



CREATING SPACES
TO SHARE OUR STORIES
AND BUILD FRIENDSHIPS ACROSS DIVIDES

How can we care for our planet? – SIKHI

Background:

The Sikh holy scripture - the Guru Granth Sahib, asks us to see and serve the environment (the air, earth, and water) as we would treat our family. The first Guru wrote “Air is the Guru, Water is the Father, and Earth is the Great Mother of all.”

When our actions are driven by greed and not compassion, we do not care for the environment. We ignore the effects our actions have on the wildlife and plants.

This is the story of the seventh Guru, Guru Har Rai Ji and tells us how he learned to take responsibility for his actions and care for the environment from an incredibly young age.



The story of Guru Har Rai Ji- (Story can be found on back)

Follow up questions:

1. What do you think it means to care for the environment like we care for our families?
2. Guru Har Rai Ji thought about how his actions affected the environment. How can we be more aware of the damaging effect our actions can have on the environment?
3. What changes can we make to improve the way our actions impact the environment?
Can you think of any examples?
4. How can we work together to take better care of our school environment?

The story of Guru Har Rai Ji

The seventh Guru, Har Rai, cared for the environment from a young age. When he was six years old he was out riding his horse and saw his grandfather, Guru Hargobind. Har Rai was excited, leapt off his horse and ran to greet him. Har Rai was wearing a long robe. As he ran past a rose bush, his robe became caught on a thorn. The cloth pulled on the bush and the roses became disturbed. Their petals broke and fell to the ground. Har Rai stopped running and began to cry “Oh no! I have hurt the poor flowers!” The flowers were as dear to him as his family and friends.

His grandfather, Guru Hargobind came to him. “Do not cry. This is a lesson. The Creator has made this whole creation. To serve God we should take care of the creation.”

“How can I do this grandfather?”

“You must master yourself first. As you walk your path through the world, you must be aware of the consequences of your actions and how they will affect others.”

The Guru’s words brought clarity to his mind. “Next time I run in the garden I will hold onto my robes. I will serve nature as it deserves. I will not pick any flowers either. I will put nature’s needs before my own.”

Throughout his life, Har Rai respected all living things and all forms of life were sacred to him. He grew many gardens, with many varieties of flowers, fruit trees, birds and animals. When animals were sick, he would capture them, heal them then release them into the wild. He taught us how to benefit from nature’s wisdom, and to care for nature. With love, compassion and awareness we can make earth a paradise for all living things.