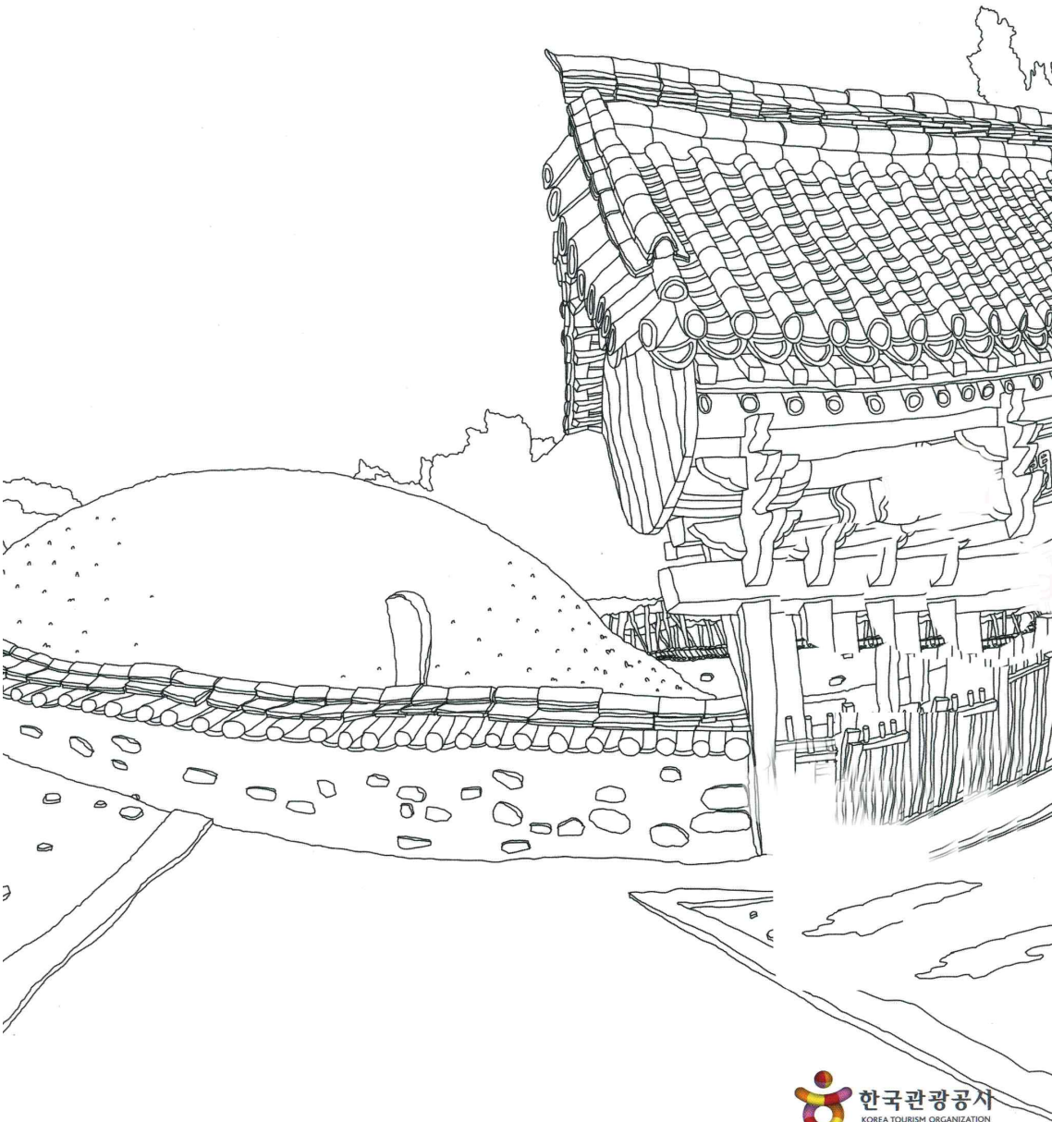


Haeinsa

1. Haeinsa





[Narration] Welcome to the Haeinsa Temple. You will now start a 1.5km-long walk from this parking lot to the One Pillar Gate, the temple's outermost entrance gate. As you walk from here to the temple, don't forget to feast your eyes on the stunningly scenic views of the Gayasan National Park. Listen, and you can hear the melodious sounds of water running along the exquisite rocky valley on your left. The valley has fascinated visitors with colorful views that continue to change with the seasons. The scenic beauty of the valley with its surroundings has given it two nicknames. Ongnyudong, or Jade Brook Valley, came from the famous valley of the same name in Geumgangsan which is often regarded as the most beautiful mountain in the entire Korean Peninsula. The other, Hongnyudong, or Vermillion Brook Valley, came from the views of autumn colored trees reflected on the water running through the valley. The Buddhist temple of Haeinsa is situated in the depth of the Gayasan National Park which contains breathtakingly beautiful peaks and valleys. It has long been regarded as an epitome of human spiritual growth in perfect harmony with nature. Haeinsa has been admired as one of Korea's most valuable Buddhist treasures since its foundation some twelve thousand

years ago. But before we visit the temple, why don't we ask one of its monks to give us a brief introduction?

[Buddhist priest in Haeinsa] "Haeinsa was established about twelve hundred years ago. It has since grown into one of the three most important Buddhist sanctuaries in Korea. Korean Buddhism has the Three Jewels represented by three main temples, Tongdosa, Songgwangsa and Haeinsa. The First Jewel of Korean Buddhism is the "true relics" of the historical Buddha, or Shakyamuni, housed in Tongdosa in Yangsan. The Second Jewel is the community of Buddhist monks symbolized by Songgwangsa which has produced sixteen eminent monks representing spiritual maturity of Korean Buddhism. Finally, the Third Jewel is the dharma, or the Buddhist law, represented by the immense scriptural collection known as the Tripitaka Koreana. This collection of over eighty thousand scriptural woodblocks is currently housed in two special depositories in Haeinsa. It is largely this treasure that makes Haeinsa stand out from other great Buddhist sanctuaries across Korea. And that is why some even argue that Haeinsa is the history of Korean Buddhism itself."



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Haeinsa	3. Death of a Tree
