Letters
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Thanks for Festival Issue

I must tell you how thrilled I am to receive the April/May/June issue of Hinduism Today, just a couple of days ago, featuring 15 of our holy days. Needless to say, this "Magazine for the Generations" is the crown jewel, making all Hindus proud of their heritage. It is very fulfilling for me and my wife that our contribution of one dollar a day in perpetuity supports some minute but nonzero part of each issue of this magazine of infinite wisdom for generations to come. Today I am even more grateful because I am enjoying this magazine.

Narayana Rao Urbana, Illinois

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Congratulations once again on your current issue: the presentation of festivals is outstanding. Thank you also for the materials you have prepared about Hinduism for the media. In that respect, you may want to take a look at a feature that comes up now and then on the MSNBC website on the world's major religions. Hinduism, in my humble opinion, is incorrectly represented. Perhaps they would appreciate some updated and corrected input? In addition to festivals, the yamas and niyamas seem like an inspiring introduction to Hinduism, and to yoga in particular. One of my friends, a truly admirable Quaker lady, read these and was quite surprised; she said she didn't think she could live up to such high standards.

Marianna Martin

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Thanks

I received my copy of Hinduism Today yesterday, and I just wanted to say how wonderful it is. Even though there is so much information on the web, holding the beautifully typeset pages is something special. It gives a real sense of connection with the wider Hindu community. As I live a long way from a Saivite temple, it is a connection with other Saivites. There are always wonderful, inspirational articles. I read Alok Lathi's words "Simply having Hinduism Today on your shelf is a blessing even if you don't read it!" I think he could be right, the devotion of the monks does infuse the words. It's even better if you do read it, though!

Chris Brooking Bradford, UK

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Please accept my heartfelt appreciation and love of the Hinduism Today magazine and books such as Dancing with Siva. Teaching World Religions at a community college in Chicago, I have seen that misunderstandings related to Hinduism are rampant. It is great to know that organizations like yours are helping to de-mystify misunderstandings and emphasizing the true beauty of Hinduism, while keeping the message of positivity and unity at the forefront.

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Hinduism Today is just awesome. This is exactly what Hinduism needs in order to educate the world.

Srinivas India

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Hindu "Stamps" Misleading

The headline "Hindu Gods on US postage stamp" [HPI, February 2, 2010] is misleading. It is just a business gimmick. Anyone can get those stamps printed. The company who prints them is not located in Atlanta. It is located in California. It is not new. This company was printing stamps long ago. If you like, you can put any photo and get a stamp made. But you will end up paying more than double the face value. Here is the link if you want to get your own stamps with the photos you like. http://photo.stamps.com/Store/company/contact/

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Admirable History

I received your package (Hinduism Endures 1100 to 1850). I just finished reading it. I am really impressed by the presentation, which summarizes admirably such a long period in few short pages--a fact-filled work that is easy to read. It is also badly needed for the Hindu community, if one can bring them to read it. Are there any plans for a massive dissemination of this brochure (and the previous two chapters as well) ?

I have just a few comments, not as a criticism but some information that may have been overlooked or missed by the author: 1.Akbar's successors were intolerant because of the pressure from Mullahs who detested Akbar's tolerant policies which were against Quran. These Mullahs railed against Akbar's policies and also often incited rebellion from provincial governors against any ruler who followed religiously tolerant policies. 2. Two Sikh gurus were executed by Mughal emperors. The first, who died in Mughal emperor Jahangir's prison, was Guru Arjan (1563-1606); the second, executed by Aurangzeb, was Guru Tegh Bahadur (1621-1675). The author has mentioned only Tegh Bahadur.

It is possible that the author ignored some of this information to avoid unwelcome and distracting controversy. All said, this is a splendid work for the level it is intended to.

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The Gateway of India was built to commemorate the arrival in 1911 of King George V and Queen Mary. Only the foundation was laid when they arrived; the actual structure was built later and completed in 1924.

Roopak Vaidya India

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Chidambaram Temple

I would like to share my views on the issue of the status of the temples in Tamil Nadu and the management takeover of Chidambaram temple. The present Chief Minister of the Government of Tamil Nadu is proud to call himself an atheist and has been a strong critic of Hindu culture and Hindu religious practices. The leaders of his party and their mentors of Dravidar Kazhagam have been strong critics of Hindu religious practices and Hindu culture. Members of the temple management boards are mostly politicians who have a strong desire to swindle public property. Thousands of Hindu temples have come under their control, without any investment from the government or from the politicians. Most of the old temples have enormous wealth, like cultivable lands and precious jewelry. It is no secret that the political bosses desire to have control over the enormous wealth of the temples rather than to give proper upkeep of the premises and provide the proper spiritual atmosphere for devotees.

R. Varatharaajan Tamil Nadu, India

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Are Paths Many?

