

MORNING TALK OF 8 OCTOBER 2026 · WE ARE NOT THE JUDGES OF THE WORLD

Green and Red Are Only Convention · Ajahn Jayapañño (ชยปญฺโญ ภิกขุ), Sakon Nakhon · translated from the Thai · with the teacher's blessing, sādhu

[00:00] Dhamma in the morning. Morning after morning we come and do our duty as usual. The days pass. Now the end of the rains is near (the end of the monks' rains retreat). After the end of the rains most (monks) go wandering. The custom, though, is to wander mostly after the Kathina (the robe offering), in monasteries that hold a Kathina.

[00:36] Now, roughly speaking: whether there are many of us or few, many monks or few, we do our duty as usual. The opportunity keeps passing by. Make the moment you are in now good. How good, we don't know; but as good as we can manage. Make more of an effort, because our time is growing shorter.

[01:11] Behave like someone standing in a house that is on fire. What do we do? How do we find a refuge for ourselves? Rely less on other things, rely more on yourself. The things (a monk's requisites) we have beyond what is necessary, let us let go of some of them; then it becomes light. Make life simple.

[01:44] Really, in the Dhamma there is not much to say. It is about looking after our own heart. With mindfulness (sati) and with wisdom (paññā), look, catch it in time, and take your own moods in hand, so that, to begin with, they cause no harm, no danger and no enmity. Be someone who lives without harm. Before you leave suffering behind, you must first be free of harm.

[02:13] Earning your living, leading your life without harming anyone: that is virtue (sīla). Only then does the heart stand firm. Only then does the mind stand firm, because nothing bad, nothing unwholesome keeps disturbing it. Then thinking goes in a good direction. Goodness is the foundation.

[02:37] About attaining this or that stage there is no need to talk. That is convention (sammuti, agreed names). Look whether your heart suffers less. Take the reality of this very moment: does it still slip unnoticed into liking, still slip unnoticed into disliking? Look, catch it in time. When the ear meets a sound, the eye meets a form, the nose picks up a smell: the mind that takes it in, what importance does it give to that knowing, and in which direction? What view does it have of the thing it knows?

[03:13] Straighten your view (diṭṭhi). Do not judge anything. For we are not the judges of the world. Over our own heart we should be able to sit as judge. Know how to look after our own heart; that is all. How good one person is, how bad another, that is each person's own affair.

[03:40] On the noble path (ariya-magga), the path of the noble ones, the very first word is correct view (sammā-diṭṭhi). So in living our life we must set our view of that life correctly. At the start, correct means correct according to convention (sammuti, the agreed names and roles). Don't step over convention while you don't yet know it. Whatever our duty is, do it, and do it correctly.

[04:10] If it is convention, then let it be a good convention, a correct one. Learn convention in order to understand convention, and then don't get lost in it. Once you are not stuck in convention, it makes no difference to you what becomes of it; it has no meaning any more. This does not mean being stuck in a convention, whether the convention of laypeople, the convention of monks or, holding on to it, the convention of practitioners. That is still being stuck. Wherever you hold on, there you are stuck.

[04:43] So if we don't rein in the mind, don't look at our own heart, we have no way of seeing the reality that is arising. Whoever reins in the mind escapes the snare of Māra (the tempter). Māra here means wrong view, which keeps

trying to drag us off. Sometimes greed sits behind it. It is a bait made of sense pleasures (kāma): forms, sounds, smells, tastes, touches, wishes.

[05:17] It baits, and it threatens: fear, discontent, anger. These two banks of mood (liking and disliking) arise from our view. But if our view is straight, then (the mind) is in the middle. The mind is neutral; it doesn't like, it doesn't dislike. It knows (what is there), and then it lets go. It doesn't judge, doesn't say: that is good, this is right. This is it: look after and support your heart.

[05:52] Take care that our mind doesn't wander off, doesn't flow into the unwholesome. Pull it back quickly, catch it in time and let go quickly. All of it, the whole practice, is practice at the heart; the effort happens in the heart. The outer form, what one does with the body, is each person's own affair. It is no yardstick for saying this one practises strictly and that one doesn't practise. You can't measure it by that. So don't judge anyone, don't make predictions (about anyone's stage).

[06:36] This mindfulness (sati), I speak of it every day. Have mindfulness directed to the body. The means of training is to follow the Buddha's path: develop mindfulness of breathing (ānāpānasati) so that the four foundations of mindfulness (satipaṭṭhāna) arise. It has to be the four foundations of mindfulness; only then can one speak of a practitioner (one who develops the mind).

[06:59] These days we mostly do it without understanding. We focus only on the outer form of the practice, only on the hours spent sitting in concentration (samādhi). But our view of that sitting is not straight. If the first button is done up wrong, there is no way it can give a correct result. It has to be adjusted anew.

