Mil 3.5.8 — 8. Question on the Existence of the Fruits of Actions

English translation by John Kelly.
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Text

Milinda’s Questions

Buddha Chapter

8. Question on the Existence of the Fruits of Actions

The king asked: “Venerable Nāgasena, for a wholesome or unwholesome action done by this name-and-form, where do those actions remain?” “Those actions would follow one, your majesty, like a shadow that never leaves.” “Is it then possible, venerable sir, to point to those actions and say they remain here or there?” “It is not possible, your majesty, to point to those actions and say they remain here or there.”

“Please give me an analogy.” “What do you think, your majesty, for those trees where the fruit has not yet arisen, is it possible to point to those fruits and say those fruits remain here or there?” “Certainly not, venerable sir.” “In the same way, your majesty, as long as the continuity of life is not cut off, it is not possible to point to those actions and say they remain here or there.”

“You are clever, Venerable Nāgasena!”

Question on the Existence of the Fruits of Actions eighth