

Gurbani as a Catalyst for Sikh Women's Identity Formation

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INTRODUCTION

At present time, material and intellectual changes have given birth to unique concepts and principles in human life. Among them, modernity has greatly affected human life. The role of modernity comes out in opposition to traditional values or religion, and science, logic, machines have replaced the traditional concepts. This has also brought forth a unique question of self-identity, which has helped man to become self-conscious, but man's confusion has also increased. In the new era of such questions, women have also become aware of their rights and a new consciousness has emerged regarding self-identity. In this research paper, an attempt has been made to present the ideas of the feminist movement and thinkers, as well as to mention the symbolic ideas of women in the writings (*Gurbani*) of the Sikh Gurus.

Philosophical perspective of feminism

Before the word 'feminism' was coined, its basis was ready. That is why words like 'women's rights', 'women's freedom', and 'women's movement' were prevalent at that time. The main purpose of these movements was to uphold the existence of women and to demand equal rights for women as men because women could not gain acceptance of their individual selves without a relationship with men. The real meaning of 'feminism' is the qualities of a woman. In general terms, 'feminism' refers to the equality of men and women in society. It is a movement or doctrine that supports women's rights and opinions. "Women's liberation movement, also called feminist movement, a social movement that seeks equal rights for women, giving them equal status with men and freedom to decide their own carers and life partners." (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica: 1974; 735)

Feminism is a movement for women's rights against social institutions and ideas that have made women helpless and weak for centuries. In this sense, feminism is a multi-layered set of ideas rather than a single concept. "...this is not one unitary concept, but instead a diverse and multifaceted grouping of ideas, and indeed actions. And although many attempts have been made to answer the question 'What is Feminism?'" (Jane Freedman: 2002;1) In general terms 'feminism' makes a woman try to know her self-identity. It is a treasure trove of ideas, and upon opening it the woman is anxious to find herself. Western thinkers have made special efforts to give equal status to women and change social thinking through 'feminism'. "All histories of feminism properly begin with the appearance of Mary Wollstonecraft's A Vindication of the Rights of women in 1792." (William L. O'Neill:1969; 15)

Mary Wollstonecraft's struggle was not only for women's rights but for the idealisation of human life. Through her writings, she brought forward the points of women's education, proper services, and equality in the relationship between husband and wife. Joan Stuart Mill was a male feminist thinker in the West who spoke of women's rights through his writing 'The

Subjection of Women' in 1869. This text is also called 'Women's Bible'. Joan Stuart called for the freedom of women to express their will in her works. He blames marriage as well as law, property ownership, and tradition for the enslavement of women. Women are usually forced to work against their will. Women need such freedom that they can realize the desires of their hearts. Based on these ideas, many other organizations were formed for women's right to vote, as more voices were raised against the oppression of women. Frederick Engels, through her book 'Origin of Family, Private Property and State', (1884) explained patriarchy and capitalism as the basic reasons for the exploitation of women in the family. Virginia Woolf (Virginia Woolf) 'A Room of One's Own' (1929), reflecting male-dominant thinking through this writing, says that a woman has to violate the orders of a male-dominated society to maintain her existence. A woman needs freedom like her brothers.

A new era in feminist thought began with the writing of 'Simone de Beauvoir'. Through her book 'The Second Sex', for the first time, an attempt has been made to understand women from a culturally connected perspective. She said that "her body is not enough to define her; it has a lived reality only as taken on by consciousness through actions and within a society; biology alone cannot provide an answer to the questions that concern us; why is woman the other?" (Simone de Beauvoir: 2011; 48)

Beauvoir spoke of female self-identity not only in her writings but also through her work in the feminist movement. Betty Friedan is a great feminist thinker, who created a platform for women to present their demands and issues. The foundation of the 'National Organization of Women' was laid in 1966 in America. In her writing 'The Feminine Mystique', Betty Friedan opposed the ideology of considering women's lives slavery to housekeeping and childbearing. Friedan says that male dominance has made women's lives meaningless. Male supremacy assigns a woman's greatest task to perfect her femininity, but femininity that is mysterious or sublime was entangled in a pro-slavery tradition. In 1982, Betty Friedan through her book 'The Second Stage', mentioned modern feminism and accepted the shortcomings of feminist ideology. She began to demand other ways of female freedom because this way was only promoting the mutual differences between men and women. Despite these twenty years of struggle, Friedan could not be clear about feminism. Feminine ideas have always been expressed in alternate forms.

