AN 4.42 — Ways of Answering Questions

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Text

Numbered Discourses 4.42

5. With Rohitassa

Ways of Answering Questions

“Mendicants, there are these four ways of answering questions. What four? There is a question that should be answered categorically. There is a question that should be answered analytically. There is a question that should be answered with a counter-question. There is a question that should be set aside.

These are the four ways of answering questions.

One is stated categorically,

another analytically,

a third with a counter-question,

while a fourth is set aside.

That sort of mendicant, who knows each of these,

in line with good principles,

is said to be skilled

in the four kinds of questions.

They’re intimidating, hard to defeat,

deep, and hard to crush.

They’re expert in both

what the meaning is and what it isn’t.

Shunning what is not the meaning,

an astute person grasps the meaning.

An attentive one, comprehending the meaning,

is said to be astute.”