

48th ਸਲੋਕ \ Couplet

ਨਿਜ ਕਰਿ ਦੇਖਿਓ ਜਗਤੁ ਮੈ ਕੋ ਕਾਹੂ ਕੋ ਨਾਹਿ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਬਿਰੁ ਹਰਿ ਭਗਤਿ ਹੈ ਤਿਹ ਰਾਖੋ ਮਨ ਮਾਹਿ ॥੪੮॥
nij kar dhekhio jagat mai ko kaahoo ko naeh ||
naanak thir har bhagat hai teh raakho man maeh ||48||

Literal Meaning: I had looked upon the world as my own, but no one belongs to anyone else. O Nanak, only devotional worship of the Lord is permanent; enshrine this in your mind.

Literal Word Meanings:

ਨਿਜ (nij) = one's own

ਕਰਿ (kar) = as

ਦੇਖਿਓ (dekhio) = looked upon

ਜਗਤੁ (jagat) = world

ਮੈ (mai) = in

ਕੋ (ko) = anyone

ਕਾਹੂ (kaahoo) = anyone

ਕੋ (ko) = of

ਨਾਹਿ (naeh) = not

ਬਿਰੁ (thir) = permanent

ਹਰਿ (har) = the Lord

ਭਗਤਿ (bhagat) = devotion

ਹੈ (hai) = is

ਤਿਹ (teh) = that

ਰਾਖੋ (raakho) = enshrine

ਮਨ (man) = mind

ਮਾਹਿ (maeh) = within

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: Observation of the World Around You

Reflect on your surroundings:

Have you noticed how different people's lives are?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Examples:

- Some have parents, some are orphans
- Some have siblings, some don't
- Some are married, some never marry
- Some have children, some don't
- Some see grandchildren, some don't

Question: How does observing these differences make you feel?

- ☐ Amazed / grateful
- ☐ Curious / thoughtful
- ☐ Indifferent
- ☐ Overwhelmed

Exercise 2: Observation of Life Situations

Some people live with their parents, some live far away

Some people experience abundance, some face lack

Question: How much control do we really have over these life circumstances?

- ☐ Complete control
- ☐ Partial control
- ☐ No control
- ☐ Not sure

Exercise 3: Awareness of Impermanence

Everyone around you – parents, siblings, friends – may depart or change in the future

Question: How does this thought impact your daily living?

- ☐ I feel sadness / fear
- ☐ I feel awareness / mindfulness
- ☐ I feel motivated to cherish moments
- ☐ Other: _____

Exercise 4: Focusing on the Inner Self

Guru Sahib reminds us: your inner self, the divine within, is always with you, part of every breath you take

Question: Do you feel connected to your inner divine?

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Not sure

Can you identify moments when you felt truly in tune with this inner divine?

- ☐ Yes → Describe: _____
- ☐ No

Exercise 5: Living with Detachment

The teaching is not to feel sad about impermanence but to enjoy life fully without attachment

Question: How often do you enjoy moments without clinging to them or fearing they will end?

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

What are some activities that help you experience life fully with detachment?

- ☐ Spending time with loved ones
- ☐ Meditation / mindfulness
- ☐ Nature walks / gardening
- ☐ Helping others
- ☐ Other: _____

Exercise 6: Reflection on Desire vs Awareness

Reflect: Are you living in desire (wanting things to stay forever) or in awareness (enjoying life as it unfolds)?

- ☐ Mostly desire
- ☐ Balanced
- ☐ Mostly awareness
- ☐ Not sure

Can you recall a recent moment when you truly lived in awareness and detachment? Describe briefly:

Exercise 7: Integration / Daily Practice

How can you remind yourself daily of this truth: the divine within is your permanent companion?

- ☐ Morning meditation
- ☐ Evening reflection / journaling
- ☐ Mindful breathing during the day
- ☐ Acts of kindness / seva
- ☐ Other: _____

Spiritual Meaning (Word → Wisdom)

ਨਿਜ ਕਰਿ (nij kar) = Calling it “mine”—ownership-feeling that builds attachment
 ਦੇਖਿਓ (dhekhio) = You see/assume—based on surface appearance
 ਜਗਤੁ (jagat) = The world—possessions, relationships, status, achievements
 ਮੈ (mai) = In this life—within the human experience
 ਕੋ (ko) = No one—universal truth, applies to all
 ਕਾਹੂ ਕੋ (kaahoo ko) = Belongs to anyone—nothing is truly possessed forever
 ਨਾਹਿ (naeh) = Is not—ownership is temporary and conditional
 ਥਿਰੁ (thir) = Permanent/steady—what doesn’t break with time
 ਹਰਿ ਭਗਤਿ (har bhagat) = Devotion to the Divine—living virtues and remembrance daily
 ਰਾਖੋ (raakho) = Keep it—protect it, prioritize it
 ਮਨ ਮਾਹਿ (man maeh) = In your mind/heart—make devotion your inner center, not outer possessions

Write Your Own Interpretation:

Take Action → Living the Wisdom

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

Question ownership deeply - Ask what remains yours beyond roles and possessions.

Differentiate temporary from eternal - Recognize that devotion outlasts material gain.

Release borrowed identities - Let go of labels that don't define your true self.

Invest in spiritual wealth - Strengthen faith and character over accumulation.

Anchor in lasting value - Center your life on devotion that endures beyond time.

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 feel that money, position, or success truly “belongs” to you? How does this affect your stress?

What things in life are temporary? What qualities truly last?

How can working on inner growth or ethical habits create lasting value, even in a changing workplace?

If material things don’t truly belong to us, how should that change your priorities?

What small daily actions can help you grow lasting virtues instead of chasing short-term rewards?
