Mil 3.3.1 — 1. Question on the Root of Time

English translation by John Kelly.
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Text

Milinda’s Questions

Examination Chapter

1. Question on the Root of Time

The king asked: “Venerable Nāgasena, what is the root of transmigration time in the past, what is the root of transmigration time in the future, what is the root of transmigration time in the present?” “The root of transmigration time in the past, your majesty, and of transmigration time in the future, and of transmigration time in the present is ignorance. From the condition of ignorance there are fabrications, from the condition of fabrications there is consciousness, from the condition of consciousness there is name-and-form, from the condition of name-and-form there are the six sense bases, from the condition of the six sense bases there is contact, from the condition of contact there is feeling, from the condition of feeling there is craving, from the condition of craving there is clinging, from the condition of clinging there is becoming, from the condition of becoming there is birth, from the condition of birth there is old age and death; sorrow, lamentation, suffering, anguish, and despair arise. Thus, no earliest point of this whole mass of suffering of transmigration time can be discerned.”

“You are clever, Venerable Nāgasena!”

Question on the Root of Time first