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The short section of the road between the two gate buildings, One Pillar Gate and Cheonwangmun Gate, is lined with tall, aged trees. On the right side of the road near Cheonwangmun, there is one particular tree which may grasp your attention. As you probably have already noticed, this aged zelkova tree died decades ago. The tree is believed to have been planted to mark the foundation of Haeinsa in 802. The tree and the establishment of the temple are interlinked with an amazing story of two monks who cured the ailing queen of Silla, an early Korean kingdom, via the power of only their prayers. And built a temple at the place they had spent time praying for her health. He also planted a tree as an expression of his gratitude. This dead zelkova standing before you is known to be the one the king planted. The tree died in 1945, ending its millennium-long duty as a guardian of the temple. The thick and bulky trunk suggests that in its heyday, it had a majestic figure without reaching branches and lush green leaves. Now turn around and try to spot a rectangular stone topped with a mound of gravels. This stone block is called yeomjuseok, or "stone salt storage". Its current look with gravels on it appears like a prayer cairn, but in reality, it relates to the traditional Korean fengshui theory. Now turn left and look to the south of the temple where you notice the peaks. Fengshui experts believed that the peaks contained energy of fire in them, comfortably explaining why the temple had to suffer at least seven disastrous fires as recorded in old history books. Having wooden structures housing such invaluable treasures as the Tripitaka



Koreana woodblocks, fire has always been a major concern among the Haeinsa community. As a result, they decided to use the power of the ocean to repel the evil energy of fire by storing salt in the stone blocks. The tradition of this symbolic ritual is still maintained by the community of the temple, and the ritual is held once every year.



You have now arrived at the gate building called Cheonwangmun, or the Gate of Four Heavenly Kings. As the name suggests, the gate houses murals depicting iconic images of the Four Heavenly Kings. These Buddhist deities tend to appear in sculptural images in most

other Buddhist temples in Korea, but here, they are painted on the walls. The Four Heavenly Kings are the guardians of the center of the Buddhist universe called Sumeru in Sanskrit, and Sumisan in Korean. These fierce-looking warriors protect the holy place from evil forces invading from all four directions. Each warrior king watches over one cardinal direction with his own weapon, a sword for the East, lute for the West, dragon for the South and pagoda for the North. Take a look at the evil creatures groaning under their feet. These embody all evil forces caught by the warriors while secretly infringing on the holy mountain.



You have just conquered thirty-three grueling steps to arrive at Haetalmun, the Gate of Nirvana. As mentioned earlier, the center of the Buddhist universe is called Sumeru, and its summit consisted of thirty-three heavens.

