Snp 1.6 — Downfalls

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Anthology of Discourses 1.6

Downfalls

So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying near Sāvatthī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. Then, late at night, a glorious deity, lighting up the entire Jeta's Grove, went up to the Buddha, bowed, and stood to one side. Standing to one side, that deity addressed the Buddha in verse:

"We ask Gotama

about a man's downfall.

We have come to ask you, sir:

what leads to downfall?"

"It's easy to understand success,

understanding downfall is just as easy.

One who loves the teaching succeeds,

but a hater of the teaching meets their downfall."

"We understand what you're saying,

this is the first downfall.

Tell us the second, Blessed One:

what leads to downfall?"

"The bad are dear to him,

he has no love for the good.

He believes the teaching of the bad;

and that leads to his downfall."

"We understand what you're saying,

this is the second downfall.

Tell us the third, Blessed One:

what leads to downfall?”
“Fond of sleep, fond of company,
a man who does no work;
he’s lazy, marked by anger,
and that leads to his downfall.”
“We understand what you’re saying,
this is the third downfall.
Tell us the fourth, Blessed One:
what leads to downfall?”
“Though able, he does not look after
his mother and father
when elderly, past their prime,
and that leads to his downfall.”
“We understand what you’re saying,
this is the fourth downfall.
Tell us the fifth, Blessed One:
what leads to downfall?”
“He deceives with lies
ascetics and brahmins
and other supplicants,
and that leads to his downfall.”
“We understand what you’re saying,
this is the fifth downfall.
Tell us the sixth, Blessed One:
what leads to downfall?”
“A man with plenty of wealth,
including gold coin and food,
eats delicacies alone,
and that leads to his downfall.”

“We understand what you’re saying,
this is the sixth downfall.
Tell us the seventh, Blessed One:
what leads to downfall?”
“Vain of birth, wealth,
and clan, a man
looks down on his own family,
and that leads to his downfall.”
“We understand what you’re saying,
this is the seventh downfall.
Tell us the eighth, Blessed One:
what leads to downfall?”
“In womanizing, drinking,
and gambling, a man
wastes all that he has earned,
and that leads to his downfall.”
“We understand what you’re saying,
this is the eighth downfall.
Tell us the ninth, Blessed One:
what leads to downfall?”
“Not content with his own partners,
he debauches himself with prostitutes,
and with others’ partners,
and that leads to his downfall.”
“We understand what you’re saying,
this is the ninth downfall.
Tell us the tenth, Blessed One:
what leads to downfall?”
“A man well past his prime

marries a girl with budding breasts;
he cannot sleep for jealousy,
and that leads to his downfall.”
“We understand what you’re saying,
this is the tenth downfall.
Tell us the eleventh, Blessed One:
what leads to downfall?”
“He places in authority
a woman or a man
who’s a drunkard and a wastrel,
and that leads to his downfall.”
“We understand what you’re saying,
this is the eleventh downfall.
Tell us the twelfth, Blessed One:
what leads to downfall?”
“A man of little wealth and strong craving,
born into an aristocratic family,
sets his sights on kingship,
and that leads to his downfall.
Seeing these downfalls in the world,
an astute and noble person,
accomplished in vision,
will enjoy a world of grace.”