A Post-modern view of feminism

Feminist thought strongly advocated redefining human freedom, self-identity and dignity. Before this, the discussion also started that women should have their language or that the language should not be dominated by men. The main thing that came out in this discussion is that there should be such a language, which can be called a feminine language free from male dominance because only a free language can take the form of beautiful writing. Women's writing should not come out in the shadow of patriarchy but it should be free writing. This ideology has flourished more in postmodernism. Postmodernist feminist thinkers Luce Irigaray, Hélène Cixous, and Julia Kristeva have conceptualized feminism or feminine ideology by combining it with philosophy, linguistics, and other new psychosocial studies. These thinkers have created new ideas about the female body. Where they have told the limits of the male body, they have raised a new aspect in feminism thinking by telling the greatness of the female body and its vastness. On the one hand, these feminist thinkers oppose male-dominated thinking and at the same time want to change the civilization and mental thinking of the people for the freedom of women.

Feminist thinker Julia Kristeva redefines the female body by erasing the marginalization of the female body. She describes the idea of the female body as a way of limiting/delineating women to certain boundaries. Rather, the female body is versatile. It is wrong to delineate or marginalize it. Luce Irigaray rejects the male dominant or masculine

thinking of Freud, Locke and Levinas by understanding the greatness and vastness of the female body. She tried to accept the extraordinary existence of women by describing the inner beauty of women. Irigaray's main aim was to establish the true identity of women. Hélène Cixous, like other post-structuralist/French feminist thinkers, tried to conceptualize feminist thinking from a social perspective. She replaces womanhood pettiness with multi-meaning and richness. She holds the feminine qualities of love and creation in high esteem.

In feminist thought, Judith Butler presents a different view than the stereotypes about sex and gender. With which the feminist principles were greatly affected. "And anyway, she asks, why would feminists wish to continue working with the same epistemological and ontological premises that have so successfully established the subordination of women?" (Judith Butler: 2006; 197) These ideas were written in 1990 through 'Gender Trouble: Feminism and The Subversion of Identity'. Through this, Judith Butler raises questions for psychoanalytic studies as well as feminist thinkers. He, like Beauvoir, holds the view that gender is not natural but constructed. Other gender-based concepts began to evolve, including gayism and lesbianism. Homosexuality is defined by many thinkers as a third gender and many consider it a mental illness. Many thinkers consider homosexuality neither a disease nor a gender, but a product of purely human thinking. It's just that sex, gender, and lust are all central incongruities, as opposed to natural action. Thus, many thinkers through their writings and other collaborations took many steps toward female identity.

Religion and Feminine Identity

If we talk about feminism or human equality from the perspective of religion, then it will have a different form, in which there will be no feeling of anger or opposition towards each other. Because every religion makes man aware of his existence and the supreme purpose of his life. Women have to fight for self-identity, but their efforts have taken other forms that are also beyond the understanding of Western feminist thinkers. Somewhere, feminism seems to have joined the demand for a woman-only world while putting women's sides forward. In this sense, it is becoming unnatural. Somewhere, feminist thinkers also later criticized feminism and said that to establish the identity of a woman, instead of fighting for rights, it seems necessary to pay attention to understanding the characteristics of her body and qualities.

