

March, April & May 2011

Following the Footsteps...

Prabhu Premi Sangh Newsletter



Volume 4, Issue 2

Upcoming events:

Ganga Dusshera:
June 11, 2011

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Reflections from Pujya Swamiji's Diary...



Dear Prabhu Premi,

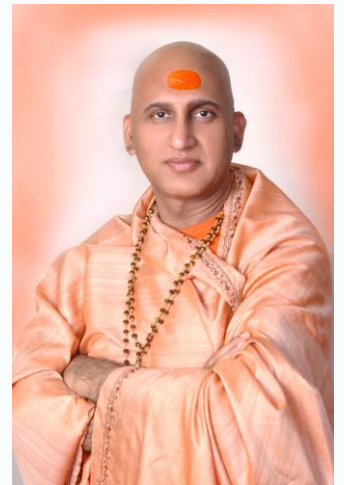
Prabhu bless you.

There is One God residing within all.

The conscious-unconscious elements, innumerable life forms, human beings and the entire world - are all a manifestation of that Lord.

A seeker should develop a vision of Oneness for all of God's creations such that he may perceive all with an equal eye. To experience the presence of that Supreme Being in each one is the highest spiritual practice.

*With best wishes,
Swami Avdheshanand Giri*



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

News in a Nutshell

Hari Om!

Can an ordinary individual preoccupied with daily activities, constant stress, myriad thoughts, and innumerable future aspirations ever experience tranquility and bliss? 'Yes'- so our scriptures say.

Materialism may grant pleasure, but neither peace nor joy. It is indeed an irony that we, who are the creators of our own

happiness, find ourselves so distant from it. Simple changes in our thinking perspective can help bridge this distance.

Understanding the broader purpose of human life and earnest spiritual efforts can enable us to experience joy while living in the midst of this external world.

In the month of March 2011, Shrimad Bhagvad

Katha was held in Uklana, Mandi from March 25, 2011 to March 31, 2011. Spiritual discourses were conducted in different parts of the country in April and May 2011.

Ganga Dusshera celebrations will be held in the holy city of Haridwar on 11th June 2011. Various spiritual discourses will also be conducted during the month.

Prayer and Worship

The human mind is like a lake. The waves of thoughts constantly arise in it and there are also several currents of memories and impressions in it. Due to the different kinds of memories that exist in the mind, each person feels scattered from within. He finds it hard to focus. For this, it is recommended that the person should develop single pointed concentration of the mind. Until and unless the mind becomes still, it cannot accumulate strength.

A person who is not mentally strong is constantly influenced by outward incidents. He is always fascinated by worldly attractions. He barely manages to gather the scattered threads of his

mind. But when he does so, he develops a unique kind of seriousness towards life. Suppose, you have tied something with a single, weak thread. As soon as it encounters any force, the thread can break. But when many different threads come together to make a strong rope, and if we tie something with this rope, then it does not break.

There is great importance of worship in a seeker's life. Until and unless he lights the lamp of worship he does not realize the temporary nature of the objects of the world. All objects are constantly being left behind. We tend to think, "This object is useful for us, that person is our own and will always support us." But we forget that in the world there is nothing



that is constant in life.

There is continuous change in every single thing of the world, every object is gradually moving towards its end, and so is each person. But we live in the hope that those whom we develop a relationship with, should never leave us. The possessions we acquire should never get destroyed. But the surprising part is, that we see objects getting broken, and relationships

coming to an end.

The Guru teaches us, 'See, awaken and establish your relationship with that Person, who can never be destroyed. Tie the strings of your faith with Him who will never desert you.'

God is the only One who will never leave or abandon you. You will be able to experience His presence when the influence of prayer and worship arises in you. Worship is the art of feeling close to God and prayer is the process of remembering Him.

(Excerpt from H.H. Swami Avdheshanand Giriji's 'Muktipath')

Health and Wellness

Exercise:

Exercise plays an important role in the life of a spiritual seeker. It is the foremost duty of the seeker to keep the body healthy and disease-free. Exercise strengthens the body and increases flexibility. Hence, the practice of regular exercise is of utmost importance. Some of the significant benefits of exercise are as follows:

1) Counters Diseases: Most importantly, exercise reduces the risk of various diseases and illnesses. High blood pressure, as well as chronic diseases like diabetes, osteoporosis, obesity, etc can be prevented with regular exercise.

