

October 2009

Following the Footsteps...

Prabhu Premi Sangh Newsletter



Volume 2, Issue 10

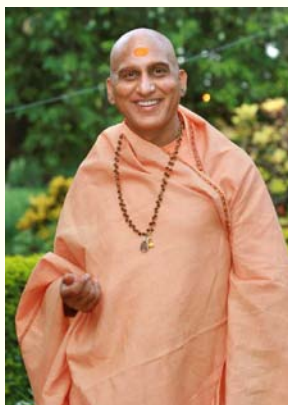
Upcoming events:

- Prakashotsav:
November 2
- Bhagavad Katha :
November 22
to 28

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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.

Truth is our very nature and the Light of Truth enables us to discover the real meaning of life.

Realization of the true nature of our existence brings supreme joy. The forgetfulness of one's nature is the root of unhappiness. The illumination of Self Knowledge enables the introspective spiritual seeker to attain Self Realization.

Best wishes on the occasion of Prakshotsav.

*With blessings,
Swami Avdheshanand Giri*

Newsletter Summary

Hari Om!

After lighting diyas on Diwali, the celebration of 'light' continues this month as we approach the sacred occasion of 'Prakashotsav'.

Our current issue is dedicated to this festival, and to the holy Kartik month, which the Lord Himself proclaims is the dearest month to Him. On Kartik Purnima, also known as Dev Diwali, and which coincides with Guru

Nanak Jayanti and the Jain Light Festival, it is believed that the gods descend the earth.

Another significant event in the month of November is Gita Jayanti, (November 28th) which marks the birth anniversary of the Bhagavad Gita. In the article, "The Bhagavad Gita and Us" we explore the practicality of this sacred scripture which can enable us to counter situations of any kind.

In the month of October,

Pujya Swamiji delivered a spiritual discourse in NCR Noida which was attended by hundreds of prabhu premis. Swamiji also presided over a meeting of Prabhu Premi Sangh volunteers held in Haridwar.

In the forthcoming month, Pujya Acharya Sri will be conducting Shrimad Bhagavad Katha in the city of Kurukshetra.

Enlightening Words of the Guru

The Guru's word (mantra) is like a lamp which guides the aspirant on his spiritual journey. As and when the seeker drifts away from his path, the lamp of knowledge helps him to drive away the darkness and move forward.

A disappointed seeker once went to a saint. He was in search of light but he could not comprehend the spiritual path. He said to the saint, "I am bored with my life. The same old life...how can I achieve liberation? Please tell me a solution such that the obscurity within gets destroyed, and my disturbed mind obtains some peace."

The saint looked at the aspirant, and giving him a book, he said, "Study this book with all your heart. Get wholly immersed into its words. The deeper you explore and the more you imbibe it, the more you will be able to learn about the ways and truth of life. The darkness of your mind will vanish, and you will experience illumination.

You will thus find the path that you seek. "

The aspirant became pleased. He became engrossed in the pages of the book. He got completely immersed in each and every word such that he could not think of anything apart from the book.

One day he went to the saint again and said, "What you advised me was correct. When I get immersed in the book every part of me comes alive with happiness. I sometimes begin to hear a sweet melody resonating in my mind. When I transcend into the deeper meaning of the words, I experience great joy. However when I come out of the insightfulness of those words, I experience an empty kind of feeling. As though, what I had attained, I have suddenly lost. The initial dilemma begins to surface again, and once again darkness takes over, escaping from which I have come to seek your guidance. I am now experiencing a feeling of

emptiness. Please advise what I should do."

The saint smiled. He knew that this is what generally happens. He began to relate a story of two friends who were travelling together at nighttime. One of them was carrying a lantern, while the other did not have one. Hence only one lantern was guiding them both. However, after a certain point, the friend who had a lantern had to change his route because he had to go in the other direction. The two friends had to part ways from that point. The one who had the light of the lantern kept progressing further with conviction, having neither fear nor doubt on his path. But the one who did not, could not proceed on his path and lost his way in the darkness. The aspirant understood the message of this story.

Our sages say that knowledge of the Guru and God, is like a lantern which drives away the darkness and provides illumination. But one who doesn't have the

knowledge of God, or who has not acquired knowledge of the Guru, wanders, forgets his path and gets absorbed in the darkness. The Guru showers equal grace on all. He gives the same 'word' (mantra) and in the same manner to each one. It is those who imbibed, meditated upon and believed in the Guru's word (mantra) have found their way through the Guru's grace and by surrendering to the Guru.

