Snp 1.6 — Parabhava Sutta: Discourse on Downfall

English translation by Piyadassi Thera.

Source: https://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/kn/snp/snp.1.06.piya.html

Source revision: sha256:7c411108530c04aafcca0ac43267ed12227cbb2653320e8ae0bb686e566bb783

License: Free redistribution with attribution and complete notice — https://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/kn/snp/snp.1.06.piya.html#F_termsOfUse

License URL: https://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/kn/snp/snp.1.06.piya.html#F_termsOfUse

Copyright: ©1999 Buddhist Publication Society.

License notice: You may copy, reformat, reprint, republish, and redistribute this work in any medium whatsoever, provided that: (1) you only make such copies, etc. available free of charge and, in the case of reprinting, only in quantities of no more than 50 copies; (2) you clearly indicate that any derivatives of this work (including translations) are derived from this source document; and (3) you include the full text of this license in any copies or derivatives of this work. Otherwise, all rights reserved. Documents linked from this page may be subject to other restrictions.

Attribution: ©1999 Buddhist Publication Society. You may copy, reformat, reprint, republish, and redistribute this work in any medium whatsoever, provided that: (1) you only make such copies, etc. available free of charge and, in the case of reprinting, only in quantities of no more than 50 copies; (2) you clearly indicate that any derivatives of this work (including translations) are derived from this source document; and (3) you include the full text of this license in any copies or derivatives of this work. Otherwise, all rights reserved. Documents linked from this page may be subject to other restrictions. From The Book of Protection, translated by Piyadassi Thera (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1999). Copyright © 1999 Buddhist Publication Society. Used with permission. Last revised for Access to Insight on 30 November 2013. How to cite this document (a suggested style): "Parabhava Sutta: Discourse on Downfall" (Sn 1.6), translated from the Pali by Piyadassi Thera. Access to Insight (BCBS Edition), 30 November 2013, https://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/kn/snp/snp.1.06.piya.html .

Changes: Presentation only: original HTML markup reflowed into plain text; wording, numbering and source repetitions retained. No repetitions expanded.

Completeness: UNKNOWN. Entire protected source unit, including notes and verses, preserved; canonical completeness has not been independently established.

Text

Thus have I heard:

On one occasion the Blessed One was living near Savatthi, at Jetavana, at Anathapindika's monastery. Now when the night was far advanced, a certain deity, whose surpassing radiance illuminated the whole of Jetavana, came to the presence of the Blessed One, respectfully saluted him, and stood beside him. Standing thus he addressed the Blessed One in verse:

[The Deity:]

1. About the declining man we question thee, Gotama. We have come to ask the Blessed One: What is the cause of his downfall?

[The Buddha:]

2. Easily known is the progressive one, easily known is the declining one. The lover of the Dhamma prospers. The hater of the Dhamma declines.

3. We understand this as explained (by thee); this is the first cause of his downfall. Tell us the second, O Blessed One. What is the cause of his downfall?

4. The vicious are dear to him. He likes not the virtuous; he approves the teachings of the ill-natured — this is the cause of his downfall.

5. We understand this as explained by thee; this is the second cause of his downfall. Tell us the third, O Blessed One. What is the cause of his downfall?

6. The man who is fond of sleep and company, inactive and lazy, and manifesting anger —this is the cause of his downfall.

7. We understand this as explained by thee; this is the third cause of his downfall. Tell us the fourth, O Blessed One. What is the cause of his downfall?

8. Whoever being affluent, does not support his mother and father who are old, and past their prime — this is the cause of his downfall.

9. We understand this as explained by thee; this is the fourth cause of his downfall. Tell us the fifth, O Blessed One. What is the cause of his downfall?

10. Whoever by falsehood deceives either a brahmana, or a samana (a holy man), or any other mendicant — this is the cause of his downfall.

11. We understand this as explained by thee; this is the fifth cause of his downfall. Tell us the six, O Blessed One. What is the cause of his downfall?

12. The person who is possessed of much wealth, who has gold, and who has an abundance of food, but enjoys his delicacies all by himself — this is the cause of his downfall.

13. We understand this as explained by thee; this is the sixth cause of his downfall. Tell us the seventh, O Blessed One. What is the cause of his downfall?

14. The man who, proud of his birth, of his wealth, and of his clan, despises his relations — this is the cause of his downfall.

15. We understand this as explained by thee; this is the seventh cause of his downfall. Tell us the eighth, O Blessed One. What is the cause of his downfall?

16. The man who is addicted to women (given to a life of debauchery), is a drunkard, a gambler, and a squanderer of his earnings — this is the cause of his downfall.

17. We understand this as explained by thee; this is the eighth cause of his downfall. Tell us the ninth, O Blessed One. What is the cause of his downfall?

18. Not satisfied with one's own wives,[2] he is seen among the whores and the wives of others — this is the cause of his downfall.

19. We understand this as explained by thee; this is the ninth cause of his downfall. Tell us the tenth, O Blessed One. What is the cause of his downfall?

20. A person past his youth takes as wife, a girl in her teens, and sleeps not being jealous of her[3] — this is the cause of his downfall.

21. We understand this as explained by thee; this is the tenth cause of his downfall. Tell us the eleventh, O Blessed One. What is the cause of his downfall?

22. He who places in authority a woman given to drink and squandering, or a man of similar nature — this is the cause of his downfall.

23. We understand this as explained by thee; this is the eleventh cause of his downfall. Tell us the twelfth, O Blessed One. What is the cause of his downfall?

24. He who having but little possessions but great ambition (greed), is of warrior birth and aspires selfishly to (an unattainable) sovereignty — this is the cause of his downfall.

25. Fully realizing these (twelve) causes of downfall in the world, the sage, endowed with ariyan insight, shares a realm of security (Nibbana).

Notes

2.

Apparently during the Buddha's time, in Indian society, a man could legally have more than one wife if he could maintain them. Kings had harems. What was prohibited was illegal sexual relations.

3.

By reason of his anxiety as to whether she would long for young men in preference to him. Comy.