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Following the Footsteps...

Volume 2, Issue 2

Prabhu Premi Sangh Newsletter



Upcoming festivals:
Holi: 11th March



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Reflections from Pujya Swamiji's Diary...



Dear Prabhu Premi,
Prabhu bless you.

Spirituality gives you the ability to reason and analyze in seeking moderation.

By controlling our desires and adopting moderation in everything that we desire, positive changes can be effected for the benefit of mankind.

If you cannot control your desires, it will be very harmful not only to you but also to mankind.

With blessings,
Swami Avdhesanand Giri.

Newsletter Summary



Hari Om!

The colorful festival of Holi is just around the corner. Announcing the arrival of spring, it is the festival of exuberance, color and joy. The vibrant colors of Holi represent positive energy, radiance and happiness. It is often associated with the immortal love Shri Krishna and Radha and hence, is spread over more than a week in the cities of Mathura, Vrindavan, Nandgaon, and Barsana.

Along with the festive spirit, Holi also represents

the essence of pure devotion. The story of five year old Prahlad is testament to the world of the power of devotion and reminds us even today that no matter how powerful people may claim to be, when their motives are not noble; they will ultimately succumb to God. The true power lies with the devotee.

"Health is the real wealth." In our latest section called "Health and Wellness", we will cover each month health related tips and ideas for physical fitness as well as emotional. and spiritual well-being.

Creating a healthy and harmonious environment for all is the need of the hour. The article "Ecological Balance" elucidates this aspect about harmony amongst the various elements of nature and explains our ecosystem from both a spiritual as well as a scientific perspective.

His Holiness Pujya Swamiji will continue to pursue spiritual practices and spiritual writing in solitude until May 31st. He will be in various places during this period.

Prahlad: The triumph of devotion



Prahlad's story is the story of faith, courage and devotion. His endless devotion toward's Bhagwan Vishnu enraged his father king Hiranakashyapu who demanded that Prahlad should worship him instead of the Lord. Prahlad believed that God is **omnipresent** and **omnipotent** and this undying faith made him fearless even in the most perilous situations. The power of Vishnu was so great that Prahlad was protected from the burning flames, while Holika, in spite of her wish, perished in the fire.

When Prahlad claimed about the omnipresence of God, Hiranakashyapu angrily questioned him if God was present in a particular pillar in the royal palace. Prahlad calmly said, "My God is everywhere." When Hiranakashyapu smashed the pillar into pieces, immediately Lord Narasimha emerged from the pillar to protect his devotee.

The Path of Devotion

The Sanskrit term "*Bhakti*" originates from the word '*Bhaj*', which literally means 'to be attached to God'. Devotion or "*Bhakti*" says Narada "is intense love of God". "*Bhakti* is love for love's sake." The devotee wants God and God alone. There is neither selfish expectation nor any fear.

Attachments to worldly things automatically dissolve when one gets attached to God. Both cannot co-exist. But one has to practice vairagya (mental renunciation) in order to develop personal love for God. "Where there is Kama, there cannot be Rama and where there is Rama there cannot be Kama".

Bhakti tends to attract people of an emotional nature. When emotion is led by devotion it is called ecstasy. Great things have been done in the world by people in such a state of ecstasy. Devotion that is completely selfless and devoid of any desires is *Nishkam bhakti* and that in which there is desire for some personal gain is *sakaam bhakti*.

The enemy of devotion is ego and desire. When desires are not fulfilled it leads to anger which destroys the peaceful state of mind. The fruit of *bhakti* is a pure, kind heart. It eradicates the evil qualities such as jealousy, pride, lust

and hatred giving way to kindness, compassion, selflessness and peace.

One must extend their love to the world and outside the circle of one's family and relatives reaching out and helping the poor, sick and less fortunate. When a person lives just for himself and a select few others, from a spiritual perspective, he doesn't exist at all. On the contrary, when he extends his love and compassion to the world, he truly lives the eternal life.

Bhakti ultimately culminates in knowledge (*Jnana*). They are not much different; they both converge and meet in the end.

Nine modes of Devotion

According to the Vishnu Purana, there are nine modes of *Bhakti*:

Sravana - This means listening to the Lilas of God by hearing his discourses and kathas. from holy and knowledgeable saints.

