SN 23.1 — About Māra

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Linked Discourses 23.1

1. About Māra

About Māra

At Sāvatthī.

Then Venerable Rādha went up to the Buddha, bowed, sat down to one side, and said to him:

“Sir, they speak of this thing called ‘Māra’. How is Māra defined?”

“When there is form, Rādha, there would be Māra, or the murderer, or the murdered. So you should see form as Māra, the murderer, the murdered, the diseased, the boil, the dart, the gloom, the gloominess. Those who see it like this see rightly. When there is feeling … perception … choices … consciousness, there may be Māra, or the murderer, or the murdered. So you should see consciousness as Māra, the murderer, the murdered, the diseased, the boil, the dart, the gloom, the gloominess. Those who see it like this see rightly.”

“But sir, what’s the purpose of seeing rightly?”

“Disillusionment is the purpose of seeing rightly.”

“But what’s the purpose of disillusionment?”

“Dispassion is the purpose of disillusionment.”

“But what’s the purpose of dispassion?”

“Freedom is the purpose of dispassion.”

“But what’s the purpose of freedom?”

“Extinguishment is the purpose of freedom.”

“But sir, what is the purpose of extinguishment?”

“Your question goes too far, Rādha. You weren’t able to grasp the limit of questioning. For extinguishment is the objective, destination, and culmination of the spiritual life.”