SN 11.1 — With Suvīra

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Linked Discourses 11.1

Chapter One

With Suvīra

So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying near Sāvatthī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. There the Buddha addressed the mendicants, "Mendicants!"

"Venerable sir," they replied. The Buddha said this:

"Once upon a time, mendicants, the titans marched against the gods.

Then Sakka, lord of gods, addressed the godling Suvīra, 'Dear Suvīra, the titans march against the gods! Go, and march against the titans!'

'Yes, lord,' replied Suvīra. But he fell into negligence.

For a second time Sakka addressed Suvīra, 'Dear Suvīra, the titans march against the gods! Go, and march against the titans!'

'Yes, lord,' replied Suvīra. But for a second time he fell into negligence.

For a third time Sakka addressed Suvīra, 'Dear Suvīra, the titans march against the gods! Go, and march against the titans!'

'Yes, lord,' replied Suvīra. But for a third time he fell into negligence.

Then Sakka addressed the godling Suvīra in verse:

'Suvīra, go to that place

where you can achieve happiness

without working for it or trying hard—

and take me with you!'

'That a lazy man who does no work,

and doesn't do his duty,

can fulfill all his desires:

Sakka, render me this boon!'

‘Suvīra, go to that place

where a lazy man who does no work

prospers in unending happiness—

and take me with you!’

‘O Sakka, first among gods,

that we might find the happiness

that’s sorrowless, unstressed:

Sakka, render me this boon!’

‘If there exists anywhere a place

where one can live happily without working,

that surely would be extinguishment’s path!

Go there, Suvīra,

and take me with you!’

Since, mendicants, even that Sakka, lord of gods—while living off of the fruit of his good deeds, and ruling as sovereign lord over these gods of the thirty-three—will speak in praise of initiative and energy, you can excel at this, for you who have gone forth in such a well explained teaching and training can try hard, strive, and make an effort to attain the unattained, achieve the unachieved, and realize the unrealized.”