

# **The Lama of *Many* Lifetimes**

## ***Touching the Living Heart of Garchen Rinpoche***

**February 5, 2003 Morning Session**

**Album 2 Track 6 (A2 T6)**

**Memory of Nangchen King**

0:09 [K.Tamphel]

So Rinpoche did not have a chance to see the king of Nangchen until Rinpoche grew up. When Rinpoche was quite big, he was invited to Nangchen to give some teachings and perform some religious ceremonies. And also at that time, the king of Nangchen for the first time received the empowerment from Rinpoche. It was actually traditional for the king to receive the empowerment from his previous gurus. When Rinpoche was about 7 years old, the king of Nangchen had prepared some silk dresses for Rinpoche and he had not seen Rinpoche's size, so the clothing was too small for Rinpoche and the sleeves were not long enough to cover Rinpoche's hands, and the lower part of garment was too short. So that was what Rinpoche remembered clearly. The king made this clothing and sent to Rinpoche.

**Rinpoche's Mother**

1:37 [SueSue]

*Can we go back and talk a little bit about his mother? What kind of a person was she? And what kind of memories he has of her?*

2:08 [Rinpoche]

2: 25 [K.Tamphel]

Rinpoche's mother was an extraordinary lady. She was full of love and compassion. She had almost no anger, no hatred at all and she was very well known in the whole area as a very compassionate lady.

2:45 [Rinpoche]

2:51 [K.Tamphel]

Until Rinpoche left his home for the monastery, Rinpoche's mother had never hit him at all even ....[???] Even a little but Rinpoche was very aggressive toward her. Several times, Rinpoche pulled her hair, and pushed her.

### **Rinpoche's Father**

3:23 [Rinpoche]

3:32 [K.Tamphel]

Rinpoche's father was aggressive, very ferocious but he was also a very well-learned person., well-educated person. And Rinpoche's father spanked Rinpoche as well as Rinpoche's mother sometimes.

### **Rinpoche's Aggressiveness as Child**

4:04 [SueSue]

*So Rinpoche, when you were young, you told me once that he liked to pick fight with the other children. And with your brothers also. Do you remember that?*

4:32 [Rinpoche]

4:46 [K.Tamphel]

Rinpoche used to beat up all the children in the village. And Rinpoche's father used to tell him that "You are recognized as a Rinpoche, a reincarnation but you look like a demon."

5:05 [Rinpoche]

5:48 [K.Tamphel]

And so when his father told him that "You are supposed to be a reincarnation but you look like a demon", at that time, it made Rinoche question, in his mind, "How did they name me as a Rinpoche?" What was the reason? On what bases? And Rinpoche asked his father. And Rinpoche's father told him that "Your recognition was requested by the king of Nangchen. And your are recognized by [the former] His Holiness in Drikung. They did not have any idea about where you are, what the name of your father was, what the name of your mother was but they could somehow tell everything clearly and that was definitely a kind of prophecy received from divine sources." So Rinpoche's father told Rinpoche that "You shouldn't have doubt about that. What you need right now is to develop yourself into that great being".

## **Special Signs for Recognition and Letter?**

7:12 [SueSue]

*In regards to the recognition process, like with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, his Regent had dreams [...]. In Garchen Rinpoche's case, what kind of process did the previous Holiness Chetsang Rinpoche had to go through in order to find out about him?*

8:07 [Rinpoche]

8:27 [K.Tamphel]

So Rinpoche actually has not so much information about the dreams or signs that the former Kyabgon Chetsang had. Actually in Tibet, it was not very easy to have an audience with the Drikung Kyabgon. People had to wait for months outside the monastery to have a chance to be with His Holiness. It was not like now when we can be with His Holiness all the time. So the letter came directly from His Holiness that revealed everything but it was very difficult to meet the Kyabgon himself to ask questions.

## **Gar Rinpoche's Other Incarnations at Gar**

9:13 [SueSue]

*Rinpoche also told me the story of his believing of having two other incarnations who are also staying at the Gar monastery. Could you please ask him to tell us a little bit about the other two incarnations?*

9:30 [K.Tamphel/Rinpoche]

No, not two. There are actually five of them! Including Rinpoche, there are five of them.

