

**Dr. Minal Desai
45th Medical Group
Patrick Air Force Base**

Religious Perspective – Hinduism

Does it offend you when someone wishes you a “Merry Christmas”?

“Ah yes, there are a lot of Christians in India. Christmas is celebrated by Hindus also, besides the Christians over there celebrating in it. In India, you have to understand that they, the Christians, also mingle a lot with the Hindus. So, there is a lot of overlapping of the customs. They greet each other, they go to each other’s houses during Christmas, during Diwali, they respect.

And you know the Christians, even if they go, if the Hindus come during Christmas they make sure that, you know, they don’t serve them meat or anything if that is what they have. They will, a lot of the Christians themselves are vegetarian in India. The rabbi and I were discussing how many Jewish people are there in India too. There are a lot of Jewish, of course India’s population is probably three times the United States and compiled in an area of seven states probably. So you can imagine you’re almost walking on each other at times. [Especially in Mumbai].

I mean I remember when I took my younger daughter for the first time to India, she was two years old and as soon as she got down at the airport she just started crying because she saw so many people that she had never seen in her life. You know there are so many people. Its, whether it’s 2 o’clock in the morning, whether it’s ten o’clock at night, whether it’s two a.m., it’s two p.m., 12 a.m., there’s people all the time. In most of the places, because you have to understand, the area per square per person is very limited compared to United States.

We are very, very blessed to have so much open space. So we have a lot of space that we can use for ourselves. Here, in my neighborhood, I can go for days without seeing anybody in the neighborhood, believe me. In India that would never, ever happen, not see my neighbor, not known my neighbor. So yes, Christmas is very much celebrated and acknowledged very well.”

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