

## 2.3 The Environment. Why should we care for planet Earth

### The Sikh window

One day Guru Gobind Singh was walking through the market in Anandpur when he heard the long braying of a donkey. The donkey belonged to the vegetable stall-holder. It was weighed down by its heavy load, exhausted and thirsty in the mid-day heat. The local people only laughed at it and mocked the donkey; they were used to it.

But the Guru felt sorry for the donkey. He knew that if it was a tiger they would be treating it very differently. He had an idea. He led the animal home, gave it food and water and then gently laid a tiger's skin which he had been given some time ago, on its back. He led the donkey back to the market and let it roam free.

Now when anyone saw him, they ran away from him. Soon he was left alone in the market and he had the feast of his life on all the fruit and vegetables left behind.

The villagers called a meeting to decide how to get rid of the tiger. The Guru offered to make a lot of loud noise and drive it back to the forest. When the donkey heard the drum beats echoing round the market he was terrified and turned to escape to the forest. He let out a loud braying noise. The villagers couldn't believe it. "That is not a tiger" they said, "That is the vegetable stall-holder's donkey!" His skin had got caught on a branch and they saw that they were right.

The Guru calmed the terrified animal and warned the villagers to treat all animals with respect, whatever their outward appearance.

### The Christian window

So God created human beings, making them to be like himself. He created them male and female, blessed them, and said, "Have many children, so that your descendants will live all over the earth and bring it under their control. I am putting you in charge of the fish, the birds, and all the wild animals. I have provided all kinds of grain and all kinds of fruit for you to eat; but for all the wild animals and for all the birds I have provided grass and leafy plants for food" – and it was done. God saw all that he had made and it was very good ... The Lord God placed the man in the garden to cultivate it and guard it.

*Genesis 1:27-31, 2:15*

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### The Humanist window

#### Birds of passage, insects and people

