SN 12.48 — A Cosmologist

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Linked Discourses 12.48

5. Householders

A Cosmologist

At Sāvatthī.

Then a brahmin cosmologist went up to the Buddha … Seated to one side he said to the Buddha:

“Worthy Gotama, does all exist?”

“‘All exists’: this is the oldest cosmology, brahmin.”

“Then does all not exist?”

“‘All does not exist’: this is the second cosmology.”

“Well, is all oneness?”

“‘All is oneness’: this is the third cosmology.”

“Then is all expansiveness?”

“‘All is expansiveness’: this is the fourth cosmology.

Avoiding these two extremes, the Realized One teaches by the middle way: ‘Ignorance is a requirement for choices.

Choices are a requirement for consciousness. … That is how this entire mass of suffering originates. When ignorance fades away and ceases no residue left behind, choices cease. When choices cease, consciousness ceases. … That is how this entire mass of suffering ceases.’”

When he said this, the brahmin cosmologist said to the Buddha, “Excellent, worthy Gotama! Excellent! … From this day forth, may the worthy Gotama remember me as a lay follower who has gone for refuge for life.”