The word of the Guru is the lamp or lantern which gives light but the real light is that, which through the Guru mantra, radiates in the heart of the disciple. True light is obtained by lighting one's own inner lamp, i.e. by practicing the 'mantra', and imbibing it within oneself. But one who doesn't light his own lamp, doesn't practice, and doesn't believe in the Guru's word, is bound to wander in the darkness.

(Excerpt from Swami Avdheshanand Ji's 'Sadhana Mantra')

'You are what you Eat'

Purity of food is essential to maintain purity of mind as the kind of food one takes influences the mental makeup of a person. This is an excerpt from Mahabharata that explains this concept:

When Bheeshma Pitamaha was lying on the bed of arrows, giving discourses on Dharma, Draupadi asked, "Pitamaha, while you're giving inspirational lessons on Gyaan and Dharma, would you mind if I asked you a question?" Pitamaha

responded, "Go ahead, Feel free to ask your question, child."

Draupadi then said, "Pitamaha! My question is bitter. I am sure that you remember the time when Dushasana pulled me by my hair, Karan used inappropriate words and Duryodhana insulted me in front of everybody. I was on my knees, begging for mercy. Why did you turn a blind eye at that time? Where did you put away your wealth of knowledge

and wisdom at that time? How did you allow a woman to face such an insult?"

Bheeshma Pitamaha responded, "Dear daughter, you are what you eat. At that time, I was eating sinful grains from Duryodhan. Hence, I was not able to talk about responsibilities and duties as the blood running in me was formed from impure food. Arjun's arrows have helped rid my body of that blood. As a result, I am purified and now able to talk about Dharma again."

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH



"Ego is one of the greatest enemies of the seeker. A man devoid of egoism is dear to the Lord."

Spiritual Discourse Held in Noida

A spiritual discourse by Pujya Swamiji was organized by Prabhu Premi Sangh, Noida on Sunday, 25th October 2009. The discourse lasted approximately for one hour and was attended by close to 800 devotees from various parts of Delhi, Noida, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Gurgaon, etc who were excited to be part of this special event.

During this discourse, Pujya Swamiji described the greatness of the sacred Kartik month during which many prominent festivals like Bhai Dooj, Karwa Chauth,

Diwali and Kartik Purnima occur. It is a time for internal as well as external purification.

The Kartik month is also a time to offer our prayers to Mother Nature, said Swamiji. We must sustain and protect our environment with our best efforts, and avoid any misuse. The goddess Earth (Dharti) is the consort of Lord Vishnu, while water is a life sustaining nectar. We must therefore live in harmony with nature and refrain from acting against it. Obeying the laws of nature is imperative to lead a successful and happy life.

The five elements of nature i.e. earth, water, fire, air and

space are associated with our five senses of sight, smell, hearing, touch, and taste. Swamiji hence advised us to utilize the five senses in a positive and creative manner and for the welfare of others. Along with our physical environment, we must also strive to keep our social and personal environment pure by refraining from negative habits like quarrelling, gossiping, or backbiting.

Describing the meaning of the Sanskrit terms, '**Manasa Vacha Karmana**', Swamiji stressed the purity of mind, speech and action and synchronization of these three aspects in our daily lives.

Salutations to Guru

In the Yogshastra, it is said that ignorance is the cause of all afflictions - '**Avidhya Uttaresham**'

Ignorance is considered as darkness. We all get deluded in this darkness. Due to ignorance, there occurs the misapprehension of the Truth. And thus our whole life becomes full of sorrows.

All our efforts are directed towards removing sorrow from our life. And sometimes we do succeed in doing this, but this experience of happiness lasts for a very short period of time. One sorrow goes away and another comes our way; the series continues...

The only way to come out of this darkness is to bring light into our life. To get rid of this darkness of ignorance we will have to

take refuge in Knowledge. Therefore the Shruti scriptures advise the seeker to approach a Guru (A great Master) to gain this Knowledge - '**Sah Gurumevabhigacchet**'. Guru is the remover of ignorance. By removing the ignorance of the disciple, the Guru establishes him in the non-dual Self, which is Existence, consciousness and Bliss. Therefore Bhagwan Shankaracharya says that to be in the company of such a great Master is one of the most difficult things in life.

We are really blessed that we have Pujya Gurudev in our life. Pujya Gurudev is the wonderful combination of ancient knowledge and modern understanding. He is the personification of kindness and love. A great Master whose heart is soaked in devotion for the Lord. Though we cannot

give anything to such a Master who is totally contented with the Self, yet we must avail all possible opportunities to offer our humble prostrations to His Lotus Feet and pray to Him to guide us on the Path of Truth.

'Karthik Purnima', also known as 'Prakashotsava' among the devotees and followers of Prabhu Premi Sangh, which is on 2nd November this year, is one such opportunity available to us when we can offer our sincere obeisance to our beloved Gurudev.

On the auspicious occasion of Prakashotsava I extend my heartfelt best wishes to all and pray to the Lord that may our hearts be always filled with the true love and devotion for Gurudev and may we become able to tread the path of righteousness.

- Umesh Ji

PUJYA GURUDEV



Like a flower that spreads its fragrance everywhere,

You bestow on all your love and care,

Like the vast blue sky and the dazzling sun,

You protect and enlighten each one.

An ocean of knowledge, bliss and grace,

Your warm smile is sufficient to make one's day.

With a persona marked with true wisdom and simplicity,

You are the embodiment of truth and divinity.

The hope of the dejected, the strength of the weak,

Always giving us more love than we expect or seek.

Your forgiving nature and comfort for the insecure,

Can transform the most sinful and render them pure.

You are the journey, companion and goal,

Enlightening our spiritual path, you are the Light of our Soul.

Wish you a very Happy Birthday!

The Bhagavad Gita and Us

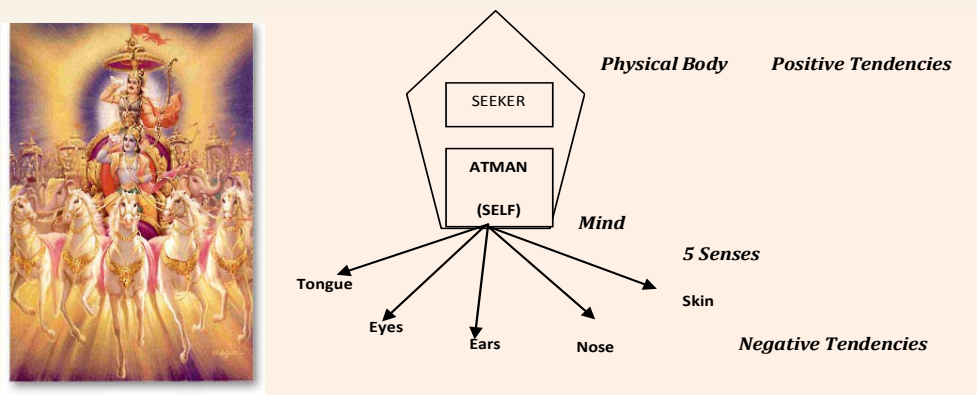
In our day to day lives we face many dilemmas leaving us in a state of confusion and chaos. Then we question ourselves- What should we do? What is the right course of action? The Bhagavad Gita teaches us to make intelligent choices. It can provide an answer for all problems and clear up all our doubts. Our scriptures assure us that there is no human mind and intellect which cannot be purified by regular study of the Gita. In the 18 chapters and 700 verses of the Bhagavad Gita, lie the solutions to all questions of mankind.

As a result, the Bhagavad Gita often called 'The Book of life'. It imparts courage to those who are afraid and tranquility, to those who are disturbed. It inspires one to be brave and follow one's duty, without thinking about the result and offering the fruit of all actions to God.

The historical battle of Kurukshetra carries an important message for us. It is representative of the battle that we are waging on a daily basis between our divine and demoniac nature. This world is a perpetual battlefield, and the war between righteousness and unrighteousness is taking place in our own hearts. Our enemies are our own negative tendencies such as ignorance, fear, ego, anger, greed, selfishness.

The physical body is the chariot and the four wheels of the chariot are our four limbs. The five horses symbolize the five senses (tongue, eyes, ears, nose and skin). These senses have a tendency to operate in different directions, and need to be regulated through discrimination. The reins of the chariot which are used to manage the five horses represent the human mind.

Lord Krishna who was the charioteer symbolizes Supreme Knowledge (Inner Self), which manifests as the Guru or spiritual teacher and guides Arjun, the passenger, who represents the seeker. Thus the Guru instructs us and guides us on the spiritual path, enabling us to think clearly and act properly.



Movement of the chariot of our body is made possible by a combined activity of the Atman (Charioteer), the senses (horses) and the Mind (reins). The Gita reminds us, that in the path to perfection, self-interest and unrighteousness may seem to dominate at first, but eventually, righteousness will always win. When the Lord is the companion, victory is certain.

Prabhu Premi Sangh

Swamiji's Upcoming schedule

- November 1st to November 2nd 2009: Ambala (Prakashotsav)
- November 3rd to November 21st 2009 : Different Places
- November 22nd to November 28th 2009 : Kurukshetra (Shrimad Bhagavad 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.

"The best preparation for a better life in the future is to live a harmonious and joyous life in the present."