Gurbani and Feminine Identity

If we try to know the ideas about women in Sikhism from a feminist perspective, then today's struggling women can be aware of the concept of self-identity. By keeping the mystical feminine freedom on the one hand and exploring the freedom gained through feminist thought/movement on the other, we can move to the next stage to understand it wisely.

Feminism is "not purely Western. The reason for this is that there is a great awareness about this in the Sikh movement." (Gurbhagat Singh: undated; 21) Every religion mentions not only pro-feminist ideas but also the real purpose of life, considering humanity as an equal. Feminism appears to be primarily a theory born out of a revolt against patriarchal thinking, as feminist thinkers have never attempted to understand the true suffering of human beings without the suffering of patriarchy and sexism. Sikhism has given unique principles to the ideas related to female identity by introducing deeper thinking beyond the layers of feminism.

Guru Nanak Sahib, the founder of Sikhism, has taken the first step to bring change in the mentality of the people. According to Him, all people are equal; There is no discrimination of creed, colour, form or gender, only through such thinking. Feminist thinking begins with understanding human beings in two forms: one is male and the other is female. The root of feminism seems to represent differentiation, but Guru Nanak *Bani* considered all human beings to be made of the same five elements (earth, water, fire, air, and sky *From the union of the five elements, this body was made.* (Sri Guru Granth Sahib: 1039) The body of the combination of

five elements has the light of wisdom consciousness, but only with the grace of the supreme truth. In light of this, no discrimination has been done with humans whether it is male or female. God has placed a light within everyone, which everyone deserves *Amongst all is the Light, You are that Light. By this illumination, that Light is radiant within all.* (Sri Guru Granth Sahib: 13) In Sri Guru Granth Sahib, there is no difference between male and female, good and bad, everything is the creation of that Supreme Truth. *First, Allah created the Light then by His creative Power, He made all mortal beings. From the One Light, the entire Universe welled up. So who is good, and who is bad.* (Sri Guru Granth Sahib: 1349) There is no difference between male and female, but all these differences are the product of human's selfish thinking. Such a thought has been described by Simon du Beauvoir in his writing. "One is not born, but rather becomes, woman. No biological, psychic, or economic destiny defines the figure that the human female takes on in society, it is civilization as a whole that elaborates this intermediary product between the male and the eunuch that is called feminine." (Simone de Beauvoir: 2011; 283)

Her main assumption is that male dominance plays a central role in feminizing a woman. Even men limit women to sexual objects. There is a physical difference between males and females, but the physical difference does not establish the superiority of one or the inferiority of the other. Beauvoir also mentions the girl's jealousy of the male sex, but all because boys are always given more importance than girls. The girl attributes this importance to the male gender. For him, the symbol of success remains the male gender. This tendency is so prevalent that the child is forced to realize its separate existence just after birth. "The child is persuaded that more is demanded of boys because of their superiority; the pride of his virility is breathed into him to encourage him in this difficult path; this abstract notion takes on a concrete form for him: it is embodied in the penis; he does not experience pride spontaneously in his little indolent sex organ; but he feels it through the attitude of those around him." (Ibid; 286)

Guru Nanak Sahib did not make any difference or distinction between men and women but described them as being made up of the same five elements and illuminated by the same flame. Guru Nanak Sahib has given the message of the good of all through *Bani*. In which the trick of living by raising life from ordinary actions has been explained. Guru Nanak Sahib has addressed God as male and human beings as females. According to that humanity is a female being and all have taken human birth for the sake of meeting that male/masculine God: *There is one Husband Lord, and all are His brides* (Sri Guru Granth Sahib: 933)

The ideal man in Sikhism is '*Gurmukh*'. Because he is devoted to God by placing the name of God in his heart. That is why he is sweet, calm, patient, satisfied and name-based. *Gurmukh* is like sandalwood, whose fragrance of good qualities is always present. A woman's life is taken as a symbol to describe *Gurmukh*. *Gurmukh's* love and devotion are described in Sri Guru Nanak *Bani* through the metaphor of a wife's love. In it, feminine qualities have been considered as the best, by adopting which one can please one's master.

