

15th ਸਲੋਕ \ Couplet

ਹਰਖੁ ਸੋਗੁ ਜਾ ਕੈ ਨਹੀ ਬੈਰੀ ਮੀਤ ਸਮਾਨਿ ॥
ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਸੁਨਿ ਰੇ ਮਨਾ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਤਾਹਿ ਤੈ ਜਾਨਿ ॥੧੫॥
harakh sog jaa kai nahee bairee meet samaan ||
kahu naanak sun re manaa mukat taeh tai jaan || 15 ||

Literal Meaning: One who is not affected by pleasure or pain, who looks upon friend and enemy alike says Nanak, listen, mind: know that such a person is liberated.

Literal Word Meanings:

ਹਰਖੁ (harakh) = pleasure
ਸੋਗੁ (sog) = pain
ਜਾ (jaa) = whose
ਕੈ (kai) = with
ਨਹੀ (nahee) = not
ਬੈਰੀ (bairee) = enemy
ਮੀਤ (meet) = friend
ਸਮਾਨਿ (samaan) = alike

ਸੁਨਿ (sun) = listen
ਰੇ (re) = O
ਮਨਾ (manaa) = mind
ਮੁਕਤਿ (mukat) = liberated
ਤਾਹਿ (taeh) = that one
ਤੈ (tai) = then
ਜਾਨਿ (jaan) = know

We have explored the literal meanings of the verse, along with the word-by-word breakdown. Now, we begin a deeper journey — to understand what the verse is pointing toward. The following exercises are designed to encourage out-of-the-box thinking. They may feel open-ended, and at times even challenging — that is intentional. Growth often begins where certainty ends.

Exercise 1: Emotional Dependence Check

Think of someone you dislike currently or in the past.

If you see them, does your mood change?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, in what way? _____

If no, why do you think it doesn't affect you? _____

Think of someone you love the most.

☐ If you see them on a bad day, does your mood improve?

☐ How long does the effect last? _____

Reflection Question:

How much of your happiness or sadness is dependent on others?

Exercise 2: Unpredictability of Mood

Reflect:

☐ Happiness can turn to sadness in an instant

☐ Sadness can vanish in a moment

☐ Mood swings are often triggered by a person, news, or event

☐ This feels unpredictable

Question:

If your inner state depends on external factors, are you truly free?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not sure

Exercise 3: Experiencing Stability

Imagine:

You are content, fulfilled, and peaceful within.

☐ Your happiness does not depend on anyone

☐ Your sadness does not depend on anyone

☐ Your mood remains stable regardless of external events

Reflection Question:

If this is true, how does it feel to see someone you like or dislike?

☐ The same

☐ Unchanged

☐ Free

☐ At peace

Exercise 4: What is Freedom?

Ask yourself:

- ☐ Is freedom just doing what you want externally?
- ☐ Or is it being unaffected internally by people, praise, or blame?

Reflection:

When your inner peace is unshaken by friends or enemies, criticism or praise —

- ☐ This is the freedom Guru Sahib describes
- ☐ I can start practicing it now

Exercise 5: Personal Reflection (Write briefly)

How often am I emotionally swayed by people around me? _____

How would life feel if I remained content regardless? _____

What is one practical way I can start cultivating this inner stability?

Spiritual Meaning (Word → Wisdom)

ਹਰਖੁ (harakh) = Excitement/highs—don't let praise or wins intoxicate the mind

ਸੋਗੁ (sog) = Sorrow/lows—don't let loss or pain break your inner balance

ਜਾ ਕੈ ਨਹੀ (jaa kai nahee) = Not ruled by them—steady within, regardless of mood or moment

ਬੈਰੀ (bairee) = Enemy/opposition—those who challenge you or hurt you

ਮੀਤ (meet) = Friend/support—those who love you or benefit you

ਸਮਾਨਿ (samaan) = Equal vision—same respect and fairness toward all

ਸੁਨਿ ਰੇ ਮਨਾ (sun re manaa) = Listen, mind—this is a higher way to live

ਮੁਕਤਿ (mukat) = Inner freedom—released from hatred, favoritism, and emotional swings

ਤਾਹਿ ਤੈ ਜਾਨਿ (taeh tai jaan) = Recognize that state as liberation—true wisdom in action

Write Your Own Interpretation:

Take Action → Living the Wisdom

Follow these practical action examples to bring the teaching into your daily actions and choices.

Initiate real conversations - Move beyond small talk and ask meaningful questions.

Listen to understand - Give full attention instead of preparing your next reply.

Share your truth honestly - Open up in a way that builds trust, not image.

Support without expectation - Help others without keeping score.

Reflect and Explore

These discussion questions can be explored alone or in a group to encourage reflection, learning, and honest sharing, with no right or wrong answers.

When something exciting or upsetting happens, how can you keep your mind steady?

Can you treat someone you dislike with the same fairness as someone you like?

What does it really mean to treat friends and difficult people the same at work or in social life?

Can you be fair and neutral without being passive? What would that look like in real life?

In which relationship or situation could treating both sides equally give you more inner peace?
