

**Grade: 3**

**Lesson Number: 13**

**Course: Bolī**

**Title: Mental Vices – I**

### **Standards**

#### **Standard 3: Introduction to Mental Vices**

- Students identify why caste-based, gender-based, and other forms of discrimination and biases are contradictory to Sikh values through the performance of a play.
  - *Students should participate in active visual illustrations of the injustices caused by caste and gender-based discrimination.*

### **Objectives**

1. Students will learn about caste-based, gender-based and other forms of discrimination.
2. Students will look at examples of Gurbāṇī and see where the Gurūs stood on issues of discrimination.
3. The students will work in a group to create a play illustrating the fact that these forms of discrimination take place in our community in this day and age – though it contradicts what Sikhī teaches us.

### **Prerequisites**

- None.

### **Materials**

- Information on discrimination – both gender and caste-based discrimination (attached)
- T-Chart graphic organizer
- Blank paper
- Crayons/Color Pencils/or Markers
- Pencil
- Chart paper
- Lined notebook paper

### **Advanced Preparation**

- The information about caste and gender-based discrimination has been provided; please make sure you take a look so that you can conduct the discussion and answer any questions that the students might have.
- Write the salok by Gurū Nānak Sahib on chart paper or a white board in Gurmukhī.

### **Engagement (40 minutes)**

- Greet the students and have them get settled.
- Discuss with children what discrimination is.
- Come up with a class definition for discrimination.
- Come up with a class definition for discrimination in Pañjābī.

- Write the definition on a chart paper/white board.
- On the board or chart paper, write in Pañjābī: “What does Sikhī say about discrimination?” (ਸਿਖੀ ਦਾ ਵਿਤਕਰੇ ਬਾਰੇ ਕੀ ਖਯਾਲ ਹੈ?)
- Before students do any writing on this topic, discuss it with the students. Ask them to back up their statements. (e.g., How do you know Gurū Nānak Sahib was against discrimination? What proof do you have?) (ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਪਤਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਵਿਤਕਰੇ ਦੇ ਵਿਰੋਧੀ ਸਨ? ਕਿ ਸਬੂਤ ਹੈ ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ?)
- Ask students to keep in mind what life in Asia was like back then. Women were treated like second-class citizens by most people, there was a lot of discrimination between castes. People were treated better or worse based on their castes, finally there were also religious biases. Depending on who was in power at any given time, people of other religions were treated unfairly and even persecuted.
- If students come up with proof – that’s great, if not, share the following lines to students about Gurū Nānak Sahib and his feelings about gender-discrimination:  
 ਭੰਡਿ ਜੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਨਿੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਮੰਗਣੁ ਵੀਆਹੁ ॥  
 ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਦੋਸਤੀ ਭੰਡਹੁ ਚਲੈ ਰਾਹੁ ॥  
 ਭੰਡੁ ਮੁਆ ਭੰਡੁ ਭਾਲੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਬੰਧਾਨੁ ॥  
 ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਮੰਦਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਜੰਮਹਿ ਰਾਜਾਨ ॥  
 ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੀ ਭੰਡੁ ਉਪਜੈ ਭੰਡੈ ਬਾਝੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥  
 ਨਾਨਕ ਭੰਡੈ ਬਾਹਰਾ ਏਕੋ ਸਚਾ ਸੋਇ ॥

*From woman, man is born;  
 within woman, man is conceived; to woman he is engaged and married.  
 Woman becomes his friend; through woman, the future generations come.  
 When his woman dies, he seeks another woman; to woman he is bound.  
 So why call her bad, from whom kings are born.  
 From woman, woman is born; without woman, there would be no one at all.*  
 - Gurū Nānak, Rāg Āsā Mahalā 1, Page 473

- Have students write down the salok in their notebook.
- Read the salok, ask students to find words that they understand. Write down all words that students understand and try to link them to make sense of the entire salok.
- Tell students that now you have provided them with an example and proof from Gurbānī to back up the statement that Gurū Nānak Sahib was against discrimination. In this case, it is gender-based discrimination. Now it is the students’ turn.
- Give each student a lined paper, ask them to fold it in half lengthwise and write, “What Sikhī says” on the left and, “What I see” on the right.
- Ask students to write for 10 minutes about what Sikhī says about discrimination on the left-hand side of their paper – provide proof (e.g., line from Gurbānī or example from history). Next, students need to think about what they see in everyday life – how people are treated and how they treat others and write about whether they see hypocrisy or do they see compliance with Sikh principles. Students will write about examples of discrimination in Pañjābī.

**Exploration (15 minutes)**

- Share the reading about gender and caste discrimination with students.
- Allow them to add on to their list if the reading incited further thoughts.
- Create a T-chart on chart paper or on the board (example of chart attached below)– similar to the one the students are using.
- Ask students to share their insight about discrimination. As students share an incident (e.g., Sevā – Sikhī says we're equal – therefore there should be equal opportunities to all – What I see – Women are not allowed to do the same types of Sevā in Darbār Sāhib.)
- Decide whether this is gender-based or caste-based discrimination.
- Go around the room until all students have had an opportunity to share.
- Next discuss in Pañjābī whether or not discrimination occurs in our local communities.
- Ask students the following questions in Pañjābī:
  - What types of incidents do you see in our community that are discriminatory in nature? (ਤੁਸੀਂ ਕਿਹੋ ਜਿਹੀਆਂ ਘਟਨਾਵਾਂ ਵੇਖਦੇ ਹੋ ਜੋ ਕਿ ਵਿਤਕਰਾ ਦਿਖਾਂਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ?)
  - Why do these incidents occur? (ਇਹ ਘਟਨਾਵਾਂ ਕਿਉਂ ਹੁੰਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ?)
  - How do they make you feel? (ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਵੇਖ ਕੇ ਕੀ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ?)
  - What can we do about them? (ਅਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਕੀ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ?)
  - What would our Gurūs do? (ਸਾਡੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਕੀ ਕਰਦੇ?)
- Explain to students that sometimes we do things without realizing why we do them. Sometimes we adopt attitudes and feeling from our ancestors – We may decide that we don't like certain type of people because our parents and grandparents didn't associate with these people. Many times we are not aware of our behavior.