Gurbani has highlighted the natural qualities of a woman, and different relationships in her life and has inspired that every human being should be devoted to his God through virtues like tolerance, love, restraint, and humility like a woman does for her husband. Guru Nanak Sahib considers himself the servant, wife, and lover of that supreme truth, who always strives for the love of her husband.

Guru Nanak Sahib uses the symbol of a graceful woman for *Gurmukh*. *Suchaji* means a woman with a good life check. *Suchaji* embodies good qualities (forbearance, patience, contentment) and can connect with Supreme. Such qualities are due to the observance of which the living woman (soul) hopes for union with God (husband).

When I have you, then I have everything.

O, my Lord and Master, You are my wealth and capital.

Within You, I abide in Peace, within You, I am Congratulated.....
.....What should I beg for, what should I say and hear,
I am hungry and thirsty for the blessed vision of your Darshan.
Through the word of the Guru's Teachings,
I have found my Husband Lord.
This is Nanak's true prayer.

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib: 762-763)

According to Guru Nanak *Bani*, the person who is detached from the illusions of the world and surrenders to God in the form of a husband through feminine virtues, that person (Jiva Nari) gets the status of *Suhagan*. In general terms *Suhagan* is used for a woman who wins the love of her husband with her virtues. *Suhagan* is a symbol associated with ordinary life, according to which a woman's life is given the status of perfection. In this way, the human body is also a house, in which it is necessary to be united with God, only then the atmosphere of coolness, playfulness and spiritual satisfaction will be created in this house. Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha derives the meaning of Suhag from happiness (*Khusnasib*) "*Suhagan* is the woman whose husband is alive." (Kahn Singh Nabha: 1999; 206) This happiness and good fortune means oneness with God. The living woman (Suchaji) possessing all virtues, who obeys His command by agreeing to His will, wins the love of her beloved. Only the woman who worships his husband (God) attains the status of *Suhagan*.

Suhagan are those who enjoy His union under command. A woman (soul) who completely devotes herself to that Supreme Truth by eliminating all dualistic emotions, wisdom, and cleverness of the mind can attain the status of *Suhagan*. By reaching this state, she attains bliss. The path to reach here is very difficult and fraught with difficulties because the mind is more attracted to the glow of the bad *Karmas*. There are very few who walk towards true love. So blessed are the women of large parts (*suhagan*) who find her love:
Sahiyya Se Sohagani Jin Sah Nali Pyaru Jiu.

They are the two true soul-brides, who embrace love for their Husband Lord.

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib: 72)

The happy soul-brides sleep in Peace; they find their Husband Lord
the treasure of Virtue.

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib: 1014)

O Nanak, the Gurmukhs are the happy, virtuous soul-brides;
the Lord is revealed to them.

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib: 1412)

What actions have the happy soul-brides performed.
They have obtained the fruit of their pre-ordained destiny.
Casting His Glance of Grace, the Lord unites them with Himself.

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib: 72)

Suhagan woman is full of those qualities that are necessary for one to merge with that Supreme Truth. Just as a woman leaves her house at the time of marriage and goes to her husband's house, she gives up everything and devotes herself to her husband. She relinquishes her ego, self, pride, violence, and grief and enjoys his union. In the same way, it is necessary for every person who is devoted to God to stay away from self and be happy in His will, to accept His every gift, to praise Him, and to possess qualities like humility and love. Devotion to God is different from patriarchal slavery because it involves freedom and love. One can fully devote oneself to her beloved by adopting this noble conduct. In the same way, the living soul should be adorned with noble qualities (contentment, truth, modesty, restraint, calmness) so that it can merge with the root of its existence. Like a wife, a person who has the desire for union in his mind gains the grace of God. In the same way, the human being should hope to become one with that Supreme Truth by cultivating the virtues of a virtuous woman. Just as a ray in the sun