[07:29] Put down your wrong view. Let go of the feeling of being able, let go of knowing, let go of having and being; put it down and stay with the reality of the present moment. You don't need to want to know what you don't yet know. And what you already know: don't hold on to that knowing. It must not be "I know". It is just knowing, with no "I" in it. Exactly this: once you look and catch it in time, your heart does not suffer. You know then how to keep your own heart.

[08:09] When the eye sees a form: is (the mind) pleased with that form? When the ear hears a sound: is it pleased with that sound? Here, catch it in time. Practising the Dhamma means looking at your own heart. Whoever develops the mind must look at his own heart, not at others. Don't meddle with other people. Regarding others as bad doesn't make us better. That someone else is bad doesn't mean we are good.

[08:40] So talking about other people's faults doesn't make us better. It drags us down, because we are wallowing in what is bad. It is our own heart that is bad. No need to blame anyone, no need to slander anyone. Anūpavādo, anūpaghāto: not speaking ill, not doing harm. However someone lives, leave him be.

[09:09] Don't force anyone. You can't press down a cow's horns to force it to eat grass. It can't be done. Even the Buddha said: for people without faith (saddhā) the Dhamma turns into something bad, something harmful. Someone who doesn't believe in the Buddha's teaching: you tell it to him and he doesn't listen. He takes us for a crank, a madman, someone who has lost his mind. So it is of no use.

[09:43] We learn the Dhamma from the Buddha's teaching. We have to practise it so that it bears fruit in us. Look, know, catch it in time. Don't get lost, don't flow away. Wherever you are, whatever you are: be aware of yourself. Whoever is aware of himself catches feeling (vedanā) in time. Being aware of yourself, that is mindfulness directed to the body (kāyagatāsati). Without the Pali words it is just the same: if there is mindfulness, being aware of yourself, an awareness of yourself that is complete all round.

[10:24] So when something strikes, there are the sense bridges (āyatana: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind), there is contact (phassa), and from it feeling (vedanā) arises: pleasure arises, displeasure arises. Pleasant, unpleasant, neither. Pleasant feeling, unpleasant feeling, neither-nor feeling. We catch the feeling in time. Whoever catches the feeling in time has no craving (taṇhā), no clinging (upādāna). This is the way to step in and cut the stream of arising,

the stream of dependent arising (paṭiccasamuppāda). Whoever cuts it at feeling, in him craving and clinging do not arise, and there is no becoming and no birth. Then it is no longer a cycle (vaṭṭa).

[11:14] Now, as our mindfulness becomes more complete, wisdom becomes sharper. It penetrates, it pierces the defilements (kilesa: greed, hatred and delusion) sitting in our heart and cleanses the heart of them more and more. The feeling that was once violent loses its violence once mindfulness and wisdom are there. When passion (rāga) or aversion (dosa) come in (as a mood) and strike, but mindfulness catches them in time, the force of that mood grows weaker. Conceit (māna, comparing oneself), which otherwise keeps stabbing, has no strength any more, because mindfulness is a protective frame.

[12:00] So as we develop mindfulness more, our concentration (samādhi) becomes firmer. It becomes correct concentration (sammā-samādhi). Being aware of yourself without suffering. There is no need to expect anything, because in the end nobody gets anything. We are here only for a while.

[12:28] That we suffer over a person comes from holding on to him as our child, our grandchild, as someone connected to us, in other words as ours. So we suffer over him. If he is not good, we suffer over him, because we want him to be good. Understand that his nature is just like that. (It is like) lead: however you cast and shape it, however fine a mould you put it in, it cannot turn into gold. You must understand it that way. Each person's nature is different. You can't force anyone.

[13:07] And most important: the Buddha never forced anyone. He only said: whoever wants to practise, practise. The result is for oneself, not for others. But these days most people want to force. They want others to be as good as our heart would like them to be. They force this one and that one, blame this one and that one, but never, never do they force their own heart to hold still and make no enemies.

[13:44] So as mindfulness becomes more complete, concentration becomes firmer: the faculty of mindfulness, the faculty of concentration, the faculty of wisdom (indriya). The faculty called wisdom ripens. But these five faculties (indriya), the five powers (bala: faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration, wisdom), are important. Without power it can't move forward. The power called faith (saddhā): without faith it can't be done; that's the end of it. It is blind from the start. Faith is the seed to be planted.

[14:18] Where there is faith, where there is belief, effort (virīya) arises. If we don't believe in cause and effect, don't believe the Buddha's words, don't believe that the Buddha's teaching can lead us out of suffering, then we won't practise that teaching. But once we believe that this teaching can lead us out of suffering, we make the effort to follow it. However hard and difficult the practice may be, we won't lose heart, we won't abandon it. That is having faith and having effort.

