

September 2009

Following the Footsteps...

Prabhu Premi Sangh Newsletter



Volume 2, Issue 9

Upcoming festivals:

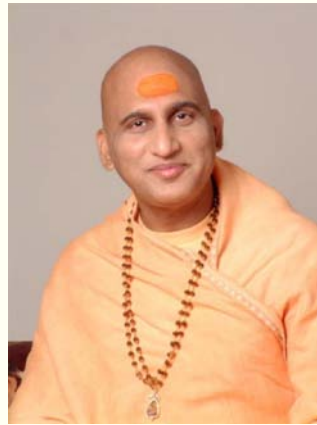
- Diwali: October 17



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Reflections from Pujya Swamiji's Diary...



Inspiring pearls of wisdom from the diary of Pujya Acharya Sri....

Dear Prabhu Premi,

Prabhu bless you.

Time is precious. It works in the favor of those who recognize its importance. Only those who make profitable utilization of their time can achieve the spiritual heights where joy and solutions permeate.

A person who makes good utilization of his time never feels that time is short. The sole way to lead an enriched and happy life is to make good and meaningful use of one's time.

*With blessings,
Swami Avdhesanand Giri*

Newsletter Summary

Hari Om!

Diwali, the Indian festival of lights is a time for celebration, togetherness, thanksgiving and cheerful optimism. It is a time when all enmities are forgotten and hatred and ignorance give way to kindness, forbearance, love and knowledge.

Diwali is also the celebration of the inner light, which is effulgent,

continuous, pure and eternal.

The current issue seeks to bring about spiritual illumination in the minds of the readers and enable them to connect to the Divine.

In this edition, you will discover the power of Bhakti (devotion) and Naam (Divine name), two indispensable tools in the spiritual path. We also speak about how

one can develop spiritual strength through discrimination and knowledge.

Diwali is also the perfect time to reflect upon the qualities of Lord Ram. His exemplary leadership style is discussed in the article 'Leadership from a spiritual perspective.'

During the month of October, Pujya Swamiji will be in various places.

A Devotee's Love

Queen Kunti was a pure hearted devotee of Shri Krishna. When the Lord was about to depart from the city of Hastinapur, she was overcome with intense feelings of separation. Unable to hold back her emotions, she stood with folded palms in front of his chariot, and prayed to Him with humility.

Shri Krishna, who was used to paying his respectful obeisances to his elderly aunt, was surprised to see her offering her prayers and asked, "Dear Aunt, why are you standing in my way like this? You should have just called upon me if you needed to meet me."

Tears welled up in Kunti's eyes. She said, "Dear Krishna, "All this while I was considering you my nephew. But today I am convinced that you are the Lord. You are not an ordinary mortal. You are the Supreme Being from whom Lord Brahma has taken birth. You are garlanded with lotuses and possess beautiful lotus-like eyes. I bow down to you again and again.

Dear Krishna, you have protected us from every crisis. You protected us from poisoned food, from fire, and numerous other calamities. It was you who shielded Draupadi from the assembly of the wicked. At each and every step, you have saved us. How can I adequately describe your grace? And yes, when you were a little child, I had come to Gokul to witness your childhood pastimes. I cannot ever forget that loveable form of yours, when Mother Yashoda had tied you up, and you who are the Lord of Lords, were trembling in fear at the sight of your mother's fury. What a wonderful 'leela' that was."

Shri Krishna stood quietly listening to all this. He asked her again why she was standing in his path but she continued...

Completely immersed in the glory of Krishna, she kept reminiscing his divine acts of grace. "Has there ever been a single instance when you did not protect us? During the war you were

beside my children each moment.

If you would not have protected the Pandavas, could they have possibly emerged victorious from the great war? How can one ever elucidate your greatness?" Saying this she broke down into tears...

Krishna stepped forward and embraced his aunt. He wiped her tears and gently placed his hand over her forehead, bestowing his blessing upon her. He said, "But you still haven't told me why you are standing in my path. Please tell me freely what is on your mind."

Finally, Kunti said, "Lord, I want that you should not leave us and go at this time. I desire that you should live with us, because we will all be orphaned without you here. Further, I ask you to grant us with the boon that every moment of our life is filled with misery and unhappiness."

Hearing this Shri Krishna asked, "What is this that you are asking for? You have already suffered so much in your life. Now the time has finally come for you to live

happily. And you are praying for sorrow?"

She said, "Yes. Because it is only in times of sorrow, that we think of you. Only in distress does man remember God. If there is happiness, then he forgets God. However, if there is constant remembrance of the Lord in sorrow, then that sorrow is equivalent to happiness, how can one term that as unhappiness?"

Queen Kunti was right. The presence of happiness makes a person egoistic, because man gives himself the credit for his success, but blames God for the problems in his life. And this is also the reason for unhappiness.

Shri Krishna cannot ever be separated from his devotee...and upon the request of Kunti, the Lord did not go to Dwarka and turned back. Thus, if one seeks God with devotion like Kunti, then He can never go far away.

(Excerpt from Swami Avdheshanand Ji's 'Adhyatmik Kathaaein')

FUN FACT!



During the ninth Lunar month, there is a 9-10 days "Vegetarian Festival" celebrated by Chinese in Thailand. This festival is believed to have started 150 years ago when the Chinese Opera troupe that traveled to perform for Chinese miners in Phuket Island were struck with killer malaria disease. Vegetarian fasting was observed to please the Gods. The ritual continues till today. Common practices include abstinence from meat or any meat products, as well as alcohol. It is believed that the discipline of cleansing body and soul will keep them healthy and strong for the year to come. Other spectacular events include street processions, people running on burning coal, and walking on bladed rod. Vegetarian/ Vegan street foods can be identified by a "yellow flag" symbol.

