

DISCOURSE ON DOWNFALL

Thus have I heard:

On one occasion, the Blessed One was dwelling at the monastery of Anāthapindika in Jeta's Grove near Savatthi.

When the night was far spent, a certain deity whose surpassing splendour illuminated the entire Jeta Grove, came to the presence of the Blessed One, and drawing near, respectfully saluted the Lord and stood to one side.

Standing thus, he addressed the Blessed One in verse :

[Deva:] Having come here with our questions to the Blessed One, we ask thee, O Gotama, about man's decline. Pray, tell us the cause of one's downfall!

[Buddha:] Easily known is the progressive one, easily known is the declining one. One who loves the Dhamma progresses; one who hates the Dhamma declines.

[Deva:] This we learn is the first cause of one's downfall.
Pray, O Blessed One, tell us the second cause of one's downfall.

[Buddha:] The wicked ones are agreeable to him, in the virtuous he finds nothing pleasing, he favours the teachings of the foolish ones – this is the cause of one's downfall.

[Deva:] This we learn is the second cause of one's downfall.
Pray, O Blessed One, tell us the third cause of one's downfall.

[Buddha:] He who is drowsy, fond of society, not diligent, indolent, and who is of fiery temper – this is the cause of one's downfall.

[Deva:] This we learn is the third cause of one's downfall.
Pray, O Blessed One, tell us the fourth cause of one's downfall.

[Buddha:] He is capable of supporting his elderly mother and father in their declining years, but does not do so – this is the cause of one's downfall.

[Deva:] This we learn is the fourth cause of one's downfall.
Pray, O Blessed One, tell us the fifth cause of one's downfall.

[Buddha:] He who, by falsehood, deceives a Holy person or an ascetic, or any mendicant – this is the cause of one's downfall.

[Deva:] This we learn is the fifth cause of one's downfall.
Pray, O Blessed One, tell us the sixth cause of one's downfall.

[Buddha:] The man who owns much property, who has gold and food, but selfishly enjoys his delicacies (without sharing them) – this is the cause of one's downfall.

DISCOURSE ON DOWNFALL

- [Deva:] This we learn is the sixth cause of one's downfall.
Pray, O Blessed One, tell us the seventh cause of one's downfall.
- [Buddha:] The man who takes pride in his birth, wealth and clan, and despises even his own kinsmen – this is the cause of one's downfall.
- [Deva:] This we learn is the seventh cause of one's downfall.
Pray, O Blessed One, tell us the eighth cause of one's downfall.
- [Buddha:] The man who is a womanizer, a drunkard, a gambler, and one who squanders whatever he possesses – this is the cause of one's downfall.
- [Deva:] This we learn is the eighth cause of one's downfall.
Pray, O Blessed One, tell us the ninth cause of one's downfall.
- [Buddha:] Not contented with one's own wife, he is seen among prostitutes and others' wives – this is the cause of one's downfall.
- [Deva:] This we learn is the ninth cause of one's downfall.
Pray, O Blessed One, tell us the tenth cause of one's downfall.
- [Buddha:] The man who past his youth takes a very young wife and cannot sleep due to jealousy for her – this is the cause of one's downfall.
- [Deva:] This we learn is the tenth cause of one's downfall.
Pray, O Blessed One, tell us the eleventh cause of one's downfall.
- [Buddha:] He who places in authority a woman given to drinking and squandering, or a man of similar nature – this is the cause of one's downfall.
- [Deva:] This we learn is the eleventh cause of one's downfall.
Pray, O Blessed One, tell us the twelfth cause of one's downfall.
- [Buddha:] He who has little wealth but great ambition (due to greed), is born a Khattiya but aspires to (an unattainable) kingship – this is the cause of one's downfall.

Knowing well these causes of downfall in the world, the Noble Sage, endowed with insight shares a happy realm.