

39th ਸਲੋਕ \ Couplet

ਜਤਨ ਬਹੁਤ ਸੁਖ ਕੇ ਕੀਏ ਦੁਖ ਕੇ ਕੀਓ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥
ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਸੁਨਿ ਰੇ ਮਨਾ ਹਰਿ ਭਾਵੈ ਸੋ ਹੋਇ ॥੩੯॥
jatan bahut sukh ke ke'ee dhukh ko keeo na koi ||
kahu naanak sun re manaa har bhaavai so hoi ||39||

Literal Meaning: People make all sorts of efforts to find peace and pleasure, but no one tries to earn pain. Says Nanak, listen, mind: whatever pleases God comes to pass.

Literal Word Meanings:

ਜਤਨ (jatan) = efforts
ਬਹੁਤ (bahut) = many
ਸੁਖ (sukh) = pleasure
ਕੇ (ke) = for
ਕੀਏ (ke'ee) = done
ਦੁਖ (dhukh) = pain
ਕੋ (ko) = for
ਕੀਓ (keeo) = did
ਨ (na) = not
ਕੋਇ (koi) = anyone

ਸੁਨਿ (sun) = listen
ਰੇ (re) = O
ਮਨਾ (manaa) = mind
ਹਰਿ (har) = God
ਭਾਵੈ (bhaavai) = pleases
ਸੋ (so) = that
ਹੋਇ (hoi) = happens

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: Begin With Daily Life Awareness

Every morning, you wake up and put effort into:

- ☐ Studies
- ☐ Job
- ☐ Relationships
- ☐ Money

☐ Self-improvement

Ask yourself:

Why am I doing all this?

Your answer is likely:

- ☐ To be happy
- ☐ To avoid struggle
- ☐ To feel secure

Question:

Have you ever woken up and said, “Today I will prepare myself for sadness”?

Exercise 2: The One-Sided Desire

Think carefully.

Do you want:

- ☐ Only happiness
- ☐ Only success
- ☐ Only smooth outcomes

Is this different from flipping a coin and saying:

“I want heads every time”?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Question:

If happiness exists, can sadness logically be erased?

Exercise 3: When Success Repeats

Reflect on a real example.

When something works once, you feel:

- ☐ Happy
- ☐ Confident

When it works again and again:

- ☐ Expectation builds
- ☐ Certainty forms

Does your mind start believing:

“This will always work”?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Question:

When expectation hardens into certainty, what happens the first time reality disagrees?

Exercise 4: Facing the First Failure

Now imagine the 11th time, when things don't work.

What arises?

- ☐ Sadness
- ☐ Panic
- ☐ Self-doubt
- ☐ Anxiety

Why does it hurt so much?

- ☐ Because of loss
- ☐ Because you were not prepared for loss

Question:

Is sadness painful—or is unpreparedness for sadness painful?

Exercise 5: Emotional Skill vs Emotional Control

Have you been trained how to:

- ☐ Handle success calmly
- ☐ Sit with disappointment
- ☐ Return to balance

Or were you trained only to:

- ☐ Chase results
- ☐ Avoid failure

Insight:

Mental suffering often comes not from sadness, but from never learning how to meet it.

Exercise 6: The Stock Market Mirror

Think of this clearly.

A beginner:

Makes profit → happiness increases

Makes profit again → confidence turns into greed

Then:

Goes all in & Market falls

Question:

Did the market betray him—or did his impulse betray him?

If knowledge and risk-awareness were present:

- ☐ Loss would still be possible
- ☐ Panic would be reduced

Lesson:

Wisdom doesn't remove loss—it removes collapse.

Exercise 7: Nature as the Teacher

Observe nature.

- Trees grow without planning
- Forests burn without complaining
- New life emerges without regret

Reflect:

When a forest burns, does it:

- ☐ Protest

- ☐ Resist
- ☐ Collapse emotionally

Or does life quietly restart?

Question:

If nature accepts both growth and destruction, why does the human ego demand only growth?

Exercise 8: Accepting Hukam “ਹਰਿ ਭਾਵੈ ਸੋ ਹੋਇ” “har bhaavai so hoi”

This line is often misunderstood.

Does it mean:

- ☐ “Whatever happens is punishment”
- ☐ “Whatever happens is random”
- ☐ “Reality does not follow personal preference”

Exercise 9: Personal Reflection

Complete these:

One happiness I chased without preparing for loss: _____

One sadness that broke me because I wasn’t ready: _____

One situation where acceptance would have reduced suffering: _____

Exercise 10: Living This Salok

Guru Sahib is not asking you to stop effort.

Guru Sahib is asking:

- Can you work without emotional addiction?
- Can you succeed without arrogance?
- Can you fail without collapse?

Final question to sit with:

Can I stay balanced when life gives both comfort and hardship? _____

Spiritual Meaning (Word → Wisdom)

ਜਤਨ ਬਹੁਤ (jatan bahut) = Many efforts—constant planning, pushing, and controlling

ਸੁਖ ਕੇ (sukh ke) = For comfort—chasing ease, praise, security, convenience

ਕੀਏ (ke'ee) = You did—your energy goes mostly toward “good outcomes”

ਦੁਖ ਕੋ (dhukh ko) = For hardship—pain, loss, delays, rejection, sickness, stress

ਕੀਓ ਨ ਕੋਇ (keeo na koi) = No effort made—no inner training to stay steady when life turns

ਹਰਿ ਭਾਵੈ (har bhaavai) = What pleases the Divine—accepting Hukam with trust, without ego-fighting reality

ਸੋ ਹੋਇ (so hoi) = That happens—life unfolds beyond control; peace comes from alignment, not resistance

Write Your Own Interpretation:

Take Action → Living the Wisdom

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

Release the illusion of control - Focus on effort and let outcomes unfold naturally.

Respond, don't resist - Accept setbacks without fighting reality.

Trust beyond understanding - Believe there is purpose even when you can't see it.

Pray before panic - Turn uncertainty into acceptance instead of stress.

Act faithfully - Do your part sincerely and leave the rest to the Creator.

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.

How often do you choose comfort and avoid difficult situations?

How can accepting life's ups and downs make you mentally stronger?

How can connecting with your inner self help you handle stress or sudden problems?

What simple steps can help you accept both comfort and struggle as part of growth?

How does knowing you can't control everything change your peace of mind and choices?