[15:02] For one who keeps going like that, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom arise, the five faculties. As wisdom grows, our view becomes straighter: correct view (sammā-diṭṭhi). As the view becomes straighter, thinking becomes straighter too. Speech, action, the way of living go in the correct direction; they lead to liberation.

[15:39] So this mind gradually fades away from suffering, little by little, a little and a little more. Suffering is not a lump, not a mass that you could grab and throw away or carry around. It fades gradually, it comes loose from clinging. The meaning of the word suffering (dukkha: tension, stress and suffering) is: it passes, it is impermanent, it breaks up. But we hold on to those (passing) things. What fades, fades away from clinging: virāga, virāga, the fading.

[16:18] Nobody lets go of suffering, nobody puts it down, nobody extinguishes it. One only knows. Suffering is what must be understood. The origin (samudaya) is what must be abandoned. That (and not suffering) is what is to be abandoned: (the cause) in the chain of arising. So dependent arising (paṭiccasamuppāda) is the teaching the Buddha tells us to enter into and study. Whoever doesn't yet know this is still far from deserving the name Buddhist, very far.

[17:00] There is a practice the Buddha taught us: first of all, guard the sense bridges. You can only guard the sense bridges, eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind, when mindfulness is there, the recollecting and knowing, and clear

comprehension (sampajañña), being aware of yourself, recollecting. Only then can you guard them. Learn right here (at this point).

[17:25] This is the way that leads out of delusion. That is why the Buddha said: Monks, whoever does not yet thoroughly know the sense bridges is still very far from the teaching and the discipline (Dhamma-Vinaya). The word monk (bhikkhu) here does not mean only someone ordained. A bhikkhu is one who sees the danger in the round of rebirth (saṃsāra). Someone who is ordained but takes it lightly and does not yet see the danger in the round of rebirth, cannot yet be called a bhikkhu; he is a bhikkhu by convention only.

[18:00] That is, he does not yet really see the danger in the round of rebirth. Whoever really sees the danger in the round of rebirth, him the Buddha calls a bhikkhu. Therefore he guards the sense bridges. Whoever guards the sense bridges with mindfulness is practising. That means: learning the Buddha's teaching and following it. Coming inward and studying the true textbook.

[18:32] For what the Buddha taught lies within these five aggregates (khandha). So one understands the five aggregates as five aggregates, not as us. It is not we who understand the five aggregates. One sees them as heaps, not as us. One sees: form, feeling, perception, what the mind creates (saṅkhāra), consciousness. From the aggregates one goes deeper, to the elements (dhātu): elements, aggregates, sense bridges, parts of the body (ākāra, the 32 parts).

[19:17] In the scriptures it is written in the forward direction (anuloma), from effect to cause (as spoken); that is the chain of arising. In practice, though, you have to turn around. (Once more:) From cause to effect, that is the chain of arising; in practice you have to go backwards (paṭiloma), from the effect back to the cause, in order to know the cause thoroughly, the origin (samudaya). But whoever follows (the chain) outward gets lost.

[19:57] That is why there are nothing but people who get lost in knowing (deluded knowing), because they can't let go of the knowing. They hold on to the knowing, and then they argue. Whoever really knows argues with no one. Whatever anyone says, let him. It is not our duty. Someone who doesn't yet see: you tell him to look, and he doesn't get it. Telling a blind man to look at green and red: whatever you tell him, he doesn't understand, until his eyes heal by themselves. Only then does he know: this they have agreed to call green, that they have agreed to call red.

[20:31] And the red, the green that the eyes see is still convention. That is exactly what people don't understand. The moment they see something green, something red, they settle it: that is the real thing. In truth green and red are just convention, nothing but illusion. So the practice, each one practises for himself. Nobody can look on behalf of someone else. Our heart, who could look at it for us?

[21:01] Right or wrong, we know it ourselves. If you have the courage to be open with yourself, to play no tricks on yourself, not to lie to yourself, and to feel shame where your own practice is still slack, that is called: shame (hiri) has arisen; you feel shame at what is bad, at the unwholesome. Then you gradually let those things go. Only when you see that they are harmful do you look for a way to let them go. Seeing them as harm, as suffering, you look for a way to let them go, to shake them off.

[21:41] At the same time the power of mindfulness becomes more complete through studying feeling, following it up in time, and knowing deeper in, down to contact (phassa), the impact. Where does it strike? It strikes at the heart: touches (phoṭṭhabba), mind-objects (dhammārammaṇa). So one studies from the body to feeling to the mind. But that very mind which gets lost: if it doesn't know itself, it is only a knower that knows other things. Itself it does not yet know; it has not yet woken up.

