AN 3.71 — Channa Sutta (The Wandering Ascetic Channa)

English translation by Bhikkhu Candana.

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Text

AN III

Suttas 71-80

Ānanda Vagga “The Section on the Venerable Ānanda”

71. Channa Sutta (The Wandering Ascetic Channa) Once at Sāvatthī, the wandering ascetic Channa approached the Venerable Ānanda, and after exchanging friendly greetings, he sat down to one side and said:

“Friend Ānanda, we see that you teach the renouncing of greed, the renouncing of anger and the renouncing of delusion. But we also teach the renouncing of greed, the renouncing of anger, and the renouncing of delusion.

“Therefore, friend Ānanda, having seen what type of danger exactly within greed, anger, and delusion, that you teach their renouncing?”

And the Venerable Ānanda said:

a. “Friend, a greedy person, overcome and consumed by greed, ends up harming himself, harming others, and harming both, becoming mentally afflicted and overwhelmed with suffering. But, when greed is abandoned, he does not harm himself, nor others, nor both. Thus, he does not become mentally afflicted, but instead lives at ease, enjoying the soothing comfort this brings.

“Friend, a greedy person, overcome and consumed by greed, misbehaves by body, speech and mind. But, when greed is abandoned, he does not misbehave by body, speech, and mind.

“Friend, a greedy person, overcome and consumed by greed, does not know his own good; he does not know the good of another; and he does not know what is really considered to be good for both. But, when greed is abandoned, he knows his own good as it really is; he

knows the good of others as it really is; and knows the good of both, as it really is.

“Therefore, friend, to have greed itself means that the person is no longer able to see clearly; hence, greed is the lack of sight; it is blindness itself and the very absence of wisdom, as it obstructs wisdom, which is why greed truly is destructive and does not lead to Nibbāna.

b. “Similarly, friend, an angry person, overcome and consumed by hatred, ends up harming himself, harming others, and harming both, becoming mentally afflicted and overwhelmed with suffering. But, when hatred is abandoned, he does not harm himself, nor others, nor both. Thus, he does not become mentally afflicted, but instead lives at ease, enjoying the soothing comfort this brings.

“Friend, an angry person, overcome and consumed by hatred, misbehaves by body, speech and mind. But, when hatred is abandoned, he does not misbehave by body, speech, and mind.

“Friend, an angry person, overcome and consumed by hatred, does not know his own good; does not know the good of another; and does not know the good of both. But, when hatred is abandoned, he knows his own good as it really is; he knows the good of others as it really is; and knows the good of both, as it really is.

“Therefore, friend, to have hatred itself means that the person is no longer able to see clearly; hence, hatred is the lack of sight; it is blindness itself and the very absence of wisdom, as it obstructs wisdom, which is why hatred truly is destructive, for it does not lead to Nibbāna.

c. “Similarly, friend, a deluded person, overcome and consumed by delusion, ends up harming himself, harming others, and harming both, by becoming mentally afflicted and overwhelmed with suffering. But, when delusion is abandoned, he does not harm himself, nor others, nor both. Thus, he does not become mentally afflicted, but instead lives at ease, while enjoying the soothing comfort this brings.

“Friend, a deluded person, overcome and consumed by delusion, misbehaves by body, speech and mind. But, when delusion is abandoned, he does not misbehave by body, speech, and mind.

“Friend, a deluded person, overcome and consumed by delusion, does not know his own good; does not know the good of another; and does not know the good of both. But, when delusion is abandoned, he knows his own good as it really is; he knows the good of others as it really is; and knows the good of both, as it really is.

“Therefore, friend, to have delusion itself means that the person is no longer able to see clearly; hence, delusion is the lack of sight; it is blindness itself and the very absence of wisdom, as it obstructs wisdom, which is why delusion truly is destructive, for it does not lead to Nibbāna.

“As you see, friend, it is by seeing these dangers in greed, that I teach the renouncing of greed; it is by seeing these dangers in hatred that I teach the renouncing of hatred; and it is by seeing these dangers in delusion, that I teach the renouncing of delusion.”

Then, the ascetic Channa asked a further question:

“But friend Ānanda, is there a path and a method for the renouncing of greed, hatred, and delusion?”

“Yes, there is indeed a Path and a Method, friend, for the renouncing of greed, hatred, and delusion.”

“But friend, what is the Path and Method for the renouncing of greed, hatred, and delusion?”

“Friend, it is this same Noble Eightfold Path, that is: Right view, Right intention, Right speech, Right action, Right lifestyle, Right effort, Right mindfulness, and Right collected stability of mind.”

“Excellent, friend, is the Path, and excellent is the Method for the renouncing of greed, hatred, and delusion, as it truly is necessary, friend Ānanda, in order to stay vigilant, instead of living with careless negligence!”