

2014 Vajrakilaya Retreat--Second Teaching

Venerable Gyatrul Rinpoche

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Someone wrote and told me, "I can't come to the Kilaya retreat, but I still want to connect with the practice. How can I do that?"

Recite the mantra! Chant OM BENZAR KILI KILAYA SARWA BIGHNEN BAM HUNG PHET with faith and devotion. Then you are connected. If you come here to do the retreat physically but you have no faith and no trust, then there is no connection, even though you are here! It is through faith, through focus on the deity with trust, that you can connect to the deity and to this practice--or to any practice, actually. Just to come here and hang out doesn't mean much. You can hang out anyplace, and that is not called retreat. That is not called practice.

If you are going to come, to take the time and expense and deal with all the difficulties of coming, then at least don't waste your time and money. Everyone gets so upset when they feel they've wasted their money. At least make your coming to the temple meaningful! Then you don't have to upset yourself over a few pennies.

Anyway, come if you can! And try! I wish everyone would come a little bit. That is how we can stretch our merit and our long life. Do they need long life? Kilaya clears away the obstacles that shorten one's life. Actually, if we keep our samaya purely, then we won't have too many obstacles. Kilaya brings what you need, whatever it might be. If we have created negativity that we need to purify, Kilaya can purify it. But mostly we don't want to benefit ourselves. Although we try not to break samaya, when we do, we don't want to practice to clean it up. We don't want to lose our precious merit, but we don't care about Kilaya.

Kilaya is everything that will protect us and make us successful. Not only us--even the Dalai Lama, his number one is Kilaya, and His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche, and the Karmapa, as well. Therefore, we are practicing Kilaya and Vajrasattva. Everybody thinks, "Money is gonna give us long life!" "Money is gonna give us liberation!" "Money is gonna benefit other sentient beings!" Yes, yes, but not like Kilaya. The most effective is Kilaya--Kilaya and Vajrasattva--bringing benefit for this life, the next life, and for many lives to come. *They* say--the lamas say and the buddhas say. I don't say! I'm not a scholar and I'm not a practitioner, either, to be able to say such things.

My time to be a scholar is past, and I never was one, anyway. But nevertheless, my time of opportunity to study is gone. But yours isn't! You need to study and think about the dharma! That will help your practice. But you don't need to study to become an overinflated "scholar," full of doubt and lazy. You don't need to think that understanding the dharma a little bit means you don't need to practice.

Everyone thinks, "I'm busy! Today I have to be very busy, because tomorrow I'm making a million dollars, and next week I'm going to be dead! You know how it is--that is my schedule! I have a careful plan! Then once I'm dead, next life I'll practice!"

That is the greatest demon, the greatest obstacle, and the greatest obstacle maker. Do you want to know something? There are no demons, obstructors, or evil spirits, except of our own making.

Why have all the lamas, in their wisdom and skillfulness, come and taught the dharma? So that we can learn it. The lamas' kindness manifests as the chance for us to learn the dharma. Their compassionate blessing is present in our lives as our opportunities to connect with the Buddha's teachings. Because of the loving kindness of the Dalai Lama, Dudjom Rinpoche, and other such masters, we have a glimpse. We have teachers. We have teachings. We have the opportunities to train in practice. What do we do with these, which are so precious? We say, "I am busy with this and that, which is SO important!" What is that "important" stuff? It is the same nonsense that we have been engaging with for lifetime after lifetime, and therefore we always wander in the three realms of existence. That is why we experience the countless sufferings of the six classes of beings. It is not just because we killed a person or even an animal. Non-virtue is much more than just the gross acts of killing, stealing, and so on.

It is as if we had something that benefits both ourselves and others, something wholly good, like an apple tree, and we ignore it. We think, "My apple tree will be there forever, and it will always have apples on it." Why? "Because I'm busy. I'll pick them later. They won't fall before I'm done with them." Good luck! Then suddenly you are an old man or an old woman, or you fall sick, and then even your chance at the glimpse offered by the lamas' blessing is gone. But still we think we are smart and we are the best, and we don't need to listen to anyone. In one way we ARE the best, it's true. We have a precious human rebirth, and it is the best in all samsara, there is nothing beyond that. If we seize our chance, we can even practice the path of dzogchen and attain buddhahood in one life and one body. But we ignore that too. There must be something better, right? That is how dumb, or crazy, or immature, or SOMETHING stupid we are. As for myself, I am happy to spend all day lying around, wasting my time. Oh, no, actually I didn't mean that. I am watching VERY important TV! Don't think I am just wasting my time--I am VERY busy, because I am such an important guy. Like you! Important guys like us, and Odzer the cat, we don't need to practice, right?

Tashi Delek!

-Gyatral