

## "Kwanseum Bosal and You Become One" Zen Master Seung Sahn

*From a Dharma Talk By Seung Sahn Soen-Sa at a Kido at Big Sur, California, February 1977.*

The first time you try chanting you won't understand. Sometimes your mouth is doing Kwan Seum Bosal, but your mind is at home, in San Francisco, in New York. But then, "No good, come back!" Chanting mind is sixth consciousness; next, going to San Francisco or New York is eighth consciousness; next, "come back!" is seventh consciousness. So we have three consciousnesses. The sixth consciousness controls the body. The seventh consciousness is feeling consciousness: "I like this, I don't like that." The eighth consciousness is your memory or storehouse consciousness. So we try keeping one mind. Then the seventh consciousness talks to the eighth consciousness, "Come back!" If the three consciousnesses are acting separately, then it is not correct chanting.

If you make a big sound then you can hear your voice and also all the other sounds. But if your mind is flying around, you can't hear. So a big sound is necessary. Also, if you want to be able to keep chanting loudly for a long time, you must chant at a low pitch.

You first chant with only one mind, into the sound. You don't hear the sound, you are into the sound. Only Kwanseum Bosal, Kwanseum Bosal—nothing at all. This is Kwanseum Bosal samadhi. One mind. Everything disappears. Your body, everything is nothing, only Kwanseum Bosal. This is being into the sound. This is not bad, not good—good. Next you can hear your voice, you can hear all the sounds. This is very clear. One mind means nothing at all, only Kwanseum Bosal. Clear mind means you can hear your voice and hear any sound. This is clear mind, the best mind. It's like having a painting which is just white. Then if you want a mountain, you can draw a mountain on it. Or like pushing "C" on your calculator: samadhi mind is zero mind; then,  $1 + 2 = 3$ . Special energy mind is like clear mind.

**Student:** Sometimes I was chanting very loud and could hear all the drums and each person singing, just as you said. Then something would jar my train of thought and I would be half asleep.

**Soen-sa:** This is *hon chim*. It is a sickness. You have Kwanseum Bosal but you don't have clear mind, you're half asleep. Your mind isn't going to San Francisco, or home, but it's not clear. Also there's another sickness, where you have Kwanseum Bosal but also thinking, thinking, thinking. This is *do go*.

**Another student:** After the Kido I was sitting by the ocean at home and suddenly it all came back, like a recording.

**Soen-sa:** If you keep a strong Kwanseum Bosal mind, then in your eighth consciousness you already make Kwanseum Bosal karma, samadhi karma. So afterwards, you still have Kwanseum Bosal. This is very good. Sometimes, even during the special energy part of the Kido, you will have a little thinking. Thinking, then energy, thinking, then energy. This is American style! Especially the first time. If you try it a lot, then no thinking.

This Kwanseum Bosal is very important. Kwan means perceive, se means world, um means sound, Bosal means Bodhisattva. Perceive world sound, you must perceive world sound. Then your voice is the world sound. Then what? Already this sound is no sound. You and the sound become one. At that time, the sound is no sound. Form is emptiness, emptiness is form. But no form, no emptiness, nothing at all. But if there is nothing at all, then your mind is very clear, your true self is very clear, like a clear mirror. Red comes, there is red; white comes, there is white. Just like this. Then form is form, emptiness is emptiness. Just like this. When you see the sky, only blue, when you see the tree, only green. When you hear, only the sound of the moktak. The drum makes a drum sound. So sound is sound, color is color. So only go straight, Kwanseum Bosal. Perceive your sound. Only hear your sound. Then you can hear everything. Then this sound is very clear. This is your self, O.K.