

November 2008

Following the Footsteps...

Volume 1, Issue 3

Prabhu Premi Sangh Newsletter



Upcoming Events:

- Srimad Bhagwad katha at Dhampteri: Nov 26 to Dec 2
- Srimad Bhagwad katha at Vrindavan: Dec 11 to Dec 17



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Reflections from Pujya Swamiji's Diary...



Dear Prabhu Premi,

Prabhu bless you.

The transformation of the world is brought about by the transformation of oneself, because the self is the product and a part of the total process of human existence.

To transform oneself, self knowledge is essential. Without knowing what you are, there is no basis for right thought, and without knowing yourself there cannot be transformation. Transform yourself and you transform the world.

With blessings,

Swami Avdhesanand Giri

News in a Nutshell



Hari om! After almost a month long wait, Delhi bhakts were delighted to meet and offer their respectful obeisances to Pujya Swamiji during His recent visit to New Delhi on October 18th.

Swamiji then left for Jhumpa, Rajasthan to perform Mahamandleshwar Patabishek ceremony for four renowned saints to initiate them in the 'Panch Dasnam Juna Akhara' group of holy saints.

Soon after this, Swamiji

attended the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha conference held in Delhi on October 23rd.

On the eve of Diwali His Holiness arrived at Ambala and this day was marked with communal prayers and satsang. Later in the evening, Swamiji met with a group of devotees who had assembled and gave them prashad.

Following this, Swamiji conducted Srimad Bhagwad kathas in the cities of Banswara, Korba sanctifying

the minds of all devotees that had gathered in huge numbers to listen to the katha.

On the auspicious occasion of Prakash-Utsav on Nov 13, sastang and pravachan was held at Ambala. Prabhu premis also gathered at the respective centers around the world and the day was marked with sincere and heartfelt prayers for the well being, good health, happiness and long life of our Pujya Guruji.

Following the Footsteps

Dharma Acharya Sabha held at New Delhi



On 23rd October, His Holiness, Pujya Swamiji attended the Dharma Acharya Conference held at India Habitat Center, New Delhi. The Dharma Acharya Sabha is an apex unifying organization comprising of prominent Hindu saints, Shankaracharyas and Acharyas

from all over the country. Other prominent Saints present at the meeting included His Holiness Swami Paramatmanand Ji, His Holiness Swami Madav Priya-dass Ji, His Holiness Swami Vishveshwaranand Ji and His Holiness Swami Samvedanand Ji.

During the meeting, the respected saints discussed various action plans for the development and growth of the Acharya Sabha, which is engaged in promoting communal and social welfare in the country and works towards preservation of the ancient Indian culture and values.

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH



"Service (seva) is the best means of destroying vanity. Through selfless service one becomes egoless."

Divine acts of compassion towards others, no matter how big or little they maybe, performed with a spirit of selflessness, constitutes seva. A true disciple prays for an opportunity to render seva, as it eliminates the ego - one of our greatest enemies, and develops humility.



Prakash Utsav - Happy Birthday to you!!



The most auspicious day of 'Kartik Purnima' has always been accorded special spiritual significance by the Hindu scriptures.

But this day holds immense significance in all our hearts for a very special reason. Our dear Guru Ji celebrates His birthday on the full moon day of November (Karthik Purnima). This year the auspicious day was on Thursday, November 13th. It is celebrated as Prakash Utsav (Festival of Light), to also celebrate the day when Guru Ji was initiated into sanyas.

The occasion is marked by lighting 108 diyas made of flour (atta) for aarti, representing prakash (light). A pandal is organized at Prabhu Prem Ashram where hundreds of sadhus and sants, as well as bhakts from all over India gather to wish Guru Ji a very Happy Birthday. Similarly, the heads (pramukh) from various shakhas (branches) also bring their best wishes. Shakha pramukh of Haridwar and Vrindavan gave loving, devotional speeches, full of blessings for our

Guru ji's long life and well-being. Sufi singer, Rekha ji, was invited for a musical program on the eve of the poornima.

"Time is precious. Don't waste it"

A little girl also sang some bhajans and the birthday song in honor of Maharaj Ji that moved all the bhakts to tears. The gathering was emotional and exciting at the same time.