and a drop in the ocean dissolve each other. In the same way, the ultimate goal of human life is to dedicate oneself to God and merge with Him, because one cannot live forever in the world of parents, therefore, human beings have been urged to try to become *Suhagan* by following the qualities of a good woman. "According to Guru Nanak Dev, the experience of God and union with him cannot happen without the loving otherness of the female body. Only by becoming a female awakener, it is known that duality/substance-attachment/self, all these have to be overcome to unite with that 'man' (*param-bodh*). To be *Suhagan* and receive the beautiful 'nectar' drop of the Beloved, the female awakener has to break all her flesh, matter, attachment and illusion. When the awakener gets the gift of union, Amrit, only then does she become *Suhagan*. This should be understood as divine bliss. In the female form, the Self enters into this bliss freed from the effects of all oppressive agencies." (Deepinderjit Kaur Randhawa: 2009; 83-84)

Guru Nanak, while talking about *Jiva Nari* in *Bani*, asked her to become a virtuous woman and then gave her the name of a *suhagan* when she attained this position. Prof. Puran Singh clarifies the feminine perspective that, "The entire Guru Granth Sahib is the voice of a married woman or a young woman in love with that supreme beauty. In Sri Guru Granth Sahib, there is no limit to moral superiority, its beauty is also at its peak. Both men and women have become one soul in their voices. It is the great reality and life is free. Only between souls free from life, subordination to each other is eliminated and conflicts cease." (Pooran Singh: 2006; 31) In this state, there is no gender difference between men and women. Here is the unique form of becoming a woman's ultimate truth and free spirit.

All the brides of the Husband Lord; all decorate themselves for Him.

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib: 54)

Guru Nanak Sahib has experienced his emotions, moods and totality of life by presenting himself as a woman. He did not compete with the woman but absorbed himself in her qualities and emotions. He described the spiritual side of a woman as pure, her emotions as powerful, her body as implicitly respected and the one following in her footsteps as an ideal, all these examples changed the image of a vulnerable woman into a powerful woman in the minds of people. "She is spiritually refined. Her emotions are strong. Her body is regarded positively. She is the model to be emulated. The lingering effect of such passage produces an emotional strength that helps to confront sexiest attitudes and practices." (Nikky Guninder kaur Singh: 2011;110)

Guru Nanak Bani takes man to positive and affirmative thinking. There cannot be a thought in the mind of the listener of Bani that a woman cannot attain liberation or that she is inferior in some way. In female form or through the natural qualities of woman, man can be the bearer of salvation. That is why the male has to first adopt the qualities of the female, then he can become a walker on the path of salvation, but the special thing about the female form is that she is already the embodiment of virtues that help to become a *Gurmukh*. According to Dr. Niki Guninder Kaur Singh, "The bride symbolizes the sacredness and honour bestowed upon a woman and indicates the multivalence and richness of her power. No negative association belittle her. Instead of being a hindrance, she is the paradigmatic figure who opens the way towards the Divine." (Nikky Guninder Kaur Singh: 190; 11) It is wrong to consider women as a hindrance in spiritual development, but woman is a great and true helper for spiritual development. Woman alone is the treasure of this spiritual beauty, by observing the qualities of which man can try to follow the path of truth. In this way, the insulting thought of woman as an obstacle to perfection was also stumbled upon.

In Guru Nanak Bani, woman is not only honoured but also considered a path-shower for all from the spiritual point of view. It is even recorded that if a man wants to merge with the Supreme Truth, he should ask *Suhagan* who, due to his auspicious qualities, has found God in the form of a husband.

Go, and ask the happy soul brides,
By that virtuous qualities do you enjoy your Husband Lord.
We are adorned with intuitive ease, contentment and sweet words.

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib: 17)

Go and ask the happy, pure soul brides, how did they obtain their Husband Lord.

