

Book Club Meeting: April 11th - Chapter 9: Doing the Common Good & Chapter 10: A Fantastic Castle City

Chavālātasutta

“Mendicants, these four individuals are found in the world. What four?”

1. One who practices to benefit neither themselves nor others;
2. one who practices to benefit others, but not themselves;
3. one who practices to benefit themselves, but not others; and
4. one who practices to benefit both themselves and others.

Suppose there was a firebrand for lighting a funeral pyre, burning at both ends, and smeared with dung in the middle. It couldn't be used as timber either in the village or the wilderness. The individual who practices to benefit neither themselves nor others is like this, I say.

The individual who practices to benefit others, but not themselves, is better than that. The individual who practices to benefit themselves, but not others, is better than both of those. But the individual who practices to benefit both themselves and others is the foremost, best, chief, highest, and finest of the four.

From a cow comes milk, from milk comes curds, from curds come butter, from butter comes ghee, and from ghee comes cream of ghee. And the cream of ghee is said to be the best of these. In the same way, the individual who practices to benefit both themselves and others is the foremost, best, chief, highest, and finest of the four.

These are the four individuals found in the world.”

Anguttara Nikaya 3.70 Uposathasutta

[...] noble disciple reflects: ‘As long as they live, the perfected ones give up killing living creatures, renouncing the rod and the sword. They are scrupulous and kind, and live full of sympathy for all living beings.

Madhyama Agama 202 (parallel to previous AN 3.70)

For their whole life arahants, “worthy ones”, refrain from killing, abandon killing, giving up knife and stick [out of a sense of] shame and scruple, with a mental attitude of mettā and compassion, with empathy for all beings,¹⁶ including insects; they purify their minds from

killing living beings. For my whole life I also refrain from killing, abandon killing, giving up knife and stick [out of a sense of] shame and scruple, with a mental attitude of mettā and compassion, with empathy for all beings, including insects; I am now purifying my mind from killing living beings. In this respect I am similar to arahants, not different from them

Anguttara Nikaya 3.70 Uposathasutta

The Blessed One is an arahant, perfectly enlightened, accomplished in true knowledge and conduct, fortunate, knower of the world, unsurpassed trainer of persons to be tamed, teacher of devas and humans, the Enlightened One, the Blessed One.’

Anguttara Nikaya 11:17 Saññāsutta

(The state of Nirvana)

“Ānanda, it’s when a mendicant perceives: ‘This is peaceful; this is sublime—that is, the stilling of all activities, the letting go of all attachments, the ending of craving, fading away, cessation, extinguishment.’

That’s how a mendicant might gain a state of immersion like this.