

May 2010

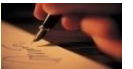
Following the Footsteps...

Prabhu Premi Sangh Newsletter



Volume 3, Issue 4

Reflections from Pujya Swamiji's Diary...



Inside this issue...

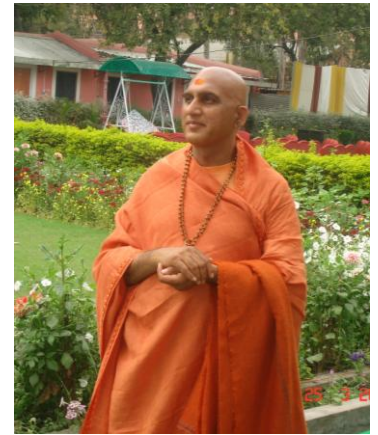
- Reflections from Pujya Swamiji's diary
- News in a Nutshell
- Harmonization of Spiritualism with Materialism is Essential
- Spiritual Q and A
- World Summit of Religious Leaders Held at Baku
- Thought of the Month
- Ganga Dusshera
- Story: Immovable Faith

Dear Prabhu Premi,

Prabhu bless you.

Seekers engaged in the search of Truth should carefully work towards developing purity of the mind. Only a person who has attained inner purification can achieve Self-Realization.

Steadfast devotion towards the Guru, regularity in one's spiritual practices, unfaltering faith in the mantra and earnest commitment towards the goal, can enable the spiritual seeker to achieve success on the spiritual path.



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

*With love,
Swami Avdheshanand Giri*

News in a Nutshell

Hari Om!

The lotus flower is a symbol of immaculate purity. It grows in the mud and yet remains untouched by the impurities of its surroundings. By rising above the swamp of muddy waters, and blossoming into a beautiful flower, it sets the perfect example for mankind. It is possible even for humans to dwell in the world and yet remain above it.

The current issue encourages us to lead the divine life, by maintaining purity in our thoughts and actions, through devotion and spiritual practice.

On April 26 and 27, H.H. Swamiji participated in the 'World Summit of Religious Leaders' held at Baku, Azerbaijan, where He represented the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha from India. Following this, spiritual discourses and

talks were conducted in different cities including Haridwar, Ambala, Ahmedabad, Mandi Gobindgarh, etc.

In the month of June, His Holiness will be touring different places abroad and participating in two key International Conferences - '2010 Interfaith Religious Leaders Summit for G8 Nations' at Canada and 'Yoga World's Day' at Portugal.

Harmonization of Spiritualism with Materialism is Essential

The *Yoga of Maharishi Patanjali* is extremely significant. It begins when one goes beyond the mind. The real existence of the consciousness is beyond the mind, and by rising above the mind; the individual personality acquires divinity, completeness and all-pervasiveness.

Our mind is characterized by obstinacy, containing painful memories of the past and innumerable fantasies of the future. We want to live in the 'known' and are afraid of the 'unknown element'. That is why we cannot muster the courage to do something new, because the unknown element seems esoteric and mysterious. It is true that only those people, who are brave enough to dive into the 'unknown', can do something innovative in this world. It is only in the 'unknown' that secrets are revealed, self-introspection takes place, and fear, doubts and illusion get

destroyed.

The mind is filled with feelings of self-centeredness and limited thinking. Hence, in order to recognize one's identity with the Great, Infinite and Endless, one has to transcend the levels of consciousness.

We have focused our life on the outside. Home and property, wealth and possessions, power and status, etc are all external forms of focus. From here, begins the journey of decline of life. Generally a person associates himself only with the external aspects of his personality and identity. That is why, he also lays down the criteria for being outwardly happy.

In ancient times, the factors that lead to greatness amongst individuals were character, elevated thinking, perseverance, duty, discipline, effort, and integrity. Today, superficiality and pretentiousness have taken



over.

A person having accumulated some material possessions considers that further growth in these assets is the ultimate aim of life. In the end, he repents that "Whatever I had attained in life, all that is being forcefully taken away from me. The wealth, status and authority for which I had spent sleepless nights and anxious days, I have to unwillingly leave it all at the time of death."

Realized beings who have known the Ultimate Reality say that the sorrow which such an individual experiences is not of death, but that of having to leave everything behind. Further, he does not know where he

will go after death. The focal point of the philosophy of Indian sages is both 'life and death'. In the contemporary world, we focus only on the 'life' aspect and all the concepts of progress and modern science are centered around life. Man remains frightened of death, which is why he is never ready to think anything about death.

Our culture has never been opposed to materialism, science or progress. But it is also true that we have considered the ultimate goal of our life to be Self-Realization.

The meaning of all this is that without the harmonization of spiritualism with materialism, the hope of a healthy, glorious and happy world will only be a dream.

(Excerpt from H.H. Swami Avdheshanand Ji's 'Gyaan Sutra')

Spiritual Q and A



Question: *How can one live in the world and yet be above the plane of worldly desires?*

Answer: Even when while living in the world, do we all have a desire for every single thing? No. It is not possible for our desires to be of every possible kind. No two people have the exact same taste or liking. Some people have a taste for sweet foods, others prefer spicy, while some enjoy extra spicy foodstuffs.

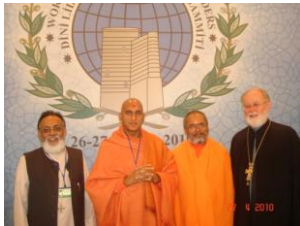
In this way, while we all have desires, we know for sure that not everyone desires everything. Just like we have a certain desire for a few things, and we remain distant from other desires, in the same way, it is also possible to separate or distance ourselves from our existing desires.

In reality, you do not live in this world. You dwell in the Lord. It is the body, senses, mind and intellect which live in the world. And you are none of these. You associate yourself with what isn't really yours, while you do not associate yourself with that Supreme Lord who really belongs to you. This is the biggest mistake.

By recognizing and remembering your identity with the Lord, you can rise above the plane of material desires.

World Summit of Religious Leaders held at Baku

Heads and representatives of the major Christian churches, Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist and Hindu communities from more than thirty two countries worldwide came together to participate in the 'World Summit of Religious Leaders' held on April 26 and 27, 2010 at Baku in Azerbaijan.



Representing the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha from India, H.H.Swamiji participated in this two-day Summit, and was accompanied by H.H. Swami Paramatmananda Saraswati Ji.

The Summit was organized

by the Inter-Religious Council of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

The main theme of this forum was 'Globalization, religion, traditional values' where the leaders discussed the impact of globalization on religion and traditional values. The objective of this Summit was to discuss the dialogue of civilizations, ways to achieve a peaceful world order, to overcome existing threats, and give a new impetus to interreligious dialogue.

At the end of the Summit, the leaders signed a Final Declaration which states that the globalization of economy, politics, law, culture remains a complex process. While it has brought a number of practical benefits to provide answers to the general challenges in many fields,



the impact of global processes on the spiritual sphere is given a negative assessment by many. Moreover, globalization does not eliminate the threats for security of states, nations and people.

The Declaration further speaks about the growing problems of social inequality, starvation, environmental pollution, armed conflict on the national-religious ground which are yet to find their solutions.

In their Declaration, the leaders appealed for the development of inter-religious collaboration at all

levels and in all formats. Highlighting the importance of such inter-faith dialogue, it states "There was no alternative to inter-religious dialogue in the 20th century, and there is no alternative today. And we, religious leaders, must do everything in our power to preserve peace among nations and peoples."

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH



"You can become what you wish to. You only need to develop your willpower and become strongly determined."

Ganga Dusshera

'Ganga Dusshera' is a ten-day festival celebrated in the the *Jyeshtha* month in June which marks the birthday or the descent of Mother Ganges on the Earth. It is believed that on the 10th day of the *Shukla Paksha* of the *Jyeshtha* month, the Goddess Ganga descended on the earth. In 2010, the date of this festival is June 21, 2010.

According to popular legend, Mother Ganga initially flowed only in heaven. By the arduous penance and austerities performed by King Bhagirath, she was brought down to the earth. This is why she is also referred to as '*Bhagirathi*'.

However, since the earth was not prepared enough to withstand the Ganga's

strong flow, Lord Shiv was asked to intervene in order to protect the earth from being swept away with her torrential flow. Lord Shiv agreed, and He coolly received the Mother Ganga in his matted locks, allowing her to drip down and fall gently on the plains.

On Ganga Dusshera, many devotees flock to the banks of the Ganga River to take a holy dip. Those who cannot reach the banks of Ganga, pray and worship Gangajal in their homes, and if even this is not possible, then many devotees bathe with ordinary water but mentally invoke the blessings of Mother Ganga through their prayers.

Several worship ceremonies, festivities and rituals are conducted on the banks of



the Ganga during Ganga Dusshera.

Each day at sunset, Ganga Aarti is performed, and hundreds of leaf boats decorated with colorful flowers, and tiny lamps are set afloat in the River Ganges.

The River Ganga occupies a significant place in lives of Indian people. In the Bhagavad Gita, the Lord Himself proclaims, "Of the flowing rivers, I am the Ganges." A dip in this sacred river done with true faith is said to cleanse one

of all sins. Nearly every home contains a bottle or container of 'Ganga Jal' which is used for the purpose of purification.

Even today, scientists find it difficult to comprehend the sanctity of the Ganga water which distinguishes it from ordinary water. Some research states that there is an unknown or 'mysterious factor' which gives it its self-purifying quality. While ordinary water being kept in airtight containers can get contaminated over time, Ganga Jal does not lose its purity, even if it is kept airtight for years together.

This is the uniqueness and sacredness of this holy River which has blessed mankind since ages.

Immovable Faith



There was once a severe drought in a village because of which the residents of that village became very worried. All the lakes and wells dried up, and there was no water even for the animals to drink. Finally, the residents decided to go to the temple on the outskirts of the village and collectively pray to God to bless them with some rain.

The next morning, all the women, men, and young children, left for the temple to offer their prayers to God. Amongst these villagers, there was a little boy who was carrying an umbrella in his hand. Seeing this, the villagers began to mock him.

The priest said - "Silly boy! Why are you carrying this umbrella with you? Don't you see how clear the skies are?" Thinking that the boy was trying to show off his new umbrella, everyone heartily laughed.

Seeing everyone poke fun at the boy, an old man asked - "Dear son, why have you brought this umbrella with you? As of now, it is neither sunny nor is it raining. Then why are you carrying this burden?"

The little boy said - "*Baba!* We are all going to pray to God to bless us with rain. God will surely fulfill our wish, right? When we will return back to the village and if it rains, then I will need this."

Hearing this, the old man was silent for a while. Then he said. "You have spoken such wise words. You have immovable faith in God. Even if it does rain, then it will only be due to your prayers."

All the villagers reached the temple and as soon as they finished praying, they started to head back to the village. However, while they were halfway, it suddenly became overcast, and began to pour heavily. The child at once opened his umbrella, while the others walked back getting drenched.

Prabhu Premi Sangh

H.H. Swamiji's Upcoming schedule

- June 2nd to June 30th: Different places in Europe, USA and Canada.

(For complete Travel Schedule, please log on to www.prabhupremisangh.org)

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About the Organization...

'Prabhu Premi Sangh' is founded, directed and led by His Holiness Param Pujya Acharya Swami Avdheshanand Giriji Maharaj. H.H. Swamiji is the spiritual head of the JunaAkhada, the biggest and the oldest order of the Sanatan Vedic Hindu Dharma, which has millions of saints. Revered Swamiji is the Trustee of Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha, the apex body of the Hindu dharma. H.H. Acharya Sri is playing a vital role as a board member of the 'World Council of Religious Leaders', 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.

"Between the two banks of birth and death, the river of life flows."