

Transmission Speech

BY ZEN MASTER BON SHIM

(Raises the Zen stick over her head, then hits the table with the stick.)

Before Buddha has appeared in this world, this one thing was pure and clear. So what did Buddha transmit to Mahakasyapa?

(Raises the Zen stick over her head, then hits the table with the stick.)

All the great teachers have also pointed only at this one great thing. What did they wish to transmit to us?

(Raises the Zen stick over her head, then hits the table with the stick.)

If you want to find it, it is far away from here. But if you don't want to find it, you will waste your life away. So what can you do?

KAAATZ!

When the alarm clock rings in the morning, get up. When you hear the moktak, go to the Dharma Room. Nothing special.

A long time ago I heard from Zen Master Seung Sahn: "One after another each thing has it. One after another, each thing is complete." This struck me very hard and I felt, it was what I was missing in my life. Some time later I discovered, that this is what is missing in the life of every person. In each of us, there is this original yearning for something pure, clear, luminescent. Some call it true nature, some call it Buddha or God. It is so close to us, but we can't see it.

A long time ago some man asked Zen Master Un Mun: "Why is it that we are unable to see what is so close to us?" Un Mun answered: "It is because it is so close to us." We are unable to see it, so we try to understand it. But understanding will not bring us closer to it, it will not pacify the yearning. We have to experience it. As it was said, it is beyond understanding and beyond words. That is why a long time ago, when someone asked Zen Master Lin Chi: "What is enlightenment, what is true nature, what is Buddha?" Lin Chi would just respond: "Katz!" At the same question Zen Master Dok Sahn would just hit the questioner. Gu Ji would just raise his finger. Dae Soen Sa Nim gave us this *(hits the table with her hand)*, but we are unable to believe it. We constantly check: whether this is true, who said it is true? We have to believe in this one clear thing, then we save this world from suffering. We have also other obstacles: strong opinions, attachment to our understanding. We are unable to let go of them. We have the feeling that if

we let go of them, all the world will cease to exist. In a way it is true, our world will cease to exist. The world of illusions will cease to exist.

A certain Tibetan teacher by the name of Marpa would teach that everything is illusion. But one day his son died and Marpa cried and cried... One student asked him: "Marpa, why are you crying? You have been teaching, that everything is illusion!" Marpa answered: "Yes, everything is illusion and my son's death is the greatest of all illusions." If you see that something is an illusion, it ceases to be an illusion. Then things are just like they are. The sky is blue. When someone is hungry, give him food. If someone is suffering, help him. Only correct function, correct situation. But correct means also natural. Water flows from the mountains. It doesn't ask whether it is correct or incorrect, whether it is good or not, whether it should flow or shouldn't. It just does it. The same with the dog: when the guest comes, the dog barks; it just does its work. What is our work? What is the work of human beings?

There is a story about our original teacher Zen Master Seung Sahn. He used to come here in the past. Always when he came here, he gave very lively Dharma talks. He laughed a lot, he shouted a lot, he gestured a lot. When he felt weak and sick, his talks still didn't change. They were very energizing. Everybody was very happy and everybody forgot about him or herself. After one of his talks, I walked with Dae Soen Sa Nim to his room. When he entered the room, he just collapsed into the chair. He was so worn out. He had his eyes closed and for some time he remained immobile. I was worried and I asked: "Dae Soen Sa Nim, what can I do?" He opened his eyes with an effort and said: "You already understand." It was very strong teaching. The great teacher was making use of every situation, every opportunity in order to help the students.

At another time during a Sangha Weekend like this one, there were many people attending and the conversations were lively. There was a lot of excitement. I was also quite excited, conversing with somebody, and something stupid jumped out of my mouth. I couldn't take it back. Near by Zen Master Wu Bong was sitting. He didn't say anything, he didn't open his mouth, he just looked. It lasted for a long period. That was strong teaching. It is not easy to keep clear mind for moment to moment. But we try. This constantly trying mind that wishes to help is enlightenment, is Buddha.

(Raises the Zen stick over her head, then hits the table with the stick.)

If you believe in this, it is a mistake.

(Raises the Zen stick over her head, then hits the table with the stick.)

If you don't believe in this, it is also a mistake.

(Raises the Zen stick over her head, then hits the table with the stick.)

What is it, that doesn't have a mistake?

KAAATZ!

It is wonderful to see all of you here. Thank you for coming.

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