

# SD 61.25 (Māra) Pasāna Sutta

## The (Māra) Discourse on the Boulder

S 4.11

Theme: Māra shatters hill-side boulders on a dark night

Translated by Piya Tan ©2024

### 1 Sutta summary and significance

#### 1.1 SUTTA SUMMARY

The **(Māra) Pasāna Sutta** (S 4.11),<sup>1</sup> as the title suggests, is about how on one dark drizzly night, while the Buddha is sitting out in the open, Māra creates a fearsome earth-shattering sound by splitting a huge boulder. Upon identifying that it is Māra trying to arouse fear in him, the Buddha recites the Sutta verse basically saying that those who are awakened are not troubled by any sound, no matter how fearsome.

#### 1.2 SUTTA SIGNIFICANCE

##### 1.2.1 The (Māra) Samiddhi Sutta (S 4.22)

The **(Māra) Samiddhi Sutta** (S 4.22) records Māra creating a similar rock-shattering ruckus to terrify the monk, Samiddhi, alone in solitude rejoicing in having the Buddha as his teacher and his life in the Dharma. Unsure what the sound is, Samiddhi consults the Buddha who explains to him that it is Māra trying to frighten him, and how he should put Māra in his place.

Samiddhi continues with his solitary meditation, and a second time, Māra makes the same earth-shattering sound. This time, Samiddhi calmly proclaims to Māra his deep faith in going forth and his progress in meditation. He has no fear of Māra. Realizing that Samiddhi knows him, Māra at once vanishes.

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<sup>1</sup> The **(Māra) Pāsāna S** (S 4.11) has also been tr as SD 61.6.(3) without nn.

## (Māra) Pasāna Sutta

The (Māra) Discourse on the Boulder

S 4.11

- 1 At one time, the Blessed One was staying on Mount Vulture Peak outside Rājagaha.
- 2 At that time, the Blessed One was sitting out in the open in the thick darkness of the night while it was raining lightly drop by drop.<sup>2</sup>
- 3 Then, Māra the evil one, wishing to arouse fear, terror, and hair-raising in the Blessed One, shattered a number of huge boulders not far away from him.
- 4 Then, the Blessed One, knowing, “This is Māra the evil one,” addressed Māra the evil one in verse:

<p>4.2 <i>sa ce pi kevalaṃ sabbaṃ gijjhakūtaṃ calessasi n’eva sammā vimuttaṃ buddhānaṃ atthi iñjitaṃ ti</i></p>	<p>Even if you make the whole of Vulture Peak quake all over, the awakened are unshaken; for they are fully liberated.</p>
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- 5 Then, Māra the evil one, realizing, “The Blessed One knows me, the well gone one knows me!” sad and downhearted, vanished right there.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> *Ratt’andha, kāra, timisāyaṃ abbhokāse nisinno hoti, devo ca ekam ekam phusāyati.* This is stock: SD 36.3 (1.1).

<sup>3</sup> *Dukkhī dummano tatth’ev’antaradhāyi.* Ee omits this para. This stock occurs some 32 times in Saṃyutta in connection with Māra [SD 61.9 (3.1.2)].