

*Inka Ceremony for Hyang Um Sunim
Su Bong Zen Monastery, Hong Kong
July 2, 1995*

Talk by Zen Master Seung Sahn

This is an Inka Ceremony. In Buddhism, it is a very important ceremony. If we do not have an inka ceremony, Buddha's mind cannot get transmitted today. One day a long time ago, Buddha sat in front of the pagoda of many children. Twelve hundred assembled waiting for Buddha to give a dharma talk. But Buddha didn't give a talk; he was waiting for somebody. After a few minutes, an old monk appeared. Although this monk's bodily age was old, his monk's age was new. His name was Mahakashyapa.

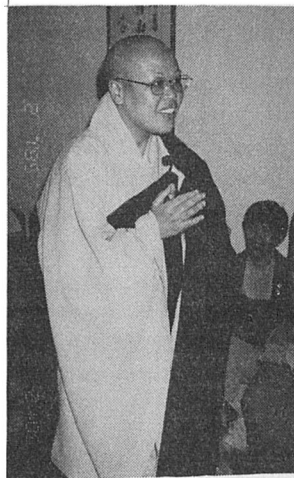
According to the rule of the sangha, monks should sit according to seniority. Mahakashyapa and Buddha looked at each other, then Mahakashyapa walked to the front of Buddha and sat next to him. Everybody was surprised; how can a new monk sit next to Buddha? That was the first transmission from Buddha to Mahakashyapa.

The next transmission was on Vulture Peak. Buddha held up a flower. Of the twelve hundred assembled, only Mahakashyapa smiled... Ha! Ha! Buddha said, "My true dharma is transmitted to you." This was the second transmission. Then Buddha died. At that time in India, people usually died at the age of 100 or 120. But Buddha died at the age of 80.

Many people didn't understand why Buddha died at an early age. Many disciples went to the place where he died to cry. Buddha's body was put in a golden coffin on top of a huge pile of firewood. The golden coffin was very strong.

Seven days had passed since Buddha's death, and everybody was waiting for Mahakashyapa. Finally, he appeared. He looked at them; they were all sad and had this big question in their mind, why Buddha had died early. Buddha had said, "No life, no death." Mahakashyapa walked around the coffin three times. Then, "BOOM!," the coffin was broken. Buddha's feet appeared. Then everybody understood: "Ah! Buddha's body died, but true Buddha was still alive." That's the last transmission.

Today we have an Inka Ceremony. That is a kind of transmission ceremony. So we must understand this point of Buddha holding up the flower; also, Buddha and Mahakashyapa sharing the same seat; and Buddha's feet appearing from the coffin. If everybody attains that point, everybody can become a Ji Do Poep Sa Nim. Today, Hyang Um Sunim has attained that point and becomes a Ji Do Poep Sa Nim.



Dharma Combat

Jobic: Many people said we can practice in any posture, be it sitting, standing, walking and lying down. But when we come to this Zen center, we just sit. So my question is, how can we keep practicing mind when we are sitting, standing, walking and lying down?

Hyang Um Sunim: What are you doing now?

Jobic: I'm using this microphone and talking to you.

HUSN: So, already you are practicing.

Jobic: Thank you very much for your teaching.

Teresa: Good evening Hyang Um Sunim!

HUSN: Good evening!

Teresa: Hyang Um Sunim, why are you a teacher and not a student?

HUSN: How do you call me?

Teresa: Hyang Um Sunim.

HUSN: So, the name is Hyang Um Sunim.

Maggie: How are you?

HUSN: Fine, thank you.

Maggie: More and more people are coming to the Zen center to practice, but there are not so many here yet. What will you do?

HUSN: Kwan Seum Bosal, Kwan Seum Bosal, Kwan Seum Bosal...

Maggie: (*joined in the chant Kwan Seum Bosal*) Thank you very much for your teaching.

Nancy: Good evening, Do An Sunim said your practice now bears a very big fruit. I would like to know what kind of fruit is that?

HUSN: How may I help you?

Nancy: Thank you!

Sister Ann, a Catholic Nun of the Columban Order: Good evening, Hyang Um Sunim.

HUSN: Sister Ann, good evening.

Sister Ann: Last week, Zen Master Seung Sahn said if we want something, we have suffering. But do we have suffering—or is it wrong—if we want something which is good?

HUSN: So I ask you: "What do you want?"

Sister Ann: I'm sitting here.

HUSN: Already you have attained.