Like every year, at the end of the morning, Maharaj Ji patiently and lovingly received wishes from every one individually. Bhakts lined up in the pandal to give a personal Pranaam to Maharaj Ji, who stood for hours until He met each individual. Message of the year to all prabhu premis is as follows: **"Samay moolyavaan hai. Uska durupyog mat karo."** "Time is precious. Don't waste it."

FUN FACT!



Did you know that Thailand, a predominantly Buddhist country that operates on Lunar calendar, also recognizes Karthik Purnima and celebrates the day with the festivities of Loi Krathong. "Loi" means "to float" and "krathong" is a raft made of banana tree trunk and decorated with flowers, candle and incense sticks. On the full moon night, people release this little raft on a river, symbolically sending their thanks to the deity of the Ganga with floating lanterns for giving life throughout the year.

Srimad Bhagwad Katha held in Banswara, Korba



After completing a string of successful Ram Kathas in the cities of Jodhpur, Mainpuri and Chitrakoot, Swamiji then conducted Srimad Bhagwad katha in various locations this month.

Banswara, Rajasthan was the first of the three destinations where Srimad Bhagwad saptah was organized this month (Nov 1st to Nov 7th). Banswara is famous as the 'City of Hundred Islands' due to

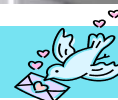
the presence of several islands in the holy Mahi River, which flows through its beautiful landscape. The next katha was organized by the Prabhu Premi sangh members of Korba branch from Nov 17th to 23rd in Korba District, Chhattisgarh.

Prabhu premis who had come to listen to these kathas felt contended and truly blessed to attend the special event. The matchless experience of listening to Swamiji

relate the story of the various avatars of Bhagwan Vishnu with a focus on the tales of Sri Krishna, accompanied by exceptional classical bhajans, enthralled the entire katha audience. It infused the prabhu premis with ever new joy and peace, wanting to relive the experience again and again.



Straight from the Heart- Nidhi Vaid



My earliest recollections of meeting Swamiji are when I was in the ninth grade. As a teenager, I enjoyed accompanying my grandma to the daily evening satsang held in Ambala, where people of all ages would collectively gather each day.

Part of the fun was that sometimes Swamiji would give us pleasant surprises. At times we went to the sastang, thinking He was not going to be in town that day, and attend satsang as per our daily routine. And then just before Aarti, voila! Swamiji would suddenly enter the room. As a teenager, I was overcome with so much happiness and treasure those special moments even now.

By God's grace, I also had the good fortune of doing seva in the Ashram, and witnessed how each one endeavored to their duties to the best of their ability. I learnt that one should serve the Guru devotedly and wholeheartedly. One should also serve with equal love and respect all other saints,

Brahmans as well disciples of the Guru.

During His pravachans, Swamiji explained the benefits of meditation in our daily lives. He also pointed out the importance of adopting and observing a particular "Niyam", (rule) He said that we should resolve to take up some good practice and continue it with faith and regularity.

One of the practices He recommended was to maintain a diary and I enthusiastically began doing this on a daily basis. At the close of the day, He suggested we should put down our thoughts, summarizing our entire day, which would help us contemplate and reflect on our own actions. I found this very effective in the process of self-analysis and self-improvement. It was also a great way to keep treasured memories. Sometimes when I felt low, and would read my own writings about a special occasion, I felt instant joy. I shared my writings with Swamiji, and He affectionately signed off on some pages, making

them more special than ever.

Just like a plant needs sunlight, water and constant care in order to develop and give flowers, so is the spiritual path, where the seeds of faith require regular effort, blessing, grace and kind help from the Guru, to unearth the happiness in our own hearts so that we can experience and share that joy with all.

Today, witnessing my 5 year old daughter already becoming Swamiji's ardent "fan" and attempting to sing "Ab saump diya", I wonder about her good fortune to have found the kind protection of a Satguru at such a tender age...



Readers are welcome to contribute their personal experiences and anecdotes. Please email your article (approx. 300-400 words) to: prabhupremisanghnews@gmail.com.

Change is the Law of Nature



Victory-defeat, joy-sorrow, success-failure, expectation-disappointment, are all like sunshines and shadows which come and go in life. Yet, every individual desires success in each and every facet of life, wishing to obtain happiness alone, and never encounter defeat. However, this is impossible. The truth is that every individual passes through different phases of life, which includes all kinds of episodes or events; and each chapter comes and goes.

