

Extracts from an 8 a.m. Desana given
by Luang Por Bundit:



Tan Ajahn Anek

... Every second our thoughts and moods are teaching us. People without Right Understanding think, 'Why is it so hot?' or 'Why is it so cold?' But it's just nature doing its job. We don't have to make such a big deal out of it. If we don't understand the world, we will always experience dukkha. Disappointments will be difficult to accept and we'll always be living for our hopes and dreams.

... People used to come to pay respects to Luang Por Chah and would complain they didn't have time to practise, that they were too busy looking after their children and everything else. 'Do you have time to breathe?' he would ask. 'Yes.' 'Well then, practice like that!'

... Take up the five primary meditation objects that preceptors give the newly-ordained as a theme for contemplation: hair of the head, hair of the body, nails, teeth and skin. Doing this will help free us from being slaves to the body and all the usual concerns regarding beautification and health, and obsession with treatments and therapy.

... Luang Por taught us to abandon everything. He repeated it again and again. ... In the old days there were no doubts about the correct practice, but now everyone has a different opinion about Luang Por's teachings.

... So learn to choose the pure things in life. If you know those things which are pure and lead to peace, then you will bear witness to the truth yourself. No one can do it for you, or verify the fruit of your practice. It's paccattam – to be experienced individually.

... Well, that is enough for today, I'm sure everyone is very hungry. Learn to choose Dhamma teachings the way you choose the fish you eat. A fish has scales, bones, intestines, and flesh. Whether you choose the flesh is up to you.

to have a quick lie-down before the 1 p.m. gathering for meditation and more Dhamma instruction. These days the Sangha gathers in the Uposatha Hall, or *bot* (a Thai short form of the Pali word *uposatha*), the building where Sangha rituals such as ordinations take place. The *bot* is jam-packed with monks and the heat and stuffiness builds up. Heads begin to nod, then droop entirely. At 2 p.m. a senior monk gives a talk. A frequent refrain in these afternoon talks particularly aimed at the monks is how tough it was living at Wat Pah Pong in the early days. All requisites, including food, were scarce. You couldn't even pick your own food, as it was ladled into your bowl for you. There was rarely a sweet drink in the afternoon, and chores were physically draining, including hauling water from a well to fill jars for toilets, bathing and foot washing. Then there was sweeping, cleaning and general maintenance. If something was broken you tried to fix it, and if it couldn't be repaired you went without. Requesting a new one wasn't an option. But it's the love and respect for Luang Por Chah that comes across most vividly from these elder-most senior monks, as expressed in a talk from Ajahn Anek:

'Luang Por wished us well from head to toe. Even if our minds didn't like what he was teaching us, our actions had to comply. We were like children bathing in a cesspit. Our loving father comes along and says, "Children, what are you doing that for?" "Its fun." "Get out. Now!" And Dad reaches in and pulls us out and gets water to clean

us. And pulling us out is no easy job. Some Ajahns leave their disciples to wallow in the cesspit. But Luang Por never did. With just his instruction he was able to extract poison from our hearts. It was like taking a bitter medicine which tasted awful, but we knew it would save our lives....

'Luang Por's teaching spread far and wide: Patiently endure. Endure with patience. Dare to be patient. Dare to endure. *Khanti paramam tapo titikkha*: Patient endurance is the supreme incinerator of defilements. *Khanti*, or patient endurance, is like a fire that no coal or electricity could ever produce. We chant *tapo ca brahmacariyanca* – the austerities of leading the Holy Life. These are the austerities that can burn up our defilements.

'One aspect of this is the morning and evening chanting ... Please give up your own preferences and be present for these activities. If during morning chanting there are no monks, but for the meal there are loads, it feels a bit strange doesn't it? Between following your own preferences, or the opinion of society, or the Dhamma – which is better? These days notions of personal liberty have so filled people's minds that they have no room for Dhamma any more. Luang Por is still with us in spirit. So I ask everyone to please meet together in harmony, so that if Luang Por were here in person he would be happy ...'

The Sangha pays respects to the senior monk who has given the talk and an announcement is made to go