

~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 14

Only Our Negativity Makes Us Vulnerable to Suffering

When we think about beings' sufferings—the sufferings of the hells, the sufferings of each of the six realms, one by one—you can see that suffering has no end. Suffering is infinite in its variety. Whatever can be a problem will be a problem. Whatever can be painful will be painful. That is what suffering is. Suffering can take any form. Suffering is the smartest, the sneakiest, and the most powerful. That can be our experience.

But you can ask, “Where does it come from? Where does this great, sneaky, powerful suffering come from?” It only comes from our own non-virtue, and suffering will only be your experience if you create non-virtue. If you do not create non-virtue, then no matter how powerful or how sneaky suffering is, it cannot hurt you, it cannot get you. So, whether it can get you or not is up to whether you have created non-virtue or not.

We Tibetans, our whole country was destroyed by the Chinese. If we had not had the negative karma that made that experience possible, the Chinese could not have destroyed everything. If we had not created great negativity in the past, we could not have experienced such a great negative result. If we had been virtuous and had strong virtuous karma, the Chinese wouldn't have been able to touch us.

Actually, there are many stories of masters who cannot be attacked by wild animals and cannot have terrible experiences. Animals try to attack them and it doesn't work because that master doesn't have the negative karma that makes them vulnerable to that suffering. Therefore, there is nothing and no one that can create that experience for them. Only they can

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~Translated and edited by Shashi Reitz~*

create their own experience, and they did not create that experience of suffering.

So, you can see that finally we can only blame ourselves. If you create what is pure, you can only have pure experiences. You can even be born in a pure realm, beyond samsara entirely. If you always create impure and negative karma, then your experience will always be impure and negative, and you will never be able to lift yourself out of samsara.

~ teaching continues in Part 15...