The stairway leading to this gate symbolizes the heavens forming the holiest place of the Buddhist cosmos. The Gate of Nirvana features fine elements of the traditional Korean architecture. The word "nirvana", or "haetal" in Korean, refers to the extreme bliss attained through liberation from all the desires and sufferings. So in passing, you are now entering the realm of complete bliss and peace. Before you continue on to Gugwangnu Pavilion, I would like to touch upon the meaning behind the name of the temple. "Haein" originated from a Buddhist scripture and literally translates into "seal of the ocean." More specifically, it means that Buddha's wisdom helped obtain enlightenment of the world.

Haeinsa	6. Gugwangnu, House for Multiple Functions
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There stands at the opposite of the Gate of Nirvana in Haeinsa's front courtyard a two-story building with the name plaque of Gugwangnu, or the House of Nine Lights. The building was originally built for lay people visiting the temple for prayer,



meditation or sermons. It has since then turned itself into a building used for various purposes, from storage and exhibition of valuable Buddhist items, to tourist information of the temple. It is also here that the English video clip on the history of the temple is presented for international visitors. As you may have noticed, there is a large maze-like symbol drawn on one side of the courtyard with a three-meter-tall stone pagoda at the center. The symbol is known to have been inspired by a Buddhist hymn consisting of 210 Chinese characters as well as the Buddhist swastika. The inventor, a famous Silla monk named Uisang, wanted Buddhist followers to use it as a path to enlightenment, etching every single word of the hymn on their mind as they walk along the passage. The symbol was designed so ingeniously that the meditative walk starts and ends at the same point. Now then, let's move to the temple's bell house standing beside the maze.



You are now standing at the bell house of Haeinsa. While the name plaque of the building, Beomjonggak, reveals that it is a bell house, it houses in fact three other instruments in addition to a bell which altogether form the Four

Dharma Vehicles. The three other instruments are a drum, a wooden fish gong, and a cloud chime. Let's talk about the bell first, as it is generally regarded as the most important and frequently used instrument in a Buddhist temple. The bell is rung at least twice a day to call the entire Haeinsa community together for the morning and evening prayer services. Spiritually, the bell sound is also interpreted as one to save all sentient beings from the sea of suffering. The temple's old bell made some five hundred years ago is carved with Buddha's benign look. It has been replaced by a new bell and moved to the museum of the temple. In the bell house, there is a cloud-shaped bronze chime called Unpan hung under the ceiling. The chime is played by striking it with a wooden mallet, and its light clear metallic sound is believed to liberate all flying creatures and wandering spirits from suffering. The fish-shaped wooden gong called Mogeo is lavishly decorated with a pattern of lush colors. This instrument is played for the salvation of all water animals. The gong is shaped like a fish because it is a symbol of the devoted spiritual life as it does not close their eyes and therefore stay awake through night and day. The size of the fish gong was later drastically reduced to be a portable wooden gong because monks would strike it when they recited sutras and mantras. Finally, the dharma drum called Beopgo is beaten for the

salvation of all the land animals. As with any traditional instruments, there are strict rules on how the instruments must be played from the order in which each instrument is played and the number of beats each instrument holds. For instance, the evening prayer session starts with striking the bell thirty-three times, again symbolizing the thirty-three heavens forming the center of the Buddhist universe, then followed by beatings of the drum, fish gong and, finally, the cloud chime. Now, it's time to move on to the stairway beside Gugwangnu and walk up to the inner courtyard.



You are now in the inner courtyard of the Haeinsa Temple where two of Haeinsa's main stone structures, lantern and pagoda, stand one after the other. We will look at the stone lantern first. The lantern is lit whenever an important religious event takes place at the temple. The lantern is marked by a square base with four sides carved with lotus designs conceived from elephant eyes, and the octagonal body of downward and upward turned bowls of lotus petals linked by a short octagonal pillar. The upper part of the lantern consists of the octagonal light chamber with

four windows and the Four Heavenly Kings carved in relief, and the octagonal roof stone covering it. The stone lantern with the octagonal body had been preferred by the Buddhist artists of Silla, one of the three earliest Korean kingdoms founded in the first century BCE in the southeastern part of the Korean Peninsula and had existed for about a millennium. However, the octagonal pillar supporting the upturned bowl of lotus petals was found as work of the later period. The three-story stone pagoda standing behind the lantern is appropriately named jeongjungtap, which literally means "the pagoda standing at the center of the courtyard." The pagoda still retains the elegant body of the three stories reflecting the refined aesthetic sensibility of the Korean Buddhist artists during the Unified Silla Period. The base, however, lost its original two-tier structure and was replaced by a three-tier base during the renovation work carried out in 1926.