10:08 [Rinpoche]

11:33 [Rinpoche]

So all five of them are of the same age. And the other Garchen incarnations, their parents had extraordinary dreams about them before they were born. And also many people in the village had unusual dreams regarding these incarnations. So there are all kinds of [consider??? 12:03]as incarnations of the previous Garchen Rinpoche doing different activities.

## **Cookoo Bird**

12:13 [SueSue]

*My question is, if the other four did not get recognized, then how did we come to know that they are also incarnations of the previous Garchen Rinpoche ? It has been recognized among the senior monks at the Gar monastery?*

12:41 [Rinpoche/Gabe]

13:34 [K.Tamphel]

The other four emanations were not formally recognized but Rinpoche personally thinks that they are kind of emanations of the former Garchen Rinpoche because of their great activities. And also because of the extraordinary dreams, and other signs that happened when they were conceived and when they were born. For example, one of them [*\*\*which one?*], when his mother was carrying him in the womb, a cookoo bird landed on her shoulder and said cookoo, cookoo, and that was unusual, very unusual for this bird to land on a human shoulder and said that. And this baby when he was born, he became a monk and he is very strongly devoted to Achi Chokyi Dolma. Right now, he is in Tibet doing practice mainly based on Achi Chokyi Dolma. And also among these five emanations, one of them is very very helpful to the Garchen monasatery. Rinpoche takes care of the external affairs of the Gar monastery, but the internal affairs all taken care by one of these emanations. For instance, during the Cultural Revolution, this emanation took care of all the statues, of all the precious objects that belonged to the monastery and made sure that they preserved and they are safe. So, some of them take care of the upper monastery in Gar and some of them take care of the lower monastery in Tibet. So it is probably Rinpoche's own pure conception. He thinks that they are emanations of the former Garchen Rinpoche. But they are not recognized, they are not known as Garchen Rinpoche. That's what Gabe Lama said.

15:10 [SueSue]

*And the senior monks never mentioned about that either... Nobody ever mentioned about that?*

15:31 [K.Tamphel]

It is not publicly known that they are [multiple] Garchen Rinpoches but some of the senior monks just have this feeling that they must be Garchen Rinpoches

considering the extraordinary things that happened, the dreams, and the way they are taking care of the teachings and the monastery.

### **Ngudrup Gyamtso's Father's Auspicious Dream of Crystal in Heart**

16:55 [Rinpoche]

17:40 [K.Tamphel]

So for instance, one of the five emanations is kind of manager of Gar monastery [Ngudrup Gyamtso]. When he was still in the womb, his father had a dream. In the dream, his father saw that the previous Garchen Rinpoche came to his house and pulled his wife, cut open the stomach and took out the baby, cut open the stomach of the baby and then cut open the heart of the baby and insert a small piece of crystal in the heart and then closed the whole thing and put it back into the mother's womb. So that was the dream before this person who is now acting as the manager was born when he was still in the womb.

### **Other Gar Incarnations' Dharma Activities and Karma**

18:59 [SueSue]

*Since there are five incarnations of one previous Garchen Rinpoche, each of the five incarnations are doing different activities and could be accumulated different karma or merits, so does that mean that the five incarnations are now five different beings with five individual [...] presents and futures?*

19:59 [Rinpoche/K.Tamphel]

Each individual is going to face the consequences of their [his] individual karma.

20:09 [SueSue]

*And then, from each of the five incarnations, if they multiply by five then there are going to be 25 Garchen Rinpoches in the future, and then multiply, and multiply and multiply?*

20:29 [Rinpoche/K.Tamphel]

There can be countless emanations of great masters, not just five. So it is possible for one great master to manifest into countless beings.

20:58 [SueSue]

*If that is the case then... why is there a need for just one person to be recognized? Why can't it be that everybody just kind of do their own job as they come back to life and try to guide all beings? It seems like in the Tibetan traditions, there are always somebody to be recognized?*

22:18 [Rinpoche/K.Tamphel] Just to make sure that the monastery and the monks and the teachings are unified and taken care of. So therefore they need one to take the seat of the former great master. And therefore, they just recognize one. For example, if you have two children, you want to keep one at home. But all the children are yours, you just keep one at home. Something like that.

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*Translated from Tibetan into English by Khenpo Tamphel at the Southwest Buddhafield, Garchen Buddhist Institute, Arizona, USA in 2003.*

*Transcribed by Sue-Sue at Drikung Mahayana Center in Maryland, USA in 2003 for Garchen Rinpoche's Biography Project.*

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