Mil 3.4.2 — 2. Nāgasena’s Question

English translation by John Kelly.
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Text

Milinda’s Questions

Nibbāna Chapter

2. Nāgasena’s Question

The elder asked: “Is salt, your majesty, cognizable by the eye?” “Yes, venerable sir, it is cognizable by the eye.” “Think carefully, your majesty.” “Is it then, venerable sir, cognizable by the tongue?” “Yes, your majesty, it is cognizable by the tongue.” “Then, venerable sir, is all salt cognizable by the tongue?” “Yes, your majesty, all salt is cognizable by the tongue.”

“If, venerable sir, all salt is cognizable by the tongue, why then do oxen bring it by the cartload, shouldn’t just salt be brought?” “It is not possible to bring just salt, your majesty, since these things arise together with a diversity in their range, and as well, salt has heaviness. Is it possible to weigh salt on scales?” “Yes, venerable sir, it is possible.” “It is not possible, your majesty, to weigh salt on scales. One weighs the heaviness on scales.”

“You are clever, Venerable Nāgasena!”

Nāgasena’s Question second