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib: 722)

A woman (human being) also becomes a path-shower for others. To attain spiritual height and perfection, a man has to take the lead from the woman and follow good qualities. Thus, the seeker woman became a *Shakti* (power) form for the entire universe and humanity, who alone could help in union with God. Through this symbol, a new form of the despised woman emerged in society. He is not only knowledgeable like men but also a guide for them.

In Sikhism, men and women are considered equal. Instead of considering women as a hindrance to the spiritual path, it has been described as a helper. According to Guru Nanak Bani, the female body is not a curse, but even men can achieve the ultimate goal only because of female qualities. “..If you want to meet God, you can meet him only in feminine form. The creative power of the feminine that identified him, her love, her creative power, her attachment to the creative power. For the union, the person will have to assume the same form. That is why they called themselves *Mahalla*. As *Mahalla* as it is interpreted or pronounced, I think it is not correct. It is women and establishing that if you want to meet God, then you can meet him only in the form of a woman. It was a big deal. This is going beyond a revolution because the Western feminist movement has not yet reached this point. He is still in the tension of how the man has subordinated the woman by establishing his hegemony, his sovereignty. But that movement did not go beyond this, her resolve for salvation is limited.” (Gurbhagat Singh: Undated; 22-23) The woman is not only capable of attaining the supreme goal, but her virtues have been described as the need for all humanity to adopt them.

The special thing is that Guru Nanak Sahib has urged all people to adopt loving extraversion with the female body to achieve the ultimate goal. This appreciation of femininity has given women a respectable place in Sikhism. According to feminist thinker Betty Friedan, femininity is full of mystery, which even scientific thinking is incapable of understanding. According to Friedan, underestimating the value of femininity by men is a huge mistake. “Patriarchy tells her that the greatest task of a woman is to perfect her femininity.” (Paramjit Kaur and Vinod Mittal: 2011; 38) According to Friedan, femininity is very mystical, intuitive and very close to the creation of life, the origin of life, which even the scientific thinking of humans is unable to understand. The roots of the superstition of underestimating femininity lie in the first thought in which a woman always wants to be like a man instead of accepting her true nature. Betty Friedan associates such motherhood with grief and sorrow. “The key term of this book, feminine mystique, expands the image in which the patriarchal order or patriarchy encourages women to live. According to the value world in this image, the greatest value and commitment for a woman is to perfect her femininity.” (Gurbhagat Singh: 1995; 101)

Guru Nanak Bani has redefined all the patriarchal notions that give the female body the status of impure. According to Guru Nanak *Bani*, birth is under the command of the supreme truth. With which the tradition of calling a woman impure has been broken. “Sri Guru Granth Sahib creates a unique symbol of an enlightened woman. This woman is the other form of multifaceted and cosmic energies. The scripture abolishes the divisions of pure/impure, body/mind and erases the gender-centric meaning of the idioms and rituals prevalent at the time. This perspective creates a symbol that goes beyond the female body but also the concerns of our contemporary feminism.” (Deepinderjit Kaur Randhawa: 2009; 85) Julia Kristeva, a follower of such thinking, has described the creative power of women as multifaceted. The bipolarity/heterosexuality of the body is powerfully expressed by Kristeva. In her work, Kristeva violently displaces many of the social, political and religious frameworks that marginalize

women. Kristeva's romanticized depiction of the female body breaks the scriptural, linear and territorialized approach. It takes the female body into song, music and frenzy. (Deepinderjit Kaur Randhawa: 2009; 40-41) This thinker considers the female psyche as well as the greater experience of female creativity because creativity is a similar form of cosmic creative forces. Her reproductive characteristic gives her multifaceted capabilities, but masculine or male-dominated thinking considers the female body as only an object. Feminist thinker Irigaray also supports this idea. The perfection of femininity is considered to be the ultimate goal of a woman's life, but patriarchal thinking has distanced femininity from its true meaning. Her femininity was considered to be a gentlewoman and to endure male dominance. Masculine culture and the foundation of social order also rested on male supremacy. "For woman is traditionally a use value for man, an exchange value among men; in other words, a commodity. As such, she remains the guardian of material substance, whose price will be established, in terms of the standard of their work and their need/desires by subjects: Workers, merchants, and consumers. Women are marked as phallic by their fathers, husbands, and procurers. And this branding determines their value in sexual commerce." (Luce Irigaray: 1993; 355)

