

That's Your Temple, You Guys

Venerable Gyatrul Rinpoche

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Having been in the Bay Area for a year and a half, Rinpoche was planning to return to Tashi Chöling in mid-July but decided to cancel the trip just a few days before he was scheduled to go, not wanting to make such a big push at that point.

Now it looks like I'm not coming up to Tashi Chöling this time. Anyway, that's not important. Whether I see everything there or not, I do know what is there. What is important is if everyone is taking care of it. I went through so much for that temple! Sangye and myself, we went to Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Australia, Taiwan, back to Hong Kong, and so many other places. All so that we could build the temple.

Now Tashi Chöling doesn't depend on me if I come or not. It depends on you, the people who are there. It is your responsibility. If you want to take care of it, if you think it is good, then it is time to wake up! Time to stand up! If not, then tough luck!

That's your temple, you guys, not only one person's. It is everybody's place for practice and learning. In 1973, the Dalai Lama, his two tutors, the Karmapa, and Dudjom Rinpoche — all these lamas! — kicked me out of India and pushed me to come to the West. I didn't know the reason. But now I sort of understand a little bit. It was because they had omniscience. I don't have omniscience or anything! Now there is getting to be success in what they pushed me to do, including pushing me to go to Taiwan and many different places over the years. Now I am 93 and I am sort of happy because everybody is sort of trying, sort of taking care of the temple. Not only the temple itself, but the garden and prayer wheels, the Guru Rinpoche temple and everything.

Everything was built stage by stage. Now you have to take care of it, stage by stage. Make offerings, but don't gossip and slander! You have merit, that is why you got these amazing things. So now and into the future, take care of them! Take care of them really nicely, step by step. If you need to fix something, fix it! If you need to build more, build! Don't just watch, staring, waiting for someone else to build it for you. We have done that in the past, opening our mouths, thinking that somebody — somebody else, not me! — is going to fill them for us.

Different people helped, sometimes cranky or this or that; but bottom line, we did build things. What did we build? First we built the Vajrasattva statue, then the temple. Who didn't work at that time? I think everybody worked hard! Nobody was lazy or arrogant, nobody was just hanging out, just being dumb. Everybody worked hard, worked together, harmoniously. We didn't have money but still we were harmonious. That way, we did everything. Penor Rinpoche came even though we didn't have any money. He gave the Nam Chö initiations and other transmissions; and they did lama dancing and other things. Among all the lamas, Penor Rinpoche helped the most, he is the number one! And then others came, some okey-dokey, different kinds, and step by step we finished everything.

You guys up at Tashi Chöling, it looks like you are still struggling, trying, doing everything, stage by stage. Therefore, you need to still keep harmony. “MY WAY!” “YOUR WAY!” “Good!” “No good!” —just shut up! Those are such demons, such obstacles! If those slow down and we don’t have those anymore, that’s wonderful!

Watch everything carefully, everything that we built, whatever we have been able to establish. If hyenas come—human hyenas, whether so-called lamas or other people—they can destroy everything again. They can destroy the dharma teachings, they can destroy the temple, everything. One way, if material things are destroyed, I don’t care; but I care about people learning. If everything is destroyed, then if people are trying to learn and trying to practice, where are they going to go? It would completely screw up everybody. You Westerners, you don’t know any dharma, you are just trying to learn, just beginning. If everything is destroyed, that screws everyone up. No more. Enough’s enough. Enough of that. The poor red-headed and red-nosed ones [Westerners], all of them, they need help. Help them! Rather than destroying things. So watch carefully.

And you guys, you wake up! Don’t be wishy-washy. Don’t face east and then west, then today north again. No. Dharma is not wishy-washy. Nobody established wishy-washy dharma in Tibet. The dharma that spread from India to Nepal wasn’t wishy-washy. The dharma that spread from Nepal to Central Tibet wasn’t wishy-washy. The dharma that spread from Central Tibet to the regions of Kham, Amdo, and Golok wasn’t wishy-washy either. It was very strong.

The Communists, they had upside-down merit, and it looks like they made upside-down prayers, and that way they destroyed the dharma throughout Tibet. They think, “We conquered Tibet!” Actually, they didn’t conquer Tibet but they conquered their own good fortune—that is really what they did.

Therefore, everybody keep harmony and try. Practice. Learn. Teach. Don’t trick everybody and lie to them. Negative ways, don’t teach. Positive ways, teach. When you learn, learn positive way. We are not Communists. Therefore, everybody try.

I saw videos of Tashi Chöling. Wonderful! You need to maintain everything nicely that way. Not like Odzer the cat sleeping, or just Ani Baba alone, or just one or two people working. That is not enough. If you want to maintain what is there, if you want to keep what has been built, that’s wonderful! Therefore, everybody needs to try. Everybody needs to help. Learn to umze, learn to chopon, learn to serve as the lama in the practice—whatever is needed! People need to stand up and do those things.

I don’t need those things! What I’m requesting is not for me, nothing for me. It is for your children and your children’s children, for many generations into the future—they need the lineage! We need to preserve and hold it for them. Wake up!

Buddha came to India, he taught at Varanasi and everywhere, and so many mahasiddhas have held his lineage until now. Now Buddhism is coming to Western countries. There are different lineages, such as Sakya, Nyingma, Kagyu, Gelug, and Jonang. But all are the same lineage in

that they are Buddhist. So one or another is not good or bad, you can't put one up and another down—Buddhism is Buddhism! Try to follow real Buddhism. We do have plenty of wonderful lamas. Right now, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, for example, is a real emanation of Buddha Shakyamuni. A real buddha. And then there are lots of incarnations of Guru Rinpoche.

But the bottom line is you guys need to learn and practice. Okay? If we practice and learn, then America will have the essence of Buddha's life. If we don't learn and we don't practice, but just gossip and slander, then what do we have? Not even Buddha's shit.

Thank you, and good night!

-Gyatral