2) Controls Weight: Exercise enables one to maintain a healthy weight

and helps to burn calories. Exercise coupled with a nutritious and balanced diet enables the person to experience weight loss. Cardiovascular exercise and yogic exercises such as *Surya Namaskar* play an important role in this respect.

3) Eliminates Stress: Exercise helps to combat stress and cope with depression. During exercise, the body releases certain chemicals, which enables an individual to feel refreshed, relaxed, and happier.

4) Sound Sleep: Sufficient exercise performed during the day enables an individual to have better and sound sleep at night.

5) Fun and Interesting: One of the best things about exercise is that it is possible to involve the



entire family which can make it even more interesting and fun. Exercise can also help overcome boredom, sluggishness and lethargy.

There are different kinds of exercise, some of which include walking, jogging, cycling, swimming, pilates, aerobics etc. One can choose whichever form of exercise that is convenient and suitable for the individual. While exercise at other times of the day is

also quite beneficial, some research suggests that early mornings are the best time to exercise. No matter what time of the day you choose to follow your exercise routine, when pursued regularly, it is bound to provide immense spiritual, mental and physical health benefits in the long-run.

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH



"Surrender all your desires to the Almighty. Only then you will have a taste of real bliss."

Spiritual Discourse Conducted on Buddha Purnima

On May 17, 2011, on the divine occasion of Buddha Purnima, a spiritual discourse by His Holiness Swami Avdheshanand Giriji Maharaj was organized in Mumbai by *Paropkar*, a well-known social organization. This discourse was conducted at the ISKCON Auditorium at Mumbai from 6pm onwards.

The discourse was attended by hundreds of devotees and the Chief Guest for the event was renowned film artiste, Mrs Kiran Kher. The main theme of the lecture was, "*The journey from sorrow to bliss by means of spirituality.*"

Swamiji opened his lecture speaking about the importance of the occasion of Buddha Purnima. He spoke in depth about Shri Buddha, who is considered as one of the 24 avatars or divine incarnations of the Lord and is associated with the concept of '*nirvana*' (freedom from mundane existence).

Swamiji explained how the entire life of Buddha was dedicated to discovering a means for the removal of sorrow. When Buddha was born, his father experienced a unique kind of joy and desirous to know about the fate of this son, he approached an astrologer with some of his queries. On looking at the birth chart of Prince Siddhartha, the astrologer advised the king to keep his son away from the harsh realities of life. He said that this child should be distanced from all kinds of sorrow, because should he witness any kind of unhappiness, he will renounce the world and become a '*sannyasi*'.

In spite of the king taking several steps to avert this, it is a well known fact that one day, the young prince

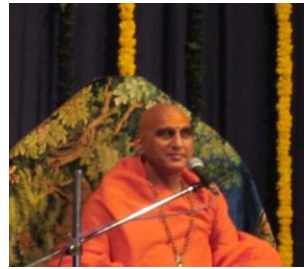
Siddhartha saw a sick person, an old man and a corpse. These sights inspired Him to renounce the kingdom and set out in search of the Highest Truth.

In relation to this, Swamiji said that in reality, there is just one Truth of this ephemeral world - death. With time, everything in this '*Mrityulok*' eventually fades away i.e. everything that exists here is within the clutches of death. He mentioned how the first Chapter of the Shrimad Bhagvad Gita begins with depression or grief, but in the end it talks about '*Anand*' or bliss and '*Poornta*' - a feeling of completeness.

His Holiness said that if we try to analyze what really is meant by depression, we will find that this tendency is rooted in self-denial. When we create a negative image of ourselves, and when our life is characterized by inactivity, then that state gives rise to depression or sorrow.

Depression is characterized by 'the fear of losing'. It could be the fear of losing one's wealth, property, beauty, status, health or the favorable conditions that exist in the present. The only remedy for this depression is - *katha* (remembrance of the Lord and listening to the stories of His divine incarnations).

