudent, learned, energetic, mindful, and wise. These are the seven qualifications for graduation that I make known after realizing them with my own insight. A mendicant who possesses these seven qualifications for graduation is qualified to be called a 'graduate mendicant'. This is so whether they have lived the full and pure spiritual life for twelve years, twenty-four years, thirty-six years, or forty-eight years."