Letters
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No More Christmas

Thank you for making known the timely and needed practice of Pancha Ganapati [publisher's desk and editorial, Dec., '97] and for the phrase of "Hindus honor all religions, we don't practice all religions." Both need to be further propagated, particularly to the people of Hindu faith who have adopted other countries as their homeland and to those who are feeling isolated and/or wanting in the midst of a majority of other faiths. We certainly have started to give it a priority to spread the message in our part of the world through various means and sources.

Dr. Anand Lalchandani, Caringbah, New South Wales, Australia

HT is the Best

I have seen so many newspapers and magazines on Hinduism and Indian culture. Yours is by far the best. And each issue gets better. Your articles are compelling, educational, inspiring and uplifting. Your artwork, layout and design is truly graceful. Hinduism Today has really mastered the balance between beauty and simplicity.

Swami Chidanand Saraswati (Muniji), Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh, India

Share the Grief

The Deuki Girls article by Dr. Hari Bansh Jha is very upsetting

to me [In God's Name, inhumanity, Dec., '97]. To see Deuki girls treated like concubines by feudals or abandoned by families truly disturbs me. I feel such girls should be provided for. They do serve many temples in Nepal. To treat young girls like things is a moral outrage. I feel such dehumanization is an affront to God. They should be cherished within our hearts and minds. Are there any sanctuaries for women? How can mankind not be moved by her tears? It must be very painful for the Deuki women to be forced into prostitution due to economic factors. No woman wants such a fate. No woman wants to use her body as a commodity and be exposed to humiliation, unwanted pregnancies, STDS and AIDS. I feel gratitude toward Dr. Hari Bansh Jha for writing an article about the Deuki and making us aware of the problems they face. Through awareness comes hope! I pray someone will help them. I have enclosed a donation for the Deuki.

Wendy Schuljan, Coram, New York, US

Jainism Needs Comparison, Too!

It was interesting to read the Editorial and the insight articles on Dharmic differences, a comparison between Hinduism and Buddhism [Dharmic Differences, insight, Feb., '98]. I am happy that you give importance to other religions and publish such studies. However, I felt that it would have been better if you had included Jainism in your comparison as Jainism has many things in common with Buddhism. Jainism is an independent religion by itself, since ages. While it is true that Buddhism has spread in Asia and other parts of the world much more than Jainism, it would not be correct to say that Hinduism and Buddhism are the only two religions originated in India. In fact, Jainism is much, much older than Buddhism. Much can be said about Jainism. Suffice it to mention that in the future you should print details about this important religion. Sikhism is

also another religion of India.

Prakash Mody, North York, Ontario, Canada, Prakash_Mody@tvo.org

Thank you for a very good article on Buddhism. When I was young, I read that Jainism derived from Hinduism. Mahavir was a born Hindu. Can you please throw some light on Jainism, and Mahavir's birth?

Mahendra Parekh, mtulsa@webtv.net

Don't Need to Compare Paths

After reading several illuminating articles in the February, '98 issue of Hinduism Today, it appears to me that the basic difference between Buddhism and Hinduism is merely one of semantics. How inadequate words such as Sunya, Brahman, deva, atman, Buddhahood, etc., are to describe essentially the indescribable. And further it appears that there is no need for such terms once the indescribable nature is realized. So let us practice what suits us the most without having to compare with any other paths.

Sash S. Seshadri, seshadri@sunline.net

Elevating Piece

Many thanks for the beautiful article by Brahmacharini Maya Tiwari [Reclaiming Sadhana: Nourisher of Health, women of vision, Feb., '98]. I found it to be inspiring, uplifting and nurturing. To see a womanly perspective about dharma and sadhana and the many issues that come up creates a different and deeper understanding for me, even if I cannot put my finger on it. I met Bri. Tiwari in San Francisco last year during the "Body, Mind and Spirit" workshops. She was looking for an

assistant, and with my luck, I was chosen. I feel that Bri. Tiwari has reached the highest state of healing. She has become the Mother of Ayurveda. I look up to her as a great teacher, a woman who has used her womanly powers to heal herself. I think this is a wonderful thing and something to strive for.

Meenakshi Devi Palani, Concord, California, US, spalani@flash.net

Divorce Awareness

Divorce and widows remarrying is taboo among most Hindus. However, with the passage of time, these practices are slowly but surely being accepted by Hindus. In its many scriptures one will find that Hinduism does not object to divorce and widows remarrying, but traditionally Hindu widows accept the theory of "one woman, only one husband and only one marriage." With changing attitudes, more and more Hindu widows are remarrying, and this is happily matched by an increasing number of educated Hindu men accepting them as brides again. Changes in our society outlook have brought a great deal of benefit to the usually tradition-ridden Hindu society. But at the same time, one cannot lose sight of the present era which has made inroads into the Hindu society, resulting in the break-up of families. Where one rarely heard of a divorce among Hindu couples in the good old days, it is now a common thing to read in the newspapers accounts of court cases involving Hindu couples. As such, I suggest Hinduism Today publish some constructive articles about divorces to stop this sad deterioration in our social structure.

S. Sundralingam, Taiping, Perak, Malaysia s52614@pc.jaring.my

Sankara's Touch

You have covered in a very excellent manner the Ati Rudra Maha Yajna with nice pictures [Vedas, USA, priesthood, Dec., '97]. Your mention about the stock index in the article was very interesting, and I showed it to a lot of my American friends who are not Hindus but who believe in Hinduism. The cover page art is one of the rarest we have in the present times of Sri Adi Sankara with the Shanmatha Murthis in the same picture. I am going to preserve it in my prayer room.

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