Kirtana - This includes chanting the names and singing the praises of God. Sri Ram Dass has spoken of this form of *bhakti* as follows "When you are in love with God, the very sound of the Name brings great joy."

Smarana means constant remembrance of His name and presence. A *bhakt* is constantly absorbed in the love for God. According to Sant Ramanuja, "Meditation, is constant remembrance, flowing like an unbroken

stream of oil poured from one vessel to another. When this kind of remembering has been attained all bondages break."

Padamsevana implies rendering service to the feet of God. This includes not only physically serving the *Ishta devta* and the Guru but also serving humanity.

Archana is worship and performing devotional ceremonies of God by offering flowers, fruits and incense to God. Even offering of one's divine qualities and prayers with feeling is accepted by God with love.

Vandana is prostrating before the Lord with humility. Offering *pranam* to God and the Guru is an essential component of the Indian culture. It helps to overcome feelings of self-

centeredness.

Dasya means cultivating the *bhava* of a devout servant by obedience and reverence. This will help eradicate the invisible seeds of pride and ego which are a great barrier in the path of spiritual progress and the devotee becomes kind and humble.

Sakhya means the cultivation of the relationship of friendship with God and visualizing him as the best and the only true friend.

Atmanivedana is complete offering or surrender is the highest aspect of *bhakti*. One must completely let go of desires and the "I" feeling. Both cannot exist. Love God with all your heart, mind and soul. The umbrella of his love is our only shelter through life and death.

Straight from the Heart - Mr. Surish Sharma



Hari Om! When one speaks of Swamiji, what instantly comes to my mind is purity, blessings and bliss. He is the solace to a disturbed mind and the kind reassurance in times of insecurity. He is also a gentle reminder of the infinite capabilities of man and the comforting promise of our well-being.

Swamiji's pragmatic approach towards physical, mental and spiritual discipline leaves one feeling complete and his kind words hold the power to lead the ignorant to enlightenment. He has paved the path to divinity and accomplished the rarest spiritual milestones.

Having weathered all possible hurdles, he is

determined in his spiritual pursuits and in his vision to uplift mankind in all spheres and lead them to divinity.

He envisions India to blossom in the future as never before. Prabhu Premi Sangh is constantly engaged in relieving the burdens and miseries of the deprived, making him the cynosure of many hearts. He also occupies a special place in the heart of youngsters, who are the future of this country.

I remember one particular instance, when he described the word "Yuvak" (youth) as follows:

Ya represents for Yatan (effort)

U is for Urja (positive

Va implies Vivek (discrimination) and

Ka means Karam (or Action)

A young person though by nature has a lot of inherent positive energy, dreams and aspirations; it must also be directed by self efforts and discrimination, Swamiji explained.

When these elements are ingrained in the exact manner, youthfulness can be sustained in any nation, corporate house or family. Youthfulness both in terms of age and temperament lead to creativity, consciousness and awareness.

One can witness Swamiji's relentless efforts towards creating a structure and

system to instill values in society. His upcoming Bhopal project reflects this where a blend of modern and conventional culture will be inculcated. Such youth will be the torch bearers of his preaching and mission.

Swamiji's blessings on us are God's grace and kindness. May his holiness be with you always.



Readers are welcome to contribute their personal experiences and anecdotes. Please email your article to: prabhupremisanghnews@gmail.com.

Health and Wellness

Health Tip:

If the body is the temple of God, we must strive to keep it healthy and fit. Exercise is the first step towards maintaining a healthy body and only when the body is healthy, can the mind and emotions be channeled to tap the inherent positivity.

One of the great exercises for people of all age groups is walking. Regularly taking long brisk walks or jogs (about 1 hour) in the fresh air in the morning and evening keeps the body supple and the mind alert.

Mind Power:

With modern life filled with stressful situations and unhealthy lifestyles, like the body, the mind needs to be to be nourished too. The mind is the storehouse of the infinite capabilities.



Our scriptures assert the significance of "svadhyaya" or spiritual study which means studying religious scriptures like the Bhagavad Gita or any other inspirational book.

"Reading is to the brain what exercise is to the body." Reading good books helps relieve anxiety, depression and provides rejuvenation. But one cannot truly draw inspiration by merely flipping over the pages. One must study with the heart, understanding and imbibing every single word."

