AN 4.100 — AN 4:100 To Potaliya | Potaliya Sutta

English translation by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.

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Changes: Presentation only: original HTML markup reflowed into plain text; wording, numbering and source repetitions retained. No repetitions expanded.

Completeness: ABBREVIATED. Every source-unit character is preserved, including introductions, notes and verse structure. Thanissaro's collection-level note explicitly states that repetitions were cut: https://www.dhammatalks.org/suttas/about.html. This is evidence about the translation method, not an assertion that every individual unit contains an omission; no repetitions reconstructed.

Text

To Potaliya

Potaliya Sutta (AN 4:100)

Then Potaliya the wanderer went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, greeted him courteously. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there, the Blessed One said to him, “Potaliya, there are these four persons to be found existing in the world. Which four?

“There is the case where a certain person speaks in dispraise of one deserving dispraise when it is accurate, factual, & timely, but he doesn’t speak in praise of one deserving praise when it is accurate, factual, & timely.

“There is the case where a certain person speaks in praise of one deserving praise when it is accurate, factual, & timely, but he doesn’t speak in dispraise of one deserving dispraise when it is accurate, factual, & timely.

“There is the case where a certain person doesn’t speak in dispraise of one deserving dispraise when it is accurate, factual, & timely, nor does he speak in praise of one deserving praise when it is accurate, factual, & timely.

“There is the case where a certain person speaks in dispraise of one deserving dispraise when it is accurate, factual, & timely, and speaks in praise of one deserving praise when it is accurate, factual, & timely.

“Now, of these four persons, Potaliya, which one do you prefer as the most excellent & sublime?”

“Master Gotama, there are these four persons to be found existing in the world…. And of these four persons, Master Gotama, the one who neither speaks in dispraise of one deserving dispraise when it is accurate, factual, & timely, nor speaks in praise of one deserving praise when it is accurate, factual, & timely is the one I prefer as most excellent & sublime. Why is that? Because this is excellent: equanimity.”

“Potaliya, there are these four persons to be found existing in the world…. And of these four, Potaliya, the one who speaks in dispraise of one deserving dispraise when it is accurate, factual, & timely, and who speaks in praise of one deserving praise when it is accurate, factual, & timely is the most excellent & sublime of the four. Why is that? Because this is excellent: having a sense of the right time in every situation.”

“Master Gotama, there are these four persons to be found existing in the world…. And of these four, Master Gotama, the one who speaks in dispraise of one deserving dispraise when it is accurate, factual, & timely, and who speaks in praise of one deserving praise when it is accurate, factual, & timely is the most excellent & sublime of the four. Why is that? Because this is excellent: having a sense of the right time in every situation.”

“Magnificent, Master Gotama! Magnificent! Just as if he were to place upright what was overturned, to reveal what was hidden, to show the way to one who was lost, or to carry a lamp into the dark so that those with eyes could see forms, in the same way has Master Gotama—through many lines of reasoning—made the Dhamma clear. I go to Master Gotama for refuge, to the Dhamma, and to the Saṅgha of monks. May Master Gotama remember me as a lay follower who has gone to him for refuge, from this day forward, for life.”

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: MN 58; AN 4:73; AN 7:64