



Today is a day to celebrate and appreciate Trees – their beauty, all the wonderful ways in which they contribute to the planet and appreciate their significance to our well-being as well recognise our responsibility to care for and protect trees.

Jainism is fundamentally a faith of ecology and Jains have a deep reverence for nature and the environment. Jain philosophy view trees as representing the inherent interconnectedness of all living beings that are essential to the ecological balance of the planet.

Mahavir, along with our other Tirthankaras emphasised ahimsa – non-violence towards all living beings including animals and plants. Mahavir considered reverence for nature as the highest virtue and destruction of environment as cruelty to nature.

It is interesting to note, following taking Diksha, our Tirthankaras spent considerable time in forests and attained enlightenment - Kevaljnana, whilst meditating under various trees of medicinal value.

Today, reflect on the eternal message of our Tirthankaras on trees and environment. Take a walk in the park, show your love for trees. Children, draw the most beautiful tree that you can imagine . . .



**LOVE A** 16th  
**TREE DAY** May





**LOVE A  
TREE DAY**

**16th  
May**



One tree less means that much soil eroded.

One tree less means that much less oxygen.

One tree less means that much pollution.

One tree less means that many birds without nests.

One tree less means that many animals without shelter.

One tree less means that that much less water, less food.

One tree less means that much heat, more colder.

One tree less, another tree less

And another tree less means nothing in the end.

**NOTHING!**



A monk or nun, seeing big trees in parks, on hills, or in woods, should not speak about them in this way: "These trees are fit for palaces, gates, houses, beeches, bolts, buckets, stools, trays, ploughs, machines, poles, the nave of a wheel, seat, beds, cars, sheds..."

A monk or nun, seeing big trees in parks, on hills, or in woods, should speak about them in this way: These trees are noble, high and round, big, they have many branches, they are very magnificent, very beautiful, very fine, very handsome

*Acaranga Sutra 11.4.2*

*Selfless and a shelter to many, the tree represents life and growth. No matter how hard the circumstances are, a will to live life can make you grow even in the darkest times. Philosophers regard trees as observers witnessing the evolution of humans and the planet around them. They are breath taking sources of life, food and shelter*

Listen to the trees as they sway in the wind. Their leaves are telling secrets. Their barks sing songs of olden days as it grows around the trunks. And their roots give names to all things. Their language has been lost. But not the gestures"

*Source: Vera Nazarian – Perpetual Calendar of Inspiration*







## Did You Know

- Trees are some of the oldest living organisms on earth. Some trees, like the bristlecone pine, can live for over 5,000 years.
- Trees absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, which helps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and combat climate change.
- A single tree produces about 260 pounds of oxygen each year. Two fully mature trees can provide enough oxygen each year to support a family of 4!
- Trees provide habitat for wildlife, supporting biodiversity and promoting healthy ecosystems.
- Trees improve air quality by removing pollutants such as nitrogen oxides and ozone from the air.
- Trees help to conserve water by reducing the amount of stormwater runoff and erosion.
- Trees provide shade and shelter, making outdoor spaces more comfortable and enjoyable.
- Trees have been shown to have a positive impact on mental health and well-being, reducing stress and promoting relaxation.
- The "wood wide web" is a term used to describe the underground network of fungi that connects trees and helps them communicate and share resources.
- The baobab tree, native to Africa, is known for its massive trunk and can hold up to 120,000 litres of water.
- The "Tree of Life" is a common motif in mythology, folklore, and art, representing the interconnectedness of all living things on earth.

*(Compiled from various sources)*



LOVE A 16th May TREE DAY



## Adipurana States

“Forests are like saints and trees should be planted for positive karma.”

The true meaning of life is to plant trees,  
under whose shade you do not expect to sit

The best time to plant a tree is twenty years ago.  
The second best time is now. - Chinese Proverb  
He who plants a tree, plants a hope - Lucy Larcom

Acharya Shri Chandnaji (Tai Maa) has said  
'one should plant at least 10 trees in one's lifetime.'

As a major Jain organisation in UK, we should be at the forefront of tree planting and other environment initiatives, as these are practical demonstration and commitment to the Jain belief of Ahimsa and compassion towards all living beings. Tree planting is a way to engage our youth as well as a way to promote more sustainable way of life.

Tree planting as part of Gujarati School and Youth Club activity. Encourage our youths to be Jain Ecology Scouts undertaking environmental activities like tree planting, nature trails etc.

At community and religious events, encourage people to pledge either monies to achieve a community target to plant x no of trees in a year or a commitment to tree planting on special occasions – birthdays, anniversary etc.

The main tenets of Jainism of Ahimsa, Asteya, Aparigraha reflect Jainism dedication to the environment. Individual and collective environmental actions, including tree planting is really an integral part of the Jain Way of Life. Incorporating these into actions will encourage youth Jain activity as well create a better future for all.