Holistic Living:

Meditation in the early hours before sunrise is an excellent spiritual practice. One must try to practice at the same time daily and preferably in the same place. One can meditate on the Guru or their Ishtha devata.

Meditation teaches you meditation. Perseverance and regularity in practice will lead to spiritual progress. Meditation before sleeping gives a sound peaceful sleep, which in turns helps one awaken with freshness and vitality.

Food for thought:

"Food makes the mind." Lord Krishna speaks about food that is freshly prepared, promotes longevity, strength and cheerfulness. Also, whatever one eats or drinks, should be offered to God first.

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH

"By doing Japa with consciousness, alertness and wakefulness, one attains concentration."

Naam japa is the easy way to reach God in this Iron Age (kalyug). When one repeats the mantra with consciousness, it sanctifies the mind and increases concentration. Meditation follows this concentration.



Ecological Balance -Swami Anand Giri Ji

Rigveda says:-

“The Sky is like Father, The Earth is like Mother and
the Space as their Son
The Universe consisting the three is like a family,
Any kind of damage done to
Any one of the three
Throws the Universe,
Out of balance “

As would be seen from above, the Vedas which are the oldest Scriptures in the World have given a word of caution that no damage should be done to the planet Earth, the Space and the Sky and a proper balance should be maintained in all activities for the continuity and survival of mankind and other species created by the Supreme.

Ecological balance is a state of perfect equilibrium within the same type and various other type of organisms in which genetic phenomena and ecological system remain relatively stable while the process of subtle changes continue to take place through the natural succession.

Nature works on ecological systems which provide for an atmosphere of harmony and required opportunities for the growth of all. The various components of the ecological systems are very much interconnected and inter-knit in a sequence by the Supreme as the atoms in a molecule are arranged on a set pattern. In an eco-system Nature has provided a self-balancing mechanism through which each component remains in perfect harmony with each other. The system as a whole sustains mankind and other species. It is God's gift to the living beings to enable them to live on this planet and lead a healthy and happy life.

The major chunk of the functioning of the ecosystem is based on regular flow of energy by the Sun, its storage by the mother Earth and distribution by the Space. Energy captured through the Sun then flows through the food chain to primary consumers and on to secondary consumers and so forth. Earth's atmosphere maintains its oxygen level-global air currents mix the atmosphere and maintain nearly the same balance of elements in areas of intense biological activity and in areas of slight biological activity.

The oceans are large tanks which store water, ensure thermal and climatic stability as well as convert the chemical elements to large oceanic currents. If there is a disturbance at any one point it is bound to have the reactions all over the system and if not mended on time the system is bound to disintegrate and collapse. The ecological balance is being upset by misuse, abuse and excessive use of resources of the environment. This has a bearing on the very existence of human race. When we disturb the Nature thereby disturbing the ecological balance the impact on human life is highly damaging.

It is said that the thought waves have the highest level of frequency and velocity, just think of moon and lo! you perceive you are there on the moon in a fraction of a second. Both the positive and negative waves traverse the ethereal space also called the celestial region beyond the atmospheric region and affect the ecological system qualitatively and quantitatively, materially and spiritually, depending on their intensity. As such for the harmony, happiness and a homogenous life for all the genetic species be they be men, animals; insects or in any other form the positive thought currents provide the favorable results and the negative currents provide sorrows, miseries and disturbances. Each self realized person works for the removal of poverty, miseries and sorrows from the Earth as ultimately all are part and parcel of the same phenomena that is called Nature or God.

Super conscious spiritual minds meditate regularly and as their thoughts contract inwardly and the Atman or the soul reaches its primordial stage it merges with the infinite i.e. the Supreme or the Divine. According to the faith, enshrined in the Scriptures of Hindu religion, the astral bodies continue their journey to evolution until they desire to be reborn again and the cycle of birth, death and rebirth continues until the person's soul has removed the moss and attained the highest level of consciousness. When the ecological balance is highly disturbed and cannot be controlled by human effort, making it almost impossible for the beings to live on this Earth, it is then that God descends on the Earth to annihilate the negativities so that an ideal ecological balance necessary for the survival and happy living of mankind and other creatures is set in motion.

To be continued in the next issue....

Prabhu Premi Sangh

Swamiji's Upcoming schedule

- Till 31st May 2009: Various places.



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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.

"Tomorrow is the lesson of the present and the present is presented by God."