

~From the Archives of Teachings by Venerable Gyatrul Rinpoche~

## TEACHINGS ON THE PRELIMINARY PRACTICES (NGÖNDRO)

*Rinpoche sent the following teaching for those gathered to do the preliminary practices (ngöndro) at Dorje Ling in Portland, Oregon, on May 12, 2013.*

### Part 2

#### The Qualities of the Buddha's Enlightened Speech and Mind

When we take refuge in the Buddha, we take refuge in his body. By taking refuge in his body—merely by that alone—we are purifying great negativity that we have accumulated through our body. Also, of course, we are purifying the effects of that negativity, which are all of the physical discomforts and suffering, great or small, that we ever experience with our body.

It is the same with speech: Taking refuge in the Buddha's enlightened speech, we are purifying the stains of our own ordinary speech. Through that, we are slowly bringing forth the qualities of the Buddha's own speech. It happens very, very slowly, but we have to know that this process is inevitable and we will certainly make progress if we are practicing honestly and genuinely. That is how we will slowly but surely bring forth the qualities of the Buddha's own speech.

With the Buddha's body, the most simple or convenient summing up of the qualities of the Buddha's magnificent form is to say that he has the 32 major and 80 minor marks of enlightenment visible upon his body. Regarding his speech, we can say that there are the 60 sublime characteristics of melodious enlightened speech that characterize the Buddha's voice. We can learn about these.

These are the simplest ways to understand these two categories of the Buddha's qualities, but actually the teachings on the Buddha's body and speech are vast. They fill many, many, many volumes. Even if you were going to explain just the qualities of Buddha's

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body, a master who really knew what he was talking about could begin the explanation today and not be done maybe 10 years from now, and everybody would be waiting for the tea break. This is how vast the Buddha's qualities of enlightened body and enlightened speech are.

Does the Buddha just have a really great body and really nice speech? No. What about his mind? His mind also, of course, is perfectly pure. The easiest way to talk about the qualities of the Buddha's enlightened mind is to speak of the two kinds of omniscience. The first is the omniscience of knowing all things in their nature. This means that the Buddha understands what each and every thing is in its ultimate essence, or according to reality itself. He knows the nature of all things. That nature is a single nature. It is not a different ultimate nature for different phenomena. It is the one nature for all phenomena. The Buddha's mind directly beholds that nature. The Buddha's mind is never separate from that nature. You could say the Buddha's mind *is* that nature. You could also say that there is no Buddha's mind knowing that nature—what we call the Buddha's mind is actually the quality of that nature that is radiant or cognizant, and you could say that knows itself.

That's the first of those two kinds of omniscience that characterize the Buddha's mind. It is that the Buddha knows the nature of all things. The second is that the Buddha knows each and every thing in all its detail. This means he knows whatever arises—and not only whatever is arising at this moment, but whatever has arisen in the past and whatever might possibly ever arise in the future. The Buddha knows all phenomena of the three times in all their detail. The Buddha knows what is arising for each and every sentient being. The Buddha knows exactly the experience of that being according to the phenomena arising for them.

Therefore, we can say that the Buddha knows everything and the Buddha knows the nature of everything. These are the two kinds of omniscience, which are how we speak of the Buddha's enlightened mind.

*~ teaching continues in Part 3...*

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