



tying a rotten rope to a cloud

Talk by Zen Master Dae Bong at the opening ceremony for Kye Ryong Sahn International Zen Center/Mu Sang Sah, on March 19, 2000.

[Raises Zen stick over head, then hits table with stick.]

This point means open is closed, closed is open. Everything is changing, changing, changing. This is the world of impermanence, the opposites' world.

[Raises Zen stick over head, then hits table with stick.]

This point means originally nothing. Never open. Never closed. This is true emptiness, the absolute world.

[Raises Zen stick over head, then hits table with stick.]

This point means open is open, closed is closed. Everything is true just as it is. Sky is blue. Trees are green. This is truth, the complete world. Three worlds. Which one is the correct world?

KATZ!

Today is the opening ceremony of Kye Ryong Sahn International Zen Center/Mu Sang Sah. The shining faces of bodhisattvas from around the world fill this mountain hall.

An old Korean book, *Chung Gam Rok*, said that when seven hundred great dharma teachers come to Guk Sa Bong, the dharma light of Kye Ryong Sahn will shine throughout the world. So today we are opening this International Zen Center. This is the result of the great vow of our teacher, Zen Master Seung Sahn, and of the dedicated and tireless efforts of sincere Buddhists from Korea and many foreign countries. Opening this temple is very important and very wonderful. But most important is opening our minds. How do you open your mind?

First you must cut off your thinking and return to before-thinking. This is our true nature, universal substance and absolute world. At this place, there are no differences. All people, all things throughout the universe are the same. Everything becomes one. If you do not attach to this place, then when you open your eyes you can see clearly. You can hear, smell, taste and touch clearly. The trees are green. The valley in front of the temple is filled with mist. This is the truth world. Everything is truth. Finally when you attain that the absolute world and the truth world are not two, then correct action appears. This is correct human life. We call that Great Love, Great Compassion and the Great Bodhisattva Way.

Our grandteacher, Zen Master Ko Bong, said if you want that, even good education and social position cannot help you. You must tie a rotten rope to a cloud. That will help your true self. Do you understand that? If someone doesn't understand, then I will help you.

Six hundred years ago, King Yi Tae Jo, the founder of the Yi Dynasty, drank water at Dragon Water Well very near here. Then he carried water to Guk Sa Bong to pray for the prosperity of the nation. Today we place water in front of the Buddha with the desire to attain our true nature and save all beings. So King Yi Tae Jo's water and our water, are they the same or different? If you say same, this stick will hit you thirty times. If you say different, this stick will still hit you thirty times. What can you do?

KATZ!

After this ceremony, please have a drink of water. Outside the door, the road leads to Om Sa Dan Ji [*the local town*] and the whole world. Only how may I help you?