AN 4.95 — Chavalata Sutta: The Firebrand

English translation by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

Source: https://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/an/an04/an04.095.than.html

Source revision: sha256:7c411108530c04aafcca0ac43267ed12227cbb2653320e8ae0bb686e566bb783

License: CC-BY-NC-4.0 — https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/

License URL: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/

Copyright: ©1998 Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

License notice: The text of this page ("Chavalata Sutta: The Firebrand", by Thanissaro Bhikkhu) is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License. To view a copy of the license, visit https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/. Documents linked from this page may be subject to other restrictions.

Attribution: ©1998 Thanissaro Bhikkhu. The text of this page ("Chavalata Sutta: The Firebrand", by Thanissaro Bhikkhu) is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License. To view a copy of the license, visit https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/. Documents linked from this page may be subject to other restrictions. Transcribed from a file provided by the translator. Last revised for Access to Insight on 30 November 2013. How to cite this document (a suggested style): "Chavalata Sutta: The Firebrand" (AN 4.95), translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu. Access to Insight (BCBS Edition), 30 November 2013, https://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/an/an04/an04.095.than.html .

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

"Monks, these four types of individuals are to be found existing in the world. Which four? The one who practices neither for his/her own benefit nor for that of others. The one who practices for the benefit of others but not for his/her own. The one who practices for his/her own benefit but not for that of others. The one who practices for his/her own benefit and for that of others.

"Just as a firebrand from a funeral pyre — burning at both ends, covered with excrement in the middle — is used as fuel neither in a village nor in the wilderness: I tell you that this is a simile for the individual who practices neither for his/her own benefit nor for that of others. The individual who practices for the benefit of others but not for his/her own is the higher & more refined of these two. The individual who practices for his/her own benefit but not for that of others is the highest & most refined of these three. The individual who practices for his/her own benefit and for that of others is, of these four, the foremost, the chief, the most outstanding, the highest, & supreme. Just as from a cow comes milk; from milk, curds; from curds, butter; from butter, ghee; from ghee, the skimmings of ghee; and of these, the skimmings of ghee are reckoned the foremost — in the same way, of these four, the individual who practices for his/her own benefit and for that of others is the foremost, the chief, the most outstanding, the highest, & supreme.

"These are the four types of individuals to be found existing in the world."

See also: SN 47.19; AN 5.20; AN 4.96; AN 4.99.