His Holiness further explained, "That which transforms sorrowful living into a joyous existence is spirituality. To be able to solve one's problems instantly and independently, is one of the highest attainments. Spirituality is the journey inwards." Explaining the meaning of the Sanskrit term, '*Paropkar Punyay Paapay Padapeedanam*', He said



that to do good to others is the highest merit and to hurt others is the greatest sin."

The current age is one of excessive consumption. This is also an age where our ancient traditions and values are getting neglected. In this context, H.H. said, "When there is a desire for instant gratification, it leads to a huge imbalance in the creation. Spirituality plays an important role in this regard as it attempts to curtail the wide range of incessant desires of mankind."

Swamiji further elucidated that spirituality alone can give us peace and contentment by eradicating our numerous wants. "Objects cannot grant us long-lasting and real happiness, nor can they cannot take away from us our feelings of dissatisfaction." He said that happiness cannot come by acquiring or possessing, it depends on the quality of our thoughts. Happiness is a way of thinking. It is a belief; it is acceptance by the heart.

"Who we are, depends on our thoughts, and we are the product of our own thinking," said Swamiji. "A person, who is overly dependent on external objects or situations, is bound to be in constant depression. A truly spiritual person does not have any fear of losing." Such a person begins to stop

experiencing the positive and negative effects of so-called favorable and unfavorable situations.

H.H. also explained that unhappiness comes when the consciousness wanders in search of happiness in the external world. However, we must remember that life is not synonymous with sorrow. It is synonymous with bliss.

Sorrow exists only because we have forgotten our True Self. There is only one cause of sorrow- not knowing our real identity. Once we know whose children and creations we really are, then how can any fear remain?

"The first spiritual practice that one should adopt is the practice of inculcating positive thoughts. If our present is not characterized by happiness, then there must be some fault in our pattern of thinking. Elevated thinking can impart greatness; it can transform one's attitude. And if one's feelings become pure, then it can change the direction of life."

In conclusion, Swamiji said, "Spirituality gives a person both direction and vision. It shapes your life; you can become whatever you choose to be. Life is like a piece of raw clay, you can give it any shape you like. Life is a canvas and you are the painter, you can paint whatever picture you like. Life is an empty land and you are the farmer, it depends on you what kind of crop you wish to nurture.

Thus, spirituality can give you a new outlook and impart your life an altogether new dimension."

Who is Really Poor?



According to an ancient fable, there was once a king who set out to attack his neighboring kingdom. He was travelling with his huge army across the snow-covered mountains situated on the borders of his own kingdom. Suddenly, he spotted a yogi (sage), who was sitting in a particular corner with his head held between the knees. He was trying to shield himself from the cold weather. His body was sparsely covered with clothing. The king had pity on the old sage and approached him.

He removed his coat and gifted it to the yogi. But the yogi did not accept it and said, "Dear King, God has given me sufficient clothes to protect myself from both heat and cold. They fulfill all my needs. Kindly give this to some poor person."

Hearing this, the king was taken aback. He asked the yogi, "Sir, where are your clothes? I cannot see them."

The yogi replied, "God has personally made my clothes. I have worn them since birth and will wear them until death. My skin is my clothing. Please give this coat to some beggar."

The king thought to himself, "Who can be needier than this yogi?"

He said, "Please tell me where can I find such a poor person?"

The yogi asked, "Son, Why have you come here? What is your purpose?"

The king replied, "Sir, I am about to climb this mountain and make entry into my rival's kingdom so that I can successfully combine his kingdom with my own."

Hearing this, the yogi smiled and said, "If you are not satisfied with your own kingdom, and are ready to put your life as well as those of your fellow soldiers into danger for a couple of acres of land, then son, undoubtedly you are poorer than me. Please gift these clothes to your own self. You need them more than me."

The king felt embarrassed and realized his mistake. He immediately ordered his army to turn back and returned to his kingdom. He understood that contentment alone is the most priceless attainment.

Prabhu Premi Sangh

H.H. Swamiji's Upcoming schedule

- June 1 to June 30, 2011: Different places in India.

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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.

"Sound planning is the key to sound development."