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**OPEN CLOSE, CLOSE OPEN**

Zen Master Dae Kwang

*[holds up the Zen stick, then hits the table]*

Form is emptiness, emptiness is form. Things are always changing and because human beings are attached to these things—attached to name and form—they suffer. Today we celebrate the opening of this new Buddha Hall at Mu Sang Sah. Zen Master Seung Sahn said that if you attain “everything is always changing,” then you attain the true Buddha Hall.

*[holds up the Zen stick, then hits the table]*

No form, no emptiness. This is the name of our true self, but because of suffering we can't stay at this point—one more step is necessary. This is our great vow to save all beings.

*[holds up the Zen stick, then hits the table]*

Form is form, emptiness is emptiness. Above, the roof shelters us from the rain and snow. Below, the foundation is strong. Inside, there is a lot of room to practice.

Which of these three points best fits our situation today?

HO!

Congratulations to the Mu Sang Sah family on the opening of their new Buddha Hall.

First, I would like to thank Zen Master Seung Sahn for his tireless efforts throughout his life to spread the dharma and provide us all with places to practice the true way. Without him, this opening today would not be possible. I would also like to express my deep gratitude to the Mu Sang Sah sangha, whose generosity, hard work, and perseverance in the face of many difficulties made this temple possible.

One day, Zen Master Man Gong told the following story to Hyo Bong Sunim: “Long ago, the King of Heaven picked up a blade of grass and put it back into the ground. He then said to Shakyamuni Buddha, ‘I made a big temple here.’ The Buddha only smiled.” Do you understand the meaning of this story? If you understand, then this new Buddha Hall is not necessary and you can help all beings. If you don't understand, then even if you visit all the Buddha Halls in Korea, you will not be able to save even yourself.

Several years ago, at our Zen Center in Los Angeles, a student said to Zen Master Seung Sahn, “You are truly a great Zen Master; you have built Zen centers all over the world to help people practice and find their true selves—thank you.” Then Zen Master Seung Sahn said, “I only have two empty hands.” Actually, each of us has just this situation—we only have two empty hands. The big question is: What will we do with our hands to help our world?

*[holds up the Zen stick, then hits the table]*

Opening is closing, closing is opening. For 2500 years, many Buddhist temples have been built—they are always coming and going. On this mountain are the bones of many old temples—what were their names? Who built them?

*[holds up the Zen stick, then hits the table]*

No opening, no closing. Buddhist temples point to only one thing: what are you?

*[holds up the Zen stick, then hits the table]*

Opening is opening, closing is closing. You already understand this point, so, which is correct, open or close?

HO!

Open the doors so that many people can come together, practice, attain the True Way, and help this world. Thank you. ☸