**Explanation/Extension (10 minutes)**

- Since discrimination still occurs on an everyday basis in our community, we are going to bring it to everyone's attention through short plays or skits. For homework they need to take another look at their list they created in class about what "Sikhī says about discrimination and what I see" and begin brainstorming on incidents that they feel that our community needs to be more conscious of. Think about how the Gurūs would feel about these incidents. They should discuss the incidents with their families and be ready to discuss during the next session.

**Evaluation (On-going)**

- At the beginning of the next session, review the T-chart with the students and then discuss issues that students have brain-stormed.

## Teacher Resources

Note to the teacher: Please refer to the examples below to show the students how the Gurū's thinking was so progressive and different from the rest of India at that time.

- Pauṛī on women from Āsā Kī Vār. Gurū Nanak's voice that women should not be discriminated against based on the fact that they are women:

ਭੰਡਿ ਜੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਨਿੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਮੰਗਣੁ ਵੀਆਹੁ ॥  
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 ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਮੰਦਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਜੰਮਹਿ ਰਾਜਾਨ ॥  
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- Gurū Nānak, Rāg Āsā Mahalā 1, Page 473

- Gurū Amardās organized his preachers into 22 teaching districts. He put Bībī Amro in-charge of one of these districts. This meant that she was to lead the saṅgat in Kīrtan and Gurbāṇī Vīcār. She was a sort of a preacher appointed by Gurū Amardās. According to one account, of the 146 missionaries Gurū Amardās trained and sent out, 52 were women. At one time the religious seats in the country of Afghanistan and Kashmir were under the jurisdiction of women. These women had complete jurisdiction in decision making as well as preaching to congregations.
- Gurū Amardās and the rejection Satī (gender based)--reference in Grade 2 lesson on Gurū Amardās.
- Gurū Aṅgad's teaching of Gurmukhī and this can be based around asking children whether they believe that girls were allowed or not allowed. And similar thing with his wrestling matches.
- The laṅgar system. Again, Gurū Amardās having Akbar sit in paṅgat before meeting him. Bringing equality.
- Gurū Arjan chose a Muslim saint to lay the foundation stone of Harimandar Sāhib.
- Gurū Arjan designed Harimandar Sāhib so that it offered entrance from all sides – symbolizing that people of all castes, genders, religions etc. were welcome.

Here is some information on Sikh Women that have shaped our history:

- **Mātā Khivī** was Gurū Aṅgad's wife and she occupies a special place in Sikh history. She played a critical role in the second Gurū's life. Her most important

contribution is that she made the concept of laṅgar (community kitchen), a reality. She helped create a new social consciousness in Sikh women.

- **Mātā Ajīt Kaur** nurtured and guided the Khālsā for forty years after the Gurū's death. She was deeply spiritual, as well as intellectual, and was responsible for making scholarship a central part of Sikh life. She provided leadership for the Sikhs in a very difficult and tumultuous time following the passing away of Gurū Gobind Singh. She helped maintain the sanctity of the Gurū Granth Sāhib as the successor of Gurū Gobind Singh and dealt strictly with pretenders and other aspirants of Gurūship.
- **Mātā Gujrī** was an illuminating force behind her husband Gurū Teghbahādar (the ninth Gurū) and her son Gurū Gobind Singh (the tenth Gurū). After the martyrdom of Gurū Teghbahādar, Mātā Gujrī guided and inspired her son Gurū Gobind Singh. She was responsible for the training of the sāhibzādās (the four sons of Gurū Gobind Singh) who gave up their lives for Sikhism while they were still very young. Mātā Gujrī was an inspiring force during one of the most difficult times in Sikh history.

Prior to the time of our Gurūs, women were treated as second-class citizens. Their lives were oppressed as they did not have an opportunity to get an education. Women and other second-class citizens or members of low castes did not have many freedom in the areas of religion, culture, politics or economics. The lives of women were predestined to serve men. The Gurūs tried to change the sad state of women by offering them a chance to learn Gurbāṇī and spread the message of Vāhigurū.

*Long ago the women was referred to as “man’s shoe,.... the root of all evil.” Her function was only to perpetuate the race, do household work, and serve the male members of society. Female infanticide was common, and the practice of sati, the immolation of the wife on her husband's funeral pyre, was encouraged, sometimes even forced. Guru Nanak condemned this man-made notion of the inferiority of women, and protested against their long subjugation.*

- Valerie Kaur, excerpt is from *Equality of Women, in Sikh Ideology and Practice*

Although Sikhs believe that all humans are equal, this is not always the practice. Our communities continue to be separated by a class system. There are Gurduārās that are considered the “Doctor’s Gurduārās” and other that are meant for “Taxicab-drivers and other blue collar workers.” The women in our community don’t play similar roles to men. The roles of women continue to be primarily in the laṅgar hall and teaching the children in Gurmat schools. However, rarely do women play roles in leadership circles. This is also true for people of “lower castes.”

This isn’t the tradition that Gurū Nānak had in mind for us – what are you going to do to change it?

“What does Sikhī say about discrimination?”

“What Sikhī says”

“What I see”

“What does Sikhi say about discrimination?”

“What Sikhi says”

“What I see”