

April 2014

Following the Footsteps...

Prabhu Premi Sangh Newsletter



Volume 7, Issue 4

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



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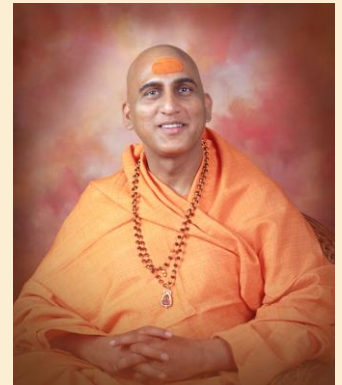
Dear Prabhu Premi,

Prabhu bless you.

In the current age of materialism, it is observed that there is immense attachment towards objects, a keen desire for gaining instant advantage, as well as a tendency to accumulate. In devotion, all objects are perceived as 'prasad' - the sacred blessing of God. Feelings of dearth, scarcity or inadequacy completely disappear when one develops devotion.

We should always try to maintain divine feelings towards all, and treat them with respect. If we recognize that the Lord is the Creator of all objects, then the entire world will appear beautiful, and seem like our own.

*With best wishes,
Swami Avdheshanand Giri*



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

News in a Nutshell

Hari Om!

It is often said that 'Knowledge is the wealth that no one can take from us.' Hence, a seeker must make diligent efforts in order to acquire divine knowledge. He or she must not only aim to imbibe spiritual knowledge

but also try to grow in this knowledge, and share it with others.

One should also make sincere attempts to know and recognize one's own real nature. By doing so, one will be able to discover the path that leads to peace and joy,

of a permanent nature.

In the previous month of March 2014, Holi celebrations were held at Ambala, and spiritual discourses and lectures by His Holiness were conducted in different cities of India.

Reap What You Sow

A curious disciple once approached Buddha and asked, "You have been preaching and sharing your knowledge since so many years, how is it that still so many people haven't been able attain true peace and eternal bliss?"

Buddha smiled and responded, "Please go to the town and ask your friends and family, 'What is it that they really seek?'. The disciple obeyed His command and surveyed among his acquaintances and made note of their responses. By the end of the day, he had gathered around two hundred responses. Having collected this information, he tallied the entire list and accordingly drew conclusions. He found that many people aspire for wealth, some seek progeny,

others want to build a house, some want success in business, others are worried about getting married and yet others desire name and fame. He noticed that there were an infinite amount of materialistic desires amongst the people.

He returned to Buddha and conveyed to Him, that of all the people he met, nobody on his list wanted to attain Truth, 'dharma' or everlasting peace. Buddha smiled and stated, "This is what I wanted to explain to you. Until and unless a human being desires peace, or Truth, he or she will not try to achieve it. Often times we say that we want peace; however, our efforts lead us towards attaining unrest. We have innumerable materialistic desires that have nothing to do with



peace.

The world we perceive is nothing but a projection of our senses. When we want something, we overcome all barriers and resistance and direct ourselves in the path of its achievement. However, we often get caught up with worldly attractions. A person who truly wants to be peaceful pays little attention to name, fame and power.

The way we publicize about our sorrows and diseases, we don't actively seek treatment in that direction. If at all we do anything, our efforts don't target to solve

the problem. This is the reason, our virtues don't blossom and we are unable to make the requisite efforts for the fulfillment of our prescribed duties.

To know one's Self is the highest spiritual practice. In our Holy texts, it is stated that one out of a million people try to know themselves and even more rarely amongst these, does someone succeed in doing so. Our actions are like a flowing stream or river whose waters can be directed towards cultivating and developing a beautiful farm. However, when that water flow is disruptive and uncontrolled, it becomes capable of destroying an entire city.

(Excerpt from H.H. Swami Avdhesanand Giri Ji's 'Shabd Prakash')

Health and Wellness

Vitamins and minerals are substances that are found in foods we eat. Multi-vitamin provides some insurance against deficiencies but is far less important for health than a healthy food diet. A healthy food diet ideally consists of rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, healthy oils and low in unhealthy fats. However, since most people's diets are not ideal and individual

absorption and utilization varies from person to person, it is recommended that people take a high quality multiple vitamin supplements. By supplementing the diet with additional vitamins and minerals, multivitamins can be a valuable tool for those with dietary imbalances. Even if your diet is ideal, some people require more of certain nutrients than

others. This varies due to the difference in each individual's absorption rate, geographical area and lifestyle. For example, some people have to take additional Vitamin D even though their diet already contains sufficient amount of this vitamin. This is because, depletion of the ozone layer and fear of skin damage from the sun encourages people to wear

sunscreen or avoid the sun all together, which reduces the production of Vitamin D. It is also important to note that vitamin/mineral supplements are not a replacement for a healthful diet. Many nutritional supplements cause more harm than good. Some supplements can cause side effects if taken with other medications or if certain health conditions exist.