If one just learns to live life with simplicity, then potentially unhappiness also reduces. No yogic practices or elaborate formulas are essential for this. It is the little things in life that make it so beautiful. Quoting Disraeli, "If you wish to live life with happiness, learn the good qualities of people around you." If you attempt to live in this manner, the small things in life will help you to overcome big issues, thus making life much simpler.

For example, after facing one failure after another, we begin to feel incapable or inadequate. This creates an obstacle in maintaining a healthy life. Such a feeling of inadequacy should not be allowed to bubble up under any circumstances. Change is the only constant of life. It is the law of nature. Hope and disappointment, happiness and sadness, success and failure, birth and death, favorable moments and misfortunate events are all linked together. Therefore, we should face adverse situations daringly and seriously. Every person cannot be successful in every aspect of life. If we accept this fact, and look for the reasons for failure, we can be successful in developing and improving ourselves.

Besides, one should also be a seeker and attempt to be curious in life, with a desire to learn new things. We should remain happy under all circumstances. No matter how busy, stressed, or overworked you are, there is no need to be unnecessarily worried. Learn to accept whatever you get with happiness. Create opportunities to laugh and make people laugh. This reduces tension and results in an increased lifespan. Nobody enjoys company of individuals who are sad, worried, and unhappy.

In order to make life simple and stress-free, one also has to be social. Cultivating an interest in public welfare activities (volunteering) helps to achieve mental peace. If time permits, engage in volunteer work. You will sense that it gives you a feeling of unique satisfaction and enhances your self-confidence. It has been stated in the Bible- "Those who bow down with humility, rise even higher." Simplicity and humility are the key cornerstones of life. Humility imparts radiance to one's personality and emerges as the primary reason for one's success. An optimistic attitude is imperative for success. As a result, one should adopt a positive outlook towards life. At the same time, one should not entertain the thought of an adverse outcome. Where possible, we should protect ourselves from self-defeating thoughts, tension, jealousy, and anger.

Evidently, by having a spiritual outlook one can build a strong character and firm determination. In the companionship of noble people, one attains mental peace and positive energy. One may have surely experienced a distinctive feeling of tranquility when one visits a temple, mosque, gurudwara, or participates in a religious gathering. In addition, one should not cause discomfort to others for their own selfish reasons. One should not trouble those that are less fortunate in any way, as their pleas will trouble you throughout your life. Life is a sum total whereby we should add friends and subtract enemies. If we are conscious of such little things, we will be able to harness and tap into the infinite capabilities of our mind. These inspiring guidelines will enable us one to lead a pleasant and blissful life.

(Translated from Swami Avdheshanand Giri Ji's GYAAN SUTRA (2007), Chapter 65)

Prabhu Premi Sangh

Swamiji's Upcoming Katha Schedule

- 26th November to Dec 2: Dhampteri (Bhagwad Katha)
- 11th December to 17th December: Vrindavan (Srimad Bhagwad katha)



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About the Organization...

'Prabhu Premi Sangh' is founded, directed and led by His Holiness Param Pujya Swami Avdheshanand Giriji Maharaj. Sri Swamiji is the spiritual Head of the age old JunaAkhada group of saints, the biggest of the thirteen saint akhadas in the country. Swamiji has also been nominated as Member of World Council of Religions, a council of great religious leaders devoted to the noble purpose of promoting world peace and communal harmony.

His divine vision for the spiritual and social welfare of mankind and his devoted efforts in this direction, led to the formation of Prabhu Premi Sangh. It has beautiful ashrams established in a divine, peaceful setting in the cities of Ambala and Haridwar, as well as numerous branches throughout India and abroad. Prabhu Premi Sangh is constantly engaged in various spiritual pursuits and programs with the mission to promote amongst society a spirit of selfless service, and impart spiritual knowledge via the study of scriptures, yoga camps, discourses and spiritual gatherings (satsang).



Please visit us online at: www.prabhupremisangh.org.



Feedback

Prabhu Premi Sangh's e-newsletter welcomes your suggestions, comments and queries. We invite you to share with us your viewpoints concerning spirituality, prayer and meditation. You can also send us your personal views, experiences with Swamiji which we will publish under the "Straight from the Heart" section. Please email us at prabhupremisanghnews@gmail.com.

"Broken faith makes a man a sinner."