

# *The Turkeys*

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*Recently, several wild turkeys have been spending a lot of time nearby. Rinpoche has been watching them preening and chasing each other, and says mantras to them when they brazenly come up to the windows.*

Look at these turkeys. Poor sentient beings. Running here and there, always killing the bugs, their habit. These birds, one way they are lucky because they are in this place where there is dharma, and not only dharma but Vajrayana, so in that way they have some little connection. It looks like they are beings who have some kind of dharma connection from past lives, that's why they got here; but, of course, we don't know. And then when they die, we don't know where they go.

But we do know if we ignore our samaya and our practice, and are just wishy-washy and artificial, then absolutely we can end up just like that. Can be! Scary! If we don't pay attention to keeping our samaya and practicing, then we can have this kind of negative rebirth, too. We have received so many empowerments and teachings, all the highest Vajrayana things. Our lamas have been real, amazing ones, not shallow bozos. At least we connected to that amazing good fortune! Everybody tried as much as they could; but also I don't think anyone has perfectly pure faith, trust, and samaya, either. Therefore, we need to purify and practice and learn continuously as much as we can.

Everybody pray for these turkeys, please. Really, any birds or animals or even bugs, whatever you see, say mantra for them. If you give them food or water, say mantra into it first. These big birds, we don't know if we have karma with them or not, but they came here, and they are staying around our place, so it looks like there's something. Therefore, we need to pray. Not just ignore. If you can take pictures of them and show them to lamas like the Dalai Lama and ask them to pray, I think some lamas do have the blessing to liberate beings simply by seeing them. But in general, we say mantra and pray for them, and that's all we can do. That's all we can do for ourselves, the same way—for our own merit and purification and to keep our samaya.

Next life, we don't know! Therefore, we need to practice sincerely now, this second. If you practice nicely and don't break your samaya, then you won't become an animal or have this kind of negative circumstance with heavy obstacles. Don't go-go practice. Don't ego practice. Just simple and sincerely. These giant birds, poor animals, they have no chance. You don't need to become that.

*-Gyatrul*

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