[22:27] When the knower itself is known, then the knower comes to an end. Only bare knowing remains. Only then do you really see how the stream of arising runs, how the stream of dependent arising runs. Not just sitting there reciting: conditioned by ignorance (avijjā), there is what the mind creates, there is consciousness, there are mind and body. You can recite it till you die and never see it, because you never looked.

[22:55] So the four foundations of mindfulness (satipaṭṭhāna) are pure insight (vipassanā), from the foundation of the body on. In contemplating the body (kāyānupassanā) one makes the foundation of the body clear. Once there is no more hesitation and doubt, the firm assumption that this body is me falls away. In Pali this is called the view of a self (sakkāya-diṭṭhi, the view that this body is me). (Its falling away) is the mark of the first stage of the noble ones, the first stage.

[23:29] As mindfulness becomes more complete, it goes from the body to feeling: contemplating the body, contemplating feeling (vedanānupassanā). One sees through feeling, pleasant, unpleasant, neither. So there is no clinging to feeling. Feeling is still there, but no clinging. One sees through the mind, so it doesn't get lost. Only then does one see the true stream of the Dhamma, see reality.

[24:03] It happens by the power of mindfulness and wisdom. One gets out of suffering through wisdom, not through concentration. Concentration without wisdom goes astray into the forest, into the thicket. One holds on to concentration, to the form of practice, to customs and traditions, to everything. One holds on to the good, to the right, and stays stuck in the good and the right. One holds on to the cause, to the effect, and is still lost, like someone with good eyes who is lost in green and red.

[24:39] But go deeper than that, and there has never been green and red. As for red, it is human beings who agreed, by convention, that it is red. As for green, it is human beings who agreed, by convention, that it is green. The colour itself is just the way it naturally is. It is not green, it is not red. Whoever sees this clearly argues with no one about green and red, doesn't ask which red, how red. He knows, and it (what is seen) ceases. It ceases in the knowing. This body (kāya-saṅkhāra, the conditioned body) remains, and one carries it along with care.

[25:13] It is only mind and body (nāma-rūpa), depending on each other. Like living in a rented house. Like a hired hand waiting for the end of the working day. In Isan (the north-east) they say: stay until death, simply. Stay, waiting for it to die. Wait for the day of death, simply. No more craving and struggling, no worry about anything, no wish left. Nothing remains. Someone who lives without wishing. He acts, but he wishes for nothing, expects nothing.

[25:55] What, then, should make life difficult? What should be happiness, what should be suffering? What is there to gain, what is there to lose? Because there is no self. The self, that is exactly the problem. Don't blame others. All problems arise because of the self, not because of other people, not because of other things. Correct yourself. Do it well, look well, consider well.

[26:30] The four truths of the noble ones (ariyasacca), that is the core of the Buddha's teaching. For all the Dhamma the Buddha taught serves the fading of suffering, leads to liberation, to freedom. If we look closely: when mindfulness is there and one simply knows, when mindfulness is there and one is simply awake, that is a dwelling beyond time.

[27:06] The word akāliko, akāliko means: beyond time. Not ruled by time. Free, without time and moment. But we can't do it completely, so it is a freedom for a while, for a certain time. Temporarily liberated (samaya-vimutta), that is the mind of one still in training (sekha), one still learning. But one who has completed the training (asekha) is liberated not only for a time (asamaya-vimutta). Liberated without being ruled by time. Liberated all round.

[27:56] Truly beyond time, beyond the world. Beyond all causes and effects. Beyond right and wrong, good and evil, demerit (pāpa) and merit (puñña, goodness that bears fruit). Beyond birth and death. There is no being born and no dying there. Right there it is. So develop it much, do it more: (it is) our refuge.

[28:15] At the same time, keep nourishing (the heart) with goodness, like fertiliser, so that the heart flourishes and becomes beautiful. Do good to nourish the heart. Make merit to nourish the heart. Make merit to cleanse the heart. Not to get, to gain, to have, to be. Don't worry about it. Illness exists, that is natural. Old age exists, that is natural. Separation exists, that is natural.

[28:50] Don't worry, don't cling to it. Because in the end everyone dies the same. Nobody escapes. This body, this interplay of mind and body (nāma-kāya-saṅkhāra): however rich someone is, even with much he can take nothing along. But whoever has wisdom puts what he has to good use before he dies. Money and gold we gather only for a short while. But goodness stays in the heart; it nourishes and sustains our heart. It is a possession we can take along, if we still have to be born again. But whoever doesn't know how to do it, for him it is hard, for him it doesn't work.

[29:44] So the principles of the Buddha's teaching we practise according to the strength of our mindfulness, our wisdom and our ability. Don't do more than your strength allows. Look at yourself more. For this morning I rejoice in the good intention of all of you, who together care for, look after and preserve the religion (sāsana) so that it remains, each according to his position and duty. May you prosper.