Did you know? The nine days of Vegetarian Festival often coincide with our nine days of Navratris!

Health and Wellness

Nama- pathy

'Naam Japa' means constant repetition of the Divine name. 'Japa' is a great physical and mental tonic and a panacea for all evils.

Says Swami Sivananda "When Allopathy, Homeopathy, Chromopathy, Naturopathy, Ayurveda and other 'pathies' fail to cure a disease, the Divine Namapathy alone can save you. There is no true happiness for him or her here and hereafter who has forgotten the Lord."

In the Gurbani it is mentioned, "*Sab Rogon ka Aukhad Naam*" i.e. the Divine Name is the cure for



all ills.' In this Iron Age, (kalyug) 'Naam simran' is the surest, fastest and easiest way to God. Japa purifies the mind and washes away all sins. It reduces negative tendencies such as anger, greed, and lust.

Regular practice of Japa has great physical, mental and spiritual benefits. It reduces stress, promotes relaxation and gives a feeling of overall wellbeing. In times of illness, it aids the healing process.

A person with an unstable mind finds it hard to think clearly, but one who has steadied his mind through the practice of Japa acquires the power to remain tranquil in all circumstances. Neither is he extremely overjoyed with success nor extremely heartbroken with failure and develops the strength to endure adverse situations with calmness.

A person who regularly practices japa will thus find himself much happier, healthier and more productive. It brings about an amazing transformation in the individual and he becomes more tolerant, forgiving and kind.

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH



"The world is filled with sorrow but the Almighty is an ocean of happiness."

Leadership from a Spiritual Perspective

The great Indian epics like the Ramayana and the Bhagavad Gita contain invaluable lessons for leadership which can provide excellent insight and guidance to any organization or society.

While the management philosophy of organizations today stresses on productivity and results, the ancient wisdom of our scriptures asks us to work not only towards achieving results, but also towards acquiring mental peace and self-satisfaction.

Long before the modern management gurus had proposed their theories, our ancient sages had explained similar management concepts which display their farsightedness and concern. Hundreds of year later, even though there have been huge changes in technology and ideas, these leadership traits are more relevant than ever.

4 Important C's of leadership

Some of the qualities that are involved in the making of a good leader are as follows:

Character: Character is the core of successful leadership. Leadership does not come from merely occupying a particular position, or by delegating orders. It is righteousness, good ethics, and a strong value system that lay the foundation of a true leader.

A good leader always has a clear vision, noble intentions and works selflessly for the benefit of others.

Courage: Another fundamental quality of an exemplary leader is courage. Says Napoleon, "Standing up for what you believe in regardless of the odds and pressure that tears at your resistance is courage." Lord Ram is the

perfect example of a righteous and courageous leader. He upheld his moral principles in spite of great resistance and difficulties. When Arjuna was dejected and seeing his kith and kin in the war, said, "I will not fight", then, Shri Krishna motivated and inspired him to be brave. Abandoning all fears, he told him that he should fulfill his duty.

Confidence: Mahatma Gandhi once wrote, "If I have the belief that I can do it, I will surely acquire the capacity to do it, even if I may not have it at the beginning." A good leader is driven by self confidence and has faith not just in himself, but also believes in the ability of his subordinates. Thus, the responsibility of a leader is also to sow the seeds of leadership. Lord Rama displayed this quality at all times and he inspired Sugreev and Vibhishan to become rulers.

Compassion: Lord Rama is also the ideal example of a



compassionate leader. Compassion enables one to bring transformation in others by empowering them such that they become more understanding and co-operative.

In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna said to Arjuna, "The enlightened people treat everyone as equal." Compassion in an organization is about showing care and concern which can help retain talented employees thus reducing employee turnover.

Contemplation of the Truth



Family, friends, wealth, are all useless in times of natural disaster. There is no previous preparation or time during such moments of distress. Neither are there any means to counteract the events. No one can think of or sense it in advance.

What a divine irony that it occurs from time to time, impacting many lives at the same time. All the wealth and luxury items that one ever accumulated vanish. They don't accompany us. We then depend on other people to begin re-creating and making provisions for the future.

We all must make ourselves spiritually strong and be prepared in order to face the divine tragedy. We must awaken the inner power in us given by the Lord. We must abandon the habit of being dependent and try to minimize our desires.

If our inner spiritual power is strong and determined, we will definitely have the capacity to face the tragedies. In the face of obstacles, people get completely confused and lose strength to do anything. In a state of chaos, we lose our loved objects, dear ones, and close relations. It becomes unclear who is close and who is distant, who belongs to you and who does not.

This situation cannot be expressed in words. To increase one's spiritual power, it is beneficial for individuals to walk on the path of dharma (righteousness) and remember God at all times. This is God's gift which is available to everyone.

This spiritual power enables us to understand how to overcome obstacles, tolerate pain, and maintain a balance. To increase our spiritual strength, we must lead a life of discipline. One should understand and accept that physical life ultimately comes to an end. One who is born will eventually die. Spiritual and divine life is the shield that helps us protect ourselves and others in times of need.

Prabhu Premi Sangh

Swamiji's Upcoming schedule

- October 1st to October 31st 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.

"Our spiritual demand is the Guru."