

# Path to Siva

A Catechism for Youth

Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami

Lesson 50



**How Do We Treat the Environment?**

# Man is not separate from Nature



**The Hindu tradition understands that man is not separate from nature, that we are linked by spiritual, psychological and physical bonds with the elements around us.**

# The Divine present in all things

Knowing that the Divine is present everywhere and in all things, Hindus hold a deep reverence for life.

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# Life cosmic web

We hold an awareness that the great forces of nature—the earth, the water, the fire, the air and space—as well as all the various orders of life, including plants and trees, forests and animals, are bound to each other within life's cosmic web.

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# Earth has nurtured mankind

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Our beloved Earth, so touchingly looked upon in our scriptures as Bhumi Devi, the Earth Goddess, has nurtured mankind through millions of years of growth and evolution.

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# Damage to the environment

However, the Earth's large population, its industries, automobiles and life-style are causing significant damage to the environment.

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# Impact of Hindu life style

As one sixth of the human family,  
Hindus can have a tremendous impact.

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We should take the lead in Earth-  
friendly living, personal frugality, lower  
power consumption, alternative energy,  
sustainable food production and  
vegetarianism.



# Caring for Earth's diversity

All of Earth's diversity is to be cared for,  
from the soil, water and air to the plants  
and animals of every shape and kind.





# We practice restraint...

To achieve this, we practice restraint in the use of Earth's resources.

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We do not exploit its minerals, water, fuels or soil.

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We avoid polluting our blue planet.

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We work to protect the many endangered plants and animals.

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We do not buy or use products from exploited species, such as furs, ivory or reptile skin.



# How do we express our reverence?

We recycle paper, glass, metal and plastic and use efficient means of transportation that save on energy.

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We plant trees and do not waste food.

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In these ways we express the fundamental Hindu reverence for the Earth and all life upon it.



# Gurudeva says...

Hinduism offers a unified vision of man and nature in which there is reverence, not dominion or carelessness.

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Mother Earth, sustainer of life, is a key Vedic idea. ...All Hindus feel they are guests on the planet with responsibilities to nature, which when fulfilled balance its responsibilities to them.

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The physical body was gathered from nature and returns to it.



# QUESTIONS for Lesson 50



**50.1** Hindus treat the Earth and all life upon it with  
(Check the correct answer)

- A. Deep reverence
- B. No thought as to how their actions are damaging it
- C. Appreciation for how it is all bound together within life's cosmic web

**50.2** As one sixth of the human family, Hindus can have little impact on protecting the environment.

- True
- False

**50.3** We should take the lead in Earth-friendly living, personal frugality, lower power consumption, alternative energy, sustainable food production and a non-vegetarian diet.

- True
- False

**50.4** Enter the letter from below of A - C for the phrase that correctly completes the idea.

- \_\_\_ We do not exploit
- \_\_\_ We do not buy or use products from exploited species such as
- \_\_\_ We recycle

(A ) Paper, glass, metal and plastic (B ) Minerals, water, fuels or soil (C ) Furs, ivory or reptile skin

**50.5** We  
(Check the incorrect answer)

- A. Aren't concerned about wasting food
- B. Do not waste food