

January 2014

# Following the Footsteps...

Prabhu Premi Sangh Newsletter



Volume 7, Issue 1

Reflections from H.H. Swamiji's Diary...



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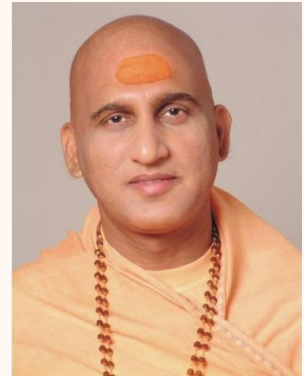
*Dear Prabhu Premi,*

*Prabhu bless you.*

*According to Indian sages, the goal of Indian philosophy is to remove sorrow and attain bliss (anand). Each and every object of the world is impermanent and is eventually a cause of unhappiness.*

*The sole remedy for all sorrows, grief, physical and mental unrest is – 'Gyaan' or spiritual knowledge which grants the seeker the insight to understand the meaning of life and death.*

*With best wishes,  
Swami Avdheshanand Giri*



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

## News in a Nutshell

Hari Om and wish you a very happy 2014!

The dawn of a new year brings in a sense of freshness and enthusiasm towards one's goals. One seeks newer ways to develop, both individually and collectively. Innovativeness along with initiative paves the way to success.

In this New Year, may we develop the strength to embark upon innovative, creative and positive thoughts, and also take the initiative to make those thoughts a part of our daily lives.

May we turn every noble resolve into a reality. May we let go of all that is painful and troublesome,

forgiving both others and our own selves, and usher in rays of happiness, warmth, love and peace.

In December 2013, spiritual discourses were held by H.H. Swamiji in different cities. In the current month, H.H. Swamiji will be travelling to different places across India and abroad.

## Turmoil of the Mind

When a lamp is lit, darkness immediately vanishes. With the arrival of light, the deep layers of darkness automatically recede; darkness cannot prevail as it cannot face light. One may wonder – ‘Is it really that in the presence of light, darkness ceases to exist?’ The answer is no. Darkness still exists. It silently awaits the opportune moment when the lamp will be extinguished so that it can resurface, and this is exactly what happens. As soon as the light is extinguished, darkness reappears, and spreads all around.

When the light of Truth is kindled in a corner of the mind, then the darkness of ignorance begins to depart, and a deep desire for God is born. When this desire or quest for Truth causes a stir in one’s existence, then an active transformation begins to take place in the individual. When the yearning for God becomes painful, and pain keenly seeks a solution then the entire existence of the seeker becomes soaked with divine love and gives rise to entirely new possibilities.

An internal revolution (for the attainment of Truth) takes place and it is these opportunities which establish the seeker in that unique state of attainment, where only the Self exists. It

is indeed surprising that the solution of pain is – the Self. In one’s journey towards the Self, the solution begins to gradually approach closer.

Solution provides satisfaction. When every corner of one’s being begins to advance towards the solution, the solution comes very close. Mistakes are often made when we are nearest to our goal. The attained solution can be lost by the slightest negligence, consequently the knowledge disappears, and once again the desire to realize the Self arises, consciousness is awakened and the chords of Truth begin to resonate. Once again a mistake and it disappears!

Why is it that the Self that seemed so near, appears to vanish? Where does it go?

In the absence of vigilance, mistakes are made, and the opportunity that knocked our door is lost. As we reach closer and closer to the shore, the possibility of getting drowned increases. Why? Because knowledge of the proximity of the shore gives rise to laziness. But often times, awareness and knowledge about the nearness of one’s destination can also make a person extra focused on his or her goal.

Allow the pain and desire to know the Truth, to deepen. Let the restlessness



increase. It is this restlessness which will lead the consciousness towards the Self, and the journey will progress towards completion. As soon as the consciousness engaged in external activities becomes directed inwards, the deep awareness of one’s inner turmoil can unveil the reality.

In the absence of awareness, the flow of consciousness is directed outwards. A single moment of watchfulness can amaze you with the beauty of Self, but a few moments of carelessness, unconsciousness and inactivity can make one’s whole life difficult. Awaken; wake up from your deep sleep. Existence is inviting you. The call of the Self is constantly resonating within you. In this call, the Self is summoning you. Until when will you play hide and seek?

In this call, you are being invited to turn your attention to an inexhaustible inner wealth of your own matchless splendor, grandeur and

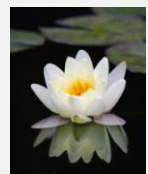
exquisite beauty in the kingdom of the Self. Get up, awaken and become alert so that you can attain the Self and can know your innermost Being.

The ambassadors of Supreme Peace are waiting to welcome you and dazzling Light is waiting to drench you with its radiance. The inner envoys are calling upon you to become Master of your Self – and this is also your goal.

A word of caution! The army of blind desires is lurking in ambush to take advantage of your negligence. Hence, vigilantly move away from the ‘non-self’, and actively engage in search for the Self during the states of yearning (for Truth), joyousness and consciousness. Peace lies within you.