Irigaray introduced the uniqueness of the feminine to break down gender stereotypes. She believes that ideas of women's liberation need to be taken a little further than the critique of male supremacy and the demand for equality. Similarly, postmodern feminist thinker Helen Cixous argues that women's writing can be a metaphor for male dominance. A woman's emotions, her feelings, are all wrapped up in the subservient language of men. Her writing is always dominated by masculine language because she was not allowed to use free language. For freedom from which Cixous also talks about innovation in the world of language like Irigaray. A woman must establish herself through the struggle of writing in the world and history. Women seem to need to write by and about women.

These thinkers have tried to understand the natural form of women. But somewhere feminism or feminist thinkers have been lagging in understanding the multiplicity or mystery of women because feminist thinkers are insisting on making women entitled to political rights before emphasizing the natural qualities of women. These rights are also important, but it does not mean that women's natural qualities or feelings should be ignored as a burden and emphasis should be placed only on modern rights. "Guru Nanak has realized the diversity, the diversity of the woman's body, the power of the woman in the eternal life. So, because of this, our female thinkers are certainly concerned about the woman, but they have not reached the height of Guru Nanak Dev." (Gurbhagat Singh: Undated; 28)

Man, because of his ego, tries to standardize the creation of God. This self-will makes the natural form of his life a blight. Homosexual relationships have had a very negative impact on male-female relationships. Due to such thinking, men and women are denying each other's needs. It is worth thinking that Guru Nanak Sahib also expressed concern about the idea of meanness in the relationship between men and women. Guru Sahib has described both as companions of each other, without each other both cannot achieve the real purpose of life.

Feminine identity in contemporary concerns

According to modern thinking, if women are not behind men in achieving the real purpose of life, then they are equal to men in other aspects as well. Under the influence of modernity/feminism, parents encourage girls to be like boys. Girls are also attracted to such thinking. In fact, instead of recognizing their qualities, they are losing their self-identity under the influence of modernity, they should understand that their identity is the best. The directionless steps taken for rights are tearing women apart from themselves. Even women are adopting same-sex relationships by being attracted to a false identity or in the cycle of becoming like men, which is against nature. It is worth thinking that the woman herself is great, she needs to face her greatness and recognize it.

Guru Nanak has asked mankind to adopt the good qualities of women in his verses, but women are moving away from their virtues and adapting themselves to other structures. He needs to live in those virtues which have been praised in *Gurbani*. Feminism has tried to make women aggressive so that women can dominate themselves over men. A woman's nature, when she gets angry, will try to prove herself above a man, but in *Gurbani*, men have also been asked to adopt the good nature of women, meekness, patience and contentment. Human birth is for love, not for burning in the furnaces of lust, anger, greed, attachment and ego. Human life is for love's purity, coolness, ease and comfort. There is no place for the egotistical ideas of feminism.

Feminist thought was awakened to improve the condition of women but its journey has become difficult. It is such freedom that social institutions and relations are collapsing. Families and marriages are breaking up. Change in human thinking can be brought only by creating a good environment. Such efforts can be meaningful only through religion because religion has always been important for the smooth running of society. The main purpose of religion is to connect man with morality. Discrimination of caste and colour cannot become a hindrance in the path of spiritual development. Guru Nanak Sahib considered men and women to be equal and an essential part of society. To end the mistreatment of women in the name of modernity, it is necessary to understand the original ideology of *Gurbani*. This ideology is such a worldview for modern times, which has the potential to give a new life to the woman by releasing her from her entanglements and slavery.

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