Are we happy – or Happiness?

How often do we wonder, "How happy so-and-so is! He has the best of everything – a luxurious home, fancy fleet of cars, perfect family, ideal job etc. Sometimes that person may not seem to us the most righteous person, and yet he or she seems so happy!" Often times this thought crops up not out of envy, but out of plain curiosity.

Then we ask ourselves the unvoiced question, "Are we happy? Really happy?" Quite often the answer may be in the negative because of numerous reasons...such as an illness, losing a loved one, financial losses, loneliness, career issues, broken heart, etc. It might be a trivial issue or an enormous problem that keeps us from being happy. And we keep believing that if that particular issue or problem is resolved, we will be permanently happy.

Let us suppose that one day the problem IS resolved, THEN are we happy? Will we never be low again, and spend the rest of our days on this earth cheerfully? The answer is no. We may think we are happy for a couple of minutes or even days, but then eventually something else will surface, which will instantly devour our happiness. The cycle



continues, not just for days and years but several lifetimes.

Here is where the wisdom and teachings of great saints guide us and comfort us. They bring us to the realization that we are spending all our energies in being happy or sad, without knowing who we really are. And the truth is that the joy or happiness we so anxiously seek – is exactly what we are.

Happiness is our nature, and WE are happiness. WE are love, joy, peace, and everything pure. We just need to experience that love, peace and joy as our very own Self. To do so we need to spend time in spiritual practices, because spirituality is about being who you really are. And slowly the quest for happiness becomes a quest for knowledge – the knowledge of one's Self. The more you know about yourself, the happier and peaceful you will be, even in the midst of dire

circumstances. Because then you know that no matter what you lose in the external world, at the core you are a peaceful and happy being.

People and things will come and go, but you, the source of your own delight, will always remain.

Don't let any circumstance keep you from reaching your highest divine purpose, the one for which you came into this world. Take every difficulty in your stride, like the dark floating clouds; they too will soon pass by.

And then the mind-like sky will be clear and resplendent with the dazzling rays of the Lord's grace shining down from above. In life, it does not matter how strongly you get hit by the obstacles that destiny sends your way, all that matters is with how much strength you can get up and try once again. For it is those who never gave up, who saw the light of success.

Human life is a kind of train journey which we undertake with our fellow passengers – our near and dear ones. It embarks with the excitement of coming into this world with the baggage of our karma, traverses through the high mountain

regions and low plains, at times travelling through dark tunnels, and sometimes past the beautiful sunny meadows. There are several stations we must bypass before we disembark at our long awaited destination – the abode of the Lord. It is our origin, and also our end.

Keep in mind, that during this fleeting journey of human life, it isn't enough to just 'be happy'. We need to live in the constant and divine remembrance that 'we are happiness'. Only then will this journey be a pleasing and comfortable one.

(Editorial Team)

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH



There is inexhaustible power in words. Words can destroy the darkness of ignorance and lead to enlightenment.

Lamp of Knowledge



Once upon a time a young man became very inquisitive to acquire divine knowledge. He decided to visit a sage who used to live in a cave. On entering the cave, the sage, who was inside the cave, asked, "Who is it?"

The young man replied, "Sir, I am a seeker. I wish to gain divine knowledge."

The sage asked the man to take a seat. He then told him to light a small *diya* i.e. an oil lamp which was kept nearby. The man took a matchbox and tried to light the lamp, but failed. When he expressed his incapability to light the lamp, the sage told him to check whether there was oil in it or not. The man checked, and realized that the lamp was actually filled with water, not oil.

The sage told the man to drain all the water and instead fill it up with oil. After doing so, he should try to light it again. The young man followed the sage's instructions but the lamp could still not be lit. When he told this to the sage, the sage said that possibly the wick was still drenched with water. Hence, he should completely squeeze the water out, dry it properly and then try to dip it in oil.

Hearing this, the man courageously shared the doubts and curiosities of his mind with the sage, and requested to receive answers to them. But the sage said that he had already provided answers to all his queries. The young man replied that on account of ignorance, he was incapable of understanding, hence he requested the sage to explain to him in clear words.

To this, the sage replied, "In your lamp-like heart, the wick of life has become drenched with the senses. That is why you are unable to light the lamp of knowledge. First of all drain out the water-like desires from the lamp of your heart, soak it in the name and remembrance of the Lord, and then dry the wick of life with the air of *vairagya* (renunciation).

After this, when you will come to me, you will surely be able to light the lamp of knowledge. It is also then that you will be able to have a vision of the Eternal Light."

H.H. Swamiji's Upcoming schedule



May 1 to May 31, 2014: Different places in India and 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.



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.

"It is not difficult to reach great heights. It is difficult to stay there."