

Anaṇa Sutta

The Discourse on Debtlessness

[Worldly happiness]

(Āṅguttara Nikāya 4.62)

Translated by Piya Tan ©2003

The Discourse on Debtlessness

1 Then the householder Anātha,piṇḍika went up to the Blessed One, saluted him, and sat down at one side. As he was sitting thus at one side, the Blessed One said this to Anāthapiṇḍika:

2 “Householder, there are these four kinds of happiness to be won from time to time by a lay person who enjoys sense-pleasures.

What are the four?

- (1) The happiness of ownership (*atthi,sukha*);
- (2) The happiness of enjoyment (*bhoga,sukha*);
- (3) The happiness of debtlessness (*anaṇa,sukha*);
- (4) The happiness of blamelessness (*anavajja,sukha*).

3 And what, householder, is **the happiness of ownership**?

Here, householder, a noble youth¹ has wealth gained by work and zeal, gathered by the strength of arm, earned by the sweat of the brow, justly obtained in a lawful way. At the thought, ‘Wealth is mine gained by work and zeal, gathered by the strength of arm, earned by the sweat of the brow, justly obtained in a lawful way,’ happiness comes to him, joy comes to him.

This, householder, is the happiness of ownership.

4 And what, householder, is **the happiness of enjoyment**?

Here, householder, a noble youth has wealth thus gained, both enjoys his wealth and does meritorious deeds. At the thought, ‘By means of wealth thus gained, I both enjoy my wealth and do meritorious deeds,’ happiness comes to him, joy comes to him.

This, householder, is the happiness of enjoyment.

5 And what, householder, is **the happiness of debtlessness**?

Here, householder, a noble youth owes no debt, great or small, to anyone. At the thought, ‘I owe no debt, great or small, to anyone,’ happiness comes to him, joy comes to him.

This, householder, is the happiness of debtlessness.

6 And what, householder, is **the happiness of blamelessness**?

Here, householder, a noble youth is endowed with blameless actions of body, blameless actions of speech, blameless actions of mind. At the thought, ‘I am endowed with blameless actions of body, blameless actions of speech, blameless actions of mind,’ happiness comes to him, joy comes to him.

This, householder, is the happiness of blamelessness.

¹ “A noble youth,” *kula,putta*, sometimes “the son of a good or noble family, young noble youth (V 1:15; D 1:93; M 1:85, 192; A 2:249; Kvu 268); cf (German) Haussohn.

7 These, householder, are the four kinds of happiness to be won from time to time by a lay person who enjoys sense-pleasures.

Enjoying the happiness of debtlessness and the happiness of possession, too,
Knowing the happiness of enjoyment, a mortal then sees with wisdom.
While seeing with wisdom, the wise knows both shares of his happiness—
The others are not worth a sixteenth part of the happiness from blamelessness.²



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² Comy: The wise one divides the types of happiness into two parts: the first three comprises one part; the happiness of blamelessness is a part of its own. Then he sees with wisdom and knows that the former three types of happiness combined are not worth a sixteenth part [ie a tiny fraction] of the happiness of blamelessness.