Haeinsa is a complexity of many valuable historical buildings. One of the most important among them is the temple's central prayer hall called Daejeokgwangjeon, or the Hall of Great Quiescent Light. The original central prayer hall was a two-story building, but fires continued to break out to burn down the original and its succeeding buildings. The current building was built in 1817 and was renovated in 1971. Now, take a look at the façade of the hall. You can see its name plaque under the eaves, and six vertical plaques attached on the front six columns each with a seven-character prayer. These prayers are famous because they were handwritten by two of the most famous royal members of the Joseon dynasty in its final phase. The prayers on the right two columns were written by a seven-year old prince who would later become King Gojong, the twenty-sixth king of the Joseon Dynasty and the first emperor of the Korean Empire. The prayers on the left four columns were written by his biological father, Prince Regent Heungseon. If you feel that you are ready to behave properly as you would at any place of worship, be brave enough and step inside the hall. You may, if you feel an inclination to pay homage to the Buddhist images enshrined on the altar before having a closer look at them and the ritual objects, paintings and decorations around the

interior. There are seven Buddhist statues in this hall of whom the principle Buddha is Vairocana, or the Buddha of All Pervading Light. He is attended by two bodhisattvas, one symbolizing wisdom, and the other universal virtue. Vairocana Buddha displays its own symbolic hand gesture, the "knowledge fist", but the Buddha in this hall displays a unique one formed by clasping both hands together with the fingers interlocking. A truth about this particular Vairocana statue is that it was originally enshrined in Geumdangsa Temple in Seongju, Gyeongsangbuk-do, before being moved to Yonggisa Temple in Gayasan and finally to the current hall in 1897. Despite the long turbulent journey he had to suffer to find his final destination in Haeinsa, this Vairocana statue remains in its original condition.

●The Founders' Tale in Murals

[Narration] Now we are going to move to the right side of the central prayer hall, where the Buddha's Life is depicted in mural paintings. On the building's back wall, there is a series of mural paintings focused on the foundation of Haeinsa. There is a painting depicting a lady lying bedridden with haloed two monks, one above and the other below her. The lady in the mural painting is the queen consort of King Aejang who ruled Silla during the early 9th century. He was crowned when he was thirteen years old and hence needed his wife's care more than ever. That is why the king was so depressed when she was ill.

[King Aejang] You are the only one I need, my dear. Why do you have to lie down like this?

[Queen] You mustn't worry about me, your majesty.

[King Aejang] Tell me why she can't get well.

[Court Physician] We have used best medicines available to us but... please forgive us, your majesty.

[King Aejang] We must do something. We need a prayer, a sincere prayer. Go and find a monk, a nobler one, who can help me get my prayers answered.

[Narration] The king sent his messengers to all the corners of his kingdom to find the holy man the king desired to see. One of the royal messengers came across two monks deep in prayer on the foot of a mountain now known as Gayasan. The messenger told them why he was there, and asked how to help the queen recover from her illness. One of the monks replied.

[Monk] Go back to the palace, and tie a string around her wrist. Take the other loose end of the string and tie it to a pear tree standing at the front the palace.

[Narration] The court messenger returned to the palace and reported what he had heard from the monk. The king did what he was advised to do and, low and behold, saw his queen rising from her bed while the pear tree withered and died. The king was deeply moved by the miracle, and built a temple for the two monks on the site where they had prayed. The temple has since then grown into today's Haeinsa.

Haeinsa	10. The Oldest Known Buddhist Statues in Korea
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Haeinsa has been enshrining twin wooden statues of Vairocana which are known as the oldest of their kind in Korea. The twin Buddhist images had been housed in two separate shrines until recently.

It was only very recently when the statues were taken out of their shrine for re-gilding, that monks of the temple discovered a wooden strip with an inscription regarding their history. According to the inscription, the images were carved in 883 commissioned by a high-ranking official of the Silla court. Since the images are invaluable pieces of Korean Buddhist art made of wood that can easily be damaged by fire, the temple went forth and prepared a safe underground storage for them. In case of emergency such as the outbreak of fire, the images are moved from the shrine hall to the underground strongroom six meters deep under the hall. We are now going to move to the depositories of the Tripitaka Koreana which is widely regarded as the crown jewel of all the cultural heritage in the temple.