*(Excerpt from H.H. Swami Avdheshanand Giri Ji’s ‘Atma Alok’)*

### THOUGHT OF THE MONTH



*“Charity is a divine tendency. To inspire someone, make them independent and courageous is charity in the true sense.”*

## Makar Sankranti – Rays of Joy and Gratitude

The festival of Makar Sankranti is an auspicious occasion for Indian people and is celebrated throughout the country with great enthusiasm. Marking the arrival of the spring season, it is often known as the 'Harvest Festival'.

Makar Sankranti is actually the day when Surya Dev (the Sun God) begins its journey towards the Northern hemisphere. Thus, it is believed that from this day onwards people in the Northern hemisphere begin to experience warmer climate and longer days, as the sun gradually starts to move closer to them.

For Hindus the sun is a manifest deity, or 'Pratyaksh



devta'. We believe the sun to be an embodiment of knowledge, wisdom, joy and spiritual energy. The festival of Makar Sankranti guides us away from darkness and inspires us to move higher and higher towards purity and happiness.

Makar Sankranti is celebrated in different ways in different regions. In Tamil Nadu, this day is celebrated as 'Pongal' while North Indians celebrate 'Lohri'. In Bengal a huge festival is held at Ganga Sagar, while

in Uttar Pradesh the festival is celebrated as 'Khichri'. In Gujarat this day is known as 'Uttarayan' (kite flying day) and in Rajasthan it is referred to as 'Makar Sakrat'. Lakhs of people take a holy dip in the sacred rivers and perform worship of the Sun God.

On the occasion of Makar Sankranti it is recommended that one should awaken early, and offer prayers to the Sun God. Worshipping the sun bestows strength, good health, wisdom, prosperity and longevity. It is also said that the value of making donations on this day is multifold, so one should try and do some 'daan' i.e. perform charity for the needy. Many people



also make offerings to birds and animals, symbolizing the spirit of giving and sharing.

Makar Sankranti is a time for people to offer thanksgiving to God for facilitating them with a good harvest. Hence it is customary to cook and distribute 'lentil and rice' preparations such as 'khichdi' or 'Til laddoos' (sesame sweets) in many households to mark this vibrant festival and the arrival of spring.

## The Test of Life

In our day to day life, success and achievements are quite important to us, for it often determines how happy we are in our lives. For a student, success may imply an exam passed with flying colors, for a businessman it could be the an important deal, for an employee – a promotion, for a sports person – a medal, while for a parent it could mean the success of his or her children. Whatever be one's background or profession, the one thing we all try to aim for is – success.

A successful person is often proud of his or her accomplishments, which keeps the spirits high. This is how we go through most of our lives, and then settle down in old age, proud to look back at what we have accomplished through our hard work. But what if we were told, that when our lives on earth come to an end – we will once again be at the crossroads between success and failing. Are we ready to face the results and the see our scorecard for the test that we unconsciously took from the

time we were born till the time we die? Try to imagine what you think will be in store for you then – will it be celebrations and fireworks for having lived a God-centered, righteous life or will the results be rather unpleasant for living a life minus prayer and virtue? Will you find your heart swelling with pride for sticking to your faith and beliefs and never giving up on God, inspite of the fact that you didn't have it all or the circumstances weren't always in your favor, or would you feel remorseful

for not having lived in divine remembrance, inspite of being blessed with great health, comfort and more than sufficient resources needed to take you through life? The only problem is, by then it would be too late to go back and change things. We may or may not be in control of our destiny then. It is only as long as we are here, on this '*karma-bhoomi*' that we have the capacity to choose and perform good deeds.

Wouldn't it then be a smart idea to prepare ourselves for the final test of life?

## A Lesson from the Mountains



Once upon a time a young boy and his father were walking on the mountains. Suddenly, the boy tripped, hurt himself and yelled, "AAhhhhhh!"

To his surprise, he heard a voice repeating from the mountains: "AAhhhhhh!"

Alarmed to hear this, he shouted, "Who are you?"

He received the answer, "Who are you?"

The boy was now furious, and screamed "Coward!"

Pat came the reply - "Coward!"

Helplessly he looked at his father and inquired, "Dad, what is going on?"

The father smiled and said, "Son, pay attention". The father then screamed to the mountain, "I admire you!" The voice immediately replied, "I admire you!" Once again he shouted, "You are wonderful!" The voice instantaneously answered, "You are wonderful!"

The boy was surprised, and could not understand what was happening. Then the father explained, "Son, people call this ECHO, but in reality, this is LIFE. It gives you back everything you say and do. Our life is nothing but a reflection of our own actions.

If you seek more love in the world, then create more love in your heart. If you want kindness, then learn to be kind. If you seek co-operation from others, then first learn to co-operate with them.

This principle applies to everything in life. Everything you give shall be returned to you. Aim to give happiness and happiness will automatically come to you.

## H.H. Swamiji's Upcoming schedule



January 1 to January 15, 2014: Different places in North India

January 16 to January 31, 2014: Different places in South India, West India, & Abroad

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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 Dharma, which has millions of saints. 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](http://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. Please email us at [prabhupremisanghnews@gmail.com](mailto:prabhupremisanghnews@gmail.com).*

**"When one meets a True Master, then one is not far from experiencing God."**