

The Story of Bhai Kanhaiya ji

One day in a village in the Punjab a boy named Kanhaiya was born to a wealthy family. As he grew up, Kanhaiya was always searching and learning about new things. He learnt about life and God from many different holy men. He loved the spiritual path, and so in his life he chose a different path from the wealth of his family. He became a deeply spiritual young man who loved listening to divine poetry. He grew up to be known as Bhai Ghaneya.

Bhai Kanhaiya stayed on his spiritual journey until he met Guru Teg Bahadur Ji and reached his highest point. All his searching had added up to this. Bhai Kanhaiya was so inspired by the Guru that he began to serve him and became a very devoted Sikh. Being around the Guru and learning from him gave Bhai Kanhaiya such a beautiful complete experience that he did not need anything else.

Meeting the Guru is like finally seeing your best friend after the long school week. For Bhai Ganeya, the Guru's presence was so soothing to his mind it brought great joy deep down in his soul. It strengthened his heart so much that it became big and beautiful all the time. Bhai Kanhaiya decided to become a Sikh and embraced the mission of the Guru. The student and the master became the same, and together increased God's presence on earth.

With his open heart and love for all, Bhai Kanhaiya Ji began devoting all his life and time to serving langar. He served any one and every one.

His life began merging with God and Guru more and more as his work brought heaven to the earth. Bhai Kanhaiya even opened a spiritual center so he could keep serving all people. He believed that God is in every single person, so he served that One God in all, Ik Ongkar.

Bhai Kanhaiya Ji worked hard for many years of his life just serving, even until Guru Gobind Singh Ji was Guru. At that time the land of Punjab was under attack and Guru Gobind Singh Ji had to protect Anandpur Sahib in a big battle. The enemies attacked Anandpur Sahib and cut off the city supplies. Soon it became very difficult to find water and food, and many men in battle were weakened and

wounded. Bhai Kanhaiya saw all the wounded men on the battlefield and with his love he went straight into the battlefield and began giving water to everyone. Serving their parched throats from a leather water container he gave water equally to the wounded men from both armies, even the enemy!

Now even though this wasn't normal, most of the Guru's Khalsa understood why Bhai Kanhaiya served even the enemy soldiers. They thought, "The Guru is pure Love and we are all part of the Guru. We feel so proud of our brother Kanhaiya for how he is acting. It is all God's play. With the Guru's blessing, in our own way, we too shall act with this kind of mastery."

But a few men didn't understand it. They complained, saying "I'm sure it's great that he serves people but we don't have enough water for ourselves! It doesn't make any sense that he is giving our water to the enemy. Plus, he's healing some of them, so what happens when the enemy recover and even come back to fight us! We must tell the Guru about this!"

So they went to Guru Gobind Singh to do something about it. When they told the Guru he simply said, "Bring Kanhaiya to my presence." So Bhai Kanhaiya was brought to him right away. When Guru Ji saw the purity and devotion of his beloved Sikh who had served him and his father so lovingly, he asked, "Is it true what I have heard? Are you giving water to the enemy?" Bhai Kanhaiya Ji replied, "O My Beloved Guru Ji, yes it is true. When I look into the faces of all these wounded men, all I see is you. I have to serve them because all I see is you and God in them."

Guru Gobind Singh was very happy hearing him and smiled as he said, "You are right and you have shown me today that you really understand the Guru's words and live them." Guru Ji then announced to all his Khalsa: "Bhai Kanhaiya has understood the teachings correctly. My Beloved Sikhs, try all you can to learn like this. The lessons that Gurbani teaches are priceless."

Guru Ji then gave some herbal medicine to Bhai Kanhaiya and told him, "From now on, put this on the wounds of all those who need it." And Bhai Kanhaiya began using this salve to serve all the wounded on the battlefield with love.

Guru Gobind Singh Ji spoke again to the whole community, telling them, "Sadh Sangat Ji, Bhai Kanhaiya is a saintly soul, beloved by God. He has served all without caring about who they are or where they come from. He has attained an exhalted spiritual state of Ease and Divine Grace. He shall carry on with his mission of service. Many more will follow his example in the years to come and keep the tradition of service to humanity alive."

Different people had different understandings of the teachings of the Gurus. And so when Guru Ji said this the Sangat started to understand that Bhai Kanhaiya had acted and lived the truth that many of them had only learnt in words and meditation. He saw the Divinity in others at the most challenging time and during such a terrible battle. And they realized he was blessed.

May we all attain a state of seeing God in others. May we all live this truth and practice it in our actions wherever we go and whatever we do, just like Bhai Kanhaiya Ji.

