

~From the Archives of Teachings by Venerable Gyatrul Rinpoche~

## SEEING OUR OWN SITUATION CLEARLY

*Venerable Gyatrul Rinpoche gave this teaching as his parting advice  
at the end of his visit to Osel Nyingpo dharma center in Ojai, California, January 2010.*

### Part 2

### Covering Our Three Jewel Nature

If you consider yourself a Buddhist, then your teacher is Buddha Shakyamuni. All the qualities of the enlightened body, speech, mind, qualities, and activities of Buddha Shakyamuni himself are embodied by the Three Jewels. Study and learn about those qualities. Regarding one's dharma friends, it doesn't matter if they are male or female, great or low, old or young, rich or poor. All are human and all have this same nature. Whatever dharma tradition they are practicing, if they have taken refuge in the Three Jewels, then they are on the path of Buddhism. If someone has not taken refuge in the Three Jewels, then they are not a Buddhist. It is really very simple. Regarding this Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha that we take as our objects of refuge, these Three Jewels, or literally the 'Three Rare Supreme' in Tibetan—what are they? Why are they 'rare?' They are rare because you can't get them from sticks and stones, from earth or rocks or any material thing. Among what is rare are many different kinds of gemstones, but these Three Jewels are 'supreme,' the best of all. You have them, we have them, all of us sentient beings have them.

However, in our ignorance we have covered over our Three Jewel nature. We have made a big mess called samsara, and we think we don't know how to clean it up. You do know how to clean up your mind, what to abandon and what to pursue. If you conduct yourself as you know is correct and do what is right, naturally you will stop being overwhelmed by your mental afflictions and negative emotions, slowly, slowly. Learn and contemplate what to eliminate and what to embrace, slowly, slowly, and practice doing it slowly, slowly.

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~Translated and edited by Shashi Reitz~*

If you want to do retreat, really that is retreat. That is *shedra* (Buddhist college) and *drubtra* (an institute of practice), too. There is no other fancy path to practice. To understand this path and bring its meaning into your mind, first slowly come to recognize your own suffering.

How? First, see that you are suffering. What is the nature of that suffering? Where does our suffering come from? Actually, we are creating harm and so we suffer. It isn't that our suffering is harming us and we are its victims. We grasp to objects; we hold to fabrications. We hold what is not truly existent to be truly existent. We take what is untrue to be true, what is unreal to be real.

And who creates this world of delusion for us? We create it ourselves. We are tireless slaves to our dualistic confusion—and under its command, we each build our own samsara. We each construct our own bardo.<sup>1</sup> All six realms of existence—the hells, hungry spirit realms, animal realms, and so forth—all are created not by others but by us.

How do we create these realms? We engage our five poisons! We apply our three poisons—attachment, aversion, and ignorance! We wield our grasping to duality! This is how we make our own samsara. You know this, of course. I myself don't know this, but you do. You have so many writings of the great teachers, books in English, Chinese, Tibetan, and other languages. Read them! Check and examine for yourself!

~ *teaching continues in Part 3...*

<sup>1</sup> *Bardo* is a Tibetan word meaning “between,” as Rinpoche himself often defined it. It is translated variously as “intermediate state,” “transitional process,” “interlude,” and other terms. Rinpoche taught frequently that each phase of life, death, and rebirth could be correctly called a bardo—indeed, each instant could be!—but in common, informal usage, it most often refers to the interval between lives, the experiences a being undergoes from their death at the end of one life until their rebirth in the next.