I've read the statement "Truth is One, Paths are Many" several times in your magazine, but I wonder if Hindus really truly believe this without any additional qualifiers. I am not a Hindu, but a Christian, and have been reading your magazine

to learn more about Hinduism. Your magazine is very informative, and the best religious magazine I have read. I support your purpose of informing and inspiring Hindus worldwide and people interested in Hinduism, and in protecting and preserving your religion. By all means, be proud of your religion, educate others about it and raise up your children in your faith.

However, as a person from outside the Hindu worldview, some things that I have read in your magazine are puzzling. A writer of a letter in your April/May/June 2010 issue titled "Stop Conversion" wrote, "...Intermarriage should only be accepted if the Christian boy or girl agrees to embrace Hinduism." If Hindus truly believe "Truth is One, paths are many," without any additional qualifiers, then it really shouldn't matter what path one chooses to embrace. Why demand a conversion to Hinduism?

As I understand it, Hindus believe all scriptures are part of the One truth but belong to different yet valid paths. Do Hindus believe the Bible is wrong, in error or being misinterpreted when it says to preach the gospel to all nations?

I was appalled to read about the lawsuit by the Hindu American Foundation against the Ten Commandments display in Austin. It was heartening, however, to see that the article actually pointed out several significant and problematic differences between Christianity and Hinduism. When Christians bring up such differences they are usually labeled intolerant. However, you can only be tolerant of something you have a difference of opinion with. We can agree to disagree and don't have to resort to legal action which seems to me intolerant. If I were living in India and a similar situation existed, I would never consider bringing legal action to change a monument related to the established religious/political system.

The essence of the wording captured on the monument is taken from the Bible that Christian's believe is the holy and inspired Word of God. The article stated that this wording "directly conflicts" with and "cannot be squared" with Hindu theology.

Truth by its very nature is exclusive--exclusive of error. Do Hindus believe the Christian Bible is wrong--in error--in the way it states the Ten Commandments? I believe they do, based upon the comments from the article in your magazine. You

may say that religions can contradict each other without being a problem, or they are only able to describe a part of the elephant so to speak, but this is your viewpoint that's not accepted by many in other religious faiths.

"Truth is One, paths are many." I personally don't believe this, but it doesn't mean I'm intolerant. I have friends of various religious beliefs from countries around the world, and am tolerant of what they believe. Tolerance doesn't mean agreement. If Hindus truly believe "Truth is One, paths are many" without any additional qualifiers, then it really shouldn't matter what path one chooses to follow. This would apply to their children and family as well. However, the article titled "Raising Children as Good Hindus," in your May/June/July 2005 issue, said, "The correct teaching is that Hindus believe that all religions worship the same truth, the same Supreme Being. However, this does not mean that all religions are identical and that it doesn't matter which religion you follow".

Based on this statement, it does seem to matter which religion you follow. From an outsider looking in based on reading your magazine it sounds more like, "Truth is One, paths are many, and Hinduism is definitely the best path to be followed." As a Christian I would disagree with a statement such as that, and so would many other religious faiths.

I did not write this to be argumentative, but to express the beliefs and opinions of one who shares a different worldview. I thank you again for an excellent and informative magazine that I look forward to reading more issues of in the future.

Gerald Readore Houston, Texas

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Bringing Answers to Seeking Souls

How you can help spread the most precious knowledge

"The most urgent need hindus have is for genuine understanding, the kind that helps you make sense out of your life," Srikanth Kannan, of Hyderabad, India, explained to our editors, recently. "I see so many youth here, in India, who will not call themselves Hindus. They are embarrassed because they can't explain

themselves. They may have spiritual longings but, sadly, they reject the very thing that holds the answers they crave."

Srikanth, a professor of management, has taught at universities in Europe, US and India. In 2000, he met Hinduism Today's founder, Gurudeva, and immediately the guru said, "Here!" and handed him a copy of the magazine. "That began, for me, a long journey of understanding which continues to this day. The magazine brought me clarity, insight and the practice of daily sadhana. I learned to be more peaceful, to control my life and appreciate my faith more deeply, based now on solid personal experience. I believe this is the way to quell all those questions the youth have. I occasionally encourage someone to do as I did: read Hinduism Today and do sadhana consistently over a long time. It's well worth the effort."

Kannan explains that there is a "community" of Hindus souls living all around the world who share a tendency toward spirituality, but have lost contact with the source and have no idea where to start. "Hinduism Today is aware of that community and speaks to them, telling them they are not alone. To me, that is the magazine's most valuable service."

Kannan has given generously to the Hinduism Today Production Fund which is a part of Hindu Heritage Endowment--"to reach out to that community, and make youth proud to be Hindus again, having experienced their faith's power to transform life and brighten their days."

If, like Srikanth, you would like to disseminate understanding where it matters most, please consider donating to the Production Fund or including it in your estate plan. Ask to receive our Production Fund e-newsletter at www.gurudeva.org/email-news. Or visit www.hheonline.org/productionfund. Or contact us at 1-808-634-5407 or hhe _@_ hindu.org.