Haeinsa	11.Tripitaka Koreana, a Symbol of Korean Spiritual Passion and Patriotism
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You must now be somewhere near the stairway leading to the two remarkable buildings called Janggyeong Panjeon, or the Depositories for the Tripitaka Koreana Woodblocks. As for the original visitors, it is these buildings and the vast collection of woodblocks housed in them that made



them make a long journey to this remote temple. Many think that the Tripitaka Koreana is a World Heritage. However, it is the depositories rather than the collection of woodblocks that was put to the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in 1995. UNESCO experts were amazed at the scientific design that helped safely store the treasures for several hundred years. It was later in 2007 that the Tripitaka Koreana was inscribed to the UNESCO Memory of the World Register. The Tripitaka Koreana is called Palman Daejanggyeong in Korean, which literally means "Eighty Thousand Scriptures". As the name suggests, it is a collection of over eighty thousand printing woodblocks carved with the canon of Buddhist scriptures. As for the 13th century Korean Buddhists, the project of carving the Buddhist scriptures, which took 16 years to complete, was their only defense to protect their country against a formidable enemy via their spiritual and cultural superiority. Now let's move into the inner courtyard of the depositories, and learn more about how the medieval Koreans carried out such an epic project.

Haeinsa	12.Patriotism, Religious Devotion and Artisanship in Perfect Unity
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These two simple, but very carefully designed buildings are depositories of the Tripitaka Koreana we have previously talked about. If you are allowed an opportunity to look inside one of the buildings, you can instantly tell that the buildings are packed with old printing woodblocks. According to historical records, these printing blocks were made of "wild cherry" or Korean pear aged over 40 years with no gnarls. The trees cut for the blocks were left where they fell for about a year so that they would not warp or crack during a process of cutting them into boards. The boards were then boiled in salted water, and dried in a well-ventilated place for about two to three years. Each board was then pasted together with two sheets of paper with handwritten scripture on both surfaces and, finally, carved. Records say that the carvers made three ceremonious bows to Buddha before they carved each character. Such devoted attitude explains the aesthetic beauty and remarkable evenness of the size of all the characters carved on the boards. After carving, they covered both ends of each woodblock with rectangular metal caps. The caps were designed to keep the woodblock from warping, used as handles, and kept any two inscribed surfaces from touching each other when piled up for storage.

Also, all the woodblocks were lacquered for extra durability by keeping bugs away and moisture from settling and softening them. The time-consuming multi-stage production process required about 15 years for the Tripitaka Koreana project to complete. Completed by skillful artists through devoted efforts of such a long period of time, these woodblocks are now widely admired not just as the world's greatest cultural and religious heritage, but as artistic masterpieces as well. The woodblocks are surely great and invaluable to the heritage, as they probably would not have survived if there have been no such efficient storage chambers such as the Janggyeong Panjeon. Now let's talk about these remarkable buildings. Janggyeong Panjeon, A Perfect Fusion of Simplicity and Complexity As mentioned earlier, these two long buildings are depositories of the Tripitaka Koreana, a large collection of printing woodblocks engraved with the code of Buddhist scriptures. It is not known exactly when the buildings were first built, although there is a record that they were enlarged in 1457. The figure shows that the buildings are over 500 years old and hence the oldest of all the buildings currently standing in Haeinsa. The buildings are remarkably simple with little decorative elements, but their structures are impressively scientific. Look at their layout. The two major depositories, the Hall of Dharma Treasure and the Hall of Sutras, stand side by side, one in the north and the other the south, forming a rectangular courtyard with two small annexes in the east and the west. The geography of the site is marked by mountains in the north and open in the south, thus winds pass through the depositories. The buildings' highly efficient natural ventilation system helped the woodblocks maintain its original condition even several hundred years after they were made. The floors of the depositories are covered with clay mixed with salt, charcoal, lime powder and sand. Such mixture of different natural materials is known to have been effective in keeping the wooden treasures from being damaged by harmful insects or moisture. In addition, the racks for holding woodblocks were also made of wood and designed to have space between the floor and the lowest rack shelf, allowing free circulation of air. Now take a look at the layout of the barred windows which are arranged in two rows, top

and bottom. On the front wall the windows of the top row are significantly smaller than those of the bottom row while the wall opposite is the case. This unique layout allows air provided through the front windows to stay circulating within the room before finding its way out through the rear windows. The extended stay of air is known to play an important role in maintaining even room temperature and humidity. It is this elaborate design based on scientific knowledge that amazes even the great architects of the 21st century. The Tripitaka Koreana in Figures As you may or may not know, the Tripitaka is a Sanskrit term referring to the complete canon of Buddhist scriptures which is largely consisting of the texts in three categories, the sutras, the code of ethics, and the commentaries. Among the Tripitaka published in East Asia until the 13th century, the Tripitaka Koreana is generally regarded as the most comprehensive and accurate version of the Buddhist texts created until then. The greatness of the Korean Tripitaka was reconfirmed when Japanese Buddhists decided to exploit it as the basis for the Revised Taisho Tripitaka they published in the early 20th century, expecting that it would be a definitive edition of the Chinese Buddhist canon and its Japanese commentaries. Numbers have often been used to stress the historical and cultural significance and value of the Tripitaka Koreana as world cultural heritage. For example, the makers of the Tripitaka woodblocks in medieval Korea used over 13,500 logs and 160,000 sheets of paper. Experts presumed that the project required over 50,000 man-days for the handwriting of scriptures, and over a million artisans for engraving them on the printing blocks. The engravers carved about 52 million characters on the woodblocks. Considering that one can read about 5,000 characters a day, it would take about 30 years to read the entire scripture of the Tripitaka Koreana. If all these Tripitaka woodblocks were stacked on top of each other, they would be about 3,250 meters tall and easily reach the summit of Baekdusan, the tallest mountain on the Korean Peninsula, and almost the same height as Mount Fuji, the highest mountain in Japan. What about their total weight? They say that the Japanese colonial authority ruling Korea in the early 20th century yearned to move this rare treasure to Japan, but eventually gave up

the plan largely because of its weight. It weighed 250 tons in total, meaning that they would need a hundred 2.5-ton cargo trucks to complete the plan, which they couldn't afford at the time. Now we will move to the left side of the buildings and down to the site called Haksadae, or the Scholar's Hill.



You have now arrived at Haksadae, or Scholar's Hill, where there is an old fir standing as if to guard the historical site. The tree is related to the final days of Choe Chi-won, one of the greatest scholars ever born in Silla in the 9th century. Records say that he was a child prodigy who began to read and understand Chinese classics at the age of four. He grew up with a lot of hopes and aspirations for the people of his time, but the strict

hierarchical society of Silla kept him from gaining the government position he desired. Devastated, he left his home country for the Chinese dynasty of Tang at the age of twelve, passed the imperial examination held there to recruit foreign talents when he was eighteen, and was given a government post. Since then he served the Tang Dynasty for ten years, participating in various important state affairs. It was when he was twenty eight years old when Choe Chi-won returned home with promising reform plans. But his home country was getting sicker with the traditional class system and his plans were effectively rejected by Silla's aristocracy. That disgusted him and led him to live a hermit's life until he passed on. The mountain ridge you are standing on was where the hermit spent his last days. According to a folk tale, the old fir under which you are standing below was his staff planted and given life to grow tall and dense. As you can see, some of its branches droop downwards because, as the folk tale goes, they are grown from the staff. This is our last view point in the sanctuary of Haeinsa. We will go down now and finish this tour by paying a brief visit to the monuments honoring some important figures of the temple.

There is an exquisite aged granite pagoda standing beside the pond called Yeongji, or Pond of Reflection. The pagoda displays the typical style of the Silla's three-story stone pagodas like the one you saw at the inner courtyard of the temple. This pagoda is called Gilsangtap, which literally means "pagoda of auspiciousness", and related with the yearning of Haeinsa's early community to protect the temple from wars and to ensure everlasting peace. Archaeologists discovered inside the pagoda a record written by Choe Chi-won. According to the record, the pagoda was built to honor those who sacrificed themselves to keep the treasures of the temple from continuous wars. There is a terrace of monuments including the temple's history monument and the stupas honoring its most revered patriarchs near the pagoda. Adjacent to the "monument terrace," there is the stupa of a Buddhist monk named Seongcheol, who is widely regarded as one of the greatest Seon masters of our time. His austere life and sincere preaching inspired so many Korean people, Buddhists or non-Buddhists, making him one of the most admired religious leaders in Korea today. So, this is the end of our tour of Haeinsa. We hope you have enjoyed the tour and will visit it again in the near future.

