

[God Doesn't Uphold Violence](#)

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God Doesn't Uphold Violence

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The morning of December 8 was wet and cold, and I gripped at my jacket as I ran outside to get the paper. I got back into the house and unfolded the paper, and the headlines glared up at me, "Religious Riots Across India - 200 Die." I couldn't believe it.

The article described the destruction of the Babri mosque by 200,000 Hindus. My first reaction was anger. How dare these fanatics tear down a religious edifice in the name of God? How could they do such a thing and say that this was done for the benefit of Hinduism? Pardon me, but as a Hindu, I simply can't agree with that. The demolishing wasn't done for the general interest of Hinduism, but political gain.

If the issue at hand were truly religion, they would realize that God, no matter what religion, doesn't uphold violence, but peace. A Muslim friend and I were discussing the whole situation, and we realized that all this savagery and brutality wasn't being done in the name of God, but instead religion was only being used as a garb.

These politicians were able to stir up public support because many Hindus believe that they are a persecuted majority, that India's Muslims have acquired privileges beyond their due, granted for the most part by the ruling Congress Party to preserve itself in power. Another contributing factor was that the Babri mosque was symbolic of the Hindu humiliation during the period of the Moguls. The humiliation lay in that the Moguls tore down the sacred temple of Lord Rama's birth and built upon that very place a mosque.

After examining the facts, I believe that the destruction of the Babri mosque was a well-calculated trick by Hindu fundamentalists to dislodge India from its secular foundation. What these fundamentalists want is a Hindu state, not an Indian republic. However, a Hindu state would defeat its purpose simply because the cornerstone of Hinduism is broadmindedness and religious tolerance. These are the two principles that made me proud to be Hindu, but I'm not sure that I can continue to be proud.

My doubts about the respectability of my religion were doubled when a friend of mine whom I hadn't talked to in months called me out of the blue and told me that because I was a Hindu, I was sinister, evil and hypocritical. And now I must question those fanatics who have given all of us Hindus a bad name. How am I supposed to explain to people that the rest of us Hindus have nothing in common with those who are directly responsible for the demolition? I don't support the tearing down of the mosque; however, I am being held responsible for it. The only recourse I have is to cast an accusing glance at those who have given the whole group a bad rap. Unfortunately, that isn't enough to solve the problem, though I fervidly wish it were. I wasn't responsible for the incident nor do I have the solution. I only have questions, the biggest of which is why? Why? Why in India? There are numerous other countries who have religious minorities, but they're able to handle these problems, so why can't India? Why can't we understand that to move forward we have to forget the past?

I have grieved for those who have died and for the reputation of Hindus. But as an Indo-Hindu-American, I am very scared that I may have to grieve for my country soon.

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