

AN 3.21: Samiddha Sutta

The Discourse to Samiddha

Translated by Bhante Suddhāso

Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Fortunate One was living at Sāvatti, at Jeta Grove, in Anāthapiṇḍika's Monastery. Then Venerable Samiddha and Venerable Mahākoṭṭhita approached Venerable Sāriputta and conversed with him. When the appropriate polite conversation was finished, they sat to one side, and Venerable Sāriputta said to Venerable Samiddha,

“Venerable Samiddha, there are three kinds of people found in the world. What three? The ‘Body-Witness,’ the ‘View-Attainer,’ and the ‘Faith-Liberated.’ Venerable, these are the three kinds of people found in the world. Venerable, of these three kinds of people, which one appeals to you as the most transcendent and the most excellent?”

“Venerable Sāriputta, there are three kinds of people found in the world... of these three kinds of people, the one who is ‘Faith-Liberated’ is the one which appeals to me as the most transcendent and the most excellent. For what reason? Venerable, this person's faith faculty is extraordinary.”

Then Venerable Sāriputta said to Venerable Mahākoṭṭhita, “Venerable Koṭṭhita, there are three kinds of people found in the world... which one appeals to you as the most transcendent and the most excellent?”

“Venerable Sāriputta, there are three kinds of people found in the world... of these three kinds of people, the one who is a ‘Body-Witness’ is the one which appeals to me as the most transcendent and the most excellent. For what reason? Venerable, this person's samādhi faculty is extraordinary.”

Then Venerable Mahākoṭṭhita said to Venerable Sāriputta, “Venerable Sāriputta, there are three kinds of people found in the world... which one appeals to you as the most transcendent and the most excellent?”

“Venerable Koṭṭhita, there are three kinds of people found in the world... of these three kinds of people, the one who is a ‘View-Attainer’ is the one which appeals to me as the most transcendent and the most excellent. For what reason? Venerable, this person's wisdom faculty is extraordinary.”

Then Venerable Sāriputta said to Venerable Samiddha and Venerable Mahākoṭṭhita, “Venerables, we have each answered according to our own inspiration. Come, let us go to the Fortunate One and report this to him. We will remember whatever explanation he gives.”

“Yes, Venerable,” Venerable Samiddha and Venerable Mahākoṭṭhita replied to Venerable Sāriputta. Then they went to the Fortunate One, paid respects to him, and sat to one side. Venerable Sāriputta reported to the Fortunate One the entire conversation that had taken place.

[The Buddha replied,] “Sāriputta, it is not easy to give a one-sided answer, [such as] ‘Of these three kinds of people, this one is the most transcendent and most excellent.’ Sāriputta, it is possible that the person who is ‘Faith-Liberated’ might have practiced to become an Arahant, whereas the ‘Body-Witness’ might only be a once-returner or a non-returner, and the ‘View-Attainer’ might also only be a once-returner or a non-returner.

“Sāriputta, it is not easy to give a one-sided answer, [such as] ‘Of these three kinds of people, this one is the most transcendent and most excellent.’ Sāriputta, it is possible that the person who is a ‘Body-Witness’ might have practiced to become an Arahant, whereas the ‘Faith-Liberated’ might only be a once-returner or a non-returner, and the ‘View-Attainer’ might also only be a once-returner or a non-returner.

“Sāriputta, it is not easy to give a one-sided answer, [such as] ‘Of these three kinds of people, this one is the most transcendent and most excellent.’ Sāriputta, it is possible that the person who is a ‘View-Attainer’ might have practiced to become an Arahant, whereas the ‘Faith-Liberated’ might only be a once-returner or a non-returner, and the ‘Body-Witness’ might also only be a once-returner or a non-returner.

“Sāriputta, it is not easy to give a one-sided answer, [such as] ‘Of these three kinds of people, this one is the most transcendent and most excellent.’”