

October 2010

Following the Footsteps...

Prabhu Premi Sangh Newsletter



Volume 3, Issue 9

Upcoming events:

Shri Ram Katha:
Nov 25th to Dec
2nd, 2010

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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.

An individual is the result of his own thoughts. Positive thinking paves the way to success since an optimistic person is capable of making good decisions at the right time. On the other hand, negative thinking or pessimism results in feelings of monotony and escapism.

Always maintain an affirmative attitude. Be vigilant of the power of your own thoughts, and you will experience inner fulfillment.

*With best wishes,
Swami Avdheshanand Giri*

News in a Nutshell

Hari Om!

'Prakash-Utsav' meaning the 'Festival of Light' is fondly celebrated with great fervor by prabhu premis around the globe. Celebrated on the sacred occasion of *Kartik Purnima*, this day marks the birthday of His Holiness.

Also known as 'Raas-Purnima', 'Tripuri Purnima', and 'Dev

Deepavali', *Kartik Purnima* is extremely significant from a religious and spiritual perspective.

The current issue is a celebration of this holy festival. It also celebrates the spirit of divine love, service and devotion. It is a gentle reminder that a true devotee is always protected, always guided.

In the previous month, spiritual discourses and

events were organized in various cities. Shrimad Bhagawad katha was conducted by His Holiness in Khandwa (Madhya Pradesh) from October 8th to 14th, 2010 and in Dehradun from November 11th to 17th, 2010.

His Holiness will be conducting Shri Ram Katha in the city of Bhopal from November 25th to December 2nd, 2010.

Radha's Letter

On being separated from Lord Shri Krishna, Radha had become very distressed. She was perplexed and wasn't even certain if she will ever meet Krishna again.

In a state of divine intoxication for the Lord, she would at times ask the flowers, "Tell me beautiful flowers, will my Krishna return or not? When will He come?"

Or she would say to the birds, "You have the ability to fly, and reach places by your flight. Please soar for me to Mathura. Go and meet my Krishna. Tell Him that your Radha keeps counting the nights and days, she keeps record of every minute, every second. Only tell us when You will come to Vrindavan... that alone will satisfy her and infuse life in her..."

She would sometimes whisper to the flowing breeze, "You move in different directions, will you carry in your arms my tears to Lord Krishna and offer it to His lotus feet?"

Lalita, one of Radha's close friends was also a *gopi* and devotee of Krishna. One day

Radha told Lalita, "Lalita you know Krishna, can you arrange to take my message to Him...or at least send my letter? On reading my letter He will understand my feelings. My Krishna can read the language of my tears. Please do come up with a solution, dear Lalita."

Lalita looked around and she spotted a swan. She thought to herself, "The swan is such a pure, innocent and gentle bird. It can be the perfect messenger for Radha and can deliver the letter in a short time. Lalita called the swan, affectionately patted it, and gave one of Radha's letters to it. She said to it, "My dear swan, without losing a single moment, please fly quickly to Mathura. Wherever Krishna is, give this letter of Radha to Him. Just keep chanting, 'Radha-Radha', He will recognize you, and will Himself come to you."

The swan flew to Mathura and seated itself on top of the terrace of Lord Krishna's meeting hall. He took a quick overview of the surroundings, and estimated that Krishna was in the large meeting room. It spotted the entrance to the building,

flew inside and sat in a corner underneath the ceiling. As soon he began to utter 'Radha-Radha', a melodious sound filled the entire room.

This sound touched the heart of Lord Krishna. He looked around, and saw the beautiful swan sitting in a corner. He approached the swan and it gave Him the letter.

While handing the letter, the swan was still saying 'Radha-Radha'. As Krishna began to read the letter, His heart became overwhelmed with love. The precious moments He had spent with Radha were at once refreshed. He began to remember the love of Mother Yashoda and Nand Baba. He also recalled the village, the gopis, and every moment spent with Radha. A strong wave of memories arose, and Krishna got swept away with that wave. Then all of a sudden, tears began to trickle down the cheeks of Shri Krishna. He began to cry so bitterly such that the entire room resonated with His crying sounds. Hearing this, his family in the palace rushed to comfort Him.

It was indeed a surprising sight. The Benevolent Lord who always bestowed love on others, who showered His affection on all, and who valiantly defeated sinners, was Himself crying today. The entire surroundings were filled with solemnity. Radha's letter had transported Krishna to the past and surrounded him with fond memories. This is the result of pure and divine memories.

From a worldly perspective, Krishna was crying, He was in the world, and was behaving in a worldly manner, but can Radha and Krishna ever be distant from one another? Can the Lord (*Paramatman*) and the Individual soul (*Atman*) ever be separate from each other?

If the devotee cries, then Krishna also cries. When the devotee calls upon the Lord with a heart drenched in love, He does not waste even a moment...He comes right away. History and scriptures attest to this.

(Excerpt from H.H. Swami Avdheshanand Giri Ji's 'Anand Yog')

Spiritual Q and A



Question: How can we know if we are making progress on the spiritual path?

Answer: The less attracted we feel towards the world, and the more love we experience for God, the more we are progressing on the spiritual path. On becoming spiritually evolved, we see a declining trend in the presence of strong likes and dislikes in our behavior. We will be less affected by external gains and losses and will feel truly happy.

Significance of Kartik Purnima

The *Kartik* month known as '*Kartik Maas*' is one of the most auspicious months of the Hindu calendar. It has been named after the Hindu god '*Kartikeya*' who is the son of Lord Shiva. It is stated in the scriptures that any pious acts or worship performed during this month give back immense favorable results.

According to the *Padma Purana*, "If anyone fasts and observes the *Kartik-vrata* according to the rules and regulations, the *Yamadutas*, the messengers of *Yamaraja*, run away from him, just as an elephant runs away by seeing a lion. This dear fast (*vrata*) of Lord Vishnu is even better than performing one hundred great sacrifices that would take him to heaven because

the person who observes the *Kartik-vrata* goes to the spiritual world."

Some of the divine activities that are recommended are : Awakening in *brahma-muhurtha* (before sunrise), have an early morning bath, performing worship of the *Tulsi* plant, and offering of lamps, flowers, food etc to the Lord.



Kartik Purnima, popularly known as '*Dev Deepavali*' is the full moon day during the *Kartik* month and it is

believed that on this day, gods descend the earth. This day has immense holy significance and coincides with the birthday of Guru Nanak Dev Ji (Guru Nanak Jayanti) as well as the Jain Light Festival.

A popular legend associated with this sacred day is the appearance of Lord Vishnu in the *Matsya avatar* i.e. incarnation as a fish in order to protect the Vedas.

Kartik Purnima also marks the killing of the demon Tripura by Lord Shiva.

One of the cities where *Dev Deepavali* is celebrated with great pomp and enthusiasm is Varanasi. People flock all day to the banks of Ganges River for a holy dip in the morning and in the evening the ghats of Varanasi come



alive with thousands of illuminated earthen lamps. People light these lamps and decorate the ghats beautifully as a sign of welcome to the gods on the earth.

In many North Eastern states, '*Maha Raas*' celebrations are held on the occasion of *Kartik Purnima* while in Pushkar, Rajasthan, a '*Pushkar Mela*' (fair) is organized.

Health and Wellness

Coffee:

Coffee is enjoyed as a drink by many. It contains caffeine which is a mild stimulant, which enhances alertness, concentration, mental and physical performance.

Consuming coffee in moderation is not likely to cause significant risks, however, if consumed more than one cup per day, the more likely it will impede your health.

Other caffeinated beverages also include tea and cola. Research shows that excessive consumption of caffeinated beverages is dangerous.

Coffee raises blood pressure and cholesterol, which are the two main factors that cause heart disease.

High intake of caffeine may also cause higher risk of cardiac arrhythmias, which can lead to sudden death.

Other problems may arise indirectly. Since caffeine is a stimulant, consumption of caffeinated drinks enables you to stay awake and alert for longer hours resulting in insufficient sleep. Inadequate sleep, in turn, promotes disease and premature aging. There is no substitute for adequate sleep. Drinking coffee also boosts estrogen levels.

Higher levels of estrogen worsen problems like endometriosis, breast pain and menstrual disorders. Increased estrogen levels are also linked to higher risk of breast cancer.

Although caffeine does not



fall into the class of "addictive" drugs, it may be habit-forming. Some people may experience headache, fatigue, irritability and nervousness when their daily intake of caffeine is quickly and substantially altered.

Coffee is more like a drug than food. Even though it has some minor benefits, the toxic effects have higher risk factors to the health. In order to have a long and healthy life, especially when you're older, it is important

to avoid stimulants and drugs, meet all our nutritional needs, and have as little exposure to toxicity as possible.

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH



"Do not demand anything from God. Ask God only to give you the gift of His own Self."

A Peaceful Night's Sleep



There were two *sanyasis* (saints) who stayed together. One of them was slightly old while the other was quite young, and together they would roam from place to place. For their own selves, all they had was a small hut in a particular village. One evening, after returning to their hut after many months, they saw that the stormy weather had blown away a part of their hut's roof.

The younger *sanyasi* was devastated and immediately began to grumble. He said "Now how can we possibly have faith in God? Those who cheat, steal and speak lies, their apartments are safe and secure. And we, who chant His name day and night, look at what He has done to our home?"

The older *sanyasi* readily said, "Brother, why are you becoming upset? Just look, although half the roof has been blown away, the other half is still there. Half our hut is still covered. It is indeed His grace and because of our devotion that He has protected us. Let us thank Him."

At nighttime, they both began to attempt to sleep. As soon as the older *sanyasi* lay down, he fell into deep sleep but the younger one continued to fret and ponder.

He was worried that if it rains, then how will they possibly protect themselves from getting drenched? This anxiety kept him awake all night.

Soon it became morning, and the older *sanyasi* woke up feeling afresh. He folded his hands, and exclaimed, "God! Today I had such a peaceful sleep under the open skies. This roof should have been blown away long ago."

Hearing this young *sanyasi* irritatingly said, "He gave us trouble, and you are thanking Him!"

The older *sanyasi* said "See, you felt disappointed, hence remained upset all night. But I was happy, thus had a peaceful sleep. How can there be happiness in disappointment and how can there be discomfort in joy?"

This time the young *sanyasi* understood. He did not complain again.

Prabhu Premi Sangh

H.H. Swamiji's Upcoming schedule

- November 18th to November 24th : Different Places
- November 25th to December 2nd : Shri Ram Katha (Bhopal)
- December 3rd to December 5th : Dharmasthala (South India)

CONTACT INFORMATION

(1)



Harihar Ashram
Kankhal,
Haridwar - 249 408
(Uttarakhand), India.



Mobile: +91-8006008682, +91-8006008683,
+91-8006008684
Fax : +91-1334-246973

(2)

Prabhu Prem Ashram
Jagadhari Road,
Ambala Cantt -133 006
Hararyana, India.



Phone: +91-171-2699335, 2699367



Email: prabhuprem@hotmail.com OR pps.ambala@gmail.com

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.

"Learn to practice non-violence in mind, speech and action."