



Nigaṇṭhanāṭaputta sutta

SN 41.8

Now on that occasion Nigantha Nataputta had arrived at Macchikasanda together with a large retinue of Niganthas. Citta the householder heard about this and, together with a number of lay followers, approached Nigantha Nataputta. He exchanged greetings with Nigantha Nataputta and, when they had concluded their greetings and cordial talk, sat down to one side. Nigantha Nataputta then said to him:

"Householder, do you have faith in the ascetic Gotama when he says: 'There is a concentration without thought and examination, there is a cessation of thought and examination'?"

"In this matter, venerable sir, I do not go by faith in the Blessed One when he says: 'There is a concentration without thought and examination, there is a cessation of thought and examination.'"

When this was said, Nigantha Nataputta looked up proudly towards his own retinue and said:

"See this, sirs! How straightforward is this Citta the householder! How honest and open!

One who thinks that thought and examination can be stopped might imagine he could catch the wind in a net or arrest the current of the river Ganges with his own fist."

"What do you think, venerable sir, which is superior: knowledge or faith?"

"Knowledge, householder, is superior to faith."

"Well, venerable sir, to whatever extent I wish, secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states, I enter and dwell in the first jhana, which is accompanied by thought and examination, with rapture and happiness born of seclusion.

Then, to whatever extent I wish, with the subsiding of thought and examination, I enter and dwell in the second jhana Then, to whatever extent I wish, with the fading away as well of rapture I enter and dwell in the third jhana Then, to whatever extent I wish, with the abandoning of pleasure and pain ... I enter and dwell in the fourth jhana. "Since I know and see thus, venerable sir, in what other ascetic or brahmin need I place faith regarding the claim that there is a concentration without thought and examination, a cessation of thought and examination?"

When this was said, Nigantha Nataputta looked askance at his own retinue and said: "See this, sirs! How crooked is this Citta the householder! How fraudulent and deceptive!"

"Just now, venerable sir, we understood you to say: 'See this sirs! How straightforward is this Citta the householder! How honest and open!' -yet now we understand you to say: 'See this, sirs! How crooked is this Citta the householder! How fraudulent and deceptive!' If your former

statement is true, venerable sir, then your latter statement is false, while if your former statement is false, then your latter statement is true.

"Further, venerable sir, these ten reasonable questions come up. When you understand their meaning, then you might respond to me along with your retinue. One question, one synopsis, one answer. Two questions, two synopses, two answers.

Three ... four ... five ... six ... seven ... eight ... nine ... ten questions, ten synopses, ten answers ."

Then Citta the householder rose from his seat and departed without having asked Nigantha